

# TASK FORCE *Lifeliners*

May 15, 2011

101st Sustainment Brigade

Volume 1, Issue 5

**INSIDE FEATURE:**

**Lifeliners remember Fallen Soldiers**



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*First Sgt. Terrence Clay, first sergeant of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, calls off the names of the six Fallen Soldiers killed at Forward Operating Base Gamberi during a Memorial ceremony, April 19. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Vanpool)*



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## A Message from the Special Troops Battalion "One Team, One Fight"

### From Sustainer 6

Greetings family and friends of Task Force Lifeliners and Sustainers!  
I'd like to first take this opportunity to thank the brigade commander, Col. Michael Peterman, for this opportunity to talk with our families and friends back home. It's hard to believe that it was only six months ago, we arrived at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, to begin this mission. The 101<sup>st</sup> Special Troops Battalion continues to play a significant role in the success of our brigade during this deployment. There's not one piece of mail coming into Bagram that has not been delivered to our Soldiers since our arrival. Our Finance Company ensures not only that our Soldiers have access to financial resources, but that our contracts with our Afghan partners are straightforward and honorable.

The riggers of our battalion are the very best in the Army, and their commitment to ensuring that bundles and supplies are carefully packaged and safely delivered to our forces in remote locations testifies to that success.

Finally, our partnership with the Afghan forces cannot be understated. The phrase "Shona Ba Shona," which means "Shoulder to Shoulder," took on a deeper meaning for us all during the tragic events at Forward Operating Base Gamberi in April. Here were our Afghan partners, side by side with us, rendering aid and carrying out our wounded during the attack. And they were there for us to cheer us on as we returned to FOB Gamberi the very next day with new Soldiers determined to carry out the mission we began together. It was at that moment that we became more than partners. We became brothers and family.

There is still much work to be done during this deployment, but rest assured, the Sustainers will continue on with their mission and the partnership to help bring about a better Afghanistan. Also, thank you to our families back home, who have carried a heavy burden while are gone. Their strength and courage gives us the will to continue until we have accomplished this mission.

Thank you again for your time.  
Sustainers! Lifeliners! Air Assault!



*Lt. Col. Robert J. Davis  
101st Special Troops Battalion*

### From Sustainer 7

Greetings to our fellow Sustainers and Lifeliners!!  
There is a saying that I used whenever I'm sending messages to the Soldiers: "The fact of the matter is we all know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it! "Lifeliners take the lead."

This statement was never more apparent and obvious than during the last month here in Afghanistan. It particularly resonates with the tragic loss of six of our fellow Sustainers and Lifeliners at Forward Operating Base Gamberi. They were there providing mentorship to members of the Afghan National Army, using their varied specialized job skills, with the intent of helping these Soldiers become more self-sufficient in their chosen fields.

It was not always easy, but it was a gratifying experience. The Soldiers chosen for this particular mission were among the best in the battalion and the brigade, not just because of their ability to do their jobs effectively, but also because of their ability to lead and inspire the very best from everyone who they came in contact with.

I shared the sorrow of losing not just Soldiers in our battalion and brigade, but losing members of our family. But I am always and forever grateful to them for the example they set as men, women, and Soldiers. By the following day, more Soldiers stepped up to not just take their place and be mentors, but to carry out the legacy they set in place.

We all know what the right thing is to do at all time, but not all of us will do the hard right. These Soldiers led by example of doing what was right, and inspiring others to follow their lead. While they are no longer physically with us, their tireless example lives in all of us.

As we approach the halfway mark of our deployment, I want to encourage each of you – Soldier, family member, friend – to remember the legacy of our "Gamberi Six" and keep in mind what it means to do the right thing and take the lead when it is time.

Finally, I just want to say thank you to our families back home who help make this mission possible.

Sustainers! Lifeliners! Air Assault!



*Command Sgt. Maj. Katrina Najee  
101st Special Troops Battalion*

# SAFETY THOUGHTS

## Hand Washing: A Force Protection Measure

A few weeks ago, I overheard a senior NCO scoff, "I've never washed my hands so much in all my life." He was irritated by the frequency with which we are required to soap up and wash our hands in Afghanistan. We do it before all three meals and after each visit to the port-a-john. But all this hand washing is just another unnecessary admin intrusion into the gritty, Spartan existence of a combat warrior, right? Another example of the out-of-touch bureaucrats imposing silly requirements, eh? Wrong. Dead wrong.

Poor personal hygiene cripples armies at war. Just as accidental losses degrade combat capabilities, disease and non-battle injuries (DNBI) due to inadequate hygiene can bring a military force to its knees. Two historical examples support this assertion.

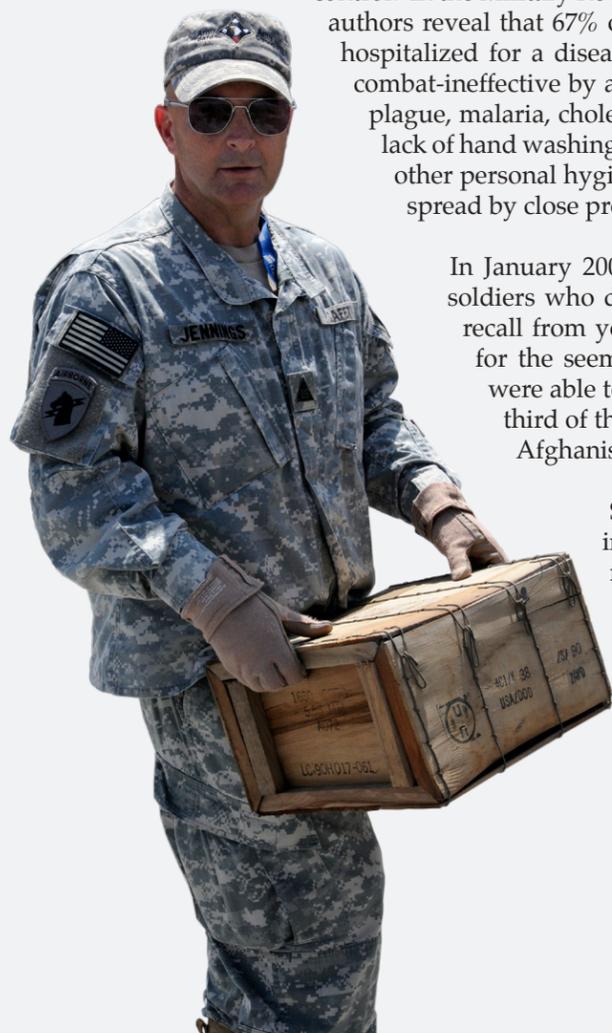
The Soviet Army's experience in Afghanistan is an excellent example of the devastating impact of poor hygiene and disease control. In the Military Review article *Beaten By The Bugs: The Soviet-Afghan Experience*, the authors reveal that 67% of the 620,000 Red Army soldiers who served in the conflict were hospitalized for a disease or serious illness. Two of every three soldiers were rendered combat-ineffective by a DNBI. The most common diseases were hepatitis, typhoid fever, plague, malaria, cholera, dysentery and meningitis. The most common causes included lack of hand washing, clothing cleanliness, lice infestation of garments and bedding, and other personal hygiene issues that made soldiers susceptible to diseases, often rapidly spread by close proximity to others in tents or barracks.

In January 2006, a French research team unearthed the remains of a group of soldiers who died during Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812. As you may recall from your history classes, this expedition ended in a humiliating defeat for the seemingly invincible Napoleon. Using DNA testing, the researchers were able to determine that infectious diseases may have rendered up to one-third of the French Army combat-ineffective. Like the Russian experience in Afghanistan 180 years later, the French were beaten by the bugs.

So what does this have to do with the US Army in Afghanistan in 2011? Why do combat soldiers have to bother with such trivial nonsense as washing hands and changing undergarments? History clearly shows that commanders who ignore the hygiene habits of their soldiers place mission success at risk. Any threat to the fighting ability of the unit must be eliminated as a force protection measure. This includes the causes of DNBI.

The next time you reach for a doorknob, think about how many hands have touched it before you. Like your mother used to say, "You don't know where that hand has been." She was right. Your hands transmit disease and must be sanitized regularly.

So the next time you roll your eyes over another required hand scrub, remember the lessons of military history. An Army that ignores personal hygiene does so at its own peril.



Jay Jennings  
TF Lifeliners Safety Officer

# Chaplain's

# Corner

I am sure that all of us at some time has had a member of the general public come up to us and thank us for our service. My general feeling is a little embarrassment because I don't know how to respond except to say, "Thank you for thinking of us." Sometimes, I think that the general public actually does not know that much about what we do or what we experience, but nonetheless they do try to understand and are genuinely appreciative.

Over the last month, as a brigade we have experienced many things that are all part of the life of being a soldier in general and of being a Lifeliner in particular: the loss of our fellow soldiers at Gamberi, units coming and units going, rocket/mortar attacks, missions, day-to-day living, etc. We have all been changed by these experiences in ways that cannot all be described in words but which are nonetheless a reality which binds us together as a band of brothers and sisters. And, we move forward hopefully to live worthily of the sacredness of life that has been granted to us and that binds us together. We share together loss, but we also share joy; we share together loneliness; but we also share togetherness; we share a common mission and purpose – a life in common.

Part of the experience of being a soldier is to experience family time often from a distance as we will do throughout this year of deployment. Even so, my thoughts turn homeward as we approach Mother's Day. Mother's Day, as I was growing up, usually meant going to church. The theme of the day venerated the virtues of motherhood. There would always be a present for the oldest mother, the youngest mother, the mother with the youngest baby, the mother with the most children, and so forth. Then, all the mothers would be called to the front to receive either a flower or some chocolates from the pastor. At school, the teacher would usually supervise the making of Mother's Day cards. So, one way or another, Mother's Day was not forgotten.

I am sure that my father did not forget Mother's Day, but I can only recall what he did about it once. My father was neither much of a cook nor much of a church-goer in his young adult years. On the particular Mother's Day that I recall, my mother, brother and I went to church as usual and my father did not as usual. However, he decided to surprise my mother for Mother's Day by cooking Sunday dinner. Everyone in the South knows how to fry chicken and how to make macaroni and cheese – that is, except my father. Needless to say, I passed on dinner that day. The effort was well intended but not very successful. I do not recall that he ever tried very much after that to improve his culinary skills. He did not need to nor was he encouraged to do so because my mother was and is such a great cook.

The story of Joseph, the favorite son of his father Jacob, in the Old Testament reminds me of the influence of our mother's upon the whole of our lives. From the story, we learned that Joseph lost his mother when he was a young boy. She died in childbirth when Benjamin, Joseph's youngest brother, was born. He had only memories of the love and nurture of his mother. I am sure that even these memories gave him courage in the dark hours of his life when he was sold into slavery by his jealous half brothers and when he was cast into prison as an innocent man. When his fortunes changed and he had his own family and was second in charge of all Egypt, with Pharaoh only being greater, he was the man that he was in part because of the values and character that was instilled in him by his mother at an early age.

Some of us have had the privilege of having wonderful mothers or those who have nurtured us like a mother while others have not been quite so blessed. Mothers at their best give of themselves without reservation for their children and rarely ask for anything in return. They do so much for others, and sometimes sacrifice their own needs or comforts in the process. But, that is what makes mothers at their best so easy to look up to and to love. If you are a mother or wish to be a mother some day or if you are like a mother to someone, I hope that you feel deeply appreciated and loved this Mother's Day. If you still have your mother, I hope that you will do something very special for her; if you do not have a mother, I hope you will find someone who has been there for you as though she were you mother and make her feel loved and appreciated.



Chap. (Maj.) Tammie Crews  
TF Lifeliners Chaplain

# Why We Serve...

My name is Michael E. Simon Sr. I am a native of Jennings, Louisiana. After graduating from high school, I joined the United States Army in 1997. One may ask why did I join? There are many reasons why I enlisted in the Army. First, I come from a very patriotic family. My father served in the Vietnam War and my grandfather served in World War II, so I feel honored to continue my family tradition of service to the country we love. Second, I joined to pay my own way through college. My parents had six kids, and I wanted to lift the burden of having my parents pay for me to go to college. In the beginning, my plan was to only complete my initial enlistment and return back to Louisiana to attend Grambling State University. But, after reviewing all of the benefits that are afforded to me, such as education, health care, housing, travel and the retirement plan, I decided to stay in. While stationed in Kaiserslautern, Germany I met the love of my life Lanita (Evans) Simon. We married in 2005 and have two wonderful kids, Michael Jr., 3, and Mikiya, 1. We continue to serve to provide the life we want for our family. We are both Staff Sergeants and our Military Occupational Specialty is also both Unit Supply Specialists (92Y). Lanita is the Supply NCOIC for the HHC, 101st Special Troops Battalion. She provides the company with all the necessary supplies to complete their missions and manages the unit's property. I work in the 101st Sustainment Brigade S4. My primary duty is to manage all the Financial Liability Investigations of Property Loss in the brigade. We have the pleasure of having the best job in the Army.

Staff Sgt. Michael Simon  
Brigade S4  
Jennings, Louisiana



Staff. Sgt. Lanita Simon  
HHC Supply NCOIC  
Elizabeth City, North Carolina



# Announcements



Congratulations to Spc. Chelsie Burton, and her sponsor Sgt. 1st Class Mia Gillens, who won the HHC Soldier of the Month Board for May.

## Promotions

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| SPC Shawn Brown-Watkins | PFC Lindsey Schneider |
| PFC Joshua Hillman      | SGT Vincent Hendricks |
| SGT Eric Rickards       | SSG Christina Carlos  |
| SSG Jenny Castro        | SFC Miguel Figereo    |

## Awards

This past month, servicemembers of TF Lifeliner received:

- 50 Combat Action Badges
- 1 Combat Medical Badge
- 8 Bronze Star Medals
- 1 Superior Civilian Award
- 19 Joint Service Commendation Medals
- 7 Joint Service Achievement Medals
- 5 Distinguished Service Medals



## Reenlistments

SGT Leon Crowell

# FINANCE FLASH

For tips on how to save money while deployed visit:

[www.themilitarywallet.com/how-to-save-money-while-deployed](http://www.themilitarywallet.com/how-to-save-money-while-deployed)

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# The Boston Marathon Afghanistan style

by Sgt 1st Class Pete Mayes  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – You can check this one off the bucket list.

The spirit of the Marathon was definitely alive and kicking in Afghanistan, as servicemembers and civilian contractors took part in the annual Bagram Boston Marathon this past weekend.

Soldiers with the 101st Sustainment Brigade were also caught up in the spirit as members took part in the coveted road race.

1st Lt. Heidi Miller, Human Resources officer in charge, 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, was the overall winner in the women's division, finishing the 26.2 mile course in three hours, 20 minutes.

"We went out there to have fun and finish. We didn't really care if we won this," Miller said immediately after her victory. "I'm happy about it, definitely. It's a big thing I guess... stumbling toward the finish line. We made it."

More than 300 runners competed in the race. They arrived at the starting point on Disney Drive during the early morning hours to take part in the grueling race.

"Yeah, the 2:30 in the morning showtime is definitely different," said Cpt. Merlin Kynaston, Alpha Company, 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade. "I'm definitely looking forward to work this morning after the race."

The Boston Marathon is considered the world's oldest and most revered road race. Steep in rich history, it is viewed as New England's most widely viewed sport and most difficult courses. Its hilly terrain and varying weather can present even the most seasoned runner with challenges.

The Bagram Boston Marathon is considered a "shadow run," or a race that takes place under the same banner, but in a different location for runners wanting to compete in its event. Instead of the famed, "Heartbreak Hill," runners in Afghanistan run the airfield's dusty perimeter at a higher altitude than the famed course.

Miller and several other Lifeliners spent the last several months training for the race, but not as much on the distance part, she said. "We have been getting out there quite a bit, Miller said.

The main objective, she said was to have fun. "I didn't really think that part through," she said, when asked what time she expected to finish the race in.

Fellow Lifeliner Sgt. Maj. Jose Figueroa,



1st Lt. Heidi Miller, administrative OIC of the 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, crosses the finish line during this weekend's Bagram Boston Marathon. Miller was the winner of the women's division. (photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

senior logistics supervisors, Support Operations, 101st Sustainment Brigade, was the first Lifeliner male to finish the marathon, coming in at three hours, 33 minutes.

He was also the oldest Lifeliner to compete.

"I feel good, but I feel my 48 years," he said after the race.

A total of six members of the Lifeliners Brigade competed in the marathon. This was a first attempt at running the race for

most, while a couple had done so back in the states. They all said this was their first marathon conducted in a combat environment.

Kynaston said he hoped to finish the race in three hours, 45 minutes.

"I'm also hoping that (Miller) does not kill him on this run because she's a speed demon," he said.

Kynaston said he has done the Bataan Memorial Death march twice. "This was a whole other experience." ♦

# Vehicle recovery made easier Lifeliners put new, improved JRADS to the test

by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Soldiers with the 101st Sustainment Brigade teamed up with the Boeing Company and USTRANSCOM one year ago to train and test out a new vehicle recovery system that would be fielded in Afghanistan.

The Joint Recovery and Distribution System, a flatbed trailer intended to load heavily damaged vehicles and bring them back to base, were tested and re-tested by 14 Soldiers assigned to the brigade's Support Operations team during a two-week training back at Fort Campbell.

With the JRADS now in theater, Soldiers with the 584th Maintenance Company, 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, are now taking the new and improved trailer through its paces.

"All the hydraulics works a whole lot better than they did back at Campbell," said Sgt. 1st Class Brian Twitty, wheel maintenance supervisor, 584th Maint. Co., 17th CSSB, 101st SB. "On the backside of the trailer, you've got something that allows you pull something off the side of the trailer at a 90 degree angle."

The Lifeliners began training on the new JRADS system in April 2010, spending two weeks on the post' back 40 learning the intricacies of the new equipment. The Soldiers, some of them Iraq veterans, had definite ideas on how the equipment could be better fielded in a combat environment.

The team was conducting, "snatch and pull" training, which consisted of hooking a damaged vehicle to the JRADS and using the winches to pull it onto the flatbed.

"It's exactly what it sounds like," said Chief Warrant 2 Dieter Speaks, maintenance technician for the 584th Maint. Co., 17th CSSB., 101st SB. "Just hook it up to a trailer, snatch it, and get out

of danger."

Speaks, who will lead the JRADS team missions for his company, was not part of the brigade when the first JRADS training was conducted, and is learning the system for the first time. He said he did vehicle recovery back in 2003 while deployed to Iraq.

"Before, all we had was a wrecker. Now we've got this thing that can pull anything out of anywhere," he said.

The new and improved JRADS system can lift vehicles with missing or damaged wheels or axles, as well as overturn and recover vehicles parallel to it. It can also transport vehicles over rough terrain, which is essential in Afghanistan.

Many of the changes that were made to the JRADS dealt with minor issues, such as adding retractable steps to allow the Soldiers to climb up the trailers.

Spc. Daniel Bulles, wheel vehicle mechanic with the 584th Maint. Co., 17th CSSB, 101st SB, also took part in the training back at Fort Campbell this past year, and is getting a re-fresher on everything he learned.

Bulles said he didn't offer a lot of advice for the new Soldiers learning the JRADS. "I just let them do their job and learn on their own," he said.

He said he also noticed the minor improvements made to the vehicle. "The winches are better, extra VI boxes ... they fixed a lot of the problems."

Gary Noah, JRADS field support representative for Boeing, said his company and USTRANSCOM took to heart all of the issues the Soldiers mentioned to them last year on improving the vehicle.

"We looked at a lot of their recommendations, and added quite a few of them," he said. "The Soldier input is invaluable. They're the ones who have to use it every day on mission, so we hold their opinions in high regard." ♦



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Dieter Speaks of the 584th Maintenance Company, 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, guides the Joint Recovery and Distribution System as it tows a damaged MRAP. The company is training on the new JRADS system, which is being fielded in Afghanistan to recover damaged vehicles. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

# Lifeliners cautiously celebrate bin Laden's death

by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Soldiers with the 101st Sustainment Brigade joined other Americans in celebrating the news that terrorist and 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden was killed during a U.S. operation in Pakistan.

They also, however, said they remain cautious about what its death will mean for Coalition forces deployed in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"It's pretty amazing, and a great triumph for the U.S., but it could make things harder for us," said Sgt. 1st Class Montenez Smith, Class III noncommissioned officer in charge, 101st Sustainment Brigade Support Operations.

Bin Laden was killed during a helicopter raid carried out by CIA paramilitary and members of Navy SEAL team six, according to news sources. The group took custody of bin Laden's remains and later confirmed his identity.

"I woke up to a very proud day to be an American citizen serving in our armed forces," Sustainment Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. David Thompson said. "We can do anything from disaster relief to taking out the most wanted man in the world."

Bin Laden's death ends a manhunt that has been going on for about a decade, just months before the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11th attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

The news comes two weeks after five 101st Sustainment Brigade Soldiers were killed in a suicide bombing attack at Forward Operating Base Gamberi.

Media embedded with the 101st Sustainment reported in a local newspaper that applause erupted throughout the Koehle Dining Facility at BAF when the news broke on television.

News agencies also reported that the nation's top intelligent officials state that while bin Laden's death is a blow to Al-Qaeda, the terrorist group has grown since the 9/11 attacks, expanded its reach, and adapted in such a ways that it still remains America's most significant threat to national security.

That line of thinking is not lost on Smith, a 17-year Army veteran who first deployed to Afghanistan back in 2001 when he was stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C. His current duty as the Brigade SPO Class III NCOIC is the overall responsibility of fuel and water to the various Forward Operating Bases in Regional Commands East, North and Capitol.

As insurgents have begun the spring fighting season, Smith said he believes the brigade could be heading into a possibly long summer.

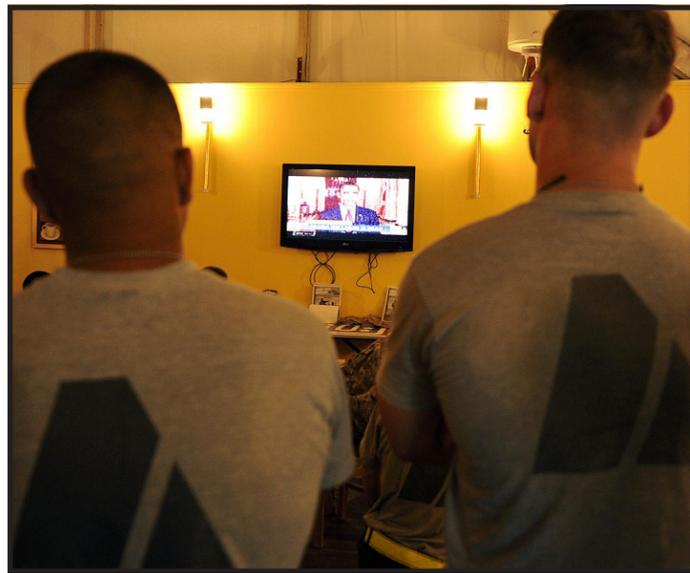
"They could attempt to retaliate or find someone to take his place," he said.

Cpt. Stephen Kildow, Operations officer in charge, 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, agreed with Smith, but added he was confident in the U.S. forces ability to respond.

"I was a student at the University of Arkansas when the attacks happened. Today's news gave me a huge sense of pride and satisfaction that we were able to get the man responsible for 9/11," he said.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Darran Wiggins, a senior petroleum technician for the 101st Sustainment Brigade Support Operations, said hunting Bin Laden was the initial reason for Coalition forces coming to Afghanistan.

"Hopefully, this sends a message to the terrorist: if you attack America, we will do everything we can to ensure that we will accomplish our mission in seeking justice, no matter how long it takes. ♦



Two U.S. Army soldiers watch President Obama talk about the details of the death of 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden on the television inside the USO at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, May 2. (Courtesy photo)

# Officers, NCOs haul ammo

## Lifeliners leadership learn ammunition movements

by Spc. Michael Vanpool  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Once a month, leadership of the 101st Sustainment Brigade break away from their daily routines of briefings and learn hands-on the impact of their decisions in the confines of the headquarters.

Called leadership professional development, the officers and senior noncommissioned officers are trained on different aspects of the multifaceted brigade.

This month, leaders of the brigade and 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion formed on the ammunition yards of the 592nd Ordnance Company, a reserve unit from Billings, Mont., attached to the 17th CSSB, 101st SB.

The company is solely responsible for resupplying ammunition for servicemembers across Regional Commands North, East and Capitol. "We load ammo for shipments to the warfighter," said Staff Sgt. Ryan Lugenbill, the operations noncommissioned officer in charge for the 592nd.

The company moved more than 15 million rounds of ammo in April, which equates to around 4,200 short tons, to various and remote forward operating bases. A majority of that ammo was prepared in the inbound/ outbound yard by a team of less than a dozen.

"It adds up," Lugenbill said. "That's a lot of work for these guys."

Approximately 130 leaders from across the brigade cycled through the various stations in the IBOB. The Soldiers of the 592nd took them through the steps of preparing ground and air shipments, sorting ammunition residue, and conducting inventories and safety checks on the ordnance. The leaders lifted, counted and stacked the different types on ammo throughout the morning.

"I now have a greater appreciation for my ammunition brethren. This is hard work," said Sgt. 1st Class Katherine Lawson-Best,

postal NCOIC and support operations platoon sergeant for the 101st SB. "Doing LPD here is a great idea. We all get to experience what each commodity does."

Lawson-Best led the first LPD in December when the leaders sorted holiday mail at the Bagram Regional Mail Distribution Center.

By moving the ammo in between pallets, the leaders realized the hard work behind the movement of nearly 18 pallets of ordnance the 592nd must push out each day.

"You might not remember much about the net explosive weight of ammo, but you'll remember how hard it is to move this ammo," said Brigade commander Col. Michael Peterman. "Leaders at all levels, sometimes when we move up, we forget the impact we have on others."

The culmination of the LPD was a competition in which three teams competed to complete moving an air shipment to a ground shipment, and then move the ground shipment back to air. The decision to move shipments from ground to air, and vice versa, takes a split second, but requires extensive work by the 592nd.

"I think it's good for the battalion and brigade, and even the other companies, to know what our guys go through on a daily basis," said Spc. Elizabeth Ridder, who works in the operations section for the 592nd. "Especially moving the ground shipments to air shipments, because that happens to our guys all the time, and they only have a few minutes to get it changed up. It's a good experience."

The LPD aimed to give insight into the work of the 592nd, which most Soldiers either see only on a computer screen.

"Hands-on-training is one of the things most of you will remember, and it's probably one of the thin most of your Soldiers will remember," Peterman said. ♦



Cpl. Taron Church, a human resources clerk with the 592nd Ordnance Company, 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, and 1st Lt. Sara Rodriguez, a medical operations officer with the 101st Sust. Bde., move two boxes of 105mm high explosive rounds during a professional development, May 5. More than 130 leaders from the 101st Sust. Bde. and 17th CSSB gathered at the ammunition yard on Bagram Air Field to learn the ins-and-outs of the 592nd Ord. Co. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Vanpool)

## Retention

For reenlistment information regarding your future Army career, contact your unit reenlistment office



MSG Michael Bonfardine  
101st Sustainment Brigade  
Career Counselor



# Lifeliners pay final respect to fallen warriors



by Sgt 1st Class Pete Mayes and Spc. Michael Vanpool  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — The six soldiers from the 101st Sustainment Brigade who were killed in a suicide bombing were remembered for their individual roles in mentoring the Afghan National Army, May 19.

The brigade, along with distinguished visitors House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, International Security Assistance Forces commander Gen. David Petraeus and U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry gathered Tuesday to pay tribute to six fallen comrades.

The soldiers died following an attack on Forward Operating Base Gamberi, where the 101st Sustainment Brigade was mentoring the 201st Afghan National Army Corps. The suicide bomber, dressed as an ANA soldier and wearing a suicide bomber's vest, entered the building where the unit was conducting its morning meeting and detonated himself.

The explosion killed Sergeant 1st Class Charles Adkins, Staff Sgt. Cynthia Taylor, Sgt. Linda Pierre, Spc. Brian Cemper and Spc. Sunny Jade Moses, all from the 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade.

Cpt. Charles, Ridgley, a supply officer with the 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, also died in the attack. The 17th CSSB is attached to the 101st Sustainment Brigade during their deployment to Afghanistan.

MORE "CEREMONY" ON PAGE 14





**“CEREMONY”**

Eight other Sustainment Brigade soldiers were wounded in the attack. The bombing also killed four ANA soldiers and a civilian contractor.

The ceremony, conducted at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation clamshell tent, quickly overflowed with soldiers paying their respects to their fallen friends and heroes. Conversations, before and after, were filled with sharing. Eyes were wet, as smiles occasionally sneaked on faces as they remembered the good times with their battles buddies.

“They stood shoulder-to-shoulder with their ANA counterparts to assist them in their soldiering skills and tasks in order to improve the security in their region,” said Chap. (Cpt.) Vincent Hardy, the 101st Special Troops Battalion chaplain. “They spent time building relationships with the ANA soldiers — a level of trust has been built and is still prospering.”

“We are gathered here to remember and never forget our own,” Hardy said. “Their lives demonstrated that we have the fortitude and endurance to press onward so that people from all nations can experience freedom and prosperity for themselves and their fellow countrymen.”

Several soldiers took to the podium

to share memories and send words of thought and remembrance to the Lifeliners deployed and families back home.

“I can only tell you that they are loved and hold a special place in our hearts,” said Lt. Col. Robert Davis, the commander of the 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade. “I will do everything to make sure they are proud of what we do, and make sure you, the families, are taken care of just like we know you would take care of our families.”

Friends and fellow soldiers of the fallen six offered a brief glimpse into their lives.

In an open letter to the Lifeliners family on the brigade’s Facebook page, Brigade Commander Col. Michael Peterman said the Lifeliners will honor the fallen soldier’s memory by continuing the mission at FOB Gamberi, despite the recent incident.

“The soldiers we lost can never be replaced. Like our history has shown, we will honor our fallen band of brothers and sisters in arms and their memory by continuing to do our duty,” he said. “We will not cave in to the enemies’ wishes, but will continue our mission to assist the people of Afghanistan in building their future. Remember this: the enemy will not win.”



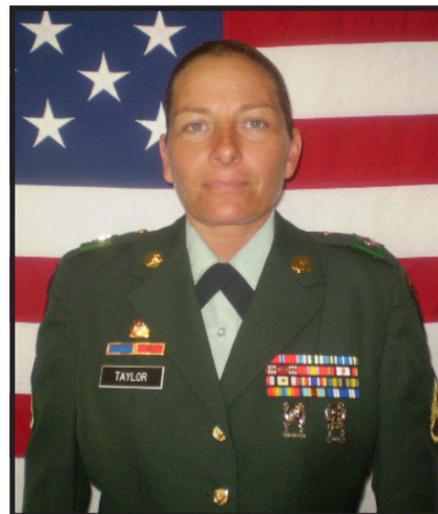
Cpt. Charles Ridgley, 40, of Baltimore, Md., was a logistics section officer in charge assigned to the 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion based out of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

“Charles’ passing continues to teach us about what it means to serve other, to carry on in the face of heartbreak and to give the last full measure of devotion while wearing the nation’s uniform and colors,” said Lt. Col. Leslie Caballero, the commander of the 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.



Sgt. 1st Class Charles Adkins, 35, of Sandusky, Ohio, was a maintenance supervisor assigned to the 101st STB based out of Fort Campbell.

“His personality filled the room,” said Staff Sgt. Zachary Sommers. “You always knew he was there. There was nothing he could not accomplish. He was big, strong and had the courage to go anywhere and do anything. There was nothing he could not accomplish.”



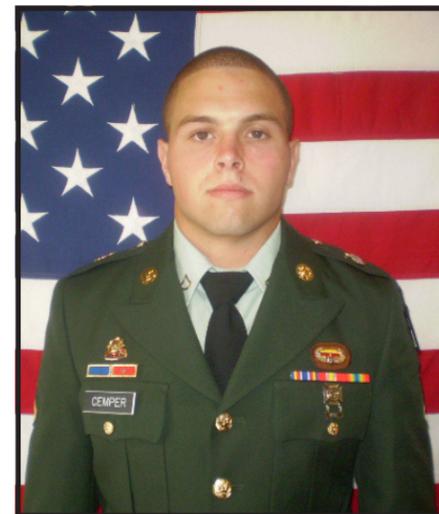
Staff Sgt. Cynthia Taylor, 39, a native of Columbus, Ga., was assigned to the 101st STB as the battalion master gunner, safety NCO, and movements NCO.

“Cynthia was the most passionate, kind, sensitive, caring and loving person I have ever ran across in my career,” said Master Sgt. Austin Harrold. “She truly loved and cared for people and had no problem showing it. It was for these reasons that this fine soldier, mother, grandmother and sister to us all will be greatly missed, but her spirit will always be in all of our hearts.”



Sgt. Linda Pierre, 28, of Immokalee, Fla., was a human resources sergeant assigned to the battalion. She was formerly the brigade Administrative NCO.

“She was the team’s spiritual advisor during all convoy operations,” said Sgt. Charles Casey. “Linda was always full of life, love and joy. She was the type of person that, once she got to know you, she would somehow, someway catch you off guard with a joke or silly saying. Linda always brought out the best in everyone.”



Spc. Joseph Cemper, 21, of Warrensburg, Mo., was the battalion transportation management coordinator.

“Those of us who had the privilege of knowing him were incredibly fortunate,” said Staff Sgt. Tammy McIsaac. “His personality, his presence and his smile lit up any room he walked into. He had the gift of making everyone smile and laugh, and he didn’t even have to say anything to do it.”



Spc. Sonny Moses, 22, of Hagatna, Guam, was a signal support specialist assigned to the battalion.

“Sonny Moses was the most amazing young man that would do anything you asked from him,” said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Riggs. “He was a fighter in spirit and had the heart of a lion.”

# Lifeliners hold shura for leaders, initiate new trucking network

## System will give Afghans jobs, paychecks, industry

by Spc. Michael Vanpool  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BALKH PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The 101st Sustainment Brigade, with the 530th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, hosted a shura for local transportation businesses at Forward Operating Base Dehdadi II here, May 9.

The meeting between the local populace and the brigade is the beginning of the Afghan Trucking Network, which is slated to replace the current trucking system September of this year.

Presently, the Host Nation Truck system, in place across Afghanistan, profits foreign companies with only a small fraction of money trickling down to the drivers. The ATN will build contracts with local trucking companies, and it will allow the truck drivers to take home more money after a dangerous route through Afghanistan.

“For the last four or five years, the way the Army has structured contracts is putting Pakistani drivers on the road, and large companies out of Kabul that, over time, have paid their truckers very little, almost penny on the dollar,” Col. Michael Peterman, the commander of the 101st Sustainment Brigade. “This initiative here puts the money in the local economy and links it to local governance.”

Under the new ATN system, the brigade will build contracts with local businesses based on their capabilities. During the shura, the brigade conducted market research of the the truck companies and their ability to transport different supplies, including fuel, food and military cargo, from Dehdadi II, the logistical hub for RC North to outlying FOBs and outposts across Regional Command North.

“By bringing someone from the local communities, they will have

pride, ownership and a sense of accomplishment when they’re able to do the job locally versus someone coming from outside,” said Sgt. Maj. James Davis, operational contracting support for the 101st Sustainment Brigade.

While supplies move throughout the Northern provinces, necessary equipment and cargo will be brought into country from Afghanistan’s northern neighbors through border crossing such as Hairaton Gate.

“Afghanistan will have free business trade with its bordering countries, and be able to transport those supplies and equipment while avoiding pilferage of their supplies and equipment,” Davis said.

A majority of equipment is currently brought into country through Pakistan, and as the trucks travel through Pakistan, the trucks are subject to multiple dangers and pilferage. The ATN aims combat these issues by involving the local leaders.

“The concept is to eliminate corruption, pilferage and stealing by first engaging the leadership in each province that can make the transportation seamless and make it easier for us to cross provincial boundaries and cultural boundaries,” Davis said.

During the trucking shura, May 9, the brigade leadership met with businesses and leaderships of the Balkh Province. Over the next few weeks, the leaders will meet with leadership of the other provinces in RC North.

“Working with each provincial governor,” Davis said, “we’re able to communicate our mission by allowing the truck owners and local truck companies to cross those boundaries without having to be stopped or utilizing our cargo as payment.

“If we make payment competitive and get payments to



Col. Michael Peterman, the commander of the 101st Sustainment Brigade, talks with local leaders of the Balkh province during a trucking shura at Forward Operating Base Dehdadi II, May 9. The shura addressed the beginning of the Afghan Trucking Network, which will hire Afghan truck drivers, directly supplying them with jobs and paychecks. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Vanpool)

## 101st Lifeliner Association, Inc.

The mission of the 101st Lifeliner Association is to organize the Veterans, Soldiers and Friends of the 101st Sustainment Brigade or 101st Airborne Division Support Command:

- Support our soldiers currently serving around the world, honor and perpetuate the memories of the officers, men and women who distinguished themselves by their past service and sacrifices while serving with or attached to the 101st Sustainment Brigade.
- Unite and promote fellowship for the good of the membership through our Reunions, Publications and Website to document the achievements of the unit
- Assist in the relief and special needs of our membership and the education of their children to the betterment of American patriotism and American citizenship, and to promote the national defense.
- Encourage historical research of wars, to acquire and preserve the records of the service of the members, as well as documents and relics, and mark the scenes of the activities of the 101st Sustainment Brigade or 101st Airborne Division Support Command with appropriate memorials and/or monuments, and celebrate the anniversaries of prominent events of our country’s wars and conflicts.
- Foster true patriotism, to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom and at all times to uphold, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States of America.



For more information, go to the 101st Lifeliners Association, Inc. Facebook page



drivers, it will do a couple things,” he said. “It will support the COIN (counter-insurgency) initiative from Gen. Petraeus ( the commander of International Security Assistance Force and US Forces Afghanistan). It will also put money back in the economy.”

By hiring the truck companies locally and directly, the Lifeliners can guarantee the drivers receive their fair share, while also cutting out the foreign companies who take a significant piece of each payment. In the end, the contracts will cost less, and the drivers will take more money home after each trip.

“This initiative is going to be cheaper for the US government,”

Peterman said, “when we start this it will cost us half of what we’re spending now for each truck. We will minimize the corruption, minimize the attacks on our trucks, create a more efficient distribution system, and the American people get a lot more value for their money.”

The ATN will pool the resources from each province, and in turn create an industry for the Afghans. By building the infrastructure, the local companies will learn business practices. Also, an industry will be in place as America withdraws its troops and retrogrades equipment, Davis said.



Staff Sgt. Maurica Dockery, the project purchasing officer for the Commander’s Emergency Response Program, 530th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, interviews a local business man during a trucking shura on Forward Operating Base Dehdadi II, May 9. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Vanpool)

“They can move their cargo, move their lumber, move whatever commodity they need to, and they will have the capabilities to do that,” Davis said. “As the agricultural sector increases, they can move food down south where the food is not as plentiful. Bottom line, we are growing the capabilities for them to be self-sustaining.”

Now, the initiative plans to help improve the quality of life for the Afghans by providing jobs and paychecks as they assist the brigade is moving supplies and equipment throughout Afghanistan.

“I really think that the Afghans driving for me are a part of Task Force Lifeliner,” Peterman said.

The brigade is benchmarking the use of the ATN across Regional Command North, and it plans to bring the system through RC East and Capitol. ♦

# Why Hairatan Gate matters

*Border Crossing means economic commerce to Northern Afghanistan, provides future exit for Coalition forces*

by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BALKH PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The 101st Sustainment Brigade has continued to work with their Northern Afghan partners in ensuring the success of the ambitious Hairatan Gate Border Crossing project.

The project, also known as the Northern Distribution Network, has been cited by brigade commander Col. Michael Peterman as a “logistical game-changer” if done correctly, particularly in terms of what it will mean for the Afghan community and U.S. forces as they prepare for the eventual withdrawal.

The “Lifeliners” serve as the proverbial “eyes and ears” for Coalition forces in Regional Command North for U.S. and Afghan cargo supply and distribution coming in and out of the country through the area, said Maj. Jesse Wentworth, former Tactical Command Post Officer in Charge for Forward Operating Base Hairatan.

They’ve also established solid partnerships with key regional leaders in an attempt to help bring about economic stability up north since arriving to the area earlier this year.

“Big picture, (the crossing) is important because it’s a large border crossing, as well as an alternative to other border crossings here, so limiting any disruptions would be of interest to us,” he said.

“By having boots on the ground, we can give real time information to the brigade as to what’s here and flowing, as well as partnering with the Afghans. The same planes and trucks coming across the border that are contracted for us do the same for them.”

Wentworth said several agencies have interest in the Hairatan Gate Border crossing because of its geographical location.

For starters, it is the first and only border crossing with a functioning rail line which currently runs from Hairatan all the way to Mazar-E-Sharif. The intent is to re-establish the distribution network in the north through Europe and Central Asia, and tie that

line into its infrastructure.

Another aspect of the crossing is its ability to improve economy up north. Dr. Hashim Barna, chief administrator of harbor services in Hairatan, said as commerce improves in the region, so does the quality of life.

“Not only does it provide economic stability and security in the region, but is also has the potential to play a significant role in bringing prosperity around the gateway to Central Asia,” he said.

Barna also said the collaboration between Coalition forces and regional Afghan leaders helps establish trust between the two. “It lets the Afghan people here know that the U.S. is here to help,” he said.

Finally, while promoting economic stability in the region, establishing a rail line at the Hairatan Gate Border crossing fits firmly into the intent laid out by International Security Assistance Forces Commander Gen. David Petraeus to create a means of a future withdrawal from Afghanistan.

“We’re trying to think two to three steps ahead of where we’re at. A safe, reliable route from Afghanistan is a plus,” Wentworth said. “But we also need to ensure that we’re meeting (President Obama’s) intent and conditions that are being laid out.”

The rail line was funded by the Central Asian banks and the Uzbekistan government built it.

“It’s just one step in the development of this region,” Wentworth said. “It’s been tested and shown to be functional. All that needs to be agreed upon is the day-to-day operation of it. That’s something that has to be figured out between the two governments.”

“We have an inherent responsibility of being involved and developing a relationship with the people of the region. They’re not going to tell a stranger about the problems they’re having, or take advice. We’ve been able to work through that.”

“What’s good for the Port of Hairatan is good for the future of Afghanistan,” Wentworth said. ♦



The rail line at the Hairatan Gate Border Crossing provides residents in Northern Afghanistan not only a chance for economic stability, but a means for helping troops get cargo and equipment back home during the future drawdown. (photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

# Around BAF

## Chapel Services

### Enduring Faith Chapel

Catholic Mass  
Saturday, 7:45 p.m.

Protestant Traditional Service  
Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

Protestant (ChapelNext) Service  
Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

Catholic Mass  
Sunday, 12:30 p.m.

Protestant (Unplugged) Service  
Sunday, 6:30 p.m.

### Aviation Chapel

Protestant Service  
Sunday, 7 p.m.

### AMC Chapel

Protestant Service  
Sunday, 8 p.m.

### Warrior Chapel

Catholic Mass  
Saturday, 4 p.m.

Protestant Service  
Saturday, 10 a.m.

For Information call:  
Enduring Faith Chapel  
431-3045

## Pool, Movies, Dominoes, Cards

All day and night at the Lifeliner Lounge

## Salsa Night

Every Thursday and Saturday from 8 p.m. until 1 a.m. at Green Beans

## Bible Study

Every Tuesday from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the Lifeliner Lounge Theater

## Hip-Hop Night

Every Friday night at 9 p.m. at the 8-Ball MWR

## Rock Band Night

Every Wednesday from 8 p.m. until midnight at the 8-Ball MWR

## Bingo

Monday & Thursday at 8 a.m., Friday at 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 12:45 a.m. at the Vulture’s Nest in Camp Cunningham



## Lifeline Gym

The gym is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An added cardio room, a second floor and several new pieces of equipment to keep the Lifeliners fit and ready to fight.

# Pulling together

## Conference aims to improve logistics in East

by Spc. Michael Vanpool  
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 101st Sustainment Brigade “Task Force Lifeline” conducted a Logistics Synchronization Conference for logistics elements in Regional Command East this weekend.

The LogSync further coordinated multiple logistical elements in RC-East, allowing each task force to break down their responsibilities and how they can assist each other support the warfighter.

“For 10 years, we fought Afghanistan one year at a time,” said Maj. Joe Suddith, the brigade support operations officer in charge. “With different units coming in at different times, we felt it was necessary to get all the logisticians together to make sure everyone knows the systems in place.

“The work we’re doing is to improve those systems and make sure the warfighter receives what they need in a timely manner,” Suddith said.

Logisticians from throughout RC-East included the 101st Sustainment Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division and the various brigade support battalions. Units from the Defense Logistics Agency, Army Material Command, and Department of Defense contractors also attended the conference to synchronize their efforts.

“The point of the conference is to get together and discuss logistics challenges and how they can work together to fix them,” said Cpt. Marjorie Cahuasqui, brigade support operations officer in charge of ammunition.

“All logistics elements came together to discuss logistical challenges and choke points in their area of operations. All task forces here gave a battle field review brief and identified choke points,” she said.

The conference comes as new brigade combat teams arrive, with their respective brigade support battalions, as well as 1st Cavalry Division, who took over the responsibility of RC-East from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) this past month.

As briefings ensued, the different task force commanders were able to learn from each other and work through problems to become more efficient in their logistical duties.

“Here we have guys that are two months away from transferring out, guys that are six months away from transferring, so it’s good to hear what they’ve learned here,” said Lt. Col. Joseph Morrow, the commander of the 325th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division “Task Force Bronco.” Morrow and Task Force Bronco took over responsibility of the Laghlan Province this past month.

Each of the BSB commanders reviewed their battle space, and how they resupply servicemembers in their brigade combat teams. The various sections of support operations for the 101st Sust. Bde. also explained to the BSB commanders and SPO officers how they can help them receive the supplies and equipment they need to complete their missions.

“We briefed for the six months we’ve been here, kind of like an azimuth check,” Cahuasqui said, who helped organize the conference. “Where we’re at, what we’ve done and where we’re going.”

The breakdown of the elements within the Lifeline SPO helped the BSBs understand where their different classes of supply come from; in an effort to assist them to work more efficiently.

“It made us look backwards from where we’re at. We know how to push forward to our units,” Morrow said. “At the end of the day, I’ll know where everything comes from, and it’s good to put a face to a name or email.” ♦



Logisticians from throughout Regional Command East gathered for a Logistics Synchronization Conference on Bagram Air Field, May 14 and 15. The conference allowed the commanders of the various task forces a chance to work together and sort out problems to better resupply servicemembers in Eastern Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Vanpool)

## 277th Maintenance Company leaves, 584th Maintenance Company joins TF Lifeline



The 277th Maintenance Company completed their deployment with 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, and returned home to Georgia. The national guard unit maintained vehicles for the 17th CSSB, mentored Afghan National Army Soldiers and recovered vehicles during their deployment with TF Ready and Lifeline.

The 277th was replaced by the 584th Maintenance Company, who re-joins the 101st Sustainment Brigade from the 106th Transportation Battalion at Fort Campbell.

## 364th Finance Company leaves, 101st Finance Company joins TF Lifeline

The 364th Finance Company completed their deployment with Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, and returned home to Maryland. The reserve unit supported Regional Commands North, East and Capitol during their deployment with TF Lifeline.

The 364th was replaced by the 101st Finance Company, who re-joins the Special Troops Battalion from Fort Campbell.



# A day in the *Life* Liners

