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# Duke Dispatch

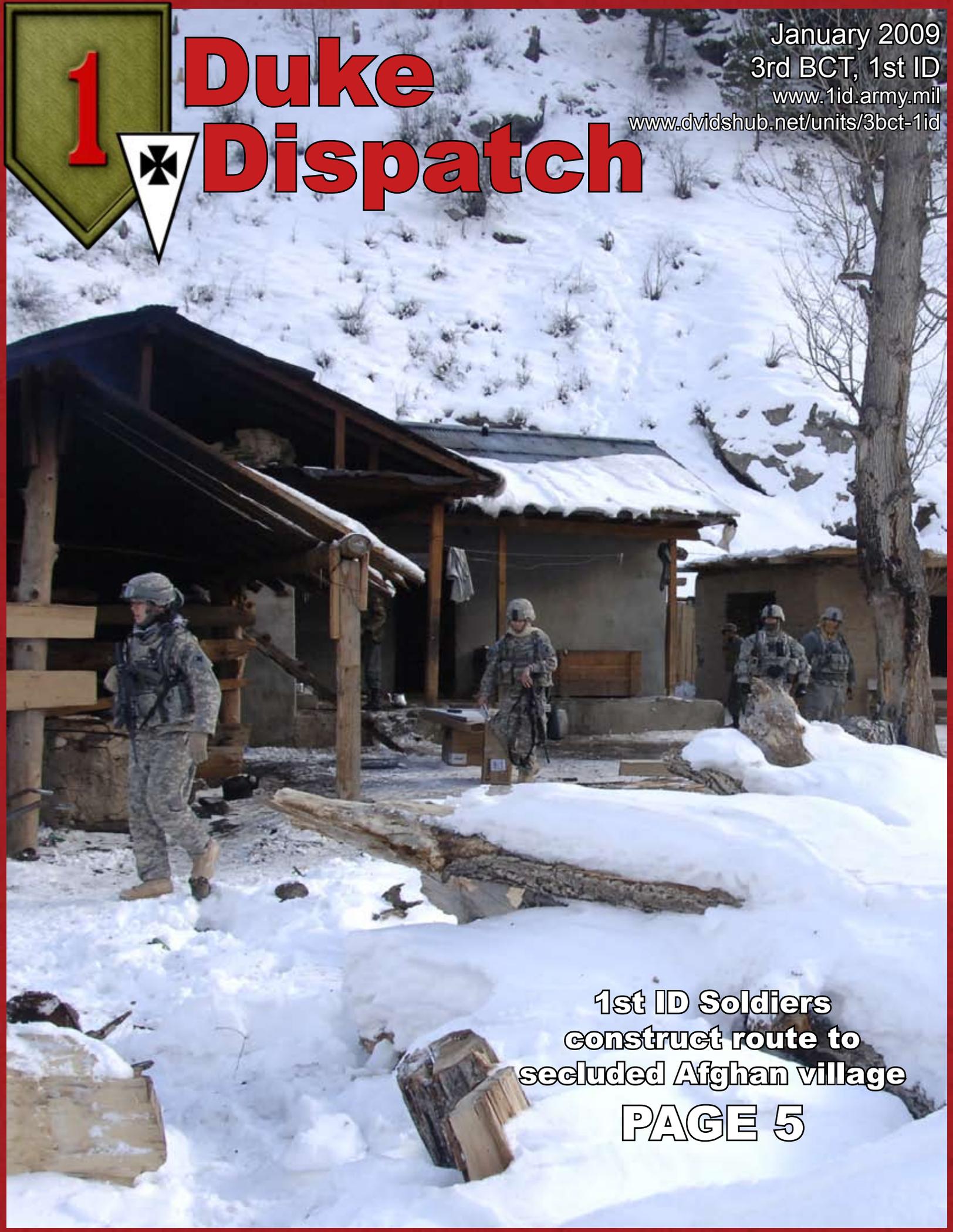


January 2009

3rd BCT, 1st ID

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**1st ID Soldiers  
construct route to  
secluded Afghan village**

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Photo by Army Spc. Michael Griffiths

Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment Soldiers fire a 155 millimeter round from an outpost in the Goshta district of the Nangarhar Province. 1-6 elements are spread throughout northeastern Afghanistan to assist Task Force Duke units in providing immediate fire support (Photo by Spc. Michael Griffiths)

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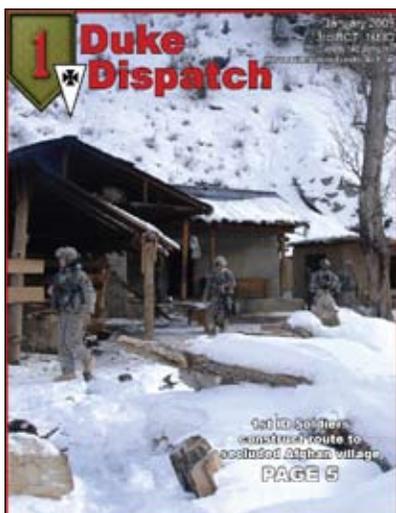
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Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 26th Inf. Regiment along with the Nuristan PRT assess the development during a dismounted patrol in the Paruns district of Afghanistan. (Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Carrie Fox-Gutierrez)

## Duke Dispatch 3rd BCT, 1st ID Magazine

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Digital photos should be at least 300 dpi.  
Stories should be in Word format.

# KCC: Building Afghanistan's Workforce

*Story by Navy Lt. j.g. James Dietle  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, Konar PRT*

The Konar Construction Center graduated 116 local workers in the eastern region of Afghanistan recently, to include several from nearby provinces such as Laughman and Nuristan.

The center which is locally owned and operated, teaches Afghans construction techniques including masonry, electrical work, rebar tying, painting, and carpentry.

Officials from United States Agriculture Aid and Development and Provisional Reconstruction Team Konar attended the event. Tasked with helping develop the war-torn region, PRT Konar has tackled many problems. An abysmal literacy rate, lack of schooling, and food shortages are only overshadowed by the insurgent and criminal element attempting to maintain a foothold in the region. However, the KCC helps address all of these issues.

"Workers that can do it here in Konar," Sayed Fazlullah Wahidi, Governor of Konar province, stated. "We can only hope that one day we can do the same thing for business and agriculture."

PRT Konar has high hopes for the upcoming development of the KCC. Already, it has received a shipment of equipment to conduct material testing. Currently material testing has to be done in more developed regions of Afghanistan or taken to Pakistan. Soon qualified personnel will be able to do this work



Photos by Army Spc. Russell Gilchrest

**Members of the third graduating class of the Konar Construction Company stand in a line during their graduation ceremony. The KCC trains local Afghans in plumbing, electrical work, and general construction.**

for a competitive fee.

Also, teachers are preparing to teach advanced courses. These courses cost a tuition paid by the construction company employing the individual. All proceeds will be going to help maintain the costs of the facility, allowing it to be self sufficient.

The center has also started implementing English classes, its first teacher arriving within the past month. Local Construction companies also use the KCC structures to provide foreman or business classes to their employees.

The initial costs, provided by PRT Konar, total \$200,000 to rehabilitate and refurbish an abandoned construction site with a barracks for students and two instruction bays for classes. USAID continues to provide monthly funding to the school for classes.

This site is located in the Shigal District of Konar, allowing a close proximity to Asadabad and road access for students.

Through hard work and dedication, Afghan locals have created over 350 skilled construction workers to help rebuild Konar province. In future years, the KCC should be able to train many more. Governor Wahidi explained the graduates' new responsibility "You are the new generation. You are future of this country. You will build this country."



**Konar Provincial Governor Sayed Fazulla Wahidi meets with the Konar Construction Company's latest graduating class, congratulating them on becoming skilled members of the country's growing workforce.**

# 201st BSB trains Afghan Security Forces

*Story by Army Sgt. Charles Brice  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

Afghan Security Guards recently learned the tactics, techniques and procedures for working a traffic control point and searching enemy prisoners of war, non hostile and hostile combatant.

The training was conducted by Soldiers with Alpha Company, 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, here at Forward Operating Base Fenty, northeastern Afghanistan, Jan. 2.

"I think it is a very good thing in training the ASG, because in order for us to win the war, we must train the ones that want to make a difference in their country," Sgt. Aaron Duncan Houston, Texas native and A. Company Soldier, said. "Also the faster they pick up the material, the better the chances of completing our mission over here in Afghanistan."

During the session of training, the ASG split into two groups in order to conduct both classes. The instructors worked closely with the ASG in order to maximize the training, while each Soldier took turns learning the techniques.

"The ASGs catch on to the information pretty well. What we teach them in the classes can carry over into their daily routine," Sgt. Prentice Rouse, Augusta, GA. native, and A. Company Soldier, said. "In return for their participation, they can go back and train their peers."

The Soldiers of A. Company demonstrated the techniques first and the ASGs followed after the



Photos by Army Sgt. Charles Brice

**Sgt. Tobias Harris demonstrates different techniques to the Soldiers of the ASG, on how to search a non-enemy combatant during his class of instructions.**

course of instruction was given.

"Each ASG Soldier will go through the same training over and over until they grasp the information and feel comfortable with teaching it to others," Rouse said. "In order to get them to catch on to what we are doing, we encourage them to participate and interact with our company and their fellow Soldiers."

The ASGs learn a different set of skills every week. As they progress through the training, they gain more of an understanding on how to conduct operations by their own standards.

"Now that our forces are combined, we can run the checkpoints and gates more effectively along with the ASG." 1st Lt. Craig Gridelli, Oyster Bay, NY. native, and base defence and operation officer in charge, said. "The training that we leave behind will hopefully have built a little bit of institutional knowledge with the ASG so that they can do the job themselves."



**Sgt. Aaron Duncan, of Alpha Company, BSB, explains a traffic control point to the ASG. This course of action is taken before each Soldier is put to the test on how to work each section of the control point.**

# Men At Work: 6-4 Constructs Bridge for Locals

*Spc. Brandon Sandefur  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, are making accessibility into the Lal Por District of the Nangahar province much easier by building a bridge and improving three miles of road.

Prior to the construction, access was limited to small vehicles and those walking by foot, isolating the villages in the Reneh-Parchaw area of the district.

“Isolation creates a situation that can and will be exploited by enemies of the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan,” Lt. Col. Patrick Daniel, Special Troops Battalion commander and Hot Springs, Ark. native, said. “People who are not reached by the legitimate government will be reached and exploited by the enemies of the government in an insurgency.”

Since the completion of the project, Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and jingle trucks can now gain access into the area, enabling International Security Assistance Forces to reach out to local citizens that may not have seen them before.

Daniel further explains how projects like this help establish trust and confidence in the Afghan government and the U.S. forces as-



Photos by Army Capt. Jay Bessey

**Local Afghan citizens stand by as Staff Sgt. Olen Ice with 3rd BCT, 1st ID, 6-4 Cav., lifts a plank to be used for a bridge in the Lal Por District of the Nangahar province. The bridge, along with road construction, will allow the Afghan government to reach the people of remote areas like Reneh and Parchaw.**

sisting them. “The best way we can counter the enemies of Afghanistan in these areas is by assisting the government in creating access and reaching the people of remote areas like Reneh and Parchaw. This operation was a definite positive step in that direction,” he said.

Despite terrain and security issues, the project was completed in three days by soldiers from Charlie Troop, 6th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, whom assisted in removing the original bridge at Reneh, and replacing it with one built out of lumber from their own supply yard.

The troops also helped widen, smooth and harden certain stretches of the road between Lal

Por Village and Reneh while integrating with Afghan National Security Forces to establish security along the route.

“Because the road has been so restrictive, the government has not been able to provide large-scale projects in the area. As a result of this inability, the people have felt abandoned,” said Capt. Jay Bessey, officer-in-charge of the project, from Greenville, Mich. “We wanted to use this project to show them that, at the behest of their Sub-Governor, we could and would support them. Hopefully, this project ties them closer to the government and opens the door to increased security through a prolonged ANSF presence.”



**Staff Sgt. Olen Ice with 3rd BCT, 1st ID, 6-4 Cav., operates a bobcat to widen, smooth and harden certain stretches of the road between Lal Por Village and Reneh. The improvement of the three-mile stretch of road allows Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and jingle trucks access into the area.**

# Successful operations for Afghanistan's future



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

This month we began the new year with continued counterinsurgency operations, Operation Lionheart, Voter Registration, and the hosting of several visitors.

We helped assist and provide security for Voter Registration in Nangarhar and Laghman, where the bulk of the population resides (about 3 million people), which ended this month. More than 470,000 people in Nangarhar and 194,000 in Laghman were registered to vote in these Provinces. This was very important to ensure the people of Afghanistan are prepared for the National Election expected to occur August 20, 2009.

We continued Operation Lionheart, and kinetic operations within N2KL (Nangarhar, Nuristan, Konar and Laghman) to disrupt and eliminate enemy activity within our region. We have had several big events this month, specifically in Laghman and Konar province, killing many insurgents and detaining a couple of high value targets. Throughout Task Force Duke's area of operations more than 400 combat patrols, numerous route

**"We have had several big events this month, specifically in Laghman and Konar province, killing many insurgents and detaining a couple of high value targets."**

*Col. John Spiszer*

clearances, and resupply combat logistics patrols have taken place, almost all with our Afghan National Security Force partners.

While making final preparations to integrate TF 1-32 Inf. from Fort Drum, who will be reinforcing the border of Konar and Nangarhar province, we also hosted several visitors to include Vice President Elect Joe Biden and Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina. 6-4 Cav. participated in the distribution of wheat and grain from the Afghan Ministry for Rural Regional Development and the World Food Program in Konar and Nuristan. In addition, Task Force Duke spent \$36 million in Commander's Emergency Response Program funds for the first quarter of this fiscal year working to develop and reconstruct this underprivileged country.

Last but not least, I would like to take this time to acknowledge the

great bravery and professionalism of three heroes who were killed in action this past month: SSG Joshua L. Rath C/2-2 Inf. and CPL Keith E. Essary C/2-2 Inf. who were killed by a suicide bomber in Hatal on Jan 8 and Sgt. Ezra Dawson, HHC/1-26 Inf. who was killed in a CH-47 Helicopter crash in the Korengal Valley on Jan 17.

We would also like to honor the following Spader Soldiers who received the Army Commendation Medal for Valor including: Staff Sgt. Lelles Cordoba-Palacios, Spc. Travis Cox, Spc. Terry Cunningham, Pfc. Jared Christian, Pfc. Keith Smith, Pfc. Patrick Lehder, Pfc. Kevin Mulholland and Pvt. Alonzo A. Stevenson.

Finally, thanks to all the Families for their support of us here in Afghanistan.

No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great. Duty First!



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Adora Medina

**Col. John Spiszer awards the bronze star medal to Pfc. Michael Bonomo for meritorious service while assigned with 1-26 Inf. in the Korengal Valley, Konar province, Afghanistan.**

## Nuristan PRT gets acquainted with local citizens



Photos by Army Spc. Casey Ware

On a recent mission to the village of Zirat, Nangarhar province, Afghanistan, Master Sgt. Ryan Bodmer, Nuristan PRT, discusses the possibility of constructing a road.

*Story courtesy of  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

The Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team recently visited Zirat village, Nuristan Province, Afghanistan, to assess the effectiveness of completed projects and work with villagers on solutions for overcoming hardships.

Until February of last year, the main income for the villagers was earned by harvesting poppy. Since the eradication of poppy production the villagers have turned to other methods to provide for their families.

To assist in the effort, the PRT recently constructed a canal that feeds into their farmlands, allowing for maximum farming.

"[With] the canal they are able to spread the water and grow wheat in the winter and corn in the summer as well as saplings, fruit trees and nut trees that we put in there for them," Master Sgt. Ryan Bodmer, PRT noncommissioned officer in charge, and Temecula, Calif. native, said.

Farming is not the only

means of financial income for the villagers. Kathrin Lauer, the United States Agency for International Development representative, assigned to the PRT, met with a group of women whom also expressed an interest in wanting to make an income.

"What they told me was with the eradication of the poppy they simply do not have enough money," Lauer native of Washington Terrace, Utah, said. "Now they make money by going up in the mountains collecting firewood and carrying it down and it is terribly hard work, they said it is too hard and we don't want to do this anymore."

Lauer suggested the possibility of making money by learning an intricate Afghan embroidery technique used by women in Kabul and Jalalabad to make up to \$300 a month.

"An Afghan American, living in New York and working in the fashion industry saw that the embroidery the Afghan women do is so unique that it sells well in the United States," Lauer said.

Financial and irrigation issues in Zirat are only a fraction of

the obstacles the PRT must overcome in Nuristan, often referred to as the "forgotten province".

To Lt. Col. Lawrence Pickett, executive officer and PRT senior Civil Affairs officer, the only thing to do in Nuristan is build from the ground up.

"We are a provincial reconstruction team, but the focus here in Nuristan is construction. There have been no schools or road networks built in Nuristan in the last 30 years, so we the PRT, like our predecessors, are constructing new roads, schools and medical facilities that have never been in this province," Pickett, Macomb, Ill. native, said.

Things are looking up for the people of Nuristan as giant steps forward are being made every day.

"We put in a tremendous amount of work in a day," Bodmer said. "We work from sun up to sun down and beyond. I know each and every one of us here is going to work hard toward handing over a better, safer and more stable Nuristan to the next PRT."



On a recent mission to the village of Zirat, Nangarhar province, Afghanistan, a member of the Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team greets a local Afghan child.

## Duke leaders communicate and enforce standards



*Command Sgt. Major Ronald Orosz  
3rd BCT, 1st ID CSM*

Communication is the key to success in everything we do as leaders in the Army. Communication goes up the chain, down the chain, and laterally with our peers. If one of these communication directions is missed or skipped we have a communication gap.

Communication comes in many forms including written, oral, sign, and visual just to name a few. Somewhere someone is not getting the information required to complete the mission to safeguard and secure our sensitive items. Despite having computers and connectivity at 95 percent of all combat outposts we seem to have a breakdown in communication.

Standards were communicated and written in our Duke Standards outlining exactly how we will secure our sensitive items. The pages in our Duke Standards have meaning and are not random notes scribbled on paper and eventually formalized with a typed, signed document. This booklet of standards had input from every unit in the brigade. Page eleven of our Duke Standards, "In addition all units are required to conduct a hands-on in-

spection of all sensitive items upon return from or completion of all missions." This specifically tells each of us to put hands on our sensitive items each time we go in and out of the wire. We go in and out of the wire many times each day. How many leaders are checking Soldiers and how many leaders are just asking "hey, you got your stuff?" This isn't leading and is laziness.

Our Duke Standards also state, "All NVGs [Night Vision Goggles] that are carried in the MOLLE or assault pack will be tied down with 550 cord. The tie down will be attached to the actual device (not the storage bag) and the frame of the MOLLE [Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment] or the carrying handle/equipment hanger of the assault pack. NVGs that are carried physically with the soldier will be tied down with 550 cord to a portion of the IBA [Interceptor Body Armor] or helmet." If you are following the written standards we can't lose sensitive items.

Despite having standards we still manage to lose sensitive items because leaders are not checking and Soldiers are not

taking personal accountability for themselves. I don't understand that we created a standard to prevent something from happening and yet it still happens. Well this is a reminder that I am communicating to each of you to care for your equipment. It is required for each leader to enforce standards and it is incumbent of each Soldier to take personal responsibility for securing your sensitive items to prevent loss and theft.

Leaders, make sure the standards are enforced by conducting inspections. Half way through the deployment, daily activities become redundant and we as leaders can get lazy. We can't afford laziness or a breakdown in communication. Communicate the standards to your Soldiers and check. They deserve your leadership and you are obligated to lead!

For the leaders and Soldiers doing the right thing, I applaud you and thank you, and for those of you not following the prescribed written standards, shame on you. Remember our motto, "No Mission Too Difficult, No Sacrifice Too Great", Duty First!



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Carrie Fox-Gutierrez

**A 101st chinook gunner looks out into the mountains of northeastern Afghanistan while in route to a mission in the Paruns district. 101st Soldiers are responsible for providing air support assets to Task Force Duke Soldiers.**

# Class in Session: Nangahar Girls' School Opens Its Doors

*Story by AF Capt. Dustin Hart  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, Nangahar PRT*

Members of the Nangahar Provincial Reconstruction Team demonstrated their commitment to furthering education, in the province, during a ground-breaking ceremony of the Maliki Surial girls' school in Behsood District here Jan. 11.

"The key to success in Afghanistan is education of all children," Lt. Col. Steven Cabosky, Nangahar PRT commander, told the crowd of more than 200 Afghans. "While this school project will help, the hard work still exists. It's up to all of you to make sure your children are able to go to school and receive an education. That is what will build a strong Afghanistan."

The ceremony featured members of the provincial government, school administration and PRT speaking about the opportunities created by the new school.

"Currently, the girls attend an open-air school where they sit outdoors and learn," said Capt. Elisabeth Leon, PRT lead engineer. "When the weather turns bad, they simply can't go to school."

The PRT-funded school,



Photos by Air Force Capt. Dustin Hart

**Village elders, school administration and provincial government representatives cut a ribbon to mark the start of construction of a girl's school in Behsood District.**

which will cost \$116,000, will feature 10 classrooms for more than 1,400 girls to attend classes throughout the year.

The importance of education, especially in regards to Afghan females, was stressed in many of the speakers' comments.

"Education is very important for girls," said Gulali Jamal Zai, the female headmaster of the Maliki Surial School. "Females are responsible for the household and can in turn educate their children and husbands within the house."

Before the Taliban government was defeated in 2001, less than one million children attended school in Afghanistan, virtually none were females. Since that time, the number has grown to more than six million children, with 35 percent of these students being female according to International Security Assistance Force-Afghanistan statistics.

"In every district we travel to, educating the children is a priority to the leadership," Leon said to the crowd of mostly females. "This school is a sign that the hopes, opportunities and dreams of Afghan females are coming true. I ask you to keep your heads high and reach for every opportunity to learn and grow."

The PRT is currently working with the Ministry of Education on 15 boys and girls school projects throughout Nangahar Province. These are part of 50 projects, worth more than \$70 million, that the PRT is working throughout the province.

**Capt. Elisabeth Leon, Nangahar Provincial Reconstruction Team lead engineer, speaks to the crowd, with the help of a PRT interpreter, during a groundbreaking ceremony for a girl's school in Behsood District.**



## Recognizing African-American benefactors, past and present



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

He was born in 1864 on a plantation near Diamond, Missouri. His parents were slaves owned [ironically] by a man named Moses, (after the biblical liberator of slaves...) When he was only a few months old, the young child and his mother were stolen by raiders and taken to Arkansas.

After the end of the Civil War, the young man was recovered by his owner with whose family he remained until he set out to make his own way in the world at the tender age of 9. Overcoming prejudice and poverty, he eagerly seized every opportunity to acquire an education at a time when education was truly hard to come by.

He studied agricultural science at Iowa State College, graduating in 1894 and receiving a Master of Science degree 2 years later – an amazing feat at a time when the average number of people holding Masters degrees in the public mainstream was relatively small. Serving briefly on the faculty at Iowa

State, this individual then traveled to the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute where he headed the Agricultural Department -- again, all this at a time when precious few of the general populace went much beyond the 8th grade in education!

In the ensuing years, this person's achievements in the areas of soil conservation, crop diversification, and utilization of southern plants and crops won him worldwide acclaim. He looked at ordinary things in extraordinary ways and applied all the tools of inspiration and research to make an incredible difference in countless lives. Remembered for the ingenuity which enabled him to discover some 300 new and useful products from the peanut, over 100 from the sweet potato, and about 60 from the pecan, this man was truly a visionary. Selflessly, he refused offers of personal financial gain for the commercial exploitation of his discoveries,

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**“Since new developments are the products of a creative mind, we must therefore stimulate and encourage that type of mind in every way possible.”**

***Dr. George Washington Carver***

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choosing rather to give them freely to humanity.

His words: “God gave them to me. How can I charge for something that God has given freely to me?” A researcher and inventor of the first order, this remarkable person finally passed away in Tuskegee, Alabama just shy of his 79th birthday on Jan. 5, 1943.

The man I'm speaking about is none other than the incomparable George Washington Carver. Noteworthy about Dr. Carver is the fact that in spite of overwhelming odds against him – a firmly ensconced, systemically sanctioned framework of racial injustice and bigotry, unbe-

lievable economic hardship at virtually every turn, and a societally-conditioned prejudice against the advancement of black men and women.

Dr. Carver refused to allow any of that to deter him from what would become his legacy as a scientist, a scholar and brilliant humanitarian. In scripture, we're told to “run with perseverance the race that is set before us,” (Hebrews 12:1). Indeed, George Washington Carver is an example of someone who did just that in every way, “casting aside every weight “that might otherwise entangle him. He refused to allow what many might consider somewhat inauspicious beginnings, institutionalized inequality, or anything else to keep him from fulfilling that which he was called to do.

Next month will be “Black History Month” and as we celebrate the myriad offerings and achievements of all Black Americans, it's

appropriate that we recall the innumerable contributions made to society by Dr. Carver and the host of other great African-

American benefactors, past and present. Dr. Carver said it well with these words: “Since new developments are the products of a creative mind, we must therefore stimulate and encourage that type of mind in every way possible.”

As we prepare to celebrate “Black History Month 2009,” may we truly be about the business of encouraging the “doing of common things in uncommon ways” (another saying of George Washington Carver). May we stay open to the many good things which the Almighty has in store for us. And may we be blessed richly in all that we do, both this day and every day!

# STB Soldiers boost security in Shirazad district



Photos by Sgt. Charles Brice

**3-1 Soldiers of Alpha Company, STB, conduct a Key Leader Engagement at the Shirazad District Center, meeting with Sub-Governor Abdul Haq. During the meeting they discussed the security and welfare of the Afghan people.**

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*Story by Sgt. Charles Brice  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

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The Soldiers of Alpha Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, are teaming up with the Afghan National Police to boost security and provide supplies for the local Afghans of the Khogyani and Shirazad districts, in Nangarhar province of northeastern Afghanistan.

The planning and coordination of improvements is accomplished through Key Leader Engagements conducted by both parties.

"We conduct these visits with the leadership to make sure they are taken care of on supplies and issues," Sgt. 1st Class Albert Huggins, a native of Walterboro, SC., and 1st Platoon leader of A Company STB, said. "We have to make frequent trips out to the locations to make contact with our allies in the area."

Measures toward protecting the local citizens around the garden and voter registration sites were emphasized during a recent KLE, held in the area of Memlah Gardens in the Khogyani district.

"There are no problems at the voter registration booths, we have very good security in protecting the locals while they register," ANP Capt. Damsaz of the Shirazad district, said.

ANP leaders also talked about supplies need-

ed in order to maintain jobs during the winter months and plan ahead for the spring before the snow melts over the mountains. Similar topics of discussion carried over into a subsequent KLE conducted at the Shirazad district center.

"Things are ok over here with the district center," Abdul Haq, sub-governor of the Shirazad district, said. "Taliban comes from Pakistan during the spring-time and attacks the local villages. Now that the mountains have snowed over, the attacks are down to a minimal."

The newly constructed walls of the district center play a small role in the security of the area which has improved significantly in the past few months.

"The locals of the area are much happier, because of the security boost," Haq said. "Along with the help of the Americans, our forces in the area have improved on their actions."

As the relationship between the two forces builds locals in the area are beginning to see progress.

"We are here to support the ANP in the Shirazad district in order to make things better for the people," Huggins said. "Safety, security and the welfare of the people are our main concern."



**3-1 Soldiers of Alpha Company, STB, enter into the Shirazad District Center to meet with the sub-governor of the area.**



## 1-6 Field Artillery

Lighting up the skies of northeastern Afghanistan

A Soldier from 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment stands by after firing a 155 millimeter round from an outpost in the Nangarhar Province. 1-6 batteries are spread throughout northeastern Afghanistan, providing immediate fire support to Task Force Duke units. (Photo by Spc. Michael Griffiths)

## New Combat Outpost Terminator in Taliban's Backyard

*Story by Tech Sgt. Jill LaVoie  
3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, is already seeing results from the increased presence offered by operating out of a newly built combat outpost Terminator in the Maywand District of Afghanistan.

Within weeks of building a permanent COP, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division soldiers are already reporting an increased willingness of local residents to assist, and receive assistance from, Coalition Forces.

"When we first came to the area, no one would talk to us," said Capt. Chris Brawley, Alpha Company commander and Ellington, Mo. native. "As soon as we started building, they began talking to us."

The COP was originally built to restrict Taliban movement through the area.

"The Maywand District is used to move supplies, drugs and medical support for the Taliban," said Spc. Andrew Gardiner, 2-2 Inf. Soldier and Gloucester, Va. native. "Our goal here is to disrupt the supply routes for the Taliban."

This was a difficult task for 2-2 Inf. to accomplish prior to establishing a permanent presence.

"Before we came here for a couple of days, but then we would leave and it would be back to business as usual for [the Taliban]," Brawley said. "Just putting the base in their back yard has been very effective. People have told us that day two of building, the Tali-

ban started clearing out of here."

Alpha Company wants to continue to build on this success.

"When we first got here most people would tell you that it was six months since they had last seen coalition Forces, and one day since they had last seen the Taliban. We want to reverse that," Brawley said. "We want to patrol so much that we are a constant presence."

Gardiner believes this will continue to grow support in the area.

"They are warming to us because they recognize we are going to stay here," he said. "Our area of influence will expand as we have more opportunities to get out and talk to people. Each time we patrol we try to talk to more people. They are definitely more positive about our presence."



Photos By Staff Sgt. Eric Donner

Noor Mohammed Akhwand, Waywand District Governor hands out food to the residents of Ata Mohammed Kartz Jan. 6.

# MWR upgrade keeps 1-26 connected in Afghanistan

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

Forward Operating Base Blessing in northeastern Afghanistan is updating their Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities to help Soldiers stay connected with their family and friends back home.

The FOB has been receiving improvements such as the construction of new buildings and the repositioning of departments on the installation. The changes allowed the MWR to move from the small building it was in to a larger space.

"We have too many people here for the old facility to accommodate," Army Pvt. Roman Orr, Radio Telephone Operator for 1st Infantry Regiment, 26th Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Division, from Redoak, Texas, said. "We had to sit and wait an hour sometimes to get on a computer with nothing to do while we waited."

The former building was cramped and only had small desks for computers and phones and a small bookshelf for reading material. The computer terminals were so small the Soldiers had to hold the keyboards on their laps to make room for the mouse on the desk.

"All we had before was a little network room," Army Sgt. Maj. Lou Holzwarth, battalion operations sergeant major for 1-26 Inf. and native of Chicora Pa., said. "We didn't have televisions or DVDs or game tables. It was just too small."

The new facility is being constructed in what was the former dining facility and will offer a lot more space for the communication equipment and additional entertainment activities and lounge space.

"[The new MWR] will have a TV for AFN, a large plasma TV for XBOX games, a regulation dartboard, two game tables, couches,

a Ping-Pong table, eight computers and four phones," Holzwarth said.

There were more improvements to the new facility than just adding more entertainment options for the Soldiers. Wooden cubicles were constructed to provide more privacy for the Soldiers while communicating with family and friends back in the states.

"The new MWR will provide some privacy to the Soldiers as they talk on the phone or chat on the computer," Holzwarth said.

The old facility had an old electrical system, which caused problems with the connectivity of the Internet and phones. The new facility has new electrical wiring that should work better.

"I hope the computers and phones work better in the new MWR," Orr said. "The phones in the old MWR building would cut out on you and the computers would lose connection."

The updates are important to the Soldiers on the FOB. They patrol regularly and need a fully-

equipped MWR to help them relax after walking up and down the Afghanistan mountains.

"We didn't have the same facilities that other FOBs had," Orr said. "We all work hard here and need a place that we can go to unwind after the long days. The MWR and our ability to talk with family and friends is also our gateway to the outside world."

The remodelling of the facility is doing more than just preparing a better facility for Soldiers to unwind and keep connected; it's providing local nationals with work.

"With the exception of the electrical work, which was done by KBR, the work was all done by local nationals," Holzwarth said.

The improvement to the new MWR took about a month to make, but should be worth the down time when it is finished.

"The Soldiers will get a lot out of the new MWR," Holzwarth said. "It will give them something to do to pass the time and help them stay in touch."

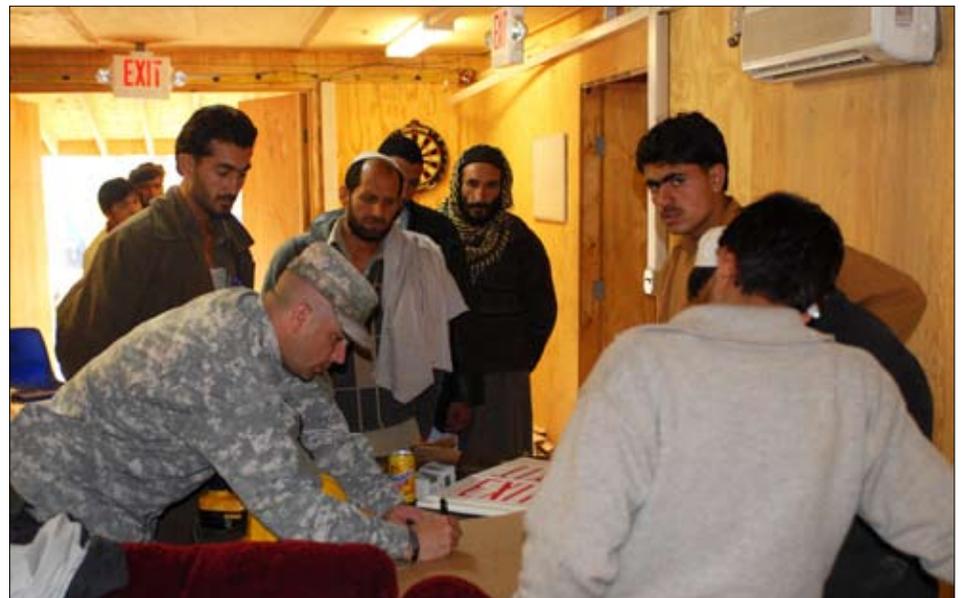


Photo by Staff Sgt. David Hopkins

**Army Sgt. Maj. Lou Holzwarth, battalion operations sergeant major for 1st Infantry Regiment, 26th Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, explains the plans for construction in the battalion headquarters' new Morale Welfare and Recreation facility. The MWR is being updated to provide the Soldiers with entertainment and the ability to communicate better with family and friends.**

# January Reenlistments

## 1st Battalion 6th Field Artillery

BARRERA RUBEN J (HHB)  
 BETH DAVID E (HHB)  
 CHARGOIS ERIC S (A. BATT.)  
 CLEMENTS CHARLES C (B. BATT.)  
 DANIEL ERIC R (FSC)  
 DYKES JOSHUA E (A. BATT.)  
 GILLILAND ROGER E (A. BATT.)  
 HAYES JOHN C III (A. BATT.)  
 HUDDY GAREN J (FSC)  
 IBARRA DAVID E (A. BATT.)  
 LAZCANO CRESENSIO (A. BATT.)  
 MCKENZIE JOHNATHAN T (FSC)  
 MEDRANO JIMY M (FSC)  
 SHAW ANTHONY R II (FSC)

## 201st Brigade Support Battalion

ARD RYAN M (B. CO.)  
 ARELLANO ANDREW M (A. CO.)  
 COLBERT MARQUITA A (HHC)  
 CORDEIRO PAUL M (B.CO.)  
 EVITT ZAKARIAH J (A.CO.)  
 JENKINS MARK A (A. CO.)  
 KINCHELOE CODY (B. CO.)  
 LARA MARK B (C. CO.)  
 MULLINS MASON M (A. CO.)  
 OGDEN RACHEL P (A. CO.)  
 PAYNE JACQUELINE (A. CO.)  
 PEREZ MANUEL IV (B. CO.)  
 SMITH HEATHER J (C. CO)

## 1st Battalion 26th Infantry Reg.

ADAMS ADRIENNE M (FSC)  
 CANION ANTONIO L (FSC)  
 CHAVEZ WHITNEY L (FSC)  
 GARCIA MICHAEL S (HHC)  
 MADURO RUDOLPH R (HHC)  
 MEYER KRISTOPHER W (FSC)  
 MINOTY RICHARD (FSC)  
 WAYCOTT OTTO T (D. CO.)  
 WRIGHT JOSEPH W JR (A. CO.)

## 6th Squadron 4th Cavalry Reg.

CHAMPION CHARLES W JR (A. TRP.)  
 CHIVERS NICHOLAS A (FSC)  
 ENGEL BRIAN C (C. CO.)  
 JUDICE JASON R (FSC)  
 SERRAULT RANDY L (HHT)  
 WILSON SHAY K (HHT)  
 WINFIELD BAILEY J (B. TRP.)

## 2nd Battalion 2nd Infantry Reg.

BEBUS DANIEL J (B. CO.)  
 BURGESS CHANCY (D. CO.)  
 CALVO JORGE (B. CO)  
 COX GREGORY S (HHC)  
 DURAN JESUS A (A. CO.)  
 GLOBOKE MICHAEL R (B. CO.)  
 HUGHES OLIVER M (B. CO.)  
 JOHNSON MARCELLO R (HHC)  
 KOPCHAK MICHAEL A (A. CO.)  
 LUKACHKO AARON R (HHC)  
 MCKENNA TRAVIS S (A. CO)  
 MCWHORTER JAMES M (A. CO.)  
 NEAL JOHNNY L JR (HHC)  
 NUNO CHRISTIAN F (B. CO.)  
 ONEAL KENNETH W JR (HHC)  
 REYES CESARIO (HHC)  
 SHANNON KENNETH B (B. CO.)  
 STEGEMEYER PETER J (C. CO.)  
 TAYLOR JOSH (D. CO.)  
 THREATS LONZELL J (HHC)  
 WISE JARED M (B. CO.)

## Special Troops Battalion

ALEXANDER ALEXIS (HHC)  
 CLEAGUE HADRIAN M (C. CO.)  
 CROWELL MATTHEW C (B. CO.)  
 DELGADO LUIS A (B. CO.)  
 HALE EVELYN M (B. CO.)  
 PONCE CHRISTOPHER L (HHC)