

**HELPING MIRIAM: MEDCAP HEALS LITTLE GIRL**

# FREEDOM WATCH AFGHANISTAN

SEPT. 22, 2008



**WATCHING THE SKIES:  
BRAVO COMPANY STB SOLDIERS  
FLY THE EYE IN THE SKY**

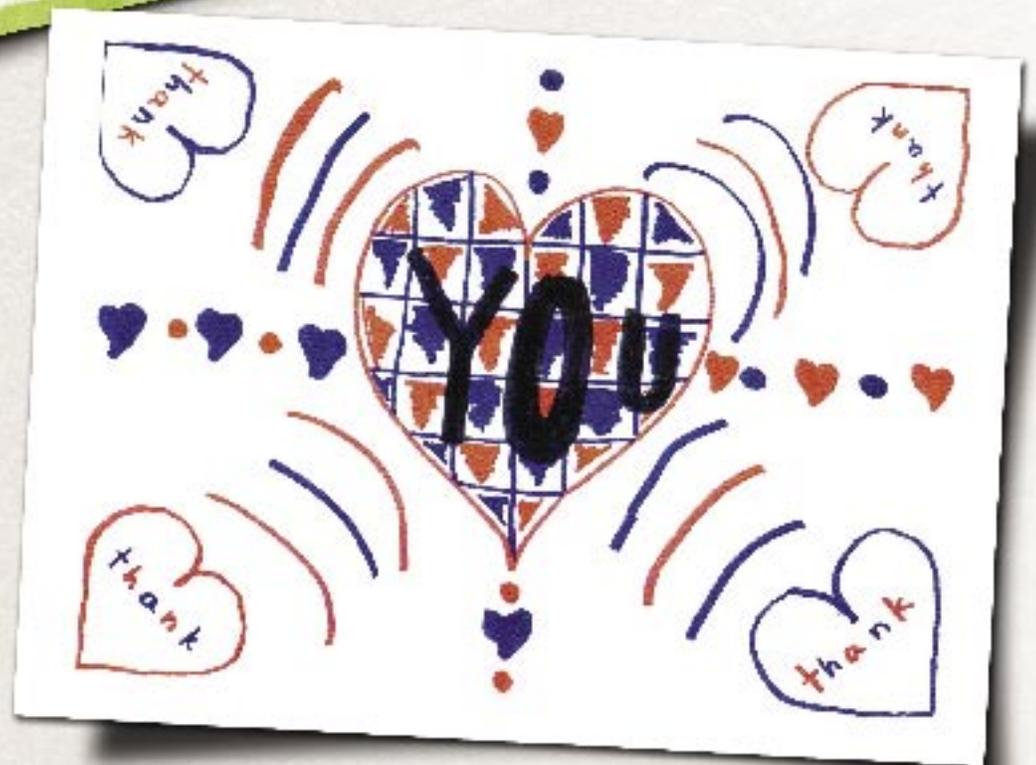
from the kids

God Bless America



Thank you for continuing  
our FREEDOM

Rebecca



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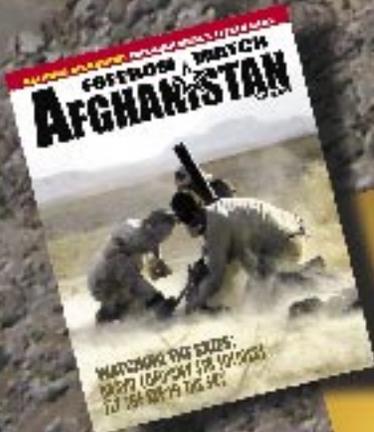
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FRONT COVER: A Dutch team shoots test rounds during the establishment of an over-watch position near Mirabad. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class John Collins)



BACK COVER: A CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to the 158th Combat Support Brigade, Task Force No Mercy flies off into the sunset from Forward Operating Base Salerno in Khowst province. (U.S. Air Force photo by Lt. Col Leslie Pratt)

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## Soldiers watch the skies

## 2-2 Infantry boosts security, stability in Kandahar province

By Army Staff Sgt.  
Adora Medina

3rd Brigade Combat Team

Villagers young and old, stood alongside the streets of Afghanistan, to watch as Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team made their way down the rock-strewn path, toward the Maywand district center to attend a meeting with the village elders Aug. 27.

With goals of good governance and district development in mind, the 2-2 Infantry Soldiers would be joining the Canadian forces for the first time in attending a bi-weekly meeting with the elders, since the units' recent arrival into the area, adding an additional 800 troops to the already numerous Canadian forces within the Kandahar province southern region of Afghanistan.

"I think they're ready for us to come here, but they're just hesitant because they don't know how long were going to stay and what our true aims are," said Capt. Trevor Voelkel, 2-2 Charlie Company commander said. "I think once we can get out into the area and they really see that we're going to be here for the long haul, they'll come around and we'll be able to really make an impact in



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Adora Medina  
An Afghan boy watches as Soldiers with Charlie Company, 2-2 Infantry Regiment, walk the streets of Afghanistan in route to a district center in the Kandahar province Aug. 27.

terms of security and development within the area."

The meeting allowed the incoming unit to get a feel for what the local populace expects in terms of support and progress.

During the meeting the elders discussed everything from security issues, recommended development projects and concerns within their respective villages.

"For being the first meeting, and from the reports from the Canadians, they had a bigger turnout than they've had in a while," Voelkel said. "So that, hopefully, is a sign the Afghans realize we're here to stay and the security problems they've had in the past will begin to get resolved."

(Right) Combined Joint Task Force-101 Commander Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Schloesser and CJTF-101 Command Sgt. Maj. Vincent Camacho place a wreath during the 9/11 ceremony. (Below) Soldiers salute during the ceremony.



## 9/11 remembered during ceremony

By Army Spc. Mary Gonzalez  
Combined Joint Task Force-101

Military members and civilians from several nations impacted by the War on Terror gathered at Bagram Air Field's Combined Joint Task Force-101 Headquarters to remember the events of Sept. 11, 2001.

"Today is a day of remembrance, but it's also a day, especially for us here, of recommitment," said Gen. David McKiernan, commanding general for International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan. "Since this day seven years ago the world has transformed. Because of the brave men and women willing to fight this tough battle, we know that the ideals of human dignity will prevail against evil."

"We remember the legacy of our fallen heroes in the war on terror, warriors who answered the call of duty that made the ultimate sacrifice," McKiernan said. "We recognize that we are still in a fight to secure a future free from oppression — and we know we must succeed in this mission."

### Do you have something to say?

Freedom Watch Magazine is changing its look.

Along with these changes, we will be starting a new "Letters to the Editor" column.

To have your say, e-mail the Editor at  
[freedomwatch@swa.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@swa.army.mil)

Tell us about the great things your unit is doing, recognize a coworker or just tell us your opinions and what you're thinking. Only initials of submitters will be used and submissions will be edited for content and appropriateness.

# Panjshir med team augments Afghan doctors



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Lory Stevens  
*Tech. Sgt. Dawn Tiemann, Panjshir PRT medical technician, holds a baby during a medical engagement in Panjshir province. Doctors in Panjshir treated 473 Afghan patients in two districts.*

**By Army 1st Lt.  
Lory Stevens**  
*Task Force Warrior*

With the assistance of the Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team medics, doctors in Panjshir province treated 473 Afghan patients in two districts, Rohka and Shutol.

Crowds of people gathered at the clinics shortly after Air Force Capt. Glenn Little, medical team chief, Staff Sgt. Janine Duschka, medical technician, and Tech. Sgt. Dawn Tiemann, medical technician, arrived to support the medical engagements.

“The PRT coordinates medical engagements, or missions, where members of the medical team go with local governors and Dr. Samad Karimi, public health director, to local villages

to help Afghans in need of medical care,” said Army Maj. Blake Bass, Panjshir PRT liaison officer at Task Force Warrior.

Medical engagements are a platform for the medical team to work closely with Afghan providers. This allows opportunities for learning from each other’s best practices and building up the medical community in Afghanistan.

Delivering care to locals is always a secondary objective to showing the people of Afghanistan the Coalition is interested in them and respects the expertise of their medical system.

“Capacity-building is the goal,” Bass said, as he explained the purpose of medical engagements is to allow local doctors to provide medical checkups as the PRT assists and supplements with items necessary for treatment.

# Road project draws 800 to discuss development

**By Air Force  
Capt. Beverly Mock**  
*PRT Gardez*

Soldiers from the Gardez Provincial Reconstruction Team and 1st Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment worked with the local government of the Paktia province to plan and assist Gov. Alhaj Juma Khan Hamdard in hosting a regional Shura and ground-breaking ceremony for the Gardez-to-Khowst road project at Forward Operating Base Gardez Aug. 28.

More than 800 Afghans citizens attended the shura, which was held to show the local Afghan leadership the visible progress.

“The meeting emphasized the importance of securing the project as well as the employment opportunities the road brings,” said Army Maj. Michael Hahn, PRT Gardez operations officer and shura logistics coordinator.

“The purpose of the shura is to



U.S. Air Force photo by Capt. Beverly Mock  
*Alhaj Juma Khan Hamdard, Paktia governor, cuts the ribbon during a ceremony as part of the Khowst to Gardez Road shura.*

show the tribal leaders, district governors and sub-governors from the three provinces affected by the road project, Paktia, Khowst and Paktika, how this road ties into their economic development and progress and how it strengthens the lines of operations of governance, development, and security,” he said.

A meeting of this size required detailed coordination, synchronization and integration between Afghan National Security Forces, Task Force Panther, the

Afghan ministerial government, local government, local leadership, media, non-governmental organizations and the Louis Berger Group road contractors.

“Security is an issue when allowing this many extra people on the FOB but it went off without any problems,” said Army Maj. Christopher Wooten, PRT Gardez executive officer and shura logistics co-coordinator.

One attendee commented this shura was the largest he had seen. Many members mentioned they recognized the importance of this road to the welfare and commerce of the entire region.

After three hours of speeches and discussion on securing the road and its benefits, lead members of the shura moved to the site of the road project for an official ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the beginning of construction.

# Commandos lend hand in Kandahar village

By Army Master Sgt.  
**Michael Nyeste**  
*Task Force-71*

Commandos of the 205th Commando Kandak, with the help of Coalition forces, visited the village of Mandi Sar in the Kandahar District Sept. 8 to distribute humanitarian aid, religious items and toys for children.

“We went in to help the people and help their quality of life,” said Capt. Mohammed Ahasn, 2nd Company, 205th Afghan National Army Corps commando. “We wanted to help on as many levels as possible.”

Before entering the village, the Commandos and Coalition forces set up a security perimeter to prevent any insurgents from disrupting the humanitarian assistance mission, said a Special Forces team commander with Combined Joint Special Operations Forces Afghanistan.

Once security had been established, their initial entry into the village was greeted with apprehension and fear from the children. Slowly, curiosity took over and children began to pour



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michael Nyeste  
*An Afghan officer from the 205th Commando Kandak hands a Koran and a prayer rug to a young Afghan man during a humanitarian assistance mission in the Mandi Sar village in the Kandahar District Sept. 8.*

out of the compounds to interact with Commandos, who developed an instant connection with the children by showing them their equipment.

“One of the Commandos told them ‘If you want to have this equipment and wear this uniform, you need to go to school and when you grow up, serve

your country like us and you can have all of this,” Ahasn said.

“The Commandos were received well by the people,” said the team commander. “The people could see the unity with the different tribes and ethnicities wearing the same uniform. They left a good impression.”

# Team’s efforts strengthen bonds, develop Nuristan



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. David Hopkins  
*An Afghan National Police officer hands a recoilless round from a cache to Capt. Ty Dawson, 703rd Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company commander.*

By Army Staff Sgt. David Hopkins  
*3rd Brigade Combat Team*

A group from the Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team, local government leadership and International Security Assistance Force Soldiers visited Paruns Village in Nuristan Sept. 1 to eliminate a weapons cache and teach new techniques for goat cheese production and marketing.

The first priority of the visit was to locate and destroy a weapons cache the Afghan National Police buried for safe-keeping near the compound.

“We’ll transport it out of here if it’s safe,” said Sgt. 1st Class Angelo Patellaro, team leader for the 703rd Explosives Or-

dinance Disposal Company. “We’ll bring it to a disposal spot and detonate it.”

The EOD team was told the cache was large and they were not disappointed. By the time all the ordinance was removed they had recovered 46 recoilless rounds, 23 107-mm rockets, 21 mortars and other items.

Removing the explosives keeps them out of the wrong hands, but it also builds relations with the local community.

“This is helpful for us and keeps the bombs from getting to the Taliban,” said Col. Mohamad Dullah, commander of the Nuristan ANP jail. “It’s like when someone is thirsty and a friend gives him a drink of water. The Americans are doing this...helping us. They are our friends.”

## Reconstruction spawns hope in Uruzgan province

By Army Spc. Anna Perry

Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force

Signs of development are popping up in Southern Afghanistan's Uruzgan province. The Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan and the U.S. Agency for International Development have been working hand in hand with the local government in the Khas Uruzgan District on a number of developmental projects.



Courtesy photo

A newly repaired mosque stands ready for worshippers in Uruzgan province.

"The [Security Forces] team has a close relationship with the villagers in Khas Uruzgan and is trying to empower the district administration, improve security by partnering with the Afghan National Security Forces and reduce support for the insurgents," said Sloan Mann, a USAID representative.

The organizations have developed a series of projects that not only improve the workplace, home and spiritual quality of life for the villagers in the district but also give local men an opportunity to earn a living and support their families.

"We've been working on several projects in the area, including a cash-for-work bazaar ditch cleanup and road improvement in the main bazaar in Khas

**"Both Pashtun and Hazara men have joined hands to work together for the benefit of their village."**

Sloan Mann,  
USAID representative

Uruzgan. The villagers are also working on a four kilometer irrigation canal that is a food-for-work project," the USAID representative said.

The two projects have been especially successful because they have brought together the Pashtun

and the Hazara tribes, two tribes that have a history of conflict dating back for centuries.

"Both Pashtun and Hazara men have joined hands to work together for the benefit of their village, which is quite an accomplishment and an extremely positive step forward for the people of Afghanistan," the

## Infantrymen patrol Afghan market

By Army Staff Sgt.

Adora Medina

3rd Brigade Combat Team

Soldiers with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, patrolled the merchant streets of the Maywand district.

For many of the villagers, this was the first they'd ever seen of the digitized Army Combat Uniform, since the recent deployment of U.S. forces into the district only a few short months ago, adding 800 more troops into the southern region of Afghanistan.

"We went to the bazaar to show that there's a presence of U.S. Army in the area now; the more they see us, the more comfortable they feel," said Sgt. Raymond Diaz. "They've had so many people come in and out of this area and there was no stable presence," Diaz continued.

Prior to the arrival of 2-2 Infantry, the Canadian military has been the district's only dedicated long-term presence, witnessing continual changes in troop elements and support.

Cpl. Matthew Hrycuik, a Canadian Soldier with the North Saskatchewan Regiment, has seen British and Portuguese forces come and go since his arrival to the Maywand district only six months ago.

Hrycuik said the extra air and ground assets the U.S. military brings to the area are needed and appreciated.

"It's going to take a lot of work though; so many small towns around here are so spread



U.S. Army photo by Staff. Sgt. Adora Medina  
Staff Sgt. Lester Medina, a 2-2 Infantry Soldier, greets two Afghan boys during a visit to a bazaar in the Mayland district.

out, Hrycuik said. "Cruising around we found tons of places where they've never seen Coalition forces period. They know nothing about the government and they know nothing about the district leader here in Maywand."

Another challenge Coalition forces face is advocating their goals and objectives to the Afghans.

With relentless oppression from the Taliban and with the recent influx of troops into the district, the villagers are uncertain of how to react.

"The people are definitely affected by the Taliban and they're affected by us. It's the actions taken by other party that decide who affects them more," Master Cpl. Tatyana Danylyshyn Psychological Operations, Canadian Scottish Regiment said. "We've been here a couple of times and repeat visits like familiarity with the person, help us to develop relationships, and that's where we start to make progress."



# Helping Miriam

*Miriam, a three-year-old Afghan girl, is comforted by 1st Lt. Erik M. Lukas of Weapons Company, TF 2/7, as an infected boil was removed from her neck. (Right) Gunnery Sgt. Omar Palaciosreal and 1st Lt. Erik M. Lukas calm Miriam. (U.S. Marine Corps photos by Cpl. Ray Lewis)*

## By Marine Corps Cpl. Ray Lewis

*Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division,  
Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix*

To many children, a hospital can be a very scary thing – for three-year-old Miriam, it was a potential lifesaver. She was brought into a makeshift medical facility in Farah province by her 10-year-old brother and 1st Lt. Erik Lukas, an infantry officer assigned to Weapons Company, TF 2/7. The fact she was barefoot and dirty wasn't the immediate concern.

"When we brought her inside, she had boils and dirt all over her neck," said Lt. Lukas. "I felt bad for her because I knew that it hurt."

Lt. Lukas said he was devastated by a boil on Miriam's neck that was one and ½-inch wide and one and ¼-inch thick.

The team of Navy and Marine medics removed an infected abscess from the girl's upper right neck during a health cooperative, also referred to as a Medical Capabilities event. This was the second such initiative led by the Marines and Sailors of 3rd Civil Affairs Group, Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, part of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix.

Lt. Junior Grade James L. Armitage, a physician's assistant in charge of the medical team, decided something had to be done immediately when he saw the girl's condition.

Lt. Armitage said if the boil wasn't removed from the toddler's body it could have potentially become a lingering health threat.

"I'm glad she trusted Americans enough to come here because I don't know where she would've received the proper professional treatment she required," Lt. Armitage said.

As Lt. Lukas and her brother made the girl laugh at the operating area, Lt. Armitage prepared his medical supplies for the minor surgery. Lukas held and comforted Miriam while Lt. Armitage cleaned and numbed her neck.

"She was screaming at the top of her lungs," said Cpl. Ericka L. Garcia, the only female civil affairs Marine with 3rd CAG, TF 2/7, who provides attention to female Afghan patients. "She was in pain and scared because she was intimidated by everybody around her."

The medical procedure lasted about 15 minutes, but Lt. Lukas said the affects could last a lifetime.

"That's one of the things we're here to do, improve their quality of life," Lt. Lukas explained. "I'm glad the little girl got help. Missions like MEDCAPs improve the atmosphere to allow the (Afghanistan National Police) ANP to do their job better."

Lt. Armitage told Miriam's brother through an Afghan interpreter to bring her back for an additional medical appointment.

"I think it was good because they were going to follow-up with her," Corporal Garcia said. "They told her to come back in two days to make sure she was healing properly."

Miriam left with bandages around her neck, a bag of candy and improved health.

"She looked like one giant bandage, but she still walked away smiling," Lt. Lukas said.

Helping the little girl turned out to be a rewarding experience that the team will certainly remember. "How much more gratification can you get than helping a little girl?" asked Gunnery Sgt. Omar Palaciosreal, with 3rd CAG, TF 2/7. "No ribbon, no medal, no money can replace the look on that little girl's face. For a minute, you're like, 'you did your job.'"

Although Miriam was one of the more urgent patients, Lt. Armitage and other service members supporting the MEDCAP treated more than 200 Afghan people that day.

Miriam is now recovering from her surgery in her home, thanks to the service members who continue to support various other civil affairs projects.



# Watching the Skies



**By Army Sgt. Jessica R. Dahlberg**  
*382nd PAD, 3rd BCT, 1st ID*

Down a hazy runway on a forward operating base in Northeastern Afghanistan, a hanger houses Task Force Duke's unmanned aerial vehicles.

One of those UAVS is the RQ-B7 Shadow, first selected for use in 1999 to fill a tactical UAV requirement for the military. It made its debut over the skies of Afghanistan in 2001.

The Soldiers of Bravo Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division operate and maintain the aircraft.

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

According to Sgt. James Thompson, an RQ-7B instructor pilot, a lot of work goes into operating and flying the Shadow.

"We all work together," said Sgt. Bill Parris, a maintenance noncommissioned officer. "It's 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 launched two operators take over control. 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 the TOC receives is real-time footage of what is happening on the ground.

As a prior forward observer, Sgt. Thompson said he understands the confidence Soldiers on the ground have in the Shadow and the comfort they get when it's in the air above them.

"It was a pretty good feeling knowing that the Shadow was flying above you," Sgt. 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," said Pfc. Greg Latka. "It's about knowing you helped the Soldiers on the ground; that is the real reward of this job."





**By Army Master Sgt.  
Tim Sachse**  
*CJTF-101/ 831st DDSB*

“Nothing happens until something moves” is saying used in the transportation world. Warfighters cannot get to the fight until they are moved to the battlefield, but this is just a small part of the puzzle. Members of the military must be supported with all the essential equipment and supplies to do the job. That is where container management begins.

Containers are used to move all the different classes of supply – from sustainment items, such as food, to operational requirements such as repair parts. All must move to the theater of operations in containers.

When containers make it to their destination, they are emptied and returned to the carrier. Since this is not always possible, units pay a detention charge for holding onto the container. Tracking each container is critical to reducing detention charges.

“Efficient container management prevents paying detention costs, money which could better be spent on the armed forces and their families,” said SFC Todd Hunter, 831st DDSB’s Container Assistant Teams in Bagram.

Container Control Officers are responsible for arrival, departure and notifying the carrier when the container is emptied. They track where the containers are located and how long they have

been at a particular location.

Container Assistant Teams of the 831st DDSB in Afghanistan and the 840th DDSB in Iraq are comprised of soldiers from the 1184th DDSB, Mobile, Ala. These soldiers are located throughout the theater of operations and conduct quality control checks at outlying FOBs to make sure those containers are tracked in the IBS-CMM web-based program.

The CATs visits each camp or forward operating base to conduct inventories. The CAT is also responsible for reviewing the inventoried data and to provide feedback. This data is used many ways to make changes or improvements.

“Many soldiers don’t think about containers and the affects as a whole on the military, because of their focus is on their mission, but working in container management, we get to see and hear of the differences we make throughout the entire theater,” explained SPC Robert Miller of the 831st DDSB CAT, Bagram.

In-theater support of operations depends on container management – without it, life for troops in Afghanistan wouldn’t be the same.

# Mama, Mia - now, that's Italian!

By Air Force Lt. Col. Leslie Pratt  
AFN Afghanistan

Labor Day means a day off for many Americans. But, that's not necessarily the case for troops serving in Afghanistan. Unless you're a cook. Who's serving up chow if the cooks are off? Why, the Italian Army, of course.

At least, that's what happened at the Farah Provisional Reconstruction Team when the Italian Army troops gave the Americans a much needed Labor Day vacation and served up some Italian home cooking. Fine dining was compliments of WO3, or Maresciallo Capo, Biagio Eriquo and his crew. Biagio is the camp's Italian Army S4 logistician, but when he puts on his apron and stylish hat, viola, he becomes Chef Chico.

"They read on the door 'Hey, Spaghetti by Chico' and they are happy because they like my spaghetti," Chico explained. "It's a special holiday for the American soldiers, so tonight I cook a special recipe for them." Biagio said.

Chico explained the straightforward approval process for such an unusual arrangement. "One day I asked the commander if I could cook pasta for all the Italian and American soldiers. The commander likes spaghetti, so they were very

happy with this. I take care of logistics, and sometimes here in the kitchen, I take care of important things like good spaghetti."

There's a certain amount of pride and reputation at stake.

"It must be just right," Chico explains. "It's the secret to cook the pasta for only for 10 minutes and cook right before you eat. No delay."

Careful to avoid international upstaging, he tactfully points out his attention to detail.

"In America sometimes they cook for too long a time," Chico said. "Here tonight, it's a gunna be just right."

Chico has enjoyed serving in Afghanistan and completed his tour the day after Labor Day and has returned to Italy. Reflecting on his time here, he said one of his fondest memories was his warm friendship with the Americans and his time in the DFAC kitchen perfecting his recipes.

"They like the spaghetti, they thank me," Chico said. "I don't think they want me to leave here, they want to continue with great pasta."

A gregarious Chico likes to talk while he works.

"For me it's pleasure because my colleagues ask me to cook Italian," Chico said. "And the American soldiers like it as well."

He not only cooked up dinner, but then got in the serving line, ladle in hand.

"Hey, guys, it's spaghetti night, let's have your plate," he exclaimed after serving up another hungry soldier.

*Army Specialist Joshua Fuller gets served by Chef Chico (CWO3 Biagio Eriquo) and the Italian Army recently at Farah PRT.*





## photos from the field

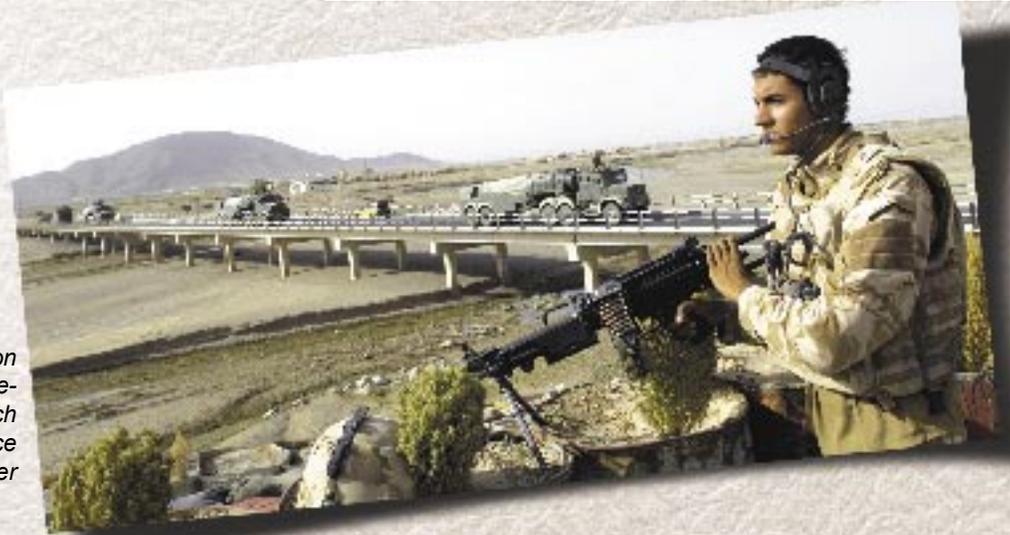


*Petty Officer 3rd Class Dan Marker, shock trauma platoon corpsman for Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, fires the squad automatic weapon during a reset training shoot at Camp Caffereta in Now Zad. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Freddy Cantu)*

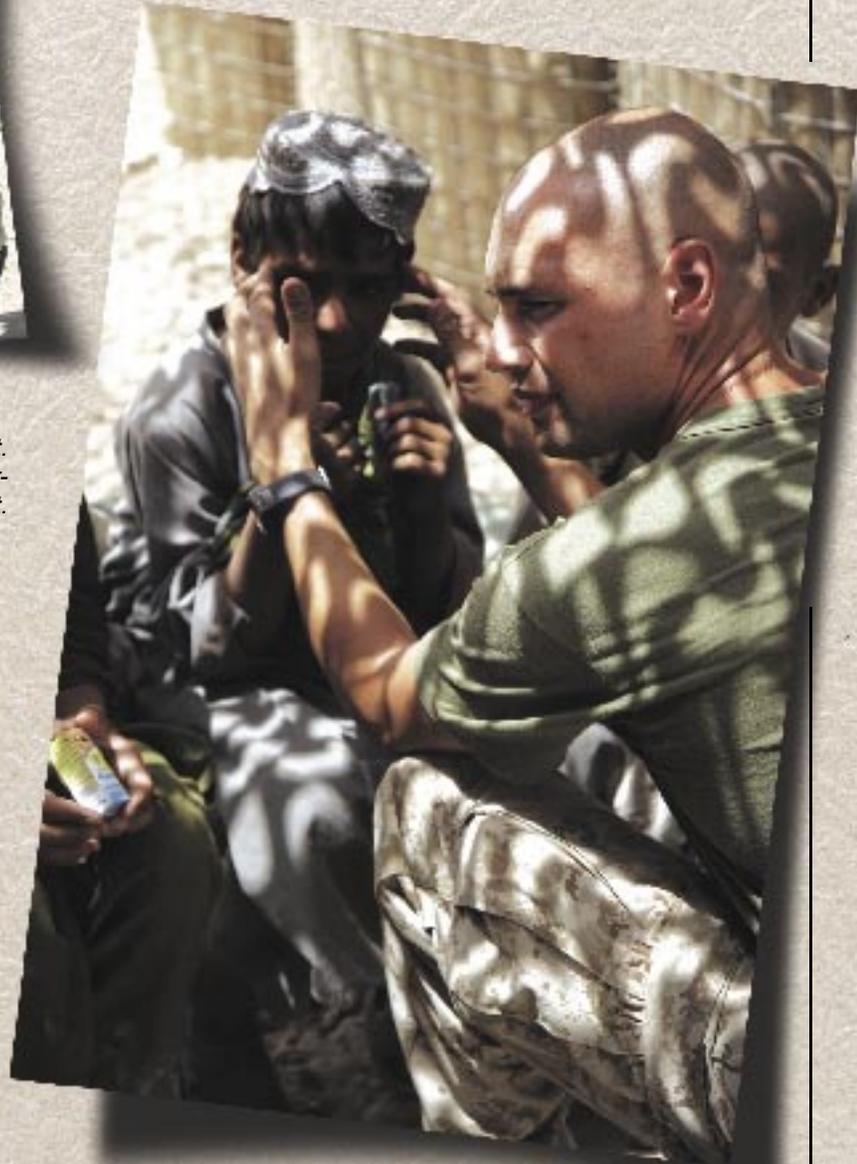


*A light armored truck from Dutch Army, 2nd Platoon, E-company, Battle Group-7, Task Force Uruzgan moves toward an over watch position near Mirabad while a local Afghan villager moves his herd. The platoon was on a three-day International Security Assistance Force mission conducting foot patrols through villages to meet the Afghan people and build friendships. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class John Collins)*

*Senior Aircraftman Matty Amin, 3rd Squadron Royal Air Force Regiment A-flight, provides security for a convoy of fuel trucks at an overwatch position on an International Security Assistance Force mission. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class John Collins)*



*Sgt. Adam Zimmerman coaches Afghan National Army Staff Sgt. Assadullah Abdul Saleem on proper 9mm firing techniques during a weapons familiarization class. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Mike Miranda)*



*Lt. Benowicz, a U.S. Navy doctor, evaluates a local child as U.S. Marines assigned to 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines work with British soldiers, Afghan national police, and Afghan national army to provide medical care to locals in the Helmand province. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Chad Pulliam)*

