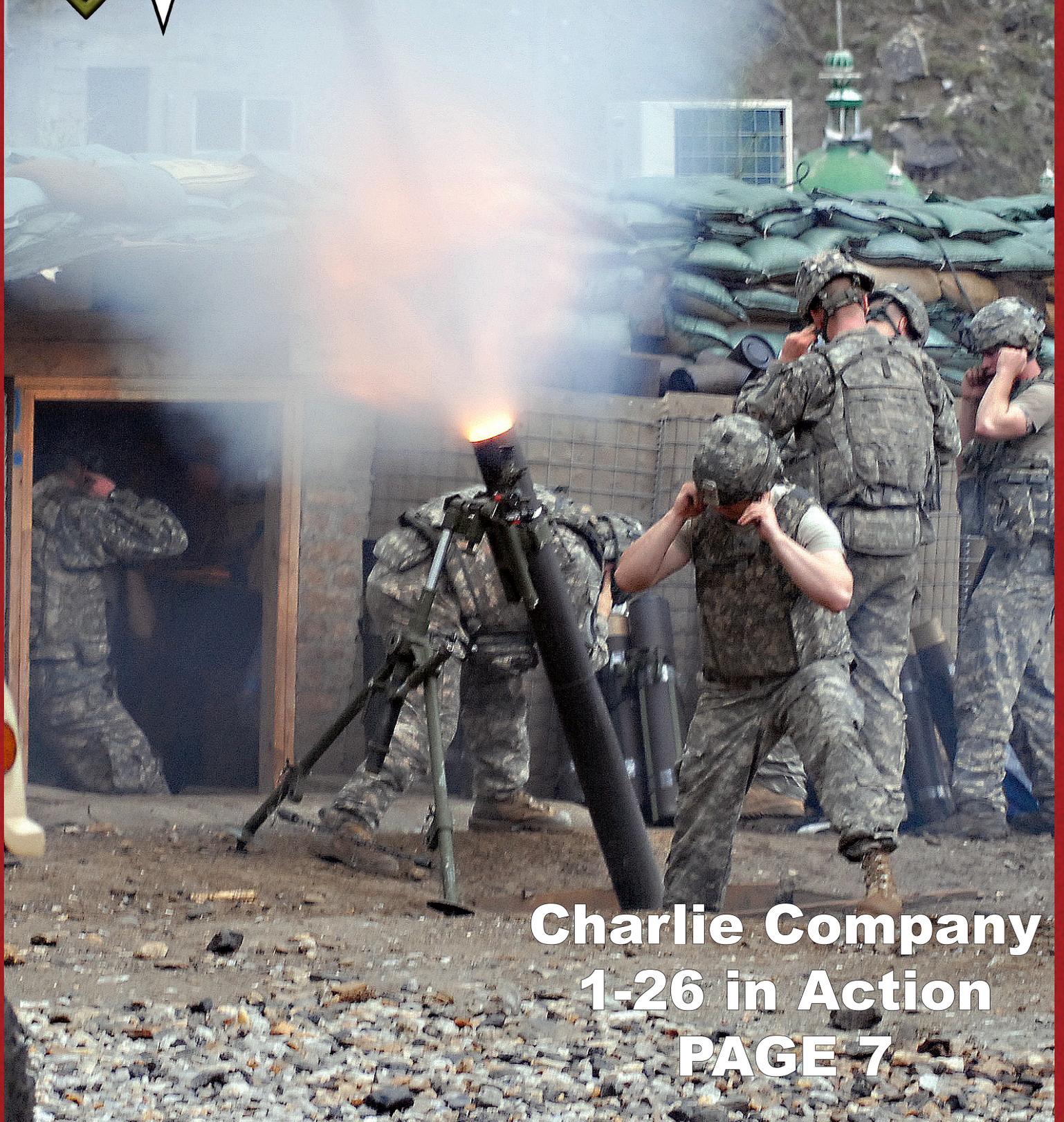


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# Duke Dispatch



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1-26 in Action  
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Photo By Maj. Chevelle Thomas

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## 3rd BCT, 1st ID Magazine

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Stories should be in Word format.

# Tuning in to Kala Gush Radio



Cpt. Adrian Chen, Task Force Centaur, hands a radio to a Nengaresh villager during a joint operation with the ANP, July 28.

*Photo and Story By Staff Sgt. Adora Medina  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

With steady hands, Mohibullah, a broadcaster for Kala Gush Radio, held his cell phone up to a microphone to pick up the voice of a local Afghan, who was calling in to make a request. Out his window the purple mountains stood tall against the two small connexes that house the station, but the signal carries far, reaching the entire province of Nuristan.

About a year ago, the Provincial Reconstruction Team had a vision to create a radio station for the people of the Nuristan province. After months of planning and coordination the dream became a reality. Kala Gush radio aired for the first time, in March 2008.

“The people are so happy, they are so glad we have a radio station. Everyone you see is talking about the radio they’re calling on the phone to ask for songs, or introduce themselves or read some poetry,” Farooq, radio broadcaster, said.

For many people living in secluded villages throughout the Nuristan province of Afghanistan, Kala Gush Radio is the only means of getting accurate information. Since the literacy rate is so low in the province, newspapers and other publications aren’t as beneficial.

For years the Taliban have used the

illiteracy rate to their advantage, changing the meaning of the Koran to promote their own agenda. This is something that the PRT and the Kala Gush broadcasters plan to change.

“I know very little about the Koran, but I have never met anyone who told me that it says anywhere in the Koran that it’s ok to put on a suicide vest and blow up people,” Maj. Rory Aylwood, Nuristan PRT, said to the broadcasters during a visit.

“When the Mullah [Islamic cleric or mosque leader] comes we will question him if suicide is against the religion or not,” Farooq, radio broadcaster said.

“It’d be nice to hear it from the Mullah that it’s not good,” Aylwood said in response.

The Mullah is only one of many guests who have been interviewed at Kala Gush Radio. The PRT and broadcasters have been working hard, lining up informative speakers, creating segments on medical tips and advice, providing pertinent security information, and interacting with the community to find out what more can be done to get the right information out.

“Every Wednesday there’s a flea market where people bring in their animals to sell in Nengaresh. They come from all the villages and we’re going to interview these people to find out what they want, what they need and find out what kind of problems they have,” Farooq, Kala Gush broadcaster, said.

One of the challenges in distributing information is the limited amount of radios in the area. The broadcasters talked about how the village women always send their children over to their house to see if they can get a free radio. They figure since the broadcasters work at the station, they must have extra radios to give away, unfortunately this isn’t the case.

“Please give us more radios so we can give them out as rewards during our question and answer show, it encourages more people to listen,” Mohibullah asked of the PRT.

# Small Rewards Program Reduces Munitions

*Photos and Story by Sgt. Jessica R. Dahlberg  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

Colorful flyers are passed out to the Afghanistan population to give them tips such as staying hydrated, warnings to avoid touching landmines and what to do if one might happen to come across munitions that could be used against Coalition Forces.

Approximately 24,000 of these flyers, which have a combination of pictures and images, tell about the Small Rewards Program. The idea behind the Small Rewards Program is that if anyone finds any munitions they can turn them into the Americans in exchange for money.

"The flyers we distribute help get the word out and advertise the Small Rewards Program a lot better than just Soldiers going out and telling the people about it," Capt. John Bilski, the Information Officer with the Pa. Army National Guard, 3rd Battalion, 103rd Armor Regiment, said.

As a result of the program, two children recently turned in an Improvised Explosive Device in the Quargehay District, and on Aug. 3 the 527th Military Police Company escorted a truck carrying a weapons cache to Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam.

The cache was turned in by a member of the Law Enforcements Professional's surveillance team, who works together with the 527th MPs to train the Afghanistan National



**Munitions to include 31 107mm rockets and 20 RPGs are lined up in a pit at Forward Operating Base Methar Lam Aug 3. The munitions are a part of a weapons cache that a member of the Law Enforcement Professional's surveillance team turned in to the Small Rewards Program.**

Police on informant development. The informant, who was trained by the ANP, told the member of the surveillance team about the cache.

The weapons cache consisted of 31, 107mm rockets and 20 rocket propelled grenades. The RPGs were brand new and taken out of the original packaging.

"These munitions getting taken off the street is a good thing," Sgt. 1st Class Jody Brissette, 1st Platoon leader, 527th MP, said. "It means that they can't be used against us later on."

Due to the Small Rewards Program, the servicemembers at FOB Methar Lam have received everything from RPGs to hand grenades and even a couple of suicide vests, David Lemoine, a member of the LEP, said.

"The cooperation from everyone on the FOB has led to us recovering more artillery than all of Afghanistan combined," Lemoine said.



**An Afghan stands in the back of a truck while unloading 107mm rockets at Forward Operating Base Methar Lam Aug 3. The 527th Military Police Company escorted the truck into the FOB. The rockets are part of a weapons cache that a member of the Law Enforcement Professional's surveillance team is turning in as part of the Small Rewards Program.**

# Grand Opening Ceremony for the Asabad Printing Press



Governor Sahid Wahidi and other officials touring the printing press facility and witnessing the first run of the press August 8.

*Photos and Story By Lt. Neil Myers  
PRT, Konar*

Today's ceremony marked the opening of a new printing press facility in downtown Asadabad. Prior to this facility all print material, including Asadabad's weekly newspaper, was printed in Jalalabad, Kabul or Pakistan. The Konar Provincial Reconstruction Team funded this facility to provide a locally produced independent print media capacity in Konar. The printing press is co-located with the Konar Radio and Television Station,

**"The new printing press will reflect the information, needs and the development of the Konar people. It will convey the message of the people to the world."**

*Governor Sahid Wahidi*

inside the media culture and information complex.

Governor Sahid Wahidi said that the printing press will help promote the exchange of information and ideas vital to democracy. Most Konar residents currently receive their news from the radio but that may soon change. Wahidi encouraged poets, magazine writers and authors to use the printing press to tell their stories and express their opinions.

Isamil Youn, an advisor for the Afghan Security Council, urged the media outlets to present facts and portray reality in their reporting.

"The media has long been considered the fourth force within the system of government in addition to the executive, judicial and legislative

forces." Youn said that the media plays a key role in the lives of the people in the entire community.

Alison Blosser, PRT Konar's Department of State representative, said that in order to get the message out to the members of parliament, Wahidi, and other government authorities, must travel to various remote areas that are sometimes difficult to reach. Now the printing press will enable them to convey news and information easily and without delay.

"The people of Konar can use this machine as a huge propagation source," Blosser said.

"The new printing press will reflect the information, needs and the development of the Konar people. It will convey the message of the people to the world. The government is trying to fight the enemy using the media to talk about development projects. I will fight the enemies in this province with the information that will be printed through this machine." Wahidi said, addressing the authors, cultural representatives and reporters in attendance at the ceremony.

He stated that whatever happens in the country is reported through the media-outlets.

"For this reason the authorities pay attention to this important resource," Wahidi said.

The governor pointed to recent news articles about Konar as an example of the power of the media to spread the good news about development in Konar.

Governor Wahidi and other officials toured the printing press facility and witnessed the first run of the press.



Governor Sahid Wahidi holding a copy of the Konar Weekly newspaper while addressing the gathering at the grand opening ceremony August 8.

# Progression to a High Degree




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*By Col. John Spiszer  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, Commander*

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Task Force Duke is doing a great job. We have two months under our belt in Afghanistan conducting counterinsurgency operations, and we continue to improve our fox hole in order to sustain operations. This month our focus has been to determine where we can enhance our Forward Operating Bases and Combat Operating Posts; provide support to 2-2 Infantry Ramrods in Southern Afghanistan; recognize troops for their hard work and Rear Detachment operations.

As we settle in, we have recognized that although most of our FOBs and COPs have the necessary life support mechanisms to provide a hot meal, a shower and laundry as well as the necessities for welfare and recreation, there is room for improvement. The majority of our FOBs and COPs have the capability for our Soldiers to make telephone calls to loved ones, write e-mails via the Internet and sit down to relax and watch a movie from time to time. However, some of our smaller and newer bases do not have all the capabilities and we are working hard to try and fix this situation within the next 60-90 days. Nevertheless, troops are periodically rotated out of those locations to provide them with the same opportunities as other Soldier who live and work on the bigger or better established FOBs.

At present 2-2 Infantry is down South in Kandahar, working for Regional Command-South. We sent the Brigade Executive Officer, Surgeon and a Public Affairs representative down there to provide added support to the Ramrods over the past month as they moved out to begin initial operations and build FOB Ramrod West of Kandahar. They are fully engaged helping our NATO Canadian broth-

ers in the South. They have also been working diligently to establish a new Forward Operating Base in the region for them to conduct all of their missions.

In an effort to keep our families informed, we conducted our first bi-monthly town hall meeting on August 23, 2008. A variety of topics were discussed in relation to how families could better support the troops downrange and what they are doing here. The bottom line is that we are taking care of everyone so there is no need to send expensive items through the mail that may or may not make it in one piece. Plus, I would always ask that you consider that all the mail must be moved in a tactical vehicle on a combat mission. Don't hesitate to send mail, but sending a "box" of stuff isn't always the best answer.

We will begin leave in September and Soldiers are looking forward to the well deserved brake. Leave begins when the Soldier reaches his or her final destination and may be adjusted based on operational needs. Our number one goal is to give everyone their chance for leave while maintaining all assigned

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**"This month our focus has been to determine where we can enhance our Forward Operating Bases and Combat Operating Posts"**

*Col. John Spiszer*

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missions. This also includes taking care of our sacred duties, while preparing to sustain and replenish our forces through Rear Detachment Operations.

Last but not least, I would like to take this time to acknowledge the great bravery and professionalism of three of our fallen who have paid the ultimate sacrifice since August 1, 2008. Please pray for them and their loved ones: Private 1st Class John Mattox, C/6-4 Cav; Staff Sgt. Kristopher D. Rodgers, HHC/1-26 IN; Staff Sgt. David Paquet, B/1-26 IN. These American heroes paid the price to keep our country and their comrades safe while trying to help the people of Afghanistan. We have also had an additional six Soldiers wounded, two of which have returned home. So, thanks to all the Families and Soldiers for their support for us in Afghanistan. No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great. Duty First!

# 1-26 Charlie Company Mortars



**1st Battalion 26th Infantry Regiment 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Division Charlie Company mortar team adjusting the mortar tube for return fire on the enemy position on August 21.**

*Photos and Story By Sgt. Charles Brice  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

The sky begin to darken during midday, when rain clouds rushed in and filled the lower valley with a shadow. That's when the mortar team from C Co., 1st Battalion 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Division received a call over the handheld radio to prepare for cover fire on a nearby outpost that was getting attacked on August 21.

Charlie Company springs into action. To someone who's never seen anything like this before it may look like chaos, but it is routine for the Soldiers who train for this and live it every day.

"Intense during times of action, but relaxing and alert during times of peace," Pfc. Steven Bates said, while standing in a mixture of Army physical fitness uniform, flip flop sandals and body armor waiting for the mission to kick off. "Ammunition Barer for the gunner is my job," he said. "It is simple, but very exciting at the same time."

The Job may seem routine to someone like Bates who's been doing his job in combat for a couple months, however, there are many aspects for the mortars, for instance, team work, coordination and timing. Everyone must work together as a team, as a single unit, In order to successfully fire mortars.

"Coordination is dealing with the ammunition and technicality of the inner working of the actual mortar tube, and it takes coordination to work with all the parts to make sure ditching out rounds to the enemy is at the right moment in time, so they can keep our brethren safe," Cpl. Bishop Brandon, mortar team squad leader said.

"Our routine has been set in mo-

tion since the beginning phase of our deployment," Brandon said. "Running a mortar team has its perks; it's an awesome job in my opinion."

Pvt. Andrew Barrowclough prepares the rounds for insertion, his job is to set the charges and hand them off to the gunners.

"In this particular situation, waiting is part of the job and patients can go along way when an actual mission accurse," Barrowclough explains. "Try not to think about it as playing the waiting game. Just slow down and listen to the organized symphony that is going on. It looks like chaos, but it is actually staged. I mean set up so we can perform in a faster manner." The assistant gunner has the next step in the process and that's were Pfc. Justin Waldrup assistant gunner steps in.

"I receive the rounds from my teammate, like a pass off of a basketball and prepare to hang the round for a few seconds or until we get the go," Waldrup said. "Hang it, means to standby and wait for the command from the squad leader."

"Fire is what you want to listen for also, because that's the signal to release the round into the mortar tube and get out the way," he said. "I don't think that you want to stand by the tube when we drop the round, because it is very loud and dangerous. That's the main reason of getting down and covering your ears for protection."

The position from hanging the round all the way to dropping it down the tube, happens in one swift motion, Waldrup said. "It happens naturally." Soon after, the squad leader tells his teammate to hang the round. Immediately after the green light was given, Brandon yelled: "FIRE."

After the first few rounds of continues fire, the mortar team begin rotating through the ranks for fresh gunners to hang the next round to keep the ammunition constantly moving out towards the enemy.

"Things move pretty quickly during combat. Time seems to speed up when you are in the mist of things, Brandon mention in a calm voice. After a while, you start to get used to things and then that will change in a split second, we have to adjust fire." While the Gunners switch out, the team quickly pinpointed the enemy location. The fire come raining down on the enemy soon after. The skirmish lasted all but 15 minutes and the fight was soon over.

"That's all in a day's work with us," Brandon said. "Things are very slow around here when nothing's going on, but for the record, attacks happen at least once or twice a week." "When the action comes around, it's like clockwork with us," Brandon said. "Let's get the job done and do it right!"

# Getting Rid of the Clutter




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*By CSM Ronald Orosz  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, CSM*

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During our tour in N2KL or Area of Operation Duke I would like every Soldier to improve their position by 10 percent. Your goal is 10 percent and if you finish that, then why not another 10 percent. Let's leave our positions a little better for the next unit. The little piece of real estate you occupy right now is your home and should be treated as such. Take care of your positions like you took care of the home you grew up in.

It doesn't matter where I travel I see Soldiers improving their positions and I see some that are not. Those of you that are "not" improving your position need to get with the program. All of our outposts and forward operating bases are defensive perimeters and we always improve our defensive position. It never stops! When the next unit gets here they will say the same thing I've heard our Soldiers say. "Where did all this garbage come from?" "Why is this built this way?"

"What were they doing for a whole year?" It is inevitable because each one of us has different expectations and wants the very best. Some of the positions you occupy started with rocks and were built with blood and sweat. Outpost Restrepo started with just rocks and now it is a virtual fortress...but could stand improvement. All our positions can be improved and we should all understand it takes time!

Get rid of the clutter and make sure everything is in order! Keep what you need, but get rid of the stuff cluttering your living areas, Out Posts or Forward Operating Bases. Plan to backhaul the stuff you are not using or find some useful way of incorporating the dunnage into your OP or FOB. If you have pallets lying around you can make a great floor. I saw some floors that are still dirt. Improve your position! Organize your position so it makes sense. Did the last unit put the

latrine in the right place? Take a deep breath and if you smell something foul then you probably need to relocate the latrine. Do you have all your food off the floor and is it in a covered position to protect it? Are you using your field sanitation kits to protect your food? Are you using camouflage nets to conceal your positions? Do you think it is time for a new grill? I know some of you have make shift grills for cooking and they are probably very old and may need replacing. Are they sanitary and how often are the grills cleaned? I haven't heard of too many Soldiers getting sick so I assume the grills are OK or they are not being used.

Check your towers and guard posts! Make sure you have stable firing positions for your automatic weapons. Make sure you: have a range card or sector sketch; know how to operate your weapon; and are attentive during guard duty. Security is the most important thing during the defense, or any operation for that matter. Without security we will fail! Stay alert so your buddy to your left and right can stay alive. It may sound cliché but it is true. You are the weak point in the perimeter if you are sleeping, reading a book, listening to your iPod or doing something other than scanning your sector. Sergeants need to make frequent checks of their guard posts. Where we have Soldiers we will have sergeants supervising to make sure the guard post is properly manned and operated.

So what are you going to do to improve your position? Each time I come see you I should see a little improvement. Work with what you have and take ownership of your positions so your standard of living is a little better for you and your buddy. Sergeants, I need your support to make all our positions better in AO Duke. Some day we hope to turn these positions over to well trained Afghan forces or close them. If we turn them over, they should be the best positions in Afghanistan.

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**"So what are you going to do to improve your position?"**

*CSM Ronald Orosz*

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# 6-4 fends off attack

Story By Staff Sgt. David Hopkins  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO

As the sun descended in the western sky, crouching down on the jagged mountain ridges of the Nuristan province on August 2, Soldiers of 2nd Team Blackfoot 6th Squadron 4th Cavalry Regiment out of Fort Hood, Texas, guarded the walls of their Combat Outpost, scanning the rocky slopes for Anti Afghan Forces.

Then on the slopes above the COP, a figure appeared, lurking among the boulders. Moments later another appeared. Before long there was a full attack on the COP and International Security Assistance Force soldiers, comprised of American and Afghan National Security Forces, were fighting for their lives.

By the time the battle was over and all the guns were silenced there was only one Afghan National Army soldier with minor wounds and more than 20 insurgents were dead while countless others scrambled up the mountain nursing possibly fatal wounds.

At about 6:30 p.m. on August 2, Sgt. Ian Boone from Mobile, Ala. and Pfc. Marco MaldonadoGarcia from San Jose, Calif. were guarding the COP walls when they first spotted enemy forces.

"I could not identify them as hostile until they bent down and picked up the weapons," Boone said, recalling the first moments of the battle.

Maldonado Garcia spotted them soon after and took the first shot, breaking the silence with the defining roar of his M-14 sniper rifle, killing an insurgent at 700 meters up the slope above the COP.

"This was decisive because from that moment on the enemy was on the defensive and no longer on the offensive," Cpt. Robert Yllescas, Blackfoot commander from Osceola, Neb., said.

Then Boone acted and began to fire on the approaching enemy, laying down suppressive fire.

"I saw their muzzle flashes and I began to suppress with well-placed shots," Boone said.

MaldonadoGarcia credits his Army training for his actions against the insurgent attack.

"It was a little bit surreal at first," MaldonadoGarcia said, "but to be honest all the training the Army has provided me immediately kicked in. Lt. Meshkin asked me to scan the area and find the enemy. I was lucky enough to find the enemy before they actually engaged us."

The AAF attacked the COP with small arms fire, Rocket Propelled Grenades and PKM machine guns, landing many direct hits inside the camp, but none hitting ISAF soldiers.

"You could see the shock in some of the

Soldiers' eyes, as if they were asking the question: 'Is this another test fire or is this for real.' You could see fear in others' eyes as they pondered the question of whether or not they would live to see another day," 1st Sgt. Howard Johnson Mullens, W. Va., said. "And then, as if a switch was suddenly turned on, everyone was flawlessly executing the training they had received prior to deploying. Soldiers performed the COP defense drills to perfection. It was amazing; it was textbook execution."

The initial attack lasted an hour-and-a-half, consisting of an attack on the COP and an Afghan National Army patrol on the high ground above, until Staff Sgt. Juan Santos from Abilene, Texas, fired a Javelin Missile, ending the advance on the patrol.

After the initial attack, 6-4 was able to track the enemy through the mountains for another three hours with the use of Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance and Close Combat Attack helicopters.

The enemy used their experience of fighting in the rugged terrain against the ISAF soldiers. "The enemy used terrain to cover and conceal themselves, but with mortars, CCA, Javelin Missiles, and more importantly, having two patrols out over-watching, the enemy avenues of approach we were able to defeat them soundly," Yllescas said.

When the dust cleared and all the Soldiers, American and ANA, were accounted for they had a chance to sit back and think about what they had been through.

"After fending off the attack it was a feeling of great accomplishment on my part, knowing that I helped eliminate the enemy that were trying to take my fellow troopers as well as myself out of the fight," Pfc. Ernest Ochoa from Victoria, Texas, said.



Photo By Maj. Chevelle Thomas

Nuristan province governor, Hazrat Din Noor, and Lt. Col. David Poage, Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team commander, discuss voter registration for the upcoming Afghanistan elections at a conference in the Nangarhar province.

# They Will Not Be Forgotten



Photo By Staff Sgt. David Hopkins

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 26th Regiment, 3rd BCT, 1ID, kneel next to the empty boots, helmet, identification tags and weapon of their fallen comrad, Staff Sgt. Kristopher Rodgers, on August 22, in the Konar province. Rodgers died in an Improvised Explosive Device attack on August 16, while on patrol.



Photo By Sgt. Charles Brice

Soldiers of Viper Company 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st ID pay their respects to Staff Sgt. David Lawrence Paquet in a memorial service in Korengal Valley on August 20.



Photo By Sgt. Charles Brice

Empty boots, helmet, identification tags and weapon of Spaders fallen comrad, Staff Sgt. Kristopher Rodgers on August 22, in the Konar province.



Photo By Sgt. Jessica Dahlberg

Soldiers of the 6th Squadron 4th Cavalry Regiment render honors in remembrance of a fellow Soldier, friend and fallen brethren, Pfc. John Mattox, during a service in Nuristan province on August 9.

# STB Soldiers Watch the Skies

*Photo and Story by Sgt. Jessica Dahlberg  
3rd BCT, 1st ID Public Affairs Office*

Down a hazy runway on a forward operating base in northeastern Afghanistan, a hanger houses Task Force Duke's Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

The Soldiers of Bravo Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, work 24 hours a day to keep the Shadow RQB7s in the air.

The shadow aircraft was first selected for use in 1999 to fill the tactical UAV requirement for the military. The first time it was used in Afghanistan was 2001.

"The Shadow is the eye in the sky for the troops," Spc. Errol Williams, a maintenance worker from Bronx, N.Y., said. "We use the aircraft to see troops while they conduct dismounted patrols, convoys, and to scout the area ahead."

Since the Shadow is a complicated aircraft, the training for the Soldiers does not stop once they graduate the UAV school at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

"We are always cross training the operators so they can help out with the maintenance," Sgt. James Thompson, an instructor operator, said. "They also have to go through continuous training here because at Huachuca they only get the basic knowledge." The training has three levels that the instructors call readiness levels.

Readiness level three is the basic level, and the Soldiers have an instructor with them who goes over basic tasks. Readiness level two is performing mission tasks and operating the camera, while working with the pilot to stay on target. Readiness level one is the Soldier doing continuation training on their own without the help of an instructor.

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**"It made you feel like someone was watching your back for you."**

*Sgt. James Thompson*

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Besides the extra training, a lot of work goes into operating and flying the Shadow, Thompson said. The maintenance crew keeps the aircraft operable, and the operators are the Soldiers behind the controls keeping the aircraft in the air and manipulating the camera.

"We all work together," Sgt. Bill Paris, a maintenance noncommissioned officer from



Sgt. James Thompson, Spc. Errol Williams and Sgt. Bill Paris, of Bravo Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, get ready to start the engine of the Shadow RQB7 for takeoff Aug 24. The aircraft is being sent out to fly over a helicopter that had a hard landing earlier that day.

Pickens, S.C., said. "It is a joint effort on everyone's part to get the aircraft in the air for the Soldiers who need the surveillance on the ground."

Once the Shadow is flying, two Soldiers are in a booth controlling it. One Soldier is flying the aircraft while the other is manning the camera. The video feed is sent to the Tactical Operations Center.

The video feed that the TOC receives is real-time footage of what is happening on the ground.

"The Soldiers from Task Force Spader [1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment] get attacked constantly, and they find the Shadow's presence as a comfort," Thompson said.

As a prior forward observer, Thompson said he understands the confidence the Soldiers on the ground have in the Shadow.

"It was a pretty good feeling knowing that the Shadow was flying above you," Thompson said. "It made you feel like someone was watching your back for you."

When the aircraft comes back from its mission, the Soldiers all participate in the post flight checks the aircraft has to go through.

The Soldiers of Bravo Company do it all from their hanger at the end of the runway. They operate, maintain and send off their UAVs with pride.

"At the end of the day, it is all about the benefits of the job," Pfc. Greg Latka, an operator from Colorado Springs, Colo., said. "It's about knowing you helped the Soldiers on the ground; that is the real reward of this job."

# U.S. Army's 2-2 Infantry joins Canadians in Task Force Kandahar



2-2 Delta Company Route Clearance Platoon clearing the land for a new FOB in Kandahar.

*Photos and Story by US Army, PAO  
3rd BCT, 1st ID Public Affairs Office*

The Second Battalion of the Second Regiment of the First Infantry Division of the United States Army – known as 2-2 Infantry – has been placed under the operational control of Brigadier-General Denis Thompson, the Commander of Task Force Afghanistan, by the Commander of Regional Command (South). 2-2 Infantry was declared ready for operations and assumed responsibility for their designated area of operations in Kandahar Province on 27 August, 2008.

The arrival of 2-2 Infantry in Kandahar Province represents an augmentation of approximately 800 additional troops. These extra 'boots on the ground' will be used to improve the security situation so reconstruction, development and good governance can take place, and the everyday lives of the local population can be improved.

"The addition of 2-2 Infantry to our team will have a real impact on the insurgency and on the overall security picture here," said Brigadier-General Denis Thompson, who commands the ISAF task force operating in Kandahar Province. "These additional troops will be operating in Maywand District, an area that is a key logistics hub for the movement of insurgent fighters, arms and money," he said.

The 2-2 will work closely with Afghan leaders and security forces to disrupt insurgent activity in the district. The improvement of security in this critical area will then allow for more development and governance work to occur. All of this should serve to increase the local population's confidence in their government, and make it easier for the people to reject the overtures of the insurgency.

"Our mission is to bring enduring security to Maywand District," said LCol Daniel Hurlbut, Commanding Officer of 2-2 Infantry. "We are speaking with

**"I am confident that they will be successful in further disrupting and isolating the insurgents from the local population as they work alongside Afghan security forces to improve the lives of Afghans"**

*Denis Thompson  
Brigadier-General*

key leaders and the people of Maywand District to ensure that we are respectful of their plans for the future of the area, and we are enlisting their support to ensure our security operations are a success," he said.

"2-2 Infantry are a well-trained and professional force who are up to this challenge," said Brigadier-General Thompson. "I am confident that they will be successful in further disrupting and isolating the insurgents from the local population as they work alongside Afghan security forces to improve the lives of Afghans," he said.

Canadian military forces are working hand-in-hand with our whole-of-government, ISAF, and ANSF partners, and are proud to be working with 2-2 Infantry in Kandahar Province. The strategy in Afghanistan is an effective and proven approach to counter-insurgency – with the elected government of Afghanistan and our ISAF partners we are helping to prove to the Afghan people that their best interest lies with the 'Rule of Law' and not with the repressive and cruel ways of the Taliban.



Alpha and Bravo Company secure the Landing Zone out post.

# “What Are We Aiming At?”




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Story By Chaplain (Maj) Steve George  
3rd BCT, 1st ID

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Several years ago, I attended Basic Combat Training at Fort Dix, New Jersey and vividly remember going to the “Night Marksmanship Range.” As new recruits, we were fascinated by the fact that every fifth bullet in our magazines was a “tracer” round – a bullet with a special pyrotechnic charge that allowed us to ‘trace’ where our rounds were hitting, even in the darkness.

What we didn’t count on was the errant recruit who decided that the “tracers” looked even more interesting being aimed at aircraft passing over head... Fortunately for everyone, the Drill Sergeant called an emergency “cease fire” after the first vertical shot was fired and shut down the range. No aircraft damage was reported and with that, our “Night Marksmanship” training was summarily ended. I still remember the stern words of the Drill Sergeant to our Company: “What in the #!?!%& were you aiming at?!”

It’s not a bad question for us to consider as well – what are we aiming at in life? Depending upon where we focus our time, energy and attention, we’ll either find ourselves feeling excited by the wonderful things which each new day has in store for us or we’ll find ourselves dreading what Dr. Virginia Satir once described as the “horrible, awful ‘what if’s” – What if things don’t work out? What if something goes wrong? What

if people don’t like me? American inventor and pioneer automobile maker, Henry Ford rightly noted that “whether we think we can or can’t [do something], we’re probably going to be right.”

What kinds of things *do* we dwell on? The Apostle Paul writing to the church at Philippi once observed the following: “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things,” (Philippians 4:8). Where we focus our thoughts will have a fairly strong impact on how we’re feeling at any given moment.

The Mayo Clinic speaks about “self-talk.” Below is a chart which shows two different ways of looking at life – one with what Mayo calls “Negative self-talk” and the other with a “Positive spin.”

If we tend to have a negative outlook, Mayo says that we shouldn’t expect to become an optimist overnight. “But,” according to Clinic studies, “With practice, our self-talk will eventually contain less

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**“With practice, our self-talk will eventually contain less self-criticism and more self-acceptance.”** Chaplain (Maj) Steve George

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self-criticism and more self-acceptance.” It also asserts that “we may become less critical of the world around us as well.” As September unfolds before us, let us be mindful of what we’re aiming at. Let us engage in the practice of “Positive self-talk” and see the potential good in any given situation. Let us recognize (as the old adage says) that behind every cloud, there really *is* a “silver lining.” Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. May that be true for us this day – and every day. Be blessed!

# Soldier Awarded Purple Heart



Photo By Sgt. Charles Brice



Photo By Sgt. Charles Brice

Specialist Vicente C. Torres of the 201st Brigade Support Battalion received a Purple Heart for sustaining wounds in battle on 18 July in an attack on the convoy he was in. He stood ready as the brigade commander pinned him in front of his fellow Soldiers.

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*Story By Capt. Gretchen Gardner  
201st BSB, 3rd BCT, 1st ID*

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Spc. Vicente Torres, motor vehicle operator, Alpha Co. 201st Brigade Support Battalion, was presented the Purple Heart on August 18, at a Forward Operating Base in eastern Afghanistan for wounds received in action. Lt. Col. Bradley White, 201st BSB commander, presented the award at the ceremony.

On July 17, Torres and seven other Avengers left on a Combat Logistics Patrol with their 173d BSB counterparts. On the return trip the next day, the CLP came under an attack by Anti-Afghan Forces on a narrow, unpaved mountain road. The enemy began the attack with multiple Rocket Propelled Grenades and continued with Small Arms Fire for approximately half an hour.

Torres was the gunner in a Humvee,

which was struck by an RPG almost immediately after the attack began. Torres received shrapnel in his right wrist from the blast, but stayed in the fight. He even continued to return fire with his left hand while a medic bandaged his wounded wrist.

Although we hope to never again award another Purple Heart during our rotation in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, we proudly recognize Torres for his bravery in the face of danger and his commitment to our mission.

# Afghan sentinels respond first in Nangahar

*Story by Capt. J. Elaine Hunnicut  
Nangahar PRT Public Affairs*

The Afghan Border Police captured a suicide bomber Aug. 10 in Chapahar District before he was able to kill himself and countless innocent civilians because a local citizen was brave enough to call in the information to the Nangahar Operational Coordination Center – Province or OCC-P.

“The OCC-P has been able to contribute to keeping drugs off the streets, clearing the country of land mines and IEDs, along with helping with the fight against terrorism,” 2nd Lt. Kenneth Pospisil, OCC-P liaison officer.

The Nangahar OCC-P opened its doors and turned on its phone lines four years ago, and since that time the combined effort of the Afghan police, border police and army have responded to emergency calls throughout the province.

“It (OCC-P) is a critical organization for the continued application of security and emergency services in Nangahar,” said Lt. Col. Pat Daniel, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Special Troops Battalion commander.

The center has 10 Afghan-manned positions and two U.S. coordinators. The center mirrors the 911 system in the United States, but the number here in Nangahar Province is 1-0-0.

The center gets more than 1,000 calls per week on the 1-0-0 Number, but only about 10 percent on average are emergencies.

“The people have confidence that if they call the 1-0-0 Number they will receive help; we receive many calls on a daily basis,” said Col. Abdul Ghafoor, Afghan National Security Forces.

“Many people are just curious to see if the number works or are confused what constitutes an emergency; we are working to educate the populous, but at least people are comfortable calling the number,” said Army Staff Sgt. Landroval Reliford, OCC-P liaison NCO.

The OCC-P enables good communication and allows joint missions, according to Ghafoor. “We are sharing information and helping each other,” said Ghafoor.

“The center also provides a direct link to the different (security) departments, which

allows for an easier flow of communication and intelligence reports,” said Pospisil.

“Now we are working side-by-side to achieve the goal and trying the best to eliminate civilian casualties, said Ghafoor.

There have been many success stories for the OCC-P since 2005.

“A couple of months back we received a call from an anonymous Afghan caller about a big load of narcotics that were traveling from Kot District to Jalalabad City,” said Ghafoor.

The caller provided the details and location. “We immediately went to the area and surrounded the suspects,” he continued. After searching the cars 165 kilograms of narcotics was confiscated and seven people arrested.

Another caller revealed that insurgents were planning an attack in the Sherzad District, so the OCC-P sent in additional security troops to the area. They have successfully fought and kept the insurgents out of the area.

The center is currently in the process of converting to a regional concept to include a new facility that will coordinate responses in Nangahar and Kunar provinces with plans to expand even further.

“The modern equipment and design will vastly improve the already effective emergency response telephone system and all operations,” said Daniel.

“As we transition to the regional concept, we will need reps from each province and the ability to communicate freely,” Pospisil.

“Currently, we have no reps from the other provinces, but once they start to trickle in, it will take some training to get everyone on the same page,” said Pospisil.



# How to Register and Vote Absentee

## Freedom, You have it, use it, VOTE!

1. A voter is at least 18 years old and have a legal voting residence address in a state or territory on election day shall complete the FPCA paper form (**Federal Post Card Application, SF 76**), or online (**www.fvap.gov**), and submit/mail form to proper election official of your state. Absentee voters should request ballots at least 60 days before the election.

*\*\*\*each states and territory requires specific registration requirements and information for filing out the FPCA, check VAG (voting assistance guide) or online website (www.fvap.gov) for your specific state.*

2. FPCA is received to local election official of specific state and approves registration request or requests further information.

3. Local election official sends blank ballot to the citizen.

4. Upon receipt of ballot, the citizen records his or hers vote and returns in time to meet state deadlines.

5. Citizens can contact the below information to obtain info on issues, positions, and candidates:

### Democrats Abroad

430 South Capitol Street, S.E.

Washington, DC 20003

Phone: (202) 863-8177

Fax: (202) 863-8063

Website: [www.democratsabroad.org](http://www.democratsabroad.org)

Email: [info@democratsabroad.org](mailto:info@democratsabroad.org)

### Republicans Abroad International

1275 K Street, NW, Suite 102

Washington, D.C. 20005

Phone: (202) 608-1423

Fax: (202) 608-1431

Website: [www.republicansabroad.org](http://www.republicansabroad.org)

Email: [chairman@republicansabroad.org](mailto:chairman@republicansabroad.org)

