

# ON POINT!



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## Lacey Community Planning 3-2 SBCT Welcome Home Picnic

Story by  
Carlene Joseph  
VP/Community Engagement

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### COVER

Pfc. Austin Kitchen leads the way as Soldiers from 2nd platoon, Crazy Horse Troop, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, conduct a partnered patrol with Afghan National Army Soldiers from the 4th Kandak, Feb. 28, 2012. Partnered missions are essential to ensure the Afghan National Army is trained sufficiently in the tactics, techniques and technologies necessary to fend off a Taliban resurgence. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Chris McCullough, Combined Task Force Arrowhead Public Affairs)

### BACK COVER

Soldiers of Combined Task Force Arrowhead in Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Joshua S Brandenburg and Sgt. Christopher McCullough) (Illustration by Spc. Mark Neace)

Once again, the Captain Meriwether Lewis (CML) Lacey Subchapter of the Association of the United States Army is planning the welcome home picnic for the soldiers of the 3-2 SBCT. Included in the subchapter are City of Lacey community leaders. The Subchapter anticipates needing \$50,000 to ensure the picnic is successful. "Already, there is approximately \$12,000 in committed funds," said Denise Burditus, the subchapter president.

The CML Lacey Subchapter has been successful in gathering the support from the City of Lacey, the Lacey Chamber of Commerce, the North Thurston County School District, and key business leaders to identify grant opportunities, prospects, and much more. Unlike the last welcome home picnic that took place on Joint Base Lewis-McChord in September of 2010, it will happen in the City of Lacey, so the soldiers and their families can experience and enjoy the heartfelt welcome from their Community Connector, the City of Lacey. Locations such as the Thurston County Fair Grounds or Cabella's are being explored as possible opportunities. The tentative date for the picnic is set for February 14<sup>th</sup>, which is in the middle of winter, so the location will have to be in a sheltered location.

Overall, the process is slow, but good steady progress is being made to welcome everyone home. The goal is to create an awareness in the community so the population will be eager to provide support by either making donations to the 501(c)3 non-profit account AUSA offers or by simply volunteering their time to assist with planning. Additionally, the subchapter is exploring opportunities to create awareness through radio broadcasting.

3-2 SBCT Commander  
Col. Charles Webster Jr.

3-2 SBCT Command Sgt. Maj.  
Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel G. Murphy

#### 3-2 SBCT Public Affairs Office

Capt Troy Frey.....Public Affairs Officer  
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg.....NCOIC/Photo Journalist/  
Layout and Design  
Sgt. Christopher G. McCullough.....Photo Journalist  
Sgt. Nathaniel D. Phillips.....Broadcast Journalist

#### Contributors

Chaplain (Maj.) Edward I. Choi, Capt. Marius Dinita,  
2nd Lt. Davin Fischer, Cpl. Ramin Mundigler,  
Spc. Mark Neace, Carlene Joseph

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# 389th Finance goes where Soldiers go to 'show them the money'

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Chris McCullough  
CTF Arrowhead Public Affairs

Located 6,343 feet above sea level, in the southern fringes of the Safed Koh Range, in southeast Afghanistan, Forward Operating Base Sweeney is certainly one of the most remote coalition bases in Zabul province, if not the most remote. As a result, Soldiers here lack some of the services often found at larger FOBs throughout the country, such as finance. So what is a Soldier assigned to a remote outpost, such as Sweeney, supposed to do if they, or their families, experience financial problems, or if they are simply in need of some cash? That is where the Soldiers of the 389th Finance Detachment, Puerto Rico, come into play.

"Basically, we're a (mobile) financial management

support team" based out of FOB Lagman, explained Spc. Arnaldo Martinez, a financial specialist with the 389th Finance.

"What we do is we help out people in other FOBs that don't have finance facilities," he said. "We come out and make sure that they get their pay squared away; that we solve whatever pay issues they have. We also make sure they have ... sufficient money to be able to carry on with their lives out here."

The two-Soldier finance team assists the men and women of Battle Company, 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment in a number of ways that range from cashing checks and conducting pay inquiries, to collecting deposits for the Savings Deposit Program or dispersing cash via a Soldier's Eagle Cash Card or



Spc. Arnaldo Martinez, a financial specialist with the 389th Finance Detachment, Puerto Rico, hands Capt. Joe Mickley, commander, 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment, U.S. and Afghan currency during the financial management support teams' recent visit to Forward Operating Base Sweeney. One of the 389th FMST's missions is to visit with Soldiers in other FOBs that don't have finance facilities and assist them with any financial needs they may have.

casual pay.

"We can - through our computer systems - load money from their banks onto their cash cards," said Martinez. "We will also, more than gladly, either give them U.S. currency or Afghan currency, depending on their needs."

While there is little to spend money on at FOB Sweeney, the availability of U.S. and Afghan currency allows the Soldiers to pay for necessities like a haircut or purchase small items at the local bazaar. The 389th mobile FMST's assistance does not stop there. They are also able to help square away any pay issues Soldiers from Battle Company, 5-20 Infantry might have by means of a mobile computer system that allows Martinez and Spc. Angel Ramirez - the other half of the mobile support team - to access the Soldiers' financial records, even out here in this remote mountain base.

"We basically carry a small office in our backpack and carry the office with us all the way here so we give the proper support to the Soldiers," said Martinez. Such mobility allows the 389th mobile FMST to take a look in the system and see if a Soldier is receiving all their entitlements and address any financial problems they might be experiencing, explained Ramirez.

"In addition to providing cash, the finance team can assist Soldiers with pay problems," said Martinez. "They can research why pay entitlements for housing, family separation, and additional combat pay entitlements are not showing up on a Soldier's pay."

Even in the absence of electronic communications the 389th mobile FMST is able to help Soldiers in need.

"If we didn't have internet, it's okay because the program we use is basically a stand-alone system," said Martinez.

They would then handle the transaction exactly like

they would back in their main office.

"When we go back to our FOB ... we'd plug it (the stand-alone system) in and we'll send the information and reports to the higher-ups," said Martinez.

The same could be said of any issues they may encounter while without communications.

"We will write down the Soldiers' issues and when we go back ... we will spend the whole day going through (them) and we will go research their issues and we will try to find a solution for them," said Martinez.

Upon discovering a solution, the 389th is quick to get back in touch with the Soldier.

"If we find something wrong, we'll make sure we square it away the same day," said Martinez.

While financial issues do sometimes happen, with the 389th Finance Detachment being on point, Arrowhead families everywhere will not have to worry that their financial issues, or those of their Soldiers, won't be addressed in the timeliest manner possible.

"Our goal here is for 100% customer satisfaction," said Martinez. With dedication like this, they just might get it.



Spc. Craig Schneider, 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment, enters his personal identification number during the financial management support teams' recent visit to Forward Operating Base Sweeney.

# The 'Voice of Shinkai': Rock Star status in a box

Story by Sgt. Chris McCullough  
CTF Arrowhead Public Affairs

*Part 2 of 3* - The 432nd Civil Affairs Team began the Radio Literacy Program in Shinkai district with approximately 100 literacy books and 200 radios that were stored at Forward Operating Base Sweeney, Zabul province, Afghanistan.

The literacy book is an easy-to-follow guide that allows the "students" to follow along on the pages according to the programming on the radio. The Afghan National Security Forces and International Security Assistance Force partners hand out the literacy books and handheld radios to the local Afghans. The radio allows the villagers to listen to the broadcasted lessons over the airwaves.

"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," said Master Sgt. Joel E. Fix, of Fort Belvoir, Va., who oversaw the Radio Literacy program during 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's deployment to Zabul province.

Once in the villages, Atta Muhammad, a 21-year old Afghan who works as the local Radio in a Box disc jockey, took the lead in selling the Radio Literacy Program to the village elders.

"We were going to the villages and we distributed the radios ... with the notebooks, with the pens," said Atta. "I was with them (the soldiers) to distribute the boxes to the people."

"Our lead DJ, Atta, has been very instrumental in promoting the program," said Staff Sgt. Jeffery Mader, Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul, 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion, Green Bay, Wis. "We actually took him out village to village, along with some of the radios and the books and the writing material (and) had him explain the program to the locals, which I think helped a whole lot."

"Instead of trying to work through translators, we actually had him explain it; showing them the book, when to expect the program, asking the locals what hours they would like to hear the program," Mader said.

## "THE RECEPTION WAS BETTER THAN EXPECTED"

"They (the locals) were actually very receptive to it," Mader said. "The further east we went, they seemed a little more iffy about the program; but here, closer towards the mountains and the pass and around the FOB, they actually were pretty receptive. A lot of them even talked about incorporating the women, and letting them learn, which was actually quite surprising."

Hereafter, a 30-minute lesson was played four times every day - except Friday (the Islamic holy day) - at 9 a.m., 1 p.m., 9 p.m. and midnight.

"We chose those times according to the recommendations of various elders in a couple different villages," said Sgt. Kat Klosinski, also from the 432nd CAB.

Between scheduled shows - to include the Radio Literacy

Program - we broadcast a variety of other programs, said Mader. The topics include local and provincial news, radio interviews from the district governor, the district chief of police, as well as Col. Dost from the Afghan National Army. They also broadcast important information, such as scheduled shuras.

"We would play that on the air for everybody to hear," Mader said. "(We) also have children's programs (and) health and wellness issues."

The Shinkai district PRT detachment also aims to broadcast at least 15 minutes of current news, every four hours, around the clock, beginning at 6 a.m.

"When a scheduled program is not playing, the default will be songs and commercials," said Klosinski.

According to Klosinski, the Radio in a Box broadcasts traditional Pashtu music in the mornings and contemporary music after 4 p.m.

Commercials are 20-second spots that are played a couple times each hour, said Klosinski, they are often a mix of health, education or public safety announcements. Topics such as fire safety, reporting insurgent acts, the importance of education and being kind to others have been a few of the themes previously broadcast.

The Radio Literacy Program is part of the "Knowledge is Light" Campaign.

# Afghan Partners Take Lead Role in Local Veterinary Seminar

Story and photos by  
2nd Lt. Davin Fischer,  
Zabul Agribusiness Development Team  
Public Affairs

For the first time in recent memory, Zabul Province Department of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL) employees took the lead role in organizing and executing a veterinary seminar and animal inoculation program in the Tarnak-Wa-Jaldak district of Zabul province.

A DAIL veterinarian and the Tarnak-Wa-Jaldak area extension agent conducted a two-day event in a village north of Shar-E-Safa. The events included a seminar and question-and-answer period on the first day, followed by inoculations for the village's livestock on the second.

"First of all, this event put the DAIL out front and shows them that they can plan, and that they can train the farmers of Afghanistan.

That's our goal, to teach the DAIL staff how to execute these types of events. This particular event showed GIRoA can do their job, and do it well," said Lt. Col. Ken DeGier of Echo, Minnesota, ZADT agricultural section leader.

The event was largely planned by the local DAIL Extension Agent, who used his knowledge of the area and background to designate the location and reach out to locals about receiving the training and inoculations. On day one of the event, the extension agent and veterinarian were met by village elders and spent several hours conducting a class on livestock care, discussing common diseases and fielding questions from the villagers.

"We were welcomed into the village the first day, and coalition forces had very little interaction with the villagers, leaving the lead role to the DAIL employees.

This legitimized the efforts of the government and its local employees and was a key factor to success" said Capt. Jenna Carlson, of Oakdale, Minn. who directs ADT activities in the Tarnak-Wa-Jaldak area.

Day two of the veterinary seminar was comprised primarily of inoculating animals. Assisted by locals, the DAIL veterinarian inoculated more than 50 animals from diseases including foot and mouth as well as anthrax.

The Zabul ADT partners with the DAIL staff and other partners in conducting agricultural outreach and activities throughout Zabul province. The ADT concept is a National Guard initiative to utilize the civilian agricultural skills of Guard members throughout the United States. ZADT 3 is one of 11 such teams operating in Afghanistan.



Capt. Jenna Carlson of Oakdale, Minn. looks on as Department of Agricultural, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL) staff conduct a class on livestock care and disease control in a village north of Zabul province's southern district of Tarnak-Wa-Jaldak.

# Shinkai Governor hears the voice of the people in the Surri region

Story by  
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg  
CTF Arrowhead Public Affairs

Heavy snowstorms, deep mud and a river crossing swelling with snowmelt had kept the newly appointed district governor at bay since he took office of the Shinkai District. Understanding that it is his duty to serve the Afghans of his district and hearing their voice, Noor Mohammed, managed to make his way through the pass in the Sur Ghar Mountain Range and held his first shura on the Surri side of the Shinkai District.

Mohammad has held many shuras in the southern half of the district, but he has never held a shura in the northern part of the Shinkai District in Zabul Province, Afghanistan. This is due to the Sur Ghar Mountain Range, which divides his district nearly in half. The mountain range only has one

pass carved into it and that pass is the only way from the southern to the northern half of the district.

Upon arriving at Forward Operating Base Grizzly, Mohammad wasted no time meeting with the Afghan National Army Company Commander, District Chief of Police, Romanian Company Commander and U.S. Army Company/Troop Commanders. A few moments later he greeted local village elders from the surrounding area as they began to arrive to hear his message and voice their concerns.

Over 25 elders and prominent village leaders from the surrounding area attended the meeting, which was focused on getting the support of the local populace and telling them how the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Afghan National Security Forces and

International Security Assistance Forces can help the villagers. Mohammed stated that GIROA, ANSF and ISAF wanted to hear the voice of the people in the Surri region and that they were there to support the people of the district.

Mohammed went on to address the importance of ANSF and ISAF patrolling the local villages in order to keep the populace safe from insurgents. He also discussed the opening of new schools and the significance of an education.

“We are trying to help your kids go to school and get an education,” said Mohammed. “(You must) Look towards your kids’ future.”

He addressed the unity of the district, as many local Afghans believe that the Shinkai District is broken into 2 halves, the southern half being the Shinkai District and the northern half being an unofficial district called ‘Surri’.

Mohammed hopes that the people of the district will come together and become the first line of defense in their villages against insurgent activities. He wants them to help ANSF and ISAF keep their villages safe from unwanted violence by identifying new faces or suspicious activities.

“If you [local Afghans] see new faces in the area, you have to ask them ‘Who are they? Where do they come from? What do they do here?’” said Mohammed.

The shura helped show the involvement that GIROA wants with the people of the district and how the Afghan Government will help them improve their villages.

“They will have more faith in the GIROA, because they see his face, they see all the other leaders there coming together,” said Capt. Joseph Mickley, commander, Battle Company, 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment. “Overall it’s a good thing.”

All the projects and events that GIROA and the populace want

accomplished in the district, Mohammed will have a direct hand in.

“GIROA doesn’t want things that the people don’t want,” added Mickley.

Mickley went on to say sometimes it’s just a matter of exact location, the people will want a checkpoint but they do not want it near a certain place, or they will want to open a school but want their children to go to a school in a different town.

Governor Mohammed is working to unify the Shinkai district and

legitimize GIROA and the ANSF, specifically in the eyes of the villagers in the Surri region. GIROA influence has long been absent in this area so the people have not been able to voice their grievances to anyone. Governor Mohammed is changing that dynamic and listening to the people.

“It’s just bringing somebody to bring those [issues] all together, and understanding the entire populace,” said Mickley. “That’s what the district governor is supposed to do.”



The Shinkai District Governor, Noor Mohammad, addresses an audience of village elders from the Surri area of the Shinkai District in Zabul Province, Afghanistan on Forward Operating Base Grizzly March 11, 2012. The shura was the first of many to be held in the northern half of the Shinkai District by the newly appointed governor.



Local village elders from the Surri area of the Shinkai District in Zabul Province, Afghanistan attend a shura hosted by District Governor Noor Muhammad on Forward Operating Base Grizzly March 11, 2012. The shura was the first of many to be held in the northern half of the Shinkai District by the newly appointed governor.



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



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



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 Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher McCullough



ROU Army photo by Capt. Marius Dinita

## For junior Soldiers, deployments can be an especially stressful time

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Chris McCullough  
CTF Arrowhead Public Affairs

Deployments are never easy for anyone in the armed forces. They are almost always lengthy, demanding, incredibly stressful, and a challenge for even the most hardened combat vet.

For the junior Soldiers of Battle Company, 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment – many of whom are under the age of 25 – a deployment can be an especially stressful time in their lives, particularly if they are deploying for the first time.

“I really didn’t want to come on this deployment,” said Pfc. Jack Schuster, of Walla-Walla, Wash., who is deployed to Afghanistan for the first time. “But I figured I had to go and try to work it out the best I could. So far it hasn’t been as hard as I thought it would be.”

The stress of being deployed isn’t reserved exclusively for first timers. Even those who have deployed before may experience family issues back home that can cause undue stress for some, such as Spc. Samuel Beck, of Mayfield, Ky., who deployed previously to Iraq.

“I have a wife and daughter at home,” he said. “My wife is currently pregnant right now too,” though he adds that his leadership is working with him so that he can try to be home for the birth.

In some cases, the stress of being in a remote location, far from home, can be a challenging time for newly married Soldiers.

“It’s not how I want to spend the beginning of my marriage,” said Schuster. “I’ve been married for a little bit, but we’re still in the beginning stages.”

Some, though, have come to embrace the solitude that is present on FOB Sweeney.

“I like that we’re on our own little FOB,” said Spc. Jeff Pearson, of Tacoma, Wash. “We can kind of set it up how we want instead of just falling into an old unit’s

area and using what they had.”

Now while there is no magic carpet to whisk Soldiers home to their families, and some services such as combat stress support are absent from FOB Sweeney, there are facilities there that can help negate the stress of being apart; such as the Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility, which Battle Company leadership continues to expand.

The MWR at FOB Sweeney, which is located a short walk from their living quarters, features 10 computers and six phones to help keep Soldiers connected to their loved ones at home. It also features a fully equipped gym, Xbox consoles, a ping pong table, a pool table, dart boards, and several movies for viewing. The MWR at FOB Sweeney, as with any FOB in Afghanistan, offers junior and senior Soldiers alike a welcome distraction from the stress and challenges of being deployed.

“The MWR is where I spend my free time,” said Rogers. “I get to Skype with (my girlfriend), talk on the phone and Facebook.”

Other ways Soldiers have found to reduce their stress levels is through the camaraderie that is universal across the Army. Sometimes just being able to talk to a friend and realize that you’re not alone helps ease the pain of being so far from home.

*See Junior Soldiers page*



Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Sweeney relax at their local Morale Welfare and Recreation building. (U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Ramin Mundigler)

## ANA in Shinkai district ‘clean the way’ for local residents

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Chris McCullough  
CTF Arrowhead Public Affairs

Old man winter has Afghanistan’s Shinkai district – a remote mountain community situated 6,343 feet up in the eastern fringes of the Sur Ghar mountain range – in its frosty grip. Here the Afghan mountains normally bring about long, cold winters, though this year the deep chill is longer and colder than usual according to the locals.

Most recently a 3-day storm dumped snow in excess of 24-inches in parts of the district, affecting the movement of local residents and leaving many of the outlying villages here completely isolated.

Not content to leave their community homebound, the 1st Kandak, 205th Corps of the Afghan National Army, set into motion a mission to clear the roads to and from the local bazaar, in conjunction with Battle Company, 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment.

“The snow clearance was actually conducted at the request of the ANA,” said Capt. Joe Mickley, commander, Battle Company, 5-20 Infantry. “They wanted to enable the population to gravitate to the local bazaar so they could get the basic goods and services that they’re accustomed to during the winter months.”

So the ANA teamed up with Battle Company and did a combined mounted patrol utilizing a contracted bulldozer to clear the 4-kilometer route from FOB Sweeney, through the Shinkai Bazaar, all the way to Menden Kheyl, one of the major population centers in Shinkai district.

“We also plowed up to the village of Shinkai, which is just to the east of FOB Sweeney; it’s also another major population center here in Shinkai district,” said Mickley.

Overall, the assistance from the ANA, and Battle Company 5-20 Infantry, was received with overwhelming support from the villages where locals were very appreciative.



A Caterpillar D8 Bulldozer clears the road through the Shinkai bazaar, Feb. 19, 2012. The bulldozer will help clear the roads from Forward Operating Base Sweeney to the villages of Menden Kheyl and Shinkai, allowing residents from the area to reach the Shinkai bazaar.

“They were glad to have us out there,” Mickley said. “They were glad to see the ANA out there opening the route – ‘cleaning the way,’ as they call it – allowing them to traffic back and forth to the bazaar.”

Since that day the snows have largely melted and the locals here have resumed their normal movements throughout the district. However, should old man winter decide to pummel Shinkai district again, the local residents here can be sure that their local ANA unit – the 1st Kandak – together with Battle Company, 5-20 Infantry, will be on hand to clear the roads so that people here can make the trip to the bazaar and get the goods or services they need.

“They said this was a good thing and they would like us to continue to do it in the future,” said Mickley.



Sgt. Philip Vota and Spc. Patrick Intorre, Battle Company, 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment, ground guide their mine resistant ambush protected vehicle through the village of Sadu Kala, Afghanistan, Feb. 19, 2012.

# Walking the “lonely walk.” Who is EOD?

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Chris McCullough  
CTF Arrowhead Public Affairs

*Part 1 of 3* The silence of a frigid February afternoon was broken by an ominous warning. “Fire in the hole, fire in the hole, fire in the hole,” the warning echoed across a sub-freezing landscape draped in ice and snow. Seconds later an explosive ordnance technician from 787th Ordnance Company, 3rd Ordnance Battalion, detonated several thermite grenades that destroyed over 500 lbs. of homemade explosive.

The HME burned this afternoon could have been used to injure, maim, or kill Afghan civilians, International Security Assistance

Force soldiers or their Afghan partners, but thanks in part to the Soldiers of 787 EOD; this HME is cooked, literally.

As it happens, the HME that was destroyed this day was discovered during a raid on a suspected bomb making laboratory conducted the previous week. Had it not been discovered, it could have been used to build an IED, in which case EOD would have to come out and blow the IED in place.

## Who would come?

Who are these people that are willing to risk their lives neutralizing explosives that could just as easily kill them? To find out

the answer, I linked up with 1st Lt. Dan Marvin and 1st Sgt. William Conard, both from 787 EOD, and learned a thing or two about those who walk “the lonely walk.”

On the surface, Conard and Marvin are straightforward, down to earth guys; the kind of men you would invite to your family barbecue. But underneath their sensible exteriors are a couple of the most courageous men in the U.S. Army. If there’s any doubt, consider how few people in the armed forces actually volunteer to walk up to a live IED, knowing full well it could be detonated at any time, and disarm it. But they do it!

“I did 10 years of warehouse-

supply work, and at the end of the day I didn’t feel like I’d accomplished anything,” says Conard. “So I went to Egypt and worked with the EOD guys and did some of the stuff they did. I felt a sense of accomplishment when I finished it. ‘Hey I cleared this explosive hazard and potentially saved the lives of numerous people.’”

So a warehouseman in search of job satisfaction chose working with explosives over stocking shelves. Surely that doesn’t sound like a rational decision to some people.

You’ve got to be a little bit irrational to do it as well laughed Conard.

Marvin’s explanation wasn’t much different. An enlisted infantryman for 9 years, Marvin was looking for the next big challenge in his Army career, so he chose to attend Officer Candidate School where he made the decision to go EOD.

“I wanted to do something that would make me feel like I was playing a significant role on the battlefield and taking care of the good guys, and EOD was it,” Marvin says. “That was my option; either that or be a maintenance officer and I didn’t want to do that,” he laughs.

So what is the job of an explosive ordnance technician anyway? Do they just blow up bombs and such, or is there something more



1st Lt. Dan Marvin (left) and 1st Sgt. William Conard, 787th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion, prepare a thermite grenade for detonation, Feb. 15, 2012. The grenade will be used to destroy homemade explosives which were discovered by 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment during a patrol in Shinkai district, Afghanistan.

to their job?

“We’re trained and specialized to handle that threat,” Conard says. “So we clear that threat and keep the roads clear for personnel and supplies moving up and down the route (which) keeps personnel from getting hit with those devices or trying to clear them

themselves.”

Still, Marvin explains, that’s not the sum of their job.

“Our job is to protect,” he says. “Our job is not necessarily to blow up bombs. Our job is to protect personnel and property. That’s the only reason we go out there and do it.”



Staff Sgt. Andrew Elo prepares 3 Russian PMN and 3 Russian PMN2 anti-personnel mines for disposal by detonation at Forward Operating Base Wolverine, Feb. 26, 2012. The mines were X-rayed and found to be too unstable for safe keeping.



Thermite grenades are detonated atop homemade explosives at Forward Operating Base Lagman, Afghanistan, Feb. 15, 2012. The grenades will burn the HME which was discovered by 5th Battalion 20th Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment during a patrol in Shinkai district, Afghanistan.



ROU Army photo by Capt. Marius Dinita



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 Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg



ROU Army photo by Capt. Marius Dinita



ROU Army photo by Capt. Marius Dinita



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



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher McCullough

# Crazy Horse Troop, 1st Squadron-14th Cavalry Regiment-ANA partnership 'going very well'

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Chris McCullough  
CTF Arrowhead Public Affairs

*Part 1 of 2* - Eleven years ago when the United States entered Afghanistan, it was a very different place. The Insurgents were in power, the Afghan infrastructure was decimated, foreign business was nonexistent, women had zero rights and music and poetry were outlawed.

These days things are different and you see it everywhere you look. The Afghan people are growing as a society. The literacy rate here has increased, women have more rights now than a decade ago, businesses from abroad have begun investing in the country's future and Afghan music and poetry are prevalent everywhere.

Still, the International Security

Assistance Force's mission is not complete. While Washington D.C. has said that nearly all U.S. troops will be coming home by the end of 2014, there's still plenty left to do, such as continuing to train the Afghan National Army to assume responsibility for Afghanistan's continued success through 2014 and beyond. That is where units such as Crazy Horse Troop, 1st Squadron 14th Infantry Regiment, Combined Task Force Arrowhead, come into play.

Based out of Forward Operating Base Wolverine, Crazy Horse Troop is in the first 100 days of their first deployment to Afghanistan. Their mission is to enable Afghan National Security Forces to provide security for the people of Afghanistan.

"The partnership has been going very well," said Capt.

Brian Rieser, commander, Crazy Horse Troop, 1st Squadron 14th Cavalry Regiment, of the working relationship with the Afghan National Army Kandaks with whom Crazy Horse Troop partners with on a regular basis. "We've been conducting joint operations with the 6th Kandak, as well as the 4th Kandak," said Rieser. "For the most part we've been very successful in conducting those operations."

When asked about the transition going on here, in preparation for the 2014 drawdown, Rieser said, "I think this transition period with us here in Afghanistan is going to be a lot smoother than it was in Iraq. Part of that has to do with the last 30 years of fighting. A lot of these guys have been fighting for years."

The Soldiers of Crazy Horse are

no strangers to war either. The troop was deployed to Iraq three times over the course of the last decade and they understand that Afghanistan is not Iraq.

"It's not like Iraq," said 1st Lt. Joe Fontana, executive officer, C/1-14 Cav. "Here you have to make do with what you got," he said, referring to the lack of super-sized logistical hubs that dominated the Iraq landscape between 2003 and 2011 while American troops were deployed to Iraq.

"(Consequently,) we've become very proficient, very efficient at using what we have; using the tools we've been given," Fontana said.

"I will say that (their) hard work and dedication shows how these Soldiers can so quickly adapt to something they're not used to and I'm so proud of them," said Rieser. "One of the biggest things we had to fight was that everything we fell in on was brand-new equipment, (but our) Soldiers have been able to adapt."

Adapt, they have. Though the troop has received ample support from their squadron and brigade, the Soldiers of Crazy Horse Troop have accomplished a lot by themselves.

"One of the biggest accomplishments is learning all about these new communications equipment," said Fontana. "These guys have been phenomenal at working with these systems and the new technology we've been

presented with, adapting to it and using it efficiently."

Even though the Soldiers of Crazy Horse are adept at learning new equipment; ultimately the success of their mission depends on gaining the trust of the Afghan people.

"Having the ANA and ANP (Afghan National Police) lead out in the front and present to the people that they're leading the mission, it gives the people confidence and trust because if the ANA and police trust us and work with us, then the Afghans will trust us," said Fontana. "Every day when we go out on a mission, they're there with us."

That methodology seems to be working.

"The people have pretty much brought us into the local villages with smiles and handshakes," said Rieser. "I know they've told me time and time again, they're glad we're here. They're glad that America continues to support them along with the ANSF and the government officials here."

According to Rieser, a lot of the enthusiasm the local populace has shown has everything to do with the level of professionalism shown to the Afghan people whenever Crazy Horse is on patrol.

"I've heard it (said) that the Soldiers are professional and that they appreciate that we treat them with dignity and respect," Rieser said. "I think that says a lot

about the professionalism of the troops in this unit."

Ultimately, the future of Afghanistan will depend on how well Afghan National Security Forces are trained up in the tactics, techniques and technologies necessary to stop an insurgent resurgence. Crazy Horse troops have been training ANSF how to engage key leaders, enroll people using the Biometrics Automated Toolset System, otherwise known as BATS, and prepare and execute their own missions.

"Teaching them how to plan and coordinate their own missions is a big step," said Fontana. "That's one of the main goals we have right now."

Without a doubt, the Soldiers of Crazy Horse Troop have their work cut out for them, but their commander is confident they will prevail.

"I just want to continue (the) successful operations we've had so far and continue that good relationship we've had with the ANSF forces because, like I tell the guys all the time, we're here to help them...train them...support them during their operations, but at the same time too we learn a lot from them," said Rieser. "They're the experts of this country, of this terrain, and they're also the experts on the enemy. We learn just as much from them as they learn from us. So as long as we can keep that going over the next nine months, I think we'll be successful."

A Soldier from Crazy Horse Troop, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment demonstrates to an Afghan National Army Soldier how to enroll people using the Biometrics Automated Toolset System, otherwise known as BATS, Feb. 28, 2012. The future of Afghanistan depends on how well Afghan National Security Forces are trained in the tactics, techniques and technologies, such as BATS, that are necessary to stop an insurgent resurgence.



# Chaplain's Corner

When I am driving on the main roads and highways, I periodically experience that horrendously obnoxious, rattling vibration when I approach a toll booth or go outside the lines and hit those rumble strips. Depending on your car, you can experience a loud warning and tremendous tremors all the way through your steering wheel. Some even have reflectors, to add a visual warning. When I hit those rumble strips, they definitely get my attention. I often wonder if I'm going to blow a tire!

The most common reasons that drivers hit the rumble strips are fatigue or sleepiness, carelessness, inattentiveness, and distraction. By the way, did you know that driving while fatigued is compared with driving under the influence of alcohol? The same holds true for the use of cell phones while driving.

While these rumble strips may seem incredibly annoying at the time, their "warnings" prevent accidents and literally save thousands of lives each year. Rumble strips have been installed on our roads for a good reason. Driving can be a blast, but it can also be dangerous.

Hmm...that sounds a lot like life, doesn't it? We are given warnings, but if we ignore them, we can get into an accident and

possibly get hurt and hurt others. What if we, instead, listened to those little nudges in our conscience?

God works through warnings to:

Wake us up. Sometimes our defenses are down, and we do not realize the decisions we are making could lead to a big mistake. They seem innocent, even harmless, at the time. Other times we are blinded by emotions or think we are strong enough to handle the situation.

Keep us on track. The narrow road always leads to life. God has an amazing adventure planned for us. Choosing detours that lead to destruction can create delays and rob us of the relationship with God that He desires.

Prevent a disaster for us and others around us. Our actions always affect more than just us. Sometimes our negative actions get others hurt. The military calls this collateral damage. Our actions always have far-reaching consequences.

God speaks to us in many ways; through our conscience, other people and the Word of God. Our ability to hear Him, discern His voice, and then obey His direction affects every aspect of our lives.



When we pay attention to the small nudges in our conscience, we usually know the right thing to do. Then it's just a matter of doing it. But when we ignore God's prompting, the answers He gives us when we pray, or the advice of a close friend, it usually doesn't work out too well.

What rumble strips are you driving over in your life right now? Make no mistake, God is trying to get your attention. Take a good look at the decisions you are making-the situations you put yourself in. Have you felt the jolt of rumble-strip warnings? If so, in what specific areas?

- Chaplain (Maj.) Edward I. Choi, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division

## Junior Soldiers (continued)

"A couple of the friendships I've made (here) so far seem likely to be lifelong friendships," said Schuster.

With time, junior Soldiers come to realize what all senior Soldiers already know, that a deployment does not last forever, and in the end, it can financially help a young Soldier and his family.

"At first I was sad, but I'm preparing us for our future, so I look at it like that and that gets me through every day," said Spc. Lance Rogers, of Webb City, Missouri.

# Arrowhead Thoughts



2nd Lt. Matthew Domench,  
Newark, Calif.  
Battle Company, 5-20 Inf. Regt.

I think the best thing about being here is just being with my guys in our final destination for the rest of the year.

Cpt. Joe Mickley,  
Gettysburg, Pa.  
Battle Company, 5-20 Inf. Regt.



Battle Company Soldiers are working hard up here; they're really getting after it, making FOB Sweeny a better place.



Spc. Talaba Pogrebinskoi,  
Medford, Ore.  
Battle Company, 5-20 Inf. Regt.

I love the weather at FOB Sweeny so far. It's not too cold, it's not too hot, just perfect.

Sgt. Thomas Johnson,  
Augusta, Ga.  
Battle Company, 5-20 Inf. Regt.



We're building up as nice as we can from scratch. The chow's pretty good and the MWR's pretty nice.

# 2<sup>ND</sup> TO NONE

3<sup>RD</sup> STRYKER BRIGADE 2<sup>ND</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION



OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM



ARROWHEAD "ON POINT"

