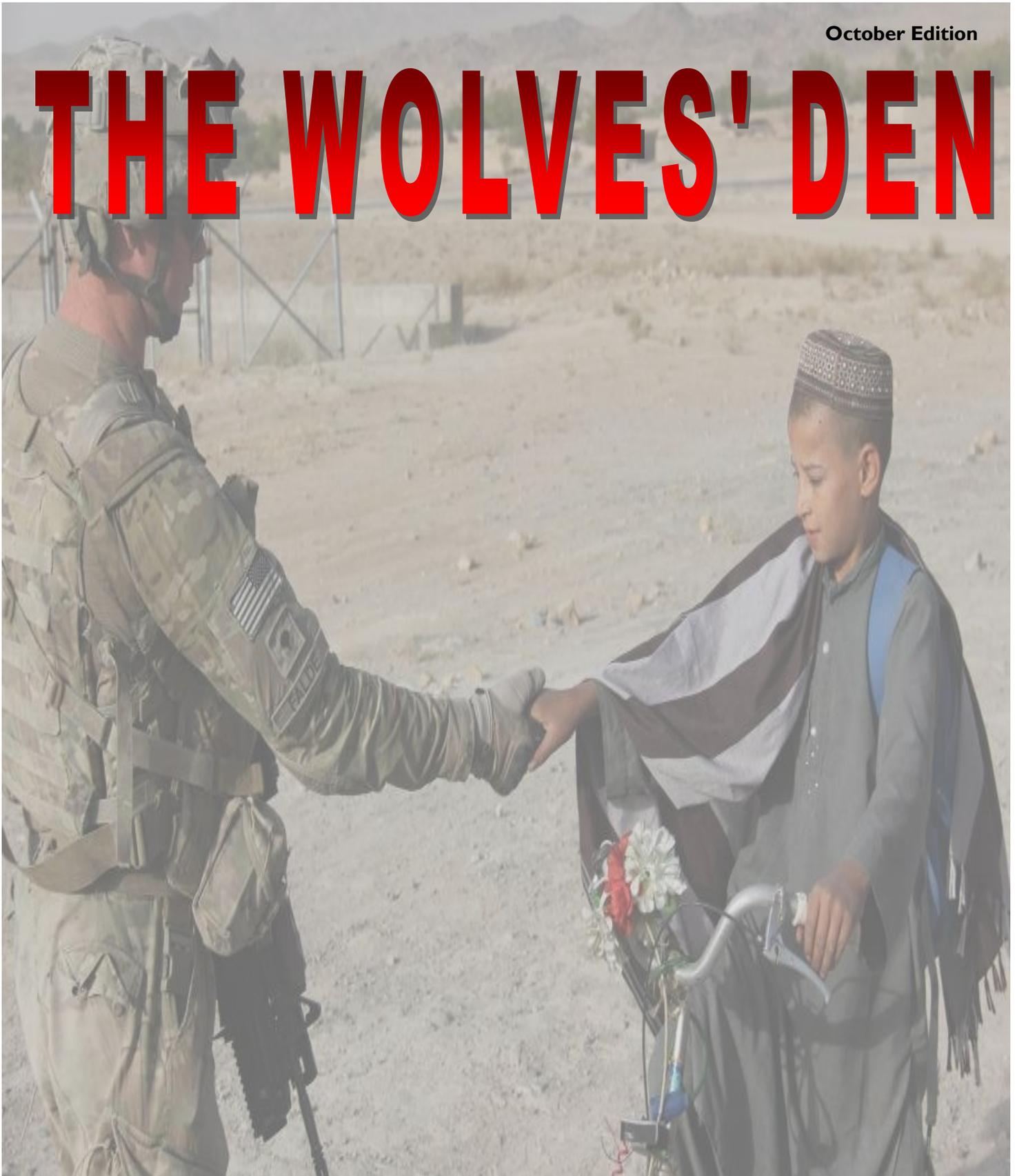


October Edition

# THE WOLVES' DEN



**HOME OF THE 1ST STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
"ARCTIC WOLVES"**

Volume 1

Issue 3



# COMMANDERS CORNER

**1/25 SBCT Commander  
Colonel Todd R. Wood**

Arctic Wolves,

We have passed the six-month threshold and the hard work and sacrifices of the Soldiers and their families are paying off, as evident in the increased capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces and decrease in the fight from insurgent fighters in Southern Kandahar Province. Every day we see Afghan leaders following the example of their 1/25 counterparts and taking the reins, providing security for the region, and increasing their public administration skills among their staff.

Recently, the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, our war-time higher headquarters, transferred authority of the International Security Assistance Forces' Regional Command-South to the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. General Huggins, with our support, is committed to put Afghan National Security Forces in the lead along with the Afghan district and provincial government officials, as we prepare to leave Afghanistan and return to Alaska.

The leaders, Soldiers, and trainers of Task Force Arctic Wolves have already made headway in improving Afghan National Security Forces' capacity to stand up a professional civil law enforcement structure and armed forces in order to secure the region. We are starting to see the Afghan Army taking the lead in more operations, conducting their own training, and coordinating logistics assets. The Afghan Uniformed Police are taking over many of the responsibilities from the Army and transitioning the region from a Martial Law-type security to a civil security and law enforcement. The district leaders are planning and conducting town hall-style meetings or 'shuras' with local leaders and elders in order to address Afghan issues. Our Security Forces Assistance Teams are already stepping back and playing the role of mentor or observer controller rather than the leading or driving force at the district governance centers and Afghan security force headquarters.

Make no doubt about it, the enemy is still out there. Insurgent forces continue to attack ISAF and Afghan forces with IEDs and small attacks, together with the Afghan Government we will decrease and defeat the insurgent forces through reintegration and combat operations.

Many Soldiers have gone on mid-tour leave or will be going on leave in the coming weeks. The Soldiers have done amazing work out here and they deserve some time off. I want you to enjoy your time with family and decompress. Remember not to set too high of expectations for the two weeks. Just relax and recuperate in order to return here to complete the mission and redeploy home.

Our Soldiers and Families have proven they are not only Arctic tough but desert tough, too. With the strength of the wolf pack we will overcome any obstacles and complete any mission.

**ARCTIC TOUGH!**  
Arctic Wolves



# WOLF 7

**1/25 SBCT Command Sergeant Major  
Command Sgt. Maj. Bernard L. Knight**

To the 1/25 SBCT Family and Friends:

October is proving to be a transitional time for the Arctic Wolves. The sweltering heat has cooled to a comfortable temperature; the number of Taliban attacks in the area has declined for the first time in the ten-year-old war; The 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division has transferred authority of Regional Command-South to the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division; our operations are shifting from completely kinetic and lethal-oriented to more stability-based operations; and of course, this month marks the halfway mark for the deployment and Soldier and family members are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I want to caution all of you not to run for the barn, as it is in these times that mistakes are made and accidents happen. I implore each and every one of you to take a moment and catch your second wind as we continue to enforce unit standards of discipline and safety. These standards are in place to protect you. It is about this time in a deployment that some become complacent. That is not the Arctic Wolf way, we will remain vigilant.

Senior and junior leaders across the brigade are currently conducting training to reemphasize brigade and battalion policies to ensure that every Soldier understands the important role they play in the unit and they know what "right looks like."

Every day I see our Soldiers and families back home doing herculean things. Every day I continue to be impressed with the professionalism and discipline of our Soldiers. Now, I encourage all of you to stay the course and remain vigilant.

**STRIKE HARD!**  
Strike Fast

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**PAO welcomes a new OIC, Maj. David Mattox!**

# The Wolves' Den

## Afghan National Security Forces excel as first responders

Story By: Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1/25 SBCT PAO



KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan- For those involved in serious vehicle accidents, a first response medical team may be all that stands between life and death. The training that first-responders receive, enable them to provide quick, life saving care, until accident victims are taken to a hospital.

Members of the Afghan Uniformed Police used this training to save lives recently, as a few officers showed proof of increased community and public safety when they arrived at the scene of a vehicle collision, assessed the casualties and evacuated them to a higher echelon of care.

For the people of Panjwa'i district in southern Kandahar, Afghanistan, the success of the AUP as first responders is a historical benchmark reached only through continuous hard

work and training.

In recent years, the ability to assess, react and recover injured Afghan civilians has been nonexistent, making the success of the AUP even more important to the people of Panjwa'i.

The incident on Sep. 30, proved to be a huge success as the AUP were able to save the lives of an adult female and a child.

The AUP have been training side by side with International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF), and the Afghan National Army to improve their medical proficiency.

Beginning Sep. 27th, Afghan medical professionals with ANA's medical company, 5th KANDAK, 1st Brigade 205th Corps, have taken the reigns from their ISAF counterparts during a combat life savers course.

During the course the ANA medical staff success-

fully taught a group of twelve Afghan soldiers how to administer intravenous (IV) fluids to a number of patients.

The Afghan soldiers hope that by the end of the month all ANA Soldiers with the 5/1/205th will be proficient in basic combat life saver skills like using the tourniquet, administering IV's and preventing shock.

The course is another successful chapter added to Afghanistan's history books, as the ANA and the Afghan National Police continue to take over more responsibilities from their U.S. partners.

Together the AUP, ANA and ISAF hope that through a continued partnership, and more advanced medical training, the success of that September day will become the standard in Panjwa'i.

## Stryker Soldiers strive for excellence during vehicle recovery course

Story By: Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1/25th SBCT PAO

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan-- Combat vehicles often times take a beating whether it's from IED's or the rough and drastically varying terrain in Afghanistan. When a vehicle gets stuck or severely damaged, it becomes inoperable or "deadlined" making it difficult to move off the battlefield. Soldiers deployed to Kandahar Airfield with the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, the "Arctic Wolves", recently honed their ability to tackle this issue in an effort to prevent unnecessary loss of both personnel and vehicles during a wheeled vehicle recovery course Sept. 26-28.

"The Hotel 8 course is designed to provide recovery Soldiers with the tools to perform combat recovery operations safely and efficiently," said Lt. Col. John McMurray, commander of 25th Brigade Support Battalion.

The course was offered to light and heavy-wheeled mechanics and utilized both a classroom portion and a hands-on field exercise.

The three-day course encompassed more than 80 hours of training that focused on rigging, recovering and towing wheeled vehicles. "The course allows Soldiers to refresh on techniques that they may not use every day while allowing them to learn new equipment," said Pfc. Brandon Locke, a Frazeytsburg, OH native, and mechanic assigned to the 1/25 SBCT. "This course is an 80-



hour program of instruction that not only challenges the Soldiers academically, but also provides some of the best hands on recovery instruction a commander could ask for," McMurray said.

The field exercise was the highlight of the event and it required Soldiers to use their hands on training to successfully recover a tractor trailer from a large 'Mire pit', a pit filled with mud.

The dirt and water mixture mixed with heavy equipment proved to be a mechanics dream. "It was awesome to get out there and have a little bit of fun while still doing some good 'high-speed' training," Locke laughed. Locke said that although the course was enjoyable for most of the mechanics it wasn't all fun and games. He insists that the training and lessons learned were well earned and at the end of the day will translate to mission success on the battlefield. After successfully graduating the course Soldiers received an Army additional skill identifier known as H8. For mechanics obtaining the H8 identifier is a benchmark that very few reach and for the 'Arctic Wolf' mechanics it makes a mark reached by only 24 mechanics throughout the more than 4,000-Soldier brigade. "The course puts you above everybody else in your class," Locke said. This was only the second time that the course was offered at KAF. Typically deployed Soldiers are forced to travel to Bagram, often times making the course an unreasonable solution to battlefield proficiency. Lt. Col. John McMurray, commander of 25th Brigade Support Battalion, brought the program to KAF to increase awareness, efficiency and the overall survivability of both Soldiers and vehicles in a combat environment. McMurray and the 25th BSB hope to make the course more frequently available and continue to improve safety and survivability of each Soldier and piece of equipment through similar training opportunities. McMurray said, "As we go into the rainy season here in Afghanistan or as we call it here in the 25th BSB, 'Stryker recovery season', I am confident that I have the best 24 H8 qualified recovery specialists on the battlefield."



# RUNNING WITH THE PACK



# STRYKER RETENTION UPDATE

The new fiscal year is here and with it came a lot of changes to Army Retention Policy. These changes were made in an effort to assist the Army with its right sizing and force shaping initiatives. The number of Soldier's the Army is authorized to have on active duty (end strength) is controlled by Congress, that number will decrease this year as we see the loss of the 22,000 Soldiers we were authorized under the temporary end strength increase or TESI.

The biggest change that affects our Soldiers is, the Army decided to use a two phase reenlistment window this year. Soldiers with an ETS between January 1, 2012 thru September 30, 2012 are considered in the reenlistment window for phase one. These Soldiers will only be given until 31 January 2012 to reenlist and then their window will close and they will have to ETS. If your ETS falls within the parameters of phase one and you have not seen one of the Brigade's Career Counselors it is advised that you do so as soon as possible to ensure you do not miss out on any opportunities that may currently be available to you. Phase two of the window will focus on the FY '13 ETS population of Soldiers. FY '13 population will be Soldiers with an ETS date between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013. Current policy has not established a date that the phase two window will open other than we will be notified of the date NLT 1 March 2012. If your ETS falls in phase two be patient and start engaging your Career Counselor now so they have your packet ready once your window opens.

Leaders need to ensure that they are taking an active role in the retention process to ensure our quality Soldiers are given the opportunity to stay with the team. As policy is changing quickly and as the Army's needs dictate, leaders need to ensure Soldiers understand that the time to start thinking about reenlisting is not when their window opens. If a quality Soldier desires to stay with the team they should be ready to make that commitment once there window opens to ensure they are given the opportunity to do so. An example of this is currently the Army is allowing deployed Soldiers serving in an over strength MOS to reenlist for the Regular Army Reenlistment Option, however once the Army reaches a certain number of reenlistments this option will no longer be available to our over strength Soldiers. As long as leaders and Soldiers are proactive in the retention process this should not be an issue, but for those who put the retention process on the back burner the results may not be as appealing. For more information on how this affects you or your Soldiers please see one of the Brigade's Career Counselors.

## “STAY WITH THE PACK”

Thank You to the following 50 Soldier's who volunteered to continue their service over the last month:

SSG Fowler,	SSG Godfrey,	SSG Morrison,	SSG Thomas,	SGT Alwin,	SGT Bishop,
SGT Doody,	SGT Grose,	SGT Handwerker,	SGT Hernandez,	SGT Johnson,	SGT Linderman,
SGT Manning,	SGT Moore,	SGT Ogg,	SGT Perez,	SGT Placencia,	SGT Ricci, SGT
Timmer,	SGT Whaley,	SPC Adams,	SPC Beeson,	SPC Brown,	SPC Buffington,
SPC Cox,	SPC Elenes,	SPC Forbes,	SPC Gabourel,	SPC Grigory,	SPC Grogan,
SPC Howell,	SPC Kenne,	SPC Lavertue,	SPC Leonard,	SPC Marquez,	SPC Marrero,
SPC Marshall,	SPC Moffett,	SPC Navarez,	SPC Petty,	SPC Pritchett,	SPC Ruffin, SPC
Sergeeff,	SPC Simmons,	SPC Turman,	SPC Tesolin,	SPC Turner,	SPC Webb,
SPC Whatley,	SPC Wilson.				

## Brigade Retention Team



MSG Crist	Brigade Senior Career Counselor	FOB Masum Ghar
SFC Hallum	BTB 1/25 and 25 <sup>th</sup> BSB Career Counselor	KAF
SFC Vinci	1-5 IN Career Counselor	FOB Tarnack
SSG Fatuesi	1-24 IN Career Counselor	FOB Lagman
SSG Alvarez	3-21 IN Career Counselor	FOB Zingabad
SSG Peltier	2-8 FA Career Counselor	FOB Lindsay
SSG Cloud	5-1 CAV Career Counselor	FOB Frontnac
SSG Lee	Rear Detachment	FT Wainwright

# Cavalry celebrates new school year with Afghan children

**Story By: Capt. Michael Newman, 5-1 Cav.  
& Sgt. Thomas Duval, I/25 SBCT PAO**

Most people can think back and remember the stories told by their grandparents about their days in school; the many stories about the uphill battle both to and from school. No busses, no shopping for fancy backpacks with their favorite cartoon character. For most people this is a part of history, an ending to a joke and a memory left for scrapbooks.

For children here in Shah Wali Kot (SWK) region of Afghanistan, our grandparents' memories are a reality.

Often times the children of SWK are not awarded the opportunity to learn for many different reasons, but thanks to the SWK District Center with help from International Security Assistance Forces the children have a more stable learning environment.

As a result of his hard work, dedication, and planning Habib Ullah, the SWK Minister of Education opened the doors to a new school and a new school year earlier this month.

"This is a great day for the children, a great day for the teachers and parents. This is a long time coming and I am very pleased to be here," said Ullah.

Lt. Col. David Raugh, commander of 5<sup>th</sup> Squadron I Cavalry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, stopped by to congratulate them on a job well done.

"We are really proud of them and hope that we see more schools like this in SWK," Raugh said.

The children ranged from age 5 to 13 and came with book bags in hand; ready to start after a long summer. They were not only excited for the first day of school but had smiles on their faces when the Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 5-1 CAV welcomed them and exchanged handshakes and high fives. Some of the children knew a little English and demonstrated their knowledge in a proud way. Counting in English was a popular demonstration. And a few "how are you" as well. Habib introduced five new teachers that will work full time at the school. They gave a tour of the new school, and were proud of the accomplishment of establishing a new school right next to the SWK District Center. NDS Officer, Mohammad Gul was one of the teachers that said he was more than happy to serve the people of SWK by volunteering his time to teach the children.



There was also discussion of providing an after school program that would allow them to teach adults to read and write. The topic was popular among the volunteer teachers and is something Habib says he plans to pursue further. With 5-1 Cav. Soldiers there to celebrate the occasion, 19 children arrived bright and early, smiling and filled with excitement, knowing that they are the first to attend the brand new school. Some traveled more than five miles and were really excited to see Soldiers here to congratulate their eagerness to learn and make history. When asked what he thought about his first day of school, one child said that his parents were also very excited and he waited a long time for the opportunity to learn. "Education is the key to building better communities and providing better jobs for our citizens. And the teachers here today want to be a part of it" said Ullah.

# POW/MIA run for remembrance

Story By: Staff Sgt. Joseph Gobeil, BTB Master Gunner

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan--Even though many around the United States will always remember the sacrifices made by Prisoners of War and those missing in Action all year long, September 16th, has been designated as the National Day of Remembrance. At Kandahar Air Field (KAF), that day took on a special meaning as warriors from around the world gathered to participate in honoring those warriors whom the day is aimed to represent.

Over 500 hundred people ran in the 5 km / 10 km race. With a few words from the Chaplain and the singing of the National Anthem, the emotions of the event took a heavy tone in the air, tears began to fall.

Thanks to the hard work of the 422<sup>nd</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), this event went off with only one small glitch. There was some confusion among the organizers on the route for the 5 km runners and many of them, including this Legacy Vet, finished the race completing an 8 km race instead.

The race event increased awareness amongst our NATO partners and assisted in raising more than \$10,000 for the VFW.

The VFW has a long history of supporting Soldiers dating back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) founded local organizations to secure rights and benefits for their service: Many arrived home wounded or sick.

With membership almost 200,000, the VFW's voice is now fighting for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans. If you find yourself on KAF, conducting combat operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in the near future, remember this event so you may be able to participate in upcoming years, raise money for a noble cause, and honor our brothers who have sacrificed so much for our great nation.



## RC South commander visit's Arctic Wolves



Photo By: Sgt. Michael Blalack, I/25 SBCT PAO

Story BY: Maj. David Mattox, I/25 SBCT PAO  
FORWARD OPERATING BASE MASUM GHAR, Afghanistan - On the eve of International Security Assistance Forces' Regional Command- South's transfer of authority ceremony at Kandahar Air Field, the incoming and outgoing commanders toured the Task Force Arctic Wolves' area of operations in the Kandahar province and met with leadership.

Maj. Gen. James L. Huggins, the incoming RC-South commander with the 82nd Airborne Division and Maj. Gen. James L. Terry, the outgoing commander from the 10th Mountain Division, were greeted at the rocky landing zone at Forward Operating Base Masum Ghar by Col. Todd Wood, commander of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division and TF Arctic Wolves, before being introduced to the senior leaders and staff of the task force, Friday.

For the past six months the I-25 SBCT followed the guidance and leadership of Terry and his staff from the 10th Mountain Division. In a meeting with Wood and the I-25 SBCT leaders, Terry praised the task force and it's soldiers for the hard work they did and their accomplishments over the past six months. Following the transfer of authority ceremony yesterday, Huggins took charge of the International Security Assistance Forces in the southern Afghan provinces of Uruzgan, Zabul, Daykundi and Kandahar to include TF Arctic Wolves.

"I believe this winter is the critical period to set conditions," said Huggins during the meeting with the staff and leaders of the task force at FOB Masum Ghar.

# 'Arctic Wolves' bring water to local village

Story By: Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1/25 SBCT PAO

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— International Security Assistance Forces, ISAF, Soldiers are providing more than just security in southern Afghanistan.

During a recent mission in Dand district of Afghanistan, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, brought purity and cleanliness to the water of Banbalay village.

The 'Arctic Wolf' Soldiers presented the local village in southern Dand with a water filtration system (WFS) designed by the 1-5 Inf. Female Engagement Team (FET) and 25th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) preventive medicine team.

"At the time of our visit, the locals were drinking dirty water due to their broken well," said Capt. Tammy Smoak, a medical officer with the 25th BSB. "It was a great feeling to know this slow sand filter could provide them with the clean water they need to reduce the prevalence of illness and even provide better tasting water to the community during times they cannot access otherwise safe water (please add)."

The home made filtration system allows local villagers to purify more than 20 gallons of water at a time.

To insure that the Afghan locals understood how to properly operate the system, the U.S. Soldiers took time to explain how to properly maintain and run the slow sand filter on a daily basis.

"Once built, we un-layered part of the system and re-layered it again in front of the locals in a designated area of Banbalay village," Smoak said. "We brought translated visual aids and had our female language assistant interpret them."

The ISAF infantrymen and members of the FET said they plan to make routine visits to the district to insure the system is still meeting the needs of the Banbalay residents. Malik Abdul Ghafar and other village elders welcomed the 1/25th SBCT Soldiers and the new addition of the WFS.

During their visit with the local villagers, the FET took the time to talk to the women of the district to address any of their needs or concerns. During the impromptu meeting, the FET presented the Afghan women with Ramadan gifts.

"We were pleased that the people of Banbalay village welcomed us, the water filtration system, and a wide variety of Ramadan gifts with gratitude and excitement," said Smoak.

Providing aid to the people of the Dand district has been a primary focus among the key leaders of 1-5 Inf. since taking over responsibility for the area earlier this year.

Prior to the water filtration system, the ISAF team worked with District Governor Nazik to provide more than 300 of the most severe poverty stricken locals with humanitarian aid. Each humanitarian aid package presented to the locals included two boxes of chai, a bag of sugar, rice, noodles and cooking oil.

Their efforts were praised by the Dand government staffs who have continued to work hand in hand with ISAF forces to foster a lasting relationship to include the strong bond with Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Afghan National Security Forces.



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Army courtesy photo: Fairbanks Equinox Marathon 'Arctic Wolves' team.

**Story By: Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1/25 SBCT PAO**  
 KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—On a clear and slightly chilled Sept. 17 morning, the Wives of the 1<sup>st</sup> Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division gathered at Fort Wainwright, Alaska to run the Fairbanks Equinox marathon, known to many as one of the toughest races in North America.

The equinox marathon is an annual event in Alaska that takes runners up a 2,000 feet climb to the top of Alaska's Ester Dome.

"Our hats are off to those wonderful ladies back home and we hope that our shared efforts helped bring us together half a world away," Said Lt. Col. John McMurray, commander 25<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, 1/25 SBCT.

Half way around the world and in a much more extreme climate the deployed 'Arctic Wolves' Soldiers came together on Kandahar Airfield to run in their own version of the marathon.

McMurray said that although the Kandahar run may not have matched the Fairbanks run for difficulty, the Soldiers came out with unmatched enthusiasm and support for a worthy cause.

For the Fort Wainwright Army wives the run was another way for them to show their support for their husbands currently serving a year-long deployment to Afghanistan.

On the other side of the globe, the Alaska based Soldiers used the run to build Esprit de corps in addition to supporting their hard working and dedicated wives.

"It was really quite nice to see the whole Battalion turnout in support. We recaptured a sense of esprit-de-corps that sometimes gets lost in the routine of day to day operations," said Capt. Travis Nedderson, commander HHC 25th BSB.

# REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN COMRADES



**Sgt. Timothy Sayne**  
5-1 CAV



**Pfc. Christophe J. Marquis**  
1-5 IN



**Sgt. Rodolfo Rodriguez Jr.**  
3-21 IN



**PV2 Danny Chen**  
3-21 IN



**Pfc. Brett E. Wood**  
1-5 IN



**Spc. Ryan J. Cook**  
3-21 IN

**Have photos or a story  
ideas? Email us!**

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- \*1-24 IN: 1st Lt. Mathew Rogers
- \*3-21 IN: Capt. Chad D. Wriglesworth
- \*1-5 IN: Spc. Gary Chessa
- \*5-1 CAV: Capt. Mike Newman
- \*BTB: 2nd Lt. John Conway
- \*BSB: 1st Lt. Stephen T. Leader

### **STRYKER CREED**

***"Strike First - Strike Hard!"***

***Strike Fear in the enemy's hearts and minds; I am a lethal and skilled war fighter with unmatched intestinal fortitude.***

***Being a disciplined, professional soldier, I live the army values.***

***Committed to my fellow soldiers, unit, and country, I am ready to answer my nation's call - NOW!***

***Tough, both physically and mentally, and instilled with the Warrior Spirit, I can accomplish any mission - anytime, anywhere!***

### **"ARCTIC WOLVES"**

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***"FIRST WITH THE TRUTH"***



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