TASK FORCE Lifeliners

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INSIDE FEATURE:
Happy Birthday, Lifeliners!

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A Message from the Commander and Command Sergeant Major

From Lifeliner 6

Col. Michael Peterman
Task Force Lifeliner Commander

The author Brian Herbert once wrote, "I leave my footprints in history, even where I do not tread." Our enduring footprint as a Sustainment Brigade is to ensure that we not only leave Afghanistan a better place than we found it, but that its improvements go a long way in helping the Afghans establish a better life for themselves.

It's part of the legacy of being part of the Army's premiere sustainment brigade. No matter where we go while in theater, the 101st Sustainment Brigade's name is brought up and spoken highly of. The positive impact that our Soldiers are making here is not going unnoticed by anyone. The team's ability to not only think in the present, but also about the future impact of what we do, speaks volumes to the rest of Coalition allies.

This month, the Lifeliners celebrate another significant milestone in its illustrious history: the birthday of our brigade. July 1, 1956, is the date etched in history as when our "enduring footprint" as a unit began. There have been many fine and outstanding Soldiers who have passed through the brigade, and have touched the lives of many throughout our history. This month, want to pay special tribute to them and what they meant to our family.

To the Lifeliners currently serving in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, this time is yours. You are truly the backbone of this organization, and without your work ethic, determination, and never quit attitude, we would not have made the accomplishments here that we have. You have the gratitude not only of a nation, but of the family, friends, and fellow 101st Airborne Division brothers back home.

To our fellow Lifeliners back home at Fort Campbell, your contribution to this great brigade is not forgotten. Your ability to keep the brigade operating at its highest level while your brothers and sisters conduct operations abroad is invaluable to us. It has not gone unnoticed, and you have our deepest thanks for all that you do.

And finally, to our families and friends, you are the true rock upon which each and everyone one of us stand. No mission is ever complete or accomplished without the firm support of those special individuals who give us reason to keep on pushing forward, not matter how hard it gets. Your faith in us and pride in who are as Soldiers, husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, siblings, etc., is the lifeblood that keeps us going.

July 1st is the day that we celebrate our birthday as the Army's premiere Sustainment Brigade. Everyday we celebrate the legacy and illustrious history of what it means to be a Lifeliner! Lifeliners! Air Assault! LL6

From Lifeliner 7

Command Sgt. Maj. David Thompson
TF Lifeliner Command Sergeant Major

One of the proudest accomplishments as the commander sergeant major of the 101st Sustainment Brigade is designing and creating the new Division Unit Insignia. It's shaped like our combat patch, and displays our lineage to the heralded 101st Airborne Division.

The four-pointed compass rose with gold rope is prominently featured on the DUI. It displays Old Abe and the playing cards - Club, Hearts, and Spades- and Torii showing our lineage to the Army's only Air Assault Division. The colors red and green symbolizes our campaigns in Vietnam, Southwest Asia, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom. The Parachute represents our lineage to Airborne units, while the Helo rotary wings signify our lineage with the Air Assault unit. Underneath the DUI are the words, "Vita Versus", which means "Lifeliners."

The new DUI represents the brigade's history… something we celebrated this month. On July 1st, 1956, the 101st Sustainment Brigade was constituted. We've had several designations since being constituted, but the fundamental purpose of our mission has and always will remain constant: to bed the Army's best at providing world class logistical support whenever and wherever needed.

We conducted a birthday celebration here at Bagram, but we also gave the Soldiers an insight into what it means to be a Lifeliner. Many did not know the history of this brigade, but ours is a lineage definitely worth being proud of. Our brigade conducted more tours in Vietnam than any other brigade in the 101st Airborne Division. We have deployed multiple times in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. When our country calls us to service, we are there and give nothing less than our best. We are the living embodiment of our motto: "Everyday there's a Lifeliner in the fight."

I'm always fond of the saying, "Surrounding yourselves with Excellence." The Soldiers of the 101st Sustainment Brigade live up to that calling on a daily basis, and it is a privilege to lead them. The same can be said for our families back home, without whom no mission can b e accomplished effectively.

Happy birthday to the Lifeliners and all of our heroes….past and present!! Fifty-five years of being the best at what we do, and may our legacy at being the best continue on throughout the years!!

Lifeliners!!
Air Assault!!
LL7

SAFETY THOUGHTS

If the average Lifeliner Soldier in Afghanistan was asked to name the top three issues which keep him awake at night, the hazards of inadequate field sanitation would probably not make the list. The efforts of unit field sanitation reps and preventive medicine personnel give the American Soldier an unmatched level of protection from diseases during a deployment. As a result, deployed US forces experience few instances of sickness crippling a unit or taking an individual out of the fight.

This exceptional record is not a chance occurrence. A brief review of military history shows that armies in the field have been rendered combat-ineffective by the rapid spread of disease. In the Crimean War, 1853-1856, the English and French combined forces against Russia. The French deployed 309,000 men into the theater. Of these, some 200,000 were hospitalized: 50,000 for wounds and 150,000 from disease; nearly 50% of their men were taken out of the fight from sickness. Forty years earlier, Napoleon Bonaparte's seemingly invincible Grand Armee was devastated by disease. Archeologists recently exhumed remains of French Soldiers who were buried in mass graves in Russia. Their research reveals that 30% of the strength of Napoleon's Army was depleted by a typhus epidemic during the infamous 1812 winter retreat from Russia. With a beginning strength of over a half-million men, as many as 160,000 soldiers may have died from an infectious disease rather than in battle.

However, the experience from which we can learn the most is the 1979-89 Soviet deployment in Afghanistan. In Beaten by the Bugs: The Soviet-Afghan War Experience (http://www-cgsc.army.mil/milrev/milrvweb/nov/gra.html), LTC (Ret) Lester Grau and MAJ William A. Jorgensen, USAR, provide an excellent overview of the devastating impact of poor field sanitation, inadequate disease prevention, and the critical importance of good nutrition. Hospitalization from diseases – often preventable – crippled the Soviet 40th Army, the primary war-fighting headquarters in Afghanistan. In the extracts from their study which follow, the comparison between hostile and non-hostile casualties is especially interesting.

Of the 620,000 Soviets who served in Afghanistan, 14,453 were killed or died from wounds, accidents or disease, a modest 2.33%. However, the rate of hospitalization during Afghan service was remarkable. The 469,685 personnel hospitalized represented almost 76% of those who deployed. Of these, 53,753 or 11.44%, were wounded or injured. Fully 415,932 or 88.56%, were hospitalized for serious diseases. In other words, 67% of those who served in Afghanistan required hospitalization for a serious illness. These illnesses included 115,308 cases of infectious hepatitis and 31,080 cases of typhoid fever. The remaining 269,544 cases were split between plague, malaria, cholera, diphtheria, meningitis, heart disease, shigellosis or infectious dysentery, amoebic dysentery, rheumatism, heat stroke, pneumonia, and typhus.

The primary reasons for the high rate of disease among Soviet troops were lack of sufficient clean drinking water, no enforcement of basic field sanitation practices (a historic Soviet problem, partly due to their lack of a professional NCO corps), the failure of cooks to wash their hands after defecation, and a poor diet by the average Soldier.

The water in Afghanistan has a high bacteria level. Despite warnings and training, Soviet troops often drank untreated water, especially at remote locations. Soviet Soldiers often drank untreated water because they did not like the taste of treated water and had grown up drinking water from all sources without apparent ill effects. The untreated water often carried typhus and amoebic dysentery. Eventually, the Soviet Army developed air-droppable containers to provide water and hot food to remote locations.

Hepatitis accounted for 95% of hepatitis infections among Soviet soldiers. Like American military personnel, Soviet soldiers were inoculated against Hepatitis B before deployment. But hepatitis A and C are highly infectious diseases spread primarily by the fecal-oral route, normally from failing to wash one's hands or drink clean water. Cooks who failed to wash were an especially serious problem, as they touched food and spread infectious diseases at a disproportionately high rate. The prevention of the spread of disease is the primary reason for our rigid enforcement of hand-washing before meals and after using the latrine. It is also the reason for the liberal distribution and use of hand sanitizer solutions.

The lack of regular, balanced meals weakened Soviet soldiers' resistance to disease, as theirdry rations failed to provide proper nutritional requirements over time. Even in the most remote locations, the US Army ensures cooks prepare hot, balanced meals - not because it's the nice thing to do, it's a force protection measure designed to allow individual immune systems to ward off diseases.

Physical conditioning and acclimatization is very important in disease prevention. However, physical training in the Soviet Union did not fully prepare soldiers for the rugged realities of combat duty in Afghanistan. Troops were rapidly debilitated by the harsh field conditions, which left them more prone to disease. The Soviet Army eventually began training their soldiers in six-month mountain warfare schools before deployment to Afghanistan. Physical conditioning was stressed, as was field craft, first aid and field sanitation.

Basic field sanitation remained a Soviet problem throughout the war. Although field latrines were dug and flush latrines were installed in base camps, Soviet soldiers often did not bother to use them and relieved themselves close to the living and dining areas. The troops often did not wash their hands after relieving themselves, providing another fecal-oral route for infectious diseases.

Finally, a significant obstacle to the control of infectious disease was the lack of a professional NCO corps in the Soviet Army. Soviet NCOs were draftees who had attended a special six-month course. They had no authority or power over their fellow soldiers. The business of discipline, inspection and enforcing standards fell on the platoon leader, a junior lieutenant. He personally had to ensure that all his troops were lice-free, washed their hands, drank clean water, prepared food correctly, and dug and used latrines. He was also responsible for maintenance, training and combat operations. Without NCOs, the lieutenant was unable to accomplish all his duties correctly, resulting in lack of adequate field sanitation. One of the primary strength of the US military is the NCO Corps, as enforcement of basic field sanitation is NCO business and sergeants have the legal authority to enforce rules which protect the force.

Grau and Jorgensen's findings in Beaten by the Bugs should encourage the Lifeliner Soldier deployed to Afghanistan. The major factors which lead to the spread of infectious diseases are effectively blunted by standard field sanitation practices backed up by enforcement of rules by NCOs, dedicated resources to provide nutritionally balanced meals and clean water, pre-deployment training and medical screening, and continual awareness training to educate the force. But, as always, force protection begins with individual awareness and compliance with standards, even when no one is looking. So wash your hands, drink your water, and eat your vegetables.

Jay Jennings
TF Lifeliners Safety Officer

Articles of Faith

Practicing Spiritual Multi-tasking

Multi-tasking sounds like something we want to avoid when simplifying our spiritual lives. And while that's probably true in general, there are exceptions to the rule.

Multi-tasking originated as a technological term to speak of a computer performing more than one function at a time, but it makes me thinks of plate spinners who performed in variety shows in the days of black-and-white television. A plate spinner would balance a dinner plate on top of a tall, pencil-thin wooden rod, then strike the plate's edge to make it spin. Then he would quickly start a second one spinning on another rod, then a third, on up to about 10 or 12. By the time he'd started the last one, the first plates would begin to wobble, so he'd run to the beginning of the line and quickly give each a new spin.

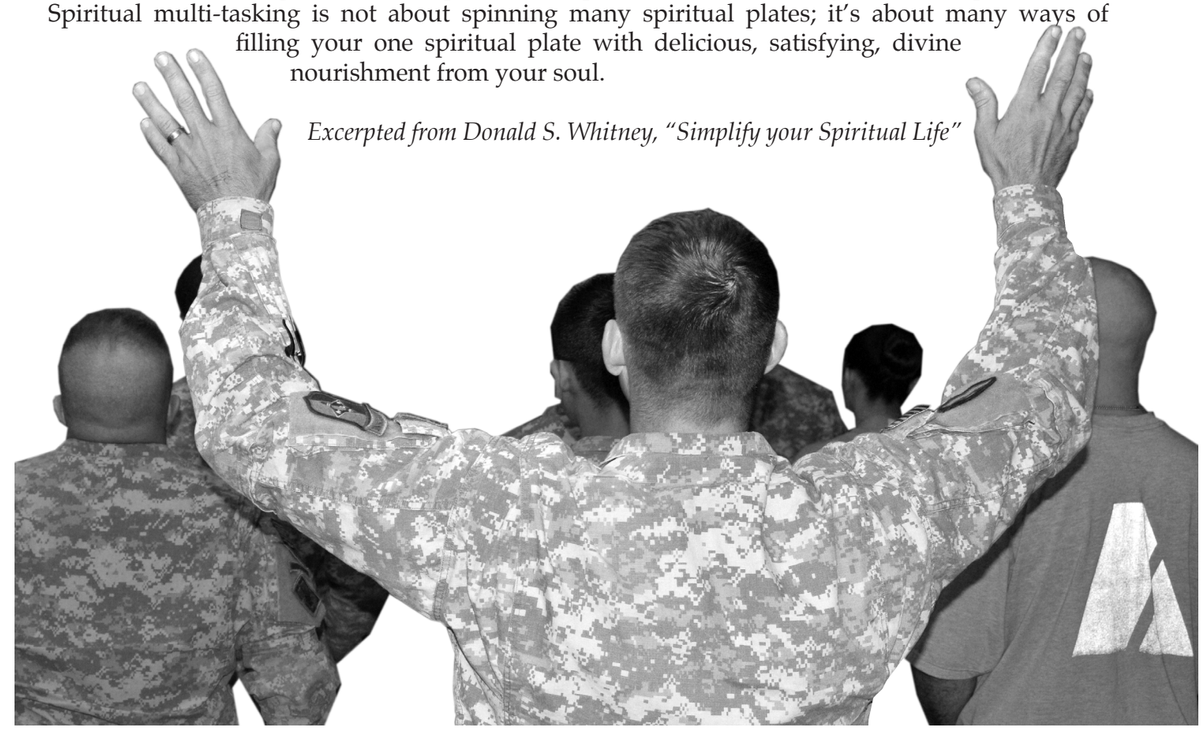
Sometimes people think that by advocating the number of spiritual disciplines I mention in "Simplify your Spiritual Life" and in "Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life" that I'm encouraging them to be spiritual plate spinners. They picture themselves trying to keep an overwhelming number of disciplines balanced, spending more time concerned about the mere maintenance of them than the fruit of them.

Just because we can isolate a discipline (like prayer, Bible intake, worship, or fasting) and examine it doesn't necessarily mean that it is practiced in isolation from other disciplines. In fact, it's not unusual to perform five or six disciplines during the same devotional period, most of them simultaneously.

For example, simply by having, "quiet time" you are practicing one form of the discipline of silence and solitude. And during that time you will likely engage in worship, Bible intake, and prayer. That's three more disciplines. Many will also write their insights from Scripture, their meditations, or other entries into a journal during this time. And if you happen to be fasting, that's half-a dozen individual disciplines being performed during the same devotional period. You are doing more than you realize.

So while we can distinguish various spiritual disciplines, we do not always have to separate them. Spiritual multi-tasking is not about spinning many spiritual plates; it's about many ways of filling your one spiritual plate with delicious, satisfying, divine nourishment from your soul.

Excerpted from Donald S. Whitney, "Simplify your Spiritual Life"



Around the Compound

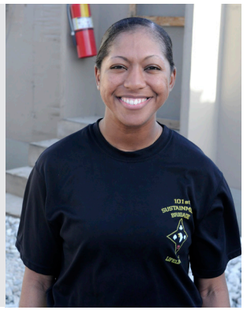
"What it means to be a Lifeliner"

"To me, it's helping people better themselves."

Spc. Stevey Masey
Supply Specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
101st STB, 101st Sustainment Brigade

"It means supporting the warfighters and being part of a great team."

Cpt. Niya Harris
Commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
101st STB, 101st Sustainment Brigade



"A Lifeliner is the true definition of Selfless Service.
We provide to ensure the battlefield is properly prepared to fulfill the mission!."

Sgt. 1st Class Orlando Bonilla
Network Operations Noncommissioned Officer in Charge,
101st Sustainment Brigade

"It means a Sister or Brother in Arms peforming a duty
with the spirit of excellence that contributes in symbolic partnership,
to the overall support of mission accomplishment and service to all."

Sgt. 1st Class Aniceto Valencia
Equal Oppurtunity Advisor,
101st Sustainment Brigade

Announcements

New Audie Murphy member

The Sgt. Audie Murphy club will initiate a new member from Task Force Lifeliner this month.

After boards leading up to the Joint Sustainment Command Afghanistan board this past month, Sgt. 1st Class Narada Johnson, of the 11th Quartermaster Detachment, 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, completed the process and is schedule to be inducted into the Sgt. Audie Murphy Club, July 20.

In order for a noncommissioned officer to compete in the boards for induction into the club, the NCO must "exemplify leadership characterized by personal concern for the needs, training, development, and welfare of Soldiers and concern for families of Soldiers," according to FORSCOM Reg. 600-8.

After being selected, Johnson worked with club members after work studying the manuals and going through mock boards, he said.

The study book for the Audie Murphy board includes command, supply and discipline, maintenance and physical fitness guidelines. However, NCOs approaching the board must also answer the questions based on their experience as leaders.

"They asked me questions and I answered from my experience and the manuals," Johnson said. "The main thing I take away from it is to go out there and help my Soldiers and other NCOs."

The reading and learning leading up to the board not only help competitors answer the questions, but it also transfers to their professional lives and allows them to be better leaders.

"They say people inducted are in the top one percent of NCOs," he said. "It puts me in a better caliber among my peers."

For Johnson, an NCO with 11 years in the Army, the board was a process of improving.

"It was something I never thought I'd be able to do. I didn't have the confidence to do it," he said. "I never thought I had it in me, but others did."

Studying before the board in Kandahar Air Field this past month, Johnson read through the massive study guide to prepare to face the six sergeants major.

"If you only need four hours of sleep," Johnson said, "an Audie Murphy member only needs two."

Awards

This past month, servicemembers of TF Lifeliner received:

111 Bronze Star Medals

215 Army Commendation Medals

72 Combat Action Badges

1 Purple Heart

Promotions

Congratulations to these newly promoted Lifeliners

Cpt. Nicholas Bredenkamp	Cpt. Kristin Strobel
Cpt. Matthew Mace	Cpt. Thomas Carter Jr.
Cpt. Jonathan Andol	Cpt. Robert Perkins
Cpt. Babajide Odejoke-Maxwell	1st Lt. Ross Powell
Master Sgt. Austin Harrold	Staff Sgt. John Adey
Staff Sgt. Sean Graham	Staff Sgt. Tracy Stewart
Sgt. Raul Ayala	Sgt. Chelsia Burton
Sgt. Colby Bottoms	Sgt. Ronald Haitz

Finding the "Rally Point"

Lifeliners kick off inaugural worship service, fellowship activities

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

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 101st Sustainment Brigade's Lifeliner Lounge – also known as the L3 - is a place where the Soldiers can relax from the daily rigors of life in a combat zone and play the latest video games on Xbox, shoot pool, watch movies, and even do their laundry.

Add a place to worship to the list.

The Brigade's Unit Ministry Team officially began church services there in the small theater this past weekend when they hosted their inaugural "Rally Point" Worship Service. The worship service and its daily fellowship get-togethers are intended to give the brigade and its attached units a place where the Soldiers can re-charge themselves spiritually during their time away from their family.

More than 20 Soldiers attended Sunday's service, which featured music and communion. Cpt. Jason Lim said he felt a "renewed vigor" six months into his deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, thanks not only to his faith in God, but through the daily morning devotions and fellowships with Christian Soldiers.

Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Vanderyt (center), 101st Sustainment Brigade Force Protection NCO, enjoys the music at the brigade's "Rally Point" Worship service. The Lifeliners hosted their inaugural Sunday worship and fellowship event at the Lifeliner Lounge. (photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

"Before I started going to the devotions, I went through this daily drag, waking up and feeling the misery of doing the same thing over and over again," the Brigade Support Operations Air Movement officer in charge said. "Now, I have this renewed energy to get through the day, especially knowing that you have brothers and sisters there for you."

Brigade Chaplain (Maj.) Tammie Crews said the name "Rally Point" came from several Soldiers who frequently meet for devotionals and fellowship. "In a military sense, it's the place where you go to get all of your resources together just before the charge. Here is not where the final result or answer is, but it's that starting point, I think," she said.

"This is different than just going down to Enduring Faith Chapel on Bagram because it's our own people. For those who come, it's about ownership; it's kind of birthed itself step by step. It's also for the other battalions attached to brigade here. We want them to know that they have a place where they belong."

Crews said the idea for the service originated when the Lifeliners first arrived back in theater in November 2010, when she and several Soldiers conducted an impromptu prayer session. One of the Soldiers involved in that session was Sgt. Linda Pierre, who was killed along with six other fellow Soldiers during a suicide bombing this past April at Forward Operating Base Gamberi.

"It makes me tear up a bit when I remember her being there," Crews said.

Another Soldier involved in the prayer, Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Vanderyt, attends the morning devotionals and Bible studies the UMT offers. He invited Lim to attend a devotional two months ago, and in turn, Lim invited his fellow Soldiers.

"The morning I went, he (Vanderyt) wasn't there," Lim said. "But it was cool. We had a great discussion. It felt like one of those rolling snowballs going down a hill. It just kept getting bigger and bigger."

Lim said the growth continues as they send the message of unity through faith. "God is working in us and God is here. He continues to work, as this group has grown from four to 15. We meet every morning, we have Bible study, and now Sunday service."

Vanderyt, a force protection noncommissioned officer, said the services goes a lot deeper to the core issue of what Soldiers deal with during consistent deployments and constant separation from families.

"The fellowship is a place where this becomes our extended family. We can re-connect with one another and share in each other's successes, our failures and our hopes," he said.

Vanderyt said he had hoped for fellowship with fellow Christian Soldiers while deployed to Afghanistan, and credits 101st Special Troops Battalion Chaplain (Cpt.) Vincent Hardy for playing a key role in the development of the Rally Point.

"I didn't have any expectations about what it would turn into or where it would go, but it's amazing that it did turn this way," he said. "He (Hardy) started something that we were able to continue. He had an amazing way with the Soldiers inasfar as connecting with them. He was the spark to where we're at now."

Crews said the "Rally Point" concept goes beyond just on the ground in Afghanistan. She said the hope is that it becomes part of the brigade chapel back at Fort Campbell.

"It's all part of the big picture, getting people to work through their faith in different mediums and different levels, whether it's a more formal worship or the morning devotions. It's part of the Army's spiritual resiliency piece; it's something that's real for our Soldiers and that they understand that they have real ownership in it," she said.✦

A deployment of firsts

by Spc. Michael Vanpool
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – A soldier's first deployment is filled with many new experiences, from the new country to the new people to the new job

One Guardsman recently added another check to his list of deployment adventures.

Nearly one month ago, Pfc. Ryan Petrill, a gunner with the 131st Transportation Company, a Pennsylvania National Guard unit attached to the 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, made it home to Pennsylvania to be with his wife as their first son was born.

Wyatt Petrill was born on May 3, 2011, with both his parents in the room.

While his leave was originally planned for June, Petrill knew he had to get home in Hazelton, Pa., for the birth of his first baby.

When Petrill deployed here this past January, his wife, Jessica, was halfway through her pregnancy. With the help of the readily available technologies, they stayed in constant contact as the baby grew.

"We talked about it so she wouldn't be home alone," he said. "We talked a lot through Skype and the internet."

Soon after completing his basic and advanced training in 2009, Petrill started drill with the 131st Trans. Company, and he soon learned of the impending deployment to Afghanistan. Deployments raise a lot of questions in a soldier's mind as he prepares to spend a year in a combat zone. Petrill and his then-girlfriend were talking about marriage, but were still undecided on a date.

"We didn't know if we were going to wait or not, but we went for it," he said. Petrill and Jessica went for it August 20, 2010, when they made the big step to marriage.

Within a few short months, Petrell and the rest of the soldiers of the 131st began their final preparations to fuel the fight known as Operation Enduring Freedom.

As the guardsmen traveled to Fort Dix, N.J., and trained in Pennsylvania, the full spectrum of their next year began to unravel. People were moved around to make the best team possible. Petrill started out as an assistant gunner, then moving to a driver, and finally, gunner.

When they arrived this past January, the 131st quickly learned the routes and began to resupply several forward operating bases throughout Regional Command East and Capitol. The convoys run anywhere from two days to two weeks, so the platoons spend most of their time on the road.

"I like it; I'd rather be on the road than be here on base," Petrill said. "It makes the time go by faster. We're on the road a lot, but when we get back I'm constantly talking with my family."

Just as he sat back and watched his wife grow with their son for the first half of the deployment, Petrill is still going to watch as his son grows. All the little moments and firsts are only a computer click and screen away for the young couple.

"For right now, she's sending photos through the internet," he said. By the end of the year, Afghanistan will be a memory for the Petrills as they make the memories with their first kid.

"The first 30 days, I plan on getting readjusted and spending time with them," he said. "I can't wait to get home and back to my family."✦

Pfc. Ryan Petrill, a gunner with the 131st Transportation Company, a Pennsylvania National Guard unit attached to the 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, poses with a photograph of his wife and newborn son outside his B-Hut on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. Petrill made it home on mid-tour leave just in time for his first child's birth, May 3, 2011.

A family affair

Dougherty brothers reunite in Afghanistan

by Spc. Michael Vanpool
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Spc. Nathan Dougherty, a rigger with the 11th Quartermaster Detachment, 101st Sustainment Brigade, recently received a message from his brother as they were preparing bundles for their next aerial delivery.

"I told him to pack ice cream on top," said Capt. Ryan Dougherty, the battalion fire support officer for the 1-505th Parachute Infantry Regiment deployed to Regional Command North to assist Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force for village stability operations.

The Dougherty brothers were recently reunited here in Afghanistan. Nathan has been deployed to Bagram Air Field for just over six months, while his brother landed here this past week. While both soldiers came from a military family, each had his own reason for raising their right hand.

"Our grandfather was in Iwo Jima, and we have lots of uncles and cousins in the Air Force and Army," Ryan said.

Ryan joined after graduating with a Sociology degree from the University of New England, where he was part of the school's Reserve Officers' Training Corps. "It was always something I wanted to do," he said.

Nathan took a different approach before coming into the Army two and a half years ago. "I wanted to enjoy life before joining the Army," he said.

After attending the University of New England, Nathan quit school and spent the winter snowboarding in Colorado, and later worked for a construction company before signing a contract with the military and started training to become a rigger.

"I was surprised when he joined," Ryan said. "I found out while I was in Iraq from Mom. He bounced around a lot, so it surprised me that he'd come into the Army."

Part of Nathan's training before being assigned to Fort Campbell included the U.S. Army Airborne School. At the end of the three week course, Nathan received a surprise visit.

"Ryan was on R&R from his first deployment to Iraq and came to pin my airborne wings on me," Nathan said.

When Nathan saluted his older brother after the badge was pinned on his chest, Ryan saw his brother for the first time as a Soldier in the Army.

"I'm proud to have my brother in the military," he said.

Since then, the two brothers only occasionally see each other, due to the large stretches between their posts and small stretches in between overseas tours.

"Last we saw each other was over nine months ago," Ryan said.

The older Dougherty came to Afghanistan with just a brief notice of two months. Just enough time to marry his girlfriend, Chelsey, and pack his bags. Ryan is helping set up a new village stability operations center in Northern Afghanistan. Since he's assisting set up new operations, the communication wasn't properly set up for a minute.

Nathan received calls from their mother when Ryan flew out of Fort Bragg two weeks ago, wondering about her two sons in Afghanistan. "Our mom was beating me up because he couldn't call her the first week he was here," he said.

When Nathan redeploys this upcoming winter, he said he's preparing to make the change to the officer side of the Army.✦

Retention

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

MSG Michael Bonfardine
101st Sustainment Brigade
Career Counselor

First responders

Newly assigned medics sharpen skills for attack

by Spc. Michael Vanpool
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – A new group of Air Force medics recently attached to the 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, got their first taste of battlefield training with the unit during a mass casualty exercise, June 8.

"This is what I signed up for," said Airman 1st Class Julynn Guiwan said. "To save lives, do my job and bring people back home to families."

Guiwan is one of a new group of Air Force medics recently attached to the battalion. The exercise is designed to get them ready to prepare and train for attacks on Bagram Air Field during their six-month deployment.

"We used this opportunity to train new Air Force medics," said Master Sgt. David Dennis, the non commissioned officer in charge of the brigade medical operations section. "The Air Force medics are not typically trained in trauma, they're usually found in the clinic."

The medics are individual augmentees from various duty stations. They come together prior to leaving for Afghanistan for stateside training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and Fort Dix, N.J.

"The training today reinforces what they learned at the training site," Dennis said. Now that they're here with the guys they're working with, they're doing it on Soldiers and not other students."

In the event of an attack on Bagram, the medics, both Air Force augmentees and Army medics deployed with the brigade, sweep an area of the base and save any casualties. They also work in the 101st Sustainment Brigade Troop Medical Clinic here and provide medical care for several convoys of the brigade and its 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

For the Air Force medics attached to the brigade, this mission is a stark contrast to their typical duties working at clinics and hospitals. They are spending their first couple weeks here learning the ropes from the outgoing Air Force medics and Lifeliner medics.

As the new medics went through the exercise, they used their previous knowledge while learning in the new environment.

"It was a walkthrough for the new guys," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Kristin Taylor, a medic attached to the 101st Sust. Bde. "I feel confident in new Air Force medics' combat skills and sense of urgency."

As the alarms blared a warning of an incoming attack during the training exercise, the medics quickly grabbed their gear to look for potential casualties. During any attack, the medics run through the various office and livings buildings to check for an injured people.

This was the first experience for the latest group of Air Force medics performing their new jobs here. They checked the various areas, quickly, making sure that all people were safe and caring for the injured on the spot. The more injured personnel would be either moved to the clinic or hospital.

"It's a lot more real here," Guiwan said. "Back home you're in the forest. Here, you're in the desert, you hear the planes and the big voice. The Afghans and other militaries are walking around and watching you train."

The experienced Soldier and Airmen followed the fresh batch of medics to observe and offer advice. "It helps them build confidence in their skills," Dennis said.✦

Spc. Michael Grimes and Pfc. Garry Lim, medics with the 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, care for a staged injured Soldier during a mass casualty exercise, June 8, as Col. (Dr.) Peter Napolitano, the brigade surgeon looks on. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Vanpool)

Celebrating Lifeliner heritage

Brigade birthday time to reflect on legacy

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

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Soon after arriving to the 101st Sustainment Brigade this past year, Brigade Command Sgt. Major David Thompson gathered all his senior noncommissioned officers into the conference room and shared with them his philosophy on leadership.

One statement resonated among the NCOs during that meeting: "I surround myself with excellence," he said. "And I expect the same from you."

Flash forward several months: the brigade known as the "Lifeliners" is entering its eighth month of its deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. It's the brigade's fifth combat deployment since the Global War on Terrorism began.

The brigade also celebrated 55 years of heritage and history July 1st. The Lifeliners marked the occasion with a birthday and streamer ceremony in Afghanistan at the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Clamshell, and hosted their Organizational Day for the Soldiers at the Lifeliner Lounge.

What's important is what the Soldiers took away from the day: a sense of importance of what their unit has meant to the Army and the 101st Airborne Division throughout the years. "It's a way for us to give back to those Lifeliners who have sacrificed eight months here in theater," he said.

The brigade is responsible for delivery and ensuring all the supplies and resources needed for Coalition forces. "Currently, we're serving 13 brigades in theater," Thompson said. "That's the equivalent of servicing two-thirds of Clarksville, Tennessee."

Thompson said the ceremony was meant to pay homage to the history of the Lifeliners and the legacy of everyone who served in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. "In each of those conflicts, there is a fallen Lifeliner, and the battle streamers on our colors reflect that," he said.

"The sad thing is we don't know the stories of what happened all those years ago. But we'll still pay tribute and honor to the legacy of everyone who served with this brigade in the past 55

MORE "BIRTHDAY" ON PAGE 14

years."

Thompson said each time a pod of streamers from the different wars was brought up during the ceremony, it provided the Soldiers insight into the brigade's role in the conflict. "You'll hear the music of that era, but more important, you'll hear tidbits relevant of that time period."

The brigade also paid tribute during the closing of the ceremony to the Soldiers who were killed this past April in a suicide bombing attack at Forward Operating Base Gamberi.

"We have it as a Fallen Hero tribute," Thompson said. "It's imperative that we tie in and recognize our current loss. The streamers we're adding on to this campaign represent their story."

The brigade command sergeant major said he credits Brigade Commander Col. Michael Peterman for helping bring a sense of excellence in the brigade.

"He has spent the past two years setting the stage for this deployment, looking through the ranks and getting the best officers and noncommissioned officers for this his team, and it has paid dividends," Thompson said.

"This brigade is highly thought of. We're always looking ahead to the 'next step', not just the present situation. When we get a mission, we always think of the impact for the next generation once we leave. That is the legacy of this brigade."

Thompson came to the Sustainment Brigade from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, known around Fort Campbell as the "Rakkasans." He said he has an incredible sense of pride in the accomplishments of his current unit.

"It's overwhelming, the pride and focused everyone on this team is," he said. "I'm the most proud of (the Lifeliners Combat) patch, because coming to a sustainment brigade and serving a division like the 101st, make me see how we impact all of the Soldiers in our area of operation. One is an important as the other. That's the beauty of a sustainment brigade."

A taste of home

"Operation H.O.T." serves up good food, good times

Chef Rick Moonen shows off his culinary skills during "Operation H.O.T" at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. The event (which stands for "Honoring Our Troops) was intended to provide servicemembers with home-cooked Cajun meals and entertainment. (photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

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

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – A little home cooking went a long way for servicemembers stationed at Bagram Air Field recently as they were treated to the taste of down-home Cajun cuisine and live entertainment.

A team of chefs and entertainers from Houston teamed up for "Operation H.O.T." (Honoring Our Troops), serving spicy cuisine from the Texas-Louisiana border to feed and entertain the servicemembers stationed at BAF.

Show Promoter and Creator Charles Carroll said the group's intent was simple: entertain the finest troops in the world with some of the best talent in the world while bringing them a taste of home with a Cajun meal.

"It's all about home. It's not just a show or something we want to do. Our full intent is to touch the hearts of everyone here," he said. "That's why we have taste from home, that's why we have food from home, and that's why we have talent from home."

For Soldiers like Master Sgt. Jernell Logan, a disbursing agent with the 101st Sustainment Brigade, the meaning of the event was not lost.

"I'm glad we have this type of entertainment and encouragement for the troops," she said. "I'm glad these outlets are available to us. It helps people remember that we are serving our country."

Charles, the executive chef at the River Oaks Country Club in Houston, Texas, said the group has been working on the event for more than one year. The idea for Operation H.O.T was conceived three years ago with another chef and a retired general who wanted to travel to Afghanistan and feed the troops.

"The concept kept stalling, and after being invited on the team, I decided this was now on my bucket list," Carroll said. "We recognize that we came here willingly, but that our troops do this for a living. There's a lot that you give us by your sacrifice, so we felt it was our turn to come here and give back."

"Operation H.O.T" featured a diverse range of entertainment, including Jay Leno- impersonator Marcel Forestieri, Hypnotist the incredible Boris, and U2 Tribute band, "Mysterious Ways."

A highlight of the event was "Bagram's Iron Chef" competition, featuring two renowned chefs, Rick Moonen and Rick Tramonto dazzling the crowd with their culinary expertise. The chefs, who were also featured on Bravo TV's, "Top Chef Masters" television program, also competed head-to-head to determine who could prepare a better food dish using content from a Meals Ready to Eat packet.

The troops were not only the honored guest at the event; they also helped provide entertainment. Army Reservist Sgt. Harold Dudley of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, helped kick off the ceremony by singing the National Anthem.

"I'm very honored I got to do this," he said.

Dudley, who is often seen walking around BAF and singing to himself. "I haven't got in trouble for it yet, so I guess it's OK," he said.

A native of Des Moines, Iowa, Dudley said he has sung since he was a child and attended Drake University to study music. He said he is planning on completing his six –year military commitment and finish his studies in music.

"I think this (Operation H.O.T) is an awesome program. It's an opportunity to eat something different and hang out people that we normally would not. Plus, it's Cajun food – who wants to pass that up?" he said.

Learning their trade, holding their own

Afghan National Army Soldiers learning maintenance, welding jobs

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

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – As with any military worldwide, the Afghan National Army is more than just "boots on the ground," as it offers a variety of trades and skills that are necessary to keep it running efficiently.

That is what 10 of its Soldiers of the 201st Corps Logistical Kandak and the 5th Combat Service Support Kandak, 201st Corps, Afghan National Army are learning during their maintenance course here at Bagram Air Field.

The ANA Soldiers, who work alongside the 10st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade at Forward Operating Base Gamberi, are taking the 45-day course to learn the basics of mechanical maintenance of their vehicles and equipment, and welding. The course is also a continued step in helping the country learn how to stand on its own.

"These Soldiers are making history," said Command Sgt. Major Katrina Najee, command sergeant major for the 101st Special Troops Battalion. "The ANA is so proud of their country. We want to help them stand on their own and support their country."

The feeling was mutual from the ANA soldiers.

"The army needs everything, and we are building the army from pieces," said Taj Mohammad Rangeen, a master sergeant with the 201st CLK, ANA, speaking through an interpreter.

Turyali Ali, a Soldier also assigned to the 201st CLK, ANA, said through an interpreter that has been working for one whole day on an M1114 vehicle for his training.

"I did a lot of work here. I took the wheel off and I'm still working on it," he said. "I've done this kind of work previously. In Gamberi, I will work and teach my fellow Soldiers how to do it."

The course is being conducted by the 401st Army Field Support Brigade. The Special Troops Battalion, also known as "Sustainers" are acting as advisors to the ANA, ensuring that they have what need to complete the course.

Sgt. 1st Class Luis Rivera, 101st STB Operations noncommissioned officer in charge, said the ANA Soldiers are learning how to work on the M1114 vehicle, including body work.

"So far it's good," he said. "The Soldiers are excited to be working on equipment. The vehicles they're working on are used for actual real-world missions."

Soldiers with the Afghan National Army work on an M1114 vehicle as part of their maintenance training at Bagram Air Field. The 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, is working with the ANA on helping them establish stability and self sufficiency. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

The welding course is brand new for the ANA Soldiers. Instructor Chris Parr said learning the science of welding comes down to repetition.

"It's that, muscle memory …for someone to come off the street and learn to weld takes a bit of time," he said. "These guys have been doing nothing but welding for the past two days, so they'll pick it pretty quick."

Parr , a senior welder with AC First, a private contracting company, said the ANA Soldiers got "tired" of just welding and wanted to actually create something. "They started making a chair," he said. "Next projects we'll have them start building lockers for their equipment, and the final project will be constructing a toolbox which they can take home."

Najee said partnerships and mentoring programs like this one go a long way in U.S.-Afghan relations.

"We always have to keep in mind that they are starting from scratch and that we have to be patient as they learn to do this," Najee said. "We want them to know that we do care about them and that we are not trying to disrespect them or their traditions."✦

'Mired' in training

Leaders get down and dirty learning vehicle recovery

by Cpl. Sarah Keegan
142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion,
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Exactly how many lieutenants does it take to recover a wrecked vehicle mired in the mud?

More than 20 junior officers with the 101st Sustainment Brigade got the chance to answer that question as they waded through the muddy pit to extract a wrecked Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle during vehicle recovery training.

The training, part of the brigade's monthly Leadership Professional Development, is intended to get the officers familiar with recovery procedures that Soldiers face regularly as they conduct real world operations in a combat environment.

"In this job you can get hurt. You can get hurt real bad, and if you're not careful you can get limbs taken or you can get killed," said Sgt. Joshua Garner, vehicle recovery instructor with the 59th Ordnance Brigade, based out of Fort Lee, Va.

Their classroom: a mired pit located on the recovery training site. The officers waded into calf -deep muddied water carrying tow recovery chains. They then hooked the chains onto the vehicles bumper and prepared to tow it out the muck.

The group was able to safely extract the vehicle. This was a new experience for many of them whose jobs in the military vary from specialty to specialty, yet they all came away from the training understanding the value of safety in recovery.

"Every level of leadership should come out here and get hands on. You want your Soldiers to feel confident that you know what's going on at all times during a mission," said 1st Lt. Alliyah Al-Maidi, platoon leader 59th Quartermaster Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade.

Brigade Commander Col. Michael Peterman said the training was not intended to make the officers experts.

"They didn't get technically competent but they got exposed to it," he said. "One of these lieutenants is going to be my replacement in 17 years, so we as the Army need to invest in them so that we end up with good leaders."

The training emphasized safety, placing these young officers in to a situation that required them to recover the vehicle in an efficient and safe manner. Garner said safety training is important because the Army is losing so many Soldiers and needs to keep everyone that they can.

"I think it helps to break down different steps and teach Soldiers something that their not accustomed to or have no knowledge of," said 1st Lt. Heidi Miller, Human Resources officer in charge, 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade.

1st Lt. Krystal Hertenstein, a platoon leader for the 584th Maintenance Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, helps rig a snatchbox to recover a MAX-Pro vehicle from a mire pit during the brigade's leadership professional development course. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael Vanpool)

Many people can imagine things that go on during a convoy, but they don't get a lot of hands on training, said 2nd Lt. Donovan Sullivan, a supply and services officer for the 142nd CSSB, 101st Sus. Bde.

"Safety is absolutely important in everything we do both here training and out in combat. If you have any unsafe acts going on if you have people out there behaving in an unsafe manner your jeopardize your entire mission," he said.

Sullivan said there was an added benefit to this training.

"I got a chance to get out and play in the mud and get dirty," he said.✦

(Editor's Note: Cpl. Keegan is the 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Unit Public Affairs Representative. The battalion, part of the 15th Sustainment Brigade out of Fort Bliss, Texas, is assigned to the 101st Sustainment Brigade, Fort Campbell, Ky., during their deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.)

‘Happy we all survived’

Airman medic receives Purple Heart

by Spc. Michael Vanpool
101st Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – As a group of eleven Air Force medics prepare their journey home, they stood in formation for awards after six months of supporting Task Force Lifeliners.

One of these airmen, Airmen 1st Class Bryenna Brooks, was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries she received just a week before.

Along with the Purple Heart, Brooks also received a Combat Medical Badge, an Air Force Combat Action Medal for her actions, and a Joint Service Commendation Medal for her actions on June 3rd.

The Sherwood, Wisc., native was on a convoy with the 59th Quartermaster Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, during a resupply mission. She was the secondary medic for the convoy.

When the Soldiers of the 59th and the Airman were rolling down the road, the mine resistant ambush-protected vehicle Brooks was in with four Soldiers started taking small arms fire. As the crew prepared for the attack, a rocket-propelled grenade was shot at the MRAP.

The RPG entered the vehicle over Brooks’s left shoulder, injuring herself and three of the Soldiers inside with shrapnel. After the attack, the crew continued down the road to the nearest combat outpost as Brooks aided the other wounded servicemembers.

“We were all very lucky to come out with minor injuries,” Brooks said.

More than a week later, the gun truck crew came out to a ceremony outside the 101st Sustainment Brigade headquarters. Soldiers from the three companies that the medics went out with looked on as they said goodbye to their medics.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Darryl Roberson, the commander of the 455th Expeditionary Wing, Bagram Air Field, made a special trip to the 101st Sustainment Brigade headquarters to award Brooks and the ten other Airmen.

A Purple Heart is not a common award for deployed Airmen, and anytime one is awarded to an Airman a general officer must personally recognize and pin the awardee, Roberson said.

Roberson pinned the eleven Airmen with Joint Service Commendation Medals. Air Force Staff Sgt. Kristin Taylor also received the Air Force Combat Action Medal and Combat Medical Badge during the ceremony. He reminded the group the importance of a Purple Heart, and its role as the oldest award in the United States military.

Brooks walked around after with the most medals hanging off her pocket of the group, a sign from her mission the previous week.

“I feel honored to receive it, but mainly I’m very happy we all survived,” Brooks said.

During the next week, the small group will travel back to their home stations. The 11 medics deployed from various bases across the United States. Brooks will return back to Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and her job in the ambulance services on the flight line there.

Most of the medics work in a clinic or hospital stateside, and opportunities to deploy as combat medics rarely arise.

“We only deploy one or two people at a time,” Brooks said. “After this tour, I’d be fine to deploy again.”✦

Airman 1st Class Bryenna Brooks, a medic with the 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, stands with Spc. Craig Richard Jr., of the 59th Quartermaster Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sust. Bde., after Brooks received four awards, including a Purple Heart Medal. Brooks and Richard were in a vehicle with three other Soldiers of the 59th when their vehicle took a rocket propelled-grenade during a resupply convoy mission this past week. (Courtesy photo)

Around BAF

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Protestant Traditional Service
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Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

Catholic Mass
Sunday, 12:30 p.m.

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

Catholic Mass
Sunday, 7:30 p.m.

Aviation Chapel

Protestant Service
Sunday, 7 p.m.

AMC Chapel

Protestant Service
Sunday, 8 pm.

Warrior Chapel

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Short notice success

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PHOENIX, Afghanistan – A little more than a year ago, the 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment found itself on the list of units that the Army had scheduled to inactivate, ending its illustrious history.

What a difference time make: the battalion is now preparing to head home from its fourth deployment in eight years in support of the Global War on Terrorism. They also take with them the belief that their mission to train and mentor Afghan security will have a lasting impact.

"I give us an A-plus on the success of this mission," said Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Thomas Nguyen. "Given the short notice that we would be deploying after all, this was an opportunity for us to showcase our flexibility, agility, and adaptability of our air defenders to complete a unique mission as trainers, mentors and partners to the Afghans."

This was the first time the battalion conducted a mission as trainers. The battalion received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for their time here in Afghanistan, and cased their colors as they prepared their Soldiers for the long-awaited trip back to the states to be reunited with their loved ones.

Nguyen said the battalion was scheduled to inactivate when he first arrived at Fort Campbell back in June 2009. They then received notice in December 2009 from the Department of he Army that their inactivation orders had been postponed until 2017.

"We also knew there was a reason why we were kept on the Army's role, and that was because of a pending deployment," he said.

His statement proved correct: Nguyen said by mid April 2010, the battalion received orders to Afghanistan to provide support to North Atlantic Treaty Organization trainers as they trained the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police.

"Our original mission was to provide counter rocket artillery support, but that mission slowly evaporated and disappeared," Nguyen said. "We were told by FORSCOM, 'hey, short notice, we're going to deploy you to Afghanistan as trainers.' So really, in a matter of six months, things really changed for us."

Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. William Maddox said the junior officers and noncommissioned officers lead the way in mentoring and training the Afghan security forces.

"It was difficult because we had 37 locations to start with, and missions did change frequently, but the way these Soldiers adapted and plugged in to the mission was phenomenal."

"I think we found it be a challenge to step out of our comfort zone to conduct this mission and see where we could make a difference," Nguyen said. "I have to give the Afghans credit as well. The leaders we worked with really stepped up to the plate. They know at the end of the day, this is their country, and they've got to make a difference."

Maj. Gen. James Mallory, deputy commander, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Training Mission-Afghanistan, attaches the Meritorious Unit Commendation streamer onto the 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, organizational colors. The battalion, originally scheduled for inactivation, was re-activated for deployment to Afghanistan as trainers to the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

This was the battalion's first deployment to Afghanistan, Nguyen said. They had deployed three times previously to Iraq, and noted the similarities and difference between the two countries.

"Even though they had Saddam Hussein, the road systems in Iraq were already in place and there was a central government as opposed to here," Maddox said. "They're a lot more technically savvy than the Afghans."

Maddox, who replaced former battalion command sergeant major Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Phifer in Mid-April 2011, also pointed to the Afghan illiteracy rate as an example of the difference between the two countries.

"It's a huge problem here. One of the challenges we had when training the police force here was finding those Afghans who could read," he said.

An Afghan Soldier and an Iraqi Soldier were similar in terms of learning and comprehending, Maddox said. They utilized a hands-on approach to learning and problem solving, he said.

"The Afghans sat down and listened. Our guys, regardless of MOS, were able to come here and teach them about their jobs, from vehicle maintenance and logistics, to actually how to run supply, contracts, etc., and ensuring that the work is done properly."

Maddox said he agreed with Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' assessment that the Afghans are much closer now to taking over their own security. "The first thing I thought about was the Soldiers in this battalion who came over here. They understand the concept of improving your position as time goes on."

"It's a complete 180 degrees. What they were able to accomplish have helped. There are still things in the country they will need help with, but I can leave here and say they're better off. I feel the Afghans are in a better position now."

Nguyen agreed.

"Our intent is to work ourselves out of a job here," he said. "Meaning, we were going to turn over the facility maintenance and management, and training aspect from "Coalition-ran' to 'Afghan-led.' The Afghans are owning their own programs."

Nguyen also said he wanted the American public to understand that there have been sustainable gains made during Operation Enduring Freedom.

"It's not to U.S. standards, but it is good by their model," he said. "What we're doing here is building capability. If we don't, who wants to come back here in five years?"✦

A matter of trust

"Sustainers" prepare for mentorship mission

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

KABUL, Afghanistan – Soldiers with the 101st Special Troops Battalion got a closer look at the Afghan National Army Soldiers they will be mentoring for their upcoming mission at Forward Operating Base Ghardez.

The ANA Soldiers, assigned to the 203rd Combat Logistics Battalion, were completing their pre-validation training in preparation for their mission at the FOB. The "Sustainers" will provide mentorship and training for the battalion as part of their partnership with the Afghan army.

"We will suggest to them what to do in certain situations, but we will never tell them what to do," said Maj. Robert Carpena, senior mentor, 101st Special Troops Bn., 101st Sus. Bde. "We want to establish a relationship with the battalion chain of command, and the trust we create with them will produce dividends later on."

The ANA Soldiers go through their pre-validation training with the International Assistance Security Forces. The Soldiers were learning how to establish both a tactical area and a forward logistics element, and basic drills such as reacting to improvised explosive devices and ambushes.

Carpena and Soldiers from the battalion spent time observing the training and will be working with the ANA on the many aspects of combat operations once the training is complete and everyone is at their final duty station.

"We want to ensure that they have the equipment and skills necessary to function," he said. "The number one priority is to get the equipment and personnel."

The Sustainers are conducting a similar mentorship program with the ANA at Forward Operating Base Gamberi. According to Staff Sgt. Thomas Williamson, senior maintenance mentor,101st Special Troops Bn., 101st Sus. Bde., the biggest concern right now is establishing the relationship with the ANA.

"It's basically building a trust relationship where if they come to me and say we have this problem, we can find an end result for them," he said.

Williamson said the ANA Soldiers are conducting driver training, and wrecker and recovery operation in preparation for the drive to Ghardez. He also said the key to success for the ANA is ensuring that the commanders are sharing knowledge with their Soldiers.

"They have to share that knowledge. The officers are not going to be the ones in that convoy wrecker with them, so if the Soldiers are not getting the proper training because the officers are holding the keys, they won't be sufficient enough when it comes time to actually recover that vehicle if an IED or something happens," he said.

Carpena said this is the first time he has led a mentorship training effort with the Afghan forces. He also praised ANA Soldiers on their ability to learn the tasking given them.

"They're quick learners. They've never done something like this before, but once you show them how to do it, they pick it up quickly," he said. "I don't see any issues with them in the near future to stand up an operation by themselves."✦

Soldiers with the Afghan National Army prepare to conduct training in preparation for their upcoming validation mission. The 101st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade will work with the ANA as mentors for these Soldiers at their next duty station. (photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

A 'well-defined' mission

by Spc. Michael Vanpool
101st Sustainment Brigade

BALKH PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Clean water is hard to come by in Afghanistan. Walking around any forward operating base, a soldier will pass several water points, each stacked with cases of bottle water.

That's not the case for the villages of Afghanistan. The Commander's Emergency Response Program team for the 530th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion decided to tackle the issue by starting a project in the Dehdadi District to build water wells for several villages.

"The villages there are in dire need of a clean water source," said Capt. Sherman Pinckney, the officer in charge of the 530th CERP team. "They (villagers) have to walk to other areas to get water in buckets or bottles and bring them home."

The 530th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, is addressing the needs of Afghan villagers in the Balkh province by working to provide water wells in the region. (Courtesy photo)

An unusually dry winter throughout Afghanistan has left several villages short on water that runs off from the mountains every spring and summer.

"Usually it snows a lot, but this year there wasn't that much snow, so there's a drought this summer," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Brown, the CERP team noncommissioned officer in charge.

Currently, there are no wells in the villages. Once the projects are completed, six shallow wells will be in place in different villages throughout the district.

The CERP team conducted a shura with the locals leaders to discuss what the villages needed. During the meeting, all the elders agreed that wells where the most important assistance they needed, Brown said.

The well construction started this week, and after 45-days of construction, they will be up and running. The project provided jobs to around 50 local Afghans to build the wells, Pinckney said.

The CERP team visits the sites weekly to make sure the construction is on schedule, and that these wells will be ready for the locals.

"Number one, they will have a water source," Pinckney said. Quality is also a big factor is the wells. The water source will be around for a while and will provide clean water to prevent diseases, he said.

Before the CERP team starts a project, they meet with the village elders to hear what they need in their villages. With the insufferable summer heat taking over Afghanistan, the need for water was their main priority.

"The village elders are excited because it helps their villages," Pinckney said. "When we spoke with the village elders, they were very appreciative of us."

As the CERP team was doing the site assessments over the past month, some of the locals came and started to thank the team even before anything had been done.

"Once they saw the 530th MRAPs and MATVs, they knew something good was about to happen," Pinckney said.

The wells are slated to be completed in about a month. In the mean time, the CERP team is working on another project.

"The next project is a high school, which will provide them with a better school, completely renovated," Pinckney said.

During a series of projects for the school, the team plans to supply the students and teachers with desks, to refurbish the library, and to build a perimeter wall. Also an outside area will be built with a gazebo and volleyball court. ✦

Dehdadi stands up food court, PX

by Spc. Michael Vanpool
101st Sustainment Brigade

BALKH PROVINCE, Afghanistan – A little over a year ago, Forward Operating Base Dehdadi II was beginning to come to life: the walls were constructed, the tents rose, and the Soldiers moved in.

Now that the groundwork is laid, more amenities are reaching the servicemembers assigned to FOB Dehdadi II. Over the next few weeks, Army and Air Force Exchange Services will arrive and open up at the base.

"This base needs something bigger than a trailer to support the expansion," said 1st Lt. Robert Schnabel, 530th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion officer in the charge of the FOB Dehdadi II mayor cell.

The first AAFES facilities, a Subway and Green Beans Coffee, are slated to open July 4th. A Pizza Hut and Post Exchange will open for the servicemembers on the FOB shortly after.

1st Lt. Ferguson Price, the personnel section officer in charge for the 530th CSSB, said the base currently operates a small conex, or unit run tactical field exchange, manned by Soldiers to provide toiletries, food and other items to the servicemembers.

However, as the FOB grows, it will quickly outgrow the small shop. A representative from AAFES visited the base earlier this year to assess the expansion of FOB Dehdadi II, Schnabel said.

AAFES looked at the base and decided it was large enough and had enough Soldiers assigned here to sustain several different shops, he said.

Soon after, the 530th CSSB worked with AAFES to give them the space they needed on the base to move in the food court trailers. The 530th CSSB operates the FOB, which houses several different units and serves as the logistical hub of Regional Command North.

"The food court was inevitable with a FOB this size," Schnabel said.

As the unit was planning to build a new Morale, Recreation and Welfare center, the AAFES representatives looked at the current MWR facilities. The tent was meant for a temporary location for movies, internet, phones and games for the Soldiers.

"When they saw the MWR tent, they thought it would be the best location for a PX," Schanbel said. "There's enough space inside for running shoes, insignia, snacks and other things."

More units have moved to the base since it began operations last year. The increasing number of servicemembers means more amenities to take care of them.

"The numbers of the FOB had grown and we were offered more options for the Soldiers," Price said.

The battalion is helping the food court and PX move to the FOB. They're tracking the PX containers and making sure the employees have a place to sleep.

"We're looking forward to bringing better and larger options to the Soldiers to increase morale and support the war fighter," Price said.

Until the PX opens, the servicemembers on the base rely on care packages sent from home and a small selection at the unit run store.

"We try to provide the Soldiers with everything they need," Schnabel said. "Most toiletries, toothpaste and hygiene items are sent to the Soldiers from home." ✦

Army and Air Force Exchange Service in slated to open a post exchange and food court on Forward Operating Base Dehdadi II. The first of the stores, a Green Beans Coffee and Subway, are scheduled to open for the Fourth of July, and the post exchange will open the following month. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes)

Battalion Briefs

101st Special Troops Battalion

B-Huts in a box

Several Soldiers from the Repair and Upgrade Team and Mission Support Platoon traveled to Forward Operating Base Gamberi to assist in building ten B-Huts.

The buildings will house various units on FOB Gamberi, and they were completed with support from the Combined Action Teams of the 101st Special Troops Battalion and Combined Joint Task Force 1st Cavalary.

The B-Huts were constructed from the B-Hut in a box system recently created by the brigade to quickly transport and build temporary housing for servicemembers.

Caribbean-American Heritage Month

Several "Sustainers" participated in events across Bagram Air Field for National Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

The events, including dinners, movie night and other celebrations, allowed Soldiers to experience the culture of the Caribbean and for servicemembers from the Caribbean to teach others about their culture.

A presidential proclamation marks the beginning of National Caribbean-American Heritage Month every June since 2006. The proclamation points out the rich history and interconnectivity of the Caribbean and America.

ANA medics train

Six Afghan National Army medics continue training on several techniques and tactics with the 101st STB Combined Action Team.

The ANA Soldiers and noncommissioned officers in the courses learn tourniquet application, airway breathing assistance and other skills valuable for ANA Soldiers on base and off base.

The medics put their learning to the test when they travel with convoys to resupply ANA Soldiers and bases.

142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

59th Quartermaster Company

The 59th Quartermaster Company's maintenenace section has maintained more than a 95% operational readiness rate in support of over 100 pieces of wheeled, crew serve/primary weapons and communications systems. Their scrifice and management of an undermanned section supports six convoy security platforms (in excess of 150 Soldiers) and ensures that the company remains fully mission capable in support of TF 142's mission.

109th TC conducts Host Nation Truck training with the 1138th TC

The 109th Transportation Company conducted host nation truck familiarization training, June 22. Sgt. Oliver served as the noncommissioned officer in charge and spent the day training the 1138th Transportation Company mission commanders. The training focused on Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration and Central Receiving and Shipping Point yard operations both here on Bagram Air Field and at the outlying forward operating bases across Regional Command East. He demonstrated to the 1138th TC mission commanders the quality assurance and quality controls process ensuring they could inspect and determine a non-mission capable truck from a fully-mission capable truck. He also conducted practical hands-on exercises in cross loading and transferring loads in order to ensure that when an HNT breaks down, they know the proper battle drills. The training consisted of both classroom and hands-on; giving the 1138th TC first hand practice with HNTs and loads they will see on the road.

236th Inland Cargo Transfer Company

Sgt. Trevor Barnhart reported to MOB station with an odd item - an ax stick! Slowly, but surely, we all began to understand why he brought it. He'd been asking all to sign his stick, the unit would bring it to Afghanistan and back to the States as a token on camaraderi during this deployment.

Sadly, Sgt. Barnhart stayed at Ft. Bliss fighting cancer. A respected NCO that everybody at the 236th ICTC is missing. 1st Sgt. Poll and all his team promised that his stick will fly with the unit to Afghanistan, travel through the FOBs and see action!

131st Transportation Company

The 131st Transportation Company maintenance section gained recognition for their support to Coalition Forces on Bagram Air Field. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kevin Holland and Sgt. 1st Class Donald E. Cruz were invited to the Korean compound for lunch. Col. Kim hosted the US Soldiers for a unique meal which was prepared by the 131st TC Soldiers and Koreans. They worked together to prepare steaks, kimchi, noodles and steamed rice. Following the meal, Col. Kim showed his appreciaition by presenting Holland and Cruz with a unit coin. Since their arrival on Bagram, the 131st TC maintenance section has supported the Korean's Army with maintenance advice and parts.

The 109th Transportation Company, 142nd CSSB is wrapping up its yearlong tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The unit travelled more than one million miles delivering goods and cargo to servicemembers throughout Regional Commands East and Capitol. The company will return to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, and will be replaced by the 1138th Transportation Company, a National Guard unit from Missouri.

EO Corner

Sexual Assault is *not* Sexual Harassment

Sexual Assault is not Sexual Harassment, but an evolution, by-product, or an escalation of Sexual Harassment behavior. Sexual Assault is intentional, invasive (anal or oral sex), forced sexual contact. It includes unwanted, improper sexual contact, fondling or the attempts there of. Sexual Assault can happen regardless of spousal status, gender, age, or the proximate relationship of victim and does not predicate on consent (DOD). Sexual Assault can occur to a male by another male and female by another female.

According to American Forces Press Service's John Kruzel, Service Members have difficulty reporting Sexual Assaults. According to Kruzel, "of the 6.8 percent of women and 1.8 percent of men who indicated they experienced unwanted sexual contact, the majority – 79 percent of women and 78 percent of men -- chose not to report it."

Why did the other percentage not report the Sexual Assault incident? A little over half the percent of women and of men felt uncomfortable making a report. Also, a little over half of the percent of women and 41 percent of men thought they would be labeled a troublemaker; whereas, 56 percent of women and 47 percent of men wanted to keep the incident confidential. Fifty-three percent of women and 44 percent of men thought that nothing would be done by reporting the incident. Half of the women and 38 percent of men feared retaliation in one form or another. However, just shy off half of the women and 60 percent of men did not consider the event important enough to report. Interestingly, 41 percent of women and 35 percent of men thought that their allegations would not be believed and 38 percent of women and 46 percent of men thought reporting would take too much time and effort. Surprisingly, 18 percent of women and 68 percent of men did not know how to report the incident (DOD).

Sgt. 1st Class Aniceto R. Valencia-Caballero
Brigade Equal Opportunity Advisor
Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

Sexual Assault is a debilitating cancer that degrades readiness and impairs mission accomplishment of any organization in our Armed Forces; it is physically and psychologically pervasive as it exerts itself, dominion of another, for long periods of time after the assault, resulting in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). According to the CBS evening news, "Medical records of 125,000 war veterans, both men and women, showed fifteen percent [that's 2,600 veterans] of the women reported sexual trauma" (CBS).

Sexual Harassment involves **unwanted** sexual advances, requests for sexual favors that involve verbal, nonverbal, or physical contact of a sexual nature, in which victims accede to a perpetrator's conduct when made explicit or implicitly in word or deed for work, job, or career security or advancement. In addition, where such advances are made, work performance suffers promoting an intimidating, offensive, and hostile work environment. Sexual Harassment is a basic structure of sexual discrimination (DoD).

In a Pentagon news release on March 14, 2008, statistical data was released on Sexual Harassment which points out that one-third of women in the military and six percent of men said they were sexually harassed. According to the latest Pentagon survey, Sexual Harassment in the active duty force was down to 24 percent in 2002 and spiked to 34 percent in 2006. When Soldiers where asked if they had received training in Sexual Harassment, 18 percent stated that they had received training within that year.

Trends show that Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault are ongoing critical issues facing our Military and society. As explained, Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment are not the same but both deserve the same prompt and immediate attention.

Report Sexual Assault:

www.preventsexualassault.army.mil

Or call your Local DSARC, UVA, CID, MTF, Chaplain or Commander.

Bagram Airfield (BAF) 24 hr HOTLINE
DSN: 318-431-7421
Provost Marshall (BAF)
DSN: 318-431-4610
Medical Treatment Facility (BAF)
DSN: 318-431-3207

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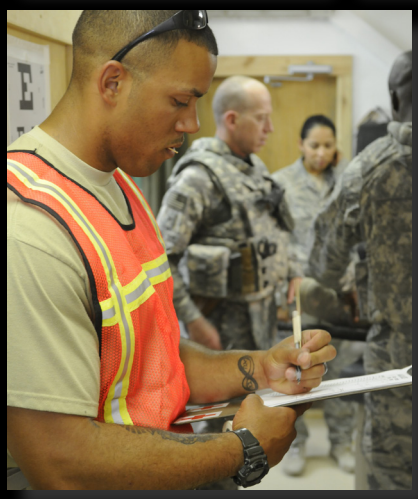
A day in the Life Liners



(Courtesy photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mary Perez)

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