

SIGNAL STRONG

'Multicam' Uniform For Deployed Soldiers

By Sgt. Bethany Witherington

Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan have begun receiving the new Multicam fire-resistant Army Combat Uniform. Starting in May, Soldiers of the 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade began receiving MultiCam uniforms and gear.

"The employees at the Soldier Protection Individual Equipment issue warehouse (here at BAF) are doing us a favor by issuing what they can, right now. The conex with our Operational Camouflage Pattern (OCP) uniforms and gear have been delayed in transit. And where they are held up it could be a month or more before we get the uniforms and gear. SPIE is not required to issue OCP to us; we as supply are supposed to issue it out. These guys have been coming in and doing extra work to help us, said Staff Sgt. Richard McCall, 228th TTSB Supply NCOIC.

The new uniforms are part of an Army-wide drive to provide soldiers deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom with gear that blends in with

the environment better than the current Army Combat Uniform (ACU).

The OCP uniform is designed to provide Soldiers better protection using the surroundings as cover.

Master Sgt. Terry Wessinger, 228th TTSB Information Assurance/Computer Network Defense NCOIC said, "I hope the new uniform is successful in saving many lives. Of the four uniforms I have seen this one seems to be the one that would provide Soldiers with better protection from the environment".

Soldiers were issued headgear, four sets of shirts and pants as well as four OCP shirts which are worn in place of the top to keep Soldiers cooler under the improvised outer tactical vest.

Soldiers were also offered three different sizes of rucksacks, the IOTV which replaces the older and the heavier Improved Body Armor all in the MultiCam pattern.

Soldiers received a class on the new features of the IOTV and equipment. Of all the improve-

ments on the IOTV, allowing soldiers a lighter vest while still providing good protection is one that soldiers are happiest to accept.

Also, the Soldiers seem to enjoy being able to exit the vest by simply pulling on a cord on the vest in an emergency situation.

Some changes on the uniform are: fire resistance, insect resistance, and buttons on the cargo pockets in place of Velcro, something that some Soldiers find to be a welcomed change on the uniform.

Master Sgt. Keith Alumbaugh, 228th TTSB Command, Control, Communications, Computers NCOIC said, "A major improvement to the new uniforms would be that they have buttons on the trousers, they won't wear out like the Velcro and they are quieter than Velcro is".

Currently, the OCP uniform is authorized for wear in Afghanistan. Soldiers are authorized to wear the OCP uniform when traveling on R&R.



Staff Sgts. Mackey and Bamberg, pose for a picture wearing their newly issued OCP uniform.

FROM 1ST SGT'S BUNKER:

By 1st Sgt. Kenneth Green

As I write this we are in the mid cycle of our tour and our R&R rotations are at maximum capacity. I have heard some of the great stories of Soldiers who have returned from leave.

I encourage anyone that had some of those good times, funny, family stories that would like to share with everyone, please set up a time with the PAO so she can get your story and publish it in the next newsletter.

We could be sharing your story right now. I know we are spread out in different directions, working varying shifts, different housing and work locations, making it difficult to see and share with our fellow Soldier so use every opportunity to get together and share your thoughts, ideas, good times and great stories.

Take full advantage of each opportunity to come together as a unit

whether it is 3 on 3 basketball, an awards formation, a cookout, using our newsletter to share or maybe challenging each other in a volleyball match, a card game/tournament, combat corn hole, maybe a unit movie night. The point is use any and all available means to communicate with your fellow Soldiers.

Not to overlook our mission and the daily task at hand. I would like to commend you all on the great performance you exhibit daily. We are at midpoint of the tour so don't let your guard (or the Guard) down.

Don't allow yourself or your Soldiers to get too comfortable with their surroundings. Keep that complacency issue in check regularly.

By all means let your Soldiers know what a great job our Task Force is doing but we are nowhere near the finish line so let press on daily. As our Task Force Command-

er likes to remind us "we run through the finish line, not to the finish line". So continue to hit our marks, strive to improve personally and in mission related task and stay always alert of our surroundings, focused and fully committed to each task. Task Force Spartan is made up of outstanding talent in many different areas; let us continue to demonstrate our abilities.



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By CH (LTC) Eric Turner

We have progressed to the point in our tour that soldiers are being reminded to guard against complacency. We usually think about complacency in terms of situational awareness, or in letting uniform standards down, or even weapons maintenance.

I think we also have to guard against it in our personal lives also. We have to be at the right place, with the right people. Guard against putting ourselves in compromising situations, even failing to attend religious services as maybe you once did. These are all forms of personal complacency.

I have found over the years that very few people make a conscious effort to get into trouble, you won't find it at the top of a to-do list, or on a post it note on the computer.

Generally we find ourselves in a situation and then ask, how did I ever end up here? Complacency.

Ephesians 6 talks about putting on the whole armor of God. The thought in this passage is that we always have to be on guard, even when in a spiritual sense; we think we have the enemy on the run, we keep our guard up.

Keep your guard up, look after your battle buddy, and you will not fall into the complacency trap.



CH (LTC) Eric Turner and Sgt. Stuart Moore

State's Adjutant General Visit With Troops

Supporting Deployed National Guard Troops

By Sgt. Bethany Witherington

The Adjutant General of Alabama, MG Perry G. Smith along with the Deputy Adjutant General of Nevada, Brig. Gen. Francis Gonzales, traveled to Bagram Afghanistan 23 June as part of a Joint Monthly Access to Reserve Components program.

The JMARC is a USCENTCOM Commander-sponsored program. It serves as the primary mechanism for Reserves and National Guard, General/Flag Officers and their senior enlisted to visit Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait.

The JMARC's primary goal is to enable leaders to see, first hand, the contributors of their brave men and women, who are serving on the cutting edge of freedom. This allows a general/flag officer perspective of the challenges and progress of not only their warriors serving in uniform, but also the progress of the coalition effort.

Smith was accompanied by Sgt. Major Eddie Pike, Alabama National Guard Command Sgt.

Maj. and Gonzales was accompanied by Sgt. Maj. Stephen Sitton, Nevada National Guard Command Sgt. Major.

Smith said, "This trip was a very enlightening experience, we were able to see how the Signal world works and to gain

enjoyed lunch with Soldiers of 228th TTSB and Soldiers from Alabama and then sat down to dinner with 228th TTSB Soldiers along with Soldiers of Alabama, Nebraska and Massachusetts while 1ST Cav Band played music.

Although the Soldiers that were visited are not from Alabama or Nebraska the visitors were very interested in how things were going for the Soldiers, while deployed to Afghanistan. Their focus was on the Soldiers as well as the mechanics of how much the war has progressed, in terms of communication.

Although the information was a technical in nature, the guests were able to understand the data explained to them about how JNCC-A supports the flow of communication for Afghanistan. They seemed to enjoy their interaction with the Soldiers and learning the workings of JNCC-A.



Photos by Sgt. Bethany Witherington

From left to right are Brig. Gen. Francis Gonzales, Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, Sgt. Maj. Eddie Pike and Sgt. Maj. Stephen Sitton. The distinguished visitors from various states were briefed on the Soldier issues and overall mission success of Soldiers in the 228th TTSB.

appreciation for what we have because of them".

While at BAF, Smith, Pike, Gonzales and Sitton toured the Joint Network Control Center Afghanistan and spoke with 228th TTSB soldiers. After leaving JNCC-A, they visited with Soldiers of the 807th Medical Command at the Joint Heath N. Craig Theatre Hospital and

Joint Forces Work Environment

By Sgt. Bethany Witherington

Working closely with Marines, Air Force and civilian contractors has proven to be a success for the 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade. Jointly monitoring and managing communications with civilians and the different branches of the military has helped build a needed bridge where there once was not one. Along with contacts that may prove to be valuable down the road.

In the command, control, computer, communications and intelligence office the mission statement is to maintain and enhance through the Combined Joint Operations Area to account for the processing of equipment. With six Army, one Air Force and three civilians C4I has been able to successfully keeps operations, sustainability and accountability up and scale down the process for end users to get the necessary equipment , said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Richard Montgomery, JNCC-A C4I Communications Officer.

As a Marine working with the Army it would be understandable if there was friction and a fight for who is in charge. That is not the case where U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Raymond Zavalla, Regional Command South West Liaison Officer is concerned. His job is to be the liaison officer between RC SW of his Marine unit and JNCC-A, but he has done much more.

“My job is to be the liaison between RC SW and JNCC-A. I ensure that the two commands understand how each other work and to ensure mission success for the Afghanistan network. When I first arrived both commands didn’t understand how business was done. Because the 228th has a

customer service outlook it was easy for the Marines and the Army to get along. I think establishing relationships along with a face to a name is the key to success. Now they communicate much more and the have established a great working relationship,” said Zavalla.

In the Network Operations section their mission statement is to monitor the changes and modifications to the Afghanistan strategic network. They have been able to work as one team and accomplish that goal and much more, Net Ops has implemented a service desk, revitalized the Authorized Service Interruption service and refined the policy and guidance for Net Ops, generating a 50% decrease in request processing time.

“It has been a pleasure working with the 228th TTSB, we were able to incorporate their vision into our work and it has worked very well. Their desire to want to learn and use that information has both impressed me and made me proud to have the opportunity to call them co-workers. This is my third deployment and although this is different from the other two it has still been an enlightening and enjoyable experience. I am going to walk away with people that I can call not only co-workers but also friends. I will keep in contact with some of these people for years to come,” said U.S. Air Force Capt. Daniel Pre-sland, JNCC-A Net Ops OIC.

Working jointly with Marines, Air Force and civilian contractors has helped 228th TTSB to successfully accomplish their mission statement, proving that the military is like one big family.

S1 Spotlight Soldier: *Working Toward College Degree*

By Sgt. Bethany Witherington

Spc. Tess D. Vandiver has been working diligently on her school work during any period of downtime she has. “Nothing, not even a deployment will keep me from my dreams, aspirations and goals”, said Vandiver.

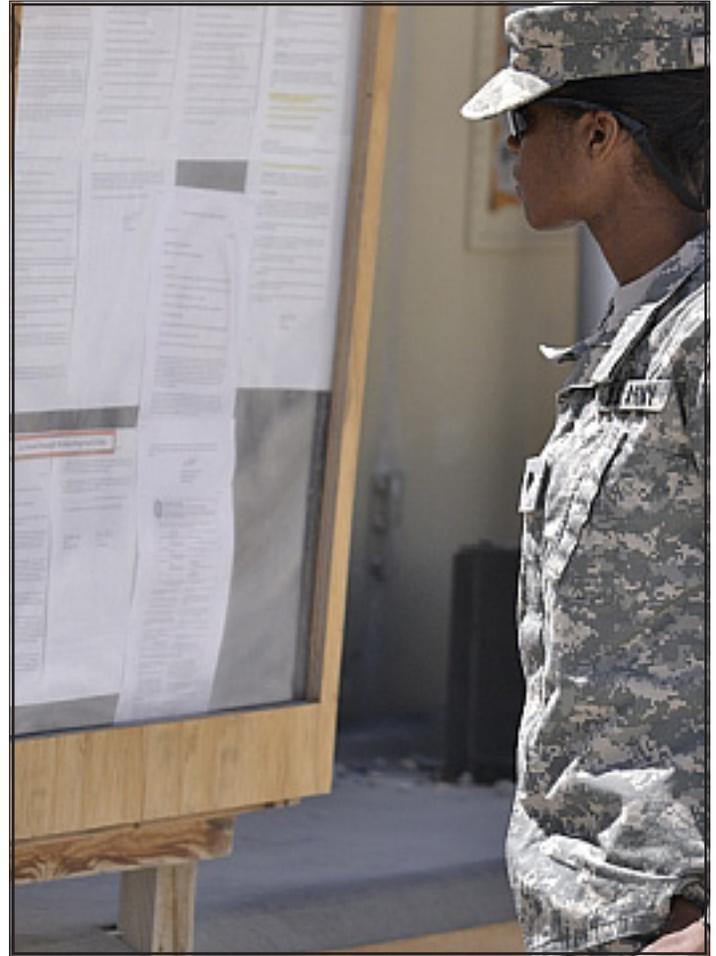
As one of 228th TTSB Human Resource Specialists, Vandiver is tasked with processing Rest and Recuperation for 1100+ Soldiers in the Task Force, has created or enhanced 9 policy memorandums with the use of regulations, processed Battlefield Promotions among other S1 duties for the Brigade.

Vandiver accomplished all of that while maintaining a 3.7 GPA, the only reason her GPA is 3.7 and not a 4.0 is because at one of the stops to BAF she was unable to get to a computer to complete and turn in a few assignments and received a C grade in the class. Currently, Vandiver’s daily routine consists of working 8 hours in the office, a lunch break and 4-5 hours after work working on her college course work.

“I feel that Spc. Vandiver deserves the personal spotlight for the S1 shop because she has diligently kept up her grades and tenacity despite the obstacles she has had to overcome, said Master Sgt. Jennie Allison, 228th TTSB Senior Human Resources NCO.

National Guard Command Sergeant Major Richard J. Burch offered to write a letter of recommendation for graduate school for Vandiver because of her outstanding ability to balance of school and work. National Guard Liaison Sgt. Major., Sgt. Major Joseph Conaway coined Vandiver for being efficient at her job as a Soldier and for applying herself in the civilian sector. Command Sgt. Major for 307 ESB, Sgt. Major Stephon Watson also coined Vandiver for her excellent customer service and timeliness of processing Battlefield Promotions.

Vandiver plans to graduate from the University of South Carolina Upstate in 2012 with a Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice. Vandiver is planning on furthering her college education at Duke



University’s Divinity School, where her brother is attending, with a goal of becoming an Army Chaplain.

Her military training has drastically helped her accomplish her goals in school because she has become more disciplined and determined to get the task done. Vandiver also encourages other Soldiers to take classes to better themselves on the civilian side.

“She has progressed drastically since being deployed, handling the increased responsibilities of her job while continuing to also manage her civilian school load. She has come out of her shell and has blossomed in the S1”, said Allison.

July Birthdays!



Warrant Officer Lewis McMahan
~July 30



Capt. Daniel Presland
~July 29



Sgt. Brian West
~July 7



Senior Airman Stewart Stevenson
~July 23

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Spc. Justin Blaine
~July 9



Capt. Karena Hill
~July 24



Staff Sgt. Chad Nabors
~July 13



2nd Lt. Lori Williams
~July 18



Maj. Lisa Maly
~July 21



Sgt. Terrence Davis
~July 30



**Sgt. Maj.
William Bostic
~July 31**



**Sgt. David Middleton
~July 6**



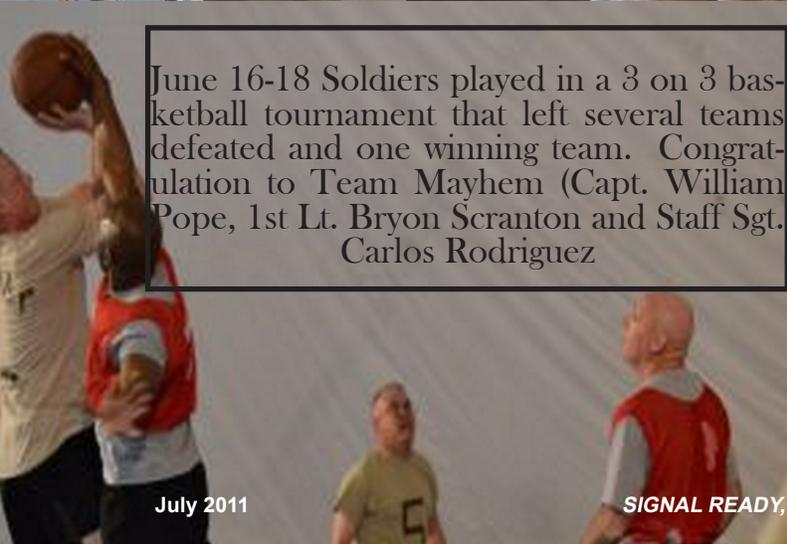
**Sgt. Telly Jones
~July 17**

Celebrations



Upper Left: Former Sgt. Lorene Littlejohn gets promoted to Staff Sgt. Upper Middle: Former 2nd Lt. Gary Holloway gets promoted to 1st Lt. Upper Right: Former Capt. John Edwards gets promoted to Maj. Bottom photos: Sgt. Kaleb Green and Spc. Bruce Keenon take the oath of office during their re-enlistment ceremony.

Congratulations to SSgt. Timothy Bush (not pictured above) on the birth of his second child, Katherine Bush on July 2. Both mother and daughter are doing well.



June 16-18 Soldiers played in a 3 on 3 basketball tournament that left several teams defeated and one winning team. Congratulation to Team Mayhem (Capt. William Pope, 1st Lt. Bryon Scranton and Staff Sgt. Carlos Rodriguez)



4th of July



Social Gathering



Soldier

by Ariel Short

*You are a Soldier
That saves people from mortars*

*You are the apple of my eye
When you leave it makes your family cry*

*Thank you for what you do
The world would be a disaster without you*

*You leave for a year
You show no fear*

*You come home on a big bus
And the police surround us*

*We all shout with hurray
It could not be a better day*

*We all wave American flags
And watch y'all come out with your bags*

*You give your family hugs
And hand over your water jugs*

*Tears run down your face
Because you are happy to be at this place*

*You think of the people that are still there
And how they are fighting for our lives trying to make it
fair*

*You are a Solider
That saves people from mortars*

*You are the apple of my eye
When you leave it makes your family cry*

This ballad poem was created by Ariel Short, niece of Maj. Mitch Jackson