

LOGFIRE LEDGER

298th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion



A beautiful Sunrise Service was held outside the Shindand Chapel on Easter morning in Shindand, Afghanistan. SPC McCartney gave a heartwarming performance on the bugle.



Volume 1, Issue 2

April 30, 2011

Inside this issue:

Lines from Logfire 6 2

Spiritual Foot Washing 3

298th NCO of the Year 6

Meet SFC Apollo 7

And the Bronze Star goes to . . . 10

Dogs of War 11

Safety Message 12

HAPPY
MOTHER'S
DAY

from the Logfire Team



Lines from "LOGFIRE 06"

Hello to all of the friends, family, and warriors of the "LOGFIRE" team! As we embark on yet another month of our journey here in Afghanistan, it remains my honor and privilege to serve as the Commander of such a distinguished body of unified soldiers. We, as a team, remain committed to the mission and goals of daily excellence here.

Our efforts here, like any organization's success story, embody the principles of relationship building. We have a unique opportunity here to bridge relationships over various cultures. We are in daily collaboration efforts with American service members, civilian contractors, Italian soldiers, and Slovenian soldiers. All of the relationships that we build here are authentic to this environment, and reinforce the power we have as human beings when we willingly share ideas, and collaborate efforts toward common goals. Although there are sometimes commu-

nications challenges with language differences, we've found that a smile; and acts of kindness serve us very well as a unified language.

As we find ourselves in this foreign land, we're also reminded of how precious our friends and family are back home. We have learned to depend on each other, confide in one another and strengthen each other. Although, we deeply miss our loved ones at home, we know the significance, and historic proportion of what we accomplish here. I want all of you to know how proud I am of my heroes here, and my heroes that are our families, friends, and support teams serving at home!

That said, it is my sincerest wish to all members of the "LOGFIRE" team that you have a very "Happy Easter" season. Easter is often a reminder to us that spring has arrived, and winter is gone. Change in season can be seen as a measure of progress. Progress in our journey becomes more evident each day. Likewise, each day represents a day closer to reunion with loved ones, and the enjoyment of successfully paving a path of progress behind us.

Finally, I thank all soldiers, friends, and family of the 298th CSSB for the professionalism, strength, confidence, and support that you provide with each day. We shall remain close to our goal to become better with "each sunrise". May God bless you all, and may God bless the USA! LOGFIRE!



Words from Command Sergeant Major

Remember SAFETY FIRST!!! Always be mindful of muzzle awareness, proper PPE, ground guides, seatbelts, etc. It is everyone's job to think safety first! Watch out for your buddies at all times, physically, mentally and emotionally.

Congratulations to SGT Ortiz-Diaz for representing the 298th CSSB NCO of the Year. We are proud to have a soldier of your caliber on our team.

Logfire team keep up the good work and remember "this is a marathon". Pace yourself.



CPT Strong and Gen Petraeus at the meet and greet at RC-W TOA

Chaplain's Corner



show the soles of your feet or even raise your feet, such as in placing them on a table or desk. Often, Afghans will remove their shoes before entering a place of business. Shoes are also removed before entering one's home.

One can certainly see why the Afghans refuse to show the bottom of their feet. Feet get much dirtier here than they do in the Western world. Most of the "roads" are made of dirt, which means that one often stirs up dust

when walking. Also, the shoes worn in Afghanistan are open, either open-toed sandals or tennis shoes in which the back has been cut out, exposing the heel. There are many animals here which contribute to the soiling of the feet. Keeping one's feet clean can be-

come a challenge.

Regarding the ritual(s) of foot etiquette, I can't help but think of another group of people who had a hard time keeping their feet clean: the early Christians. During Jesus' time, the lowest slave would wash the feet of those higher up the chain. As the reader may recall in the book of John 13, Peter did not want Jesus washing his feet. Peter felt that he should be washing Jesus' feet. Peter was actually embarrassed to be in a position where his Lord and teacher was playing the role of a servant to him.

While we are in this country, may we not forget that we are here to serve the people of Afghanistan. If we wish to be great, we must first learn to serve. "The greatest among you will be your servant." (Matt. 23:11). Let's keep our hearts pure and our feet clean – as we continue to serve others.

Spiritual Foot Washing

The first lesson learned before deploying to Afghanistan was: Don't show the bottoms of your feet while in the presence of an Afghan. The feet are considered "unclean," thus it is very rude to



Members of the 298th CSSB and the 377th QM received their Combat Patches on March 29 and April 22 respectively.



History in the Making: First Ever Maxxpro Recovery Vehicle Sustainment Mission

As emphasis is being placed on the “Transfer” portion of the four phase Counterinsurgency plan (Clear, Hold, Build, Transfer), the reliance on “Afghan First” support increases, as well. With the Army reducing its footprint on the Afghan highways while simultaneously stimulating the local economy, responsibility for transporting commodities is shifting from Coalition forces to locally hired Afghans. As the reliance on our Afghan partners to transport commodities across the theater increases, so does the demand for recovery and repair assets. Typically, when a local vehicle breaks down, the driver may wait for help for days on end; that is, if he can afford it and if someone is willing to come to his location. When escorted by U.S forces, a recovery vehicle whose mission is to repair, recover, or tow broken or damaged vehicles, both Coalition and local, is embedded into the convoy.

On April 23rd, at approximately 9:32am, the 298th CSSB, the 183D Maintenance and the 104th Transportation Companies made Army and Department of Defense history by being the first Sustainment unit, ever, to take the new Maxxpro Recovery Vehicle (MRV) outside the wire. The new Vehicle, operated by SGT John Downs and SPC Christopher Wheat (183D Maintenance Company), was suc-

cessfully utilized by the “Warpigs” gun truck team on its first Sustainment Combat Logistical Patrol since its conception on the drawing board. The recovery team employed the MRV to assist numerous Host Nation Trucks during the long drive from Camp Leatherneck to Shindand Air Base, as well as tow a Palletized Load System Vehicle (PLS). With increased recovery capabilities, the MRV combines previous conventional capabilities with multi-faceted and diversified equipment upgrades such as improved communication and radio capabilities, and increased crew compartment protection. “Maxine”, the newest member to our vehicle fleet, previously a prototype, is now the latest and greatest addition to military’s arsenal of recovery vehicles being driven by Americas finest in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

1LT Avraham (Avi) Behar
Gun Truck Team 1 “Warpigs” Commander
Maintenance Support Platoon Leader



Left to right, SGT Cody DeVore, SPC Adam Callahan, SPC Christopher Wheat, and SGT John Downs



377th QM DET/ 298th CSSB
377th Quartermaster Detachment
"Movement Brings Victory"



SPC Ruiz working with a DynCorp employee at the FSSP.



SFC Taylor testing water samples from the ROWPU.



SPC Clanton and SPC Sheffield hook up trailer during PLS training.



SGT Digsby training executing PLS training with the 104th.

LTC Phippen visits the Locals



LTC Phippen, SPC Jackson, and SPC Mays taking a group photo after visiting and handing out gifts. Most of you know that pictures say a thousand words. As a viewer of this event you would have to be there to get the full effect. The conversation turned into a very educational lesson as the locals gathered into a group ask LTC Phippen questions. As the questions were coming out and being answered, you could see on their face that the worries of what type of people the 298th were, was lifted.

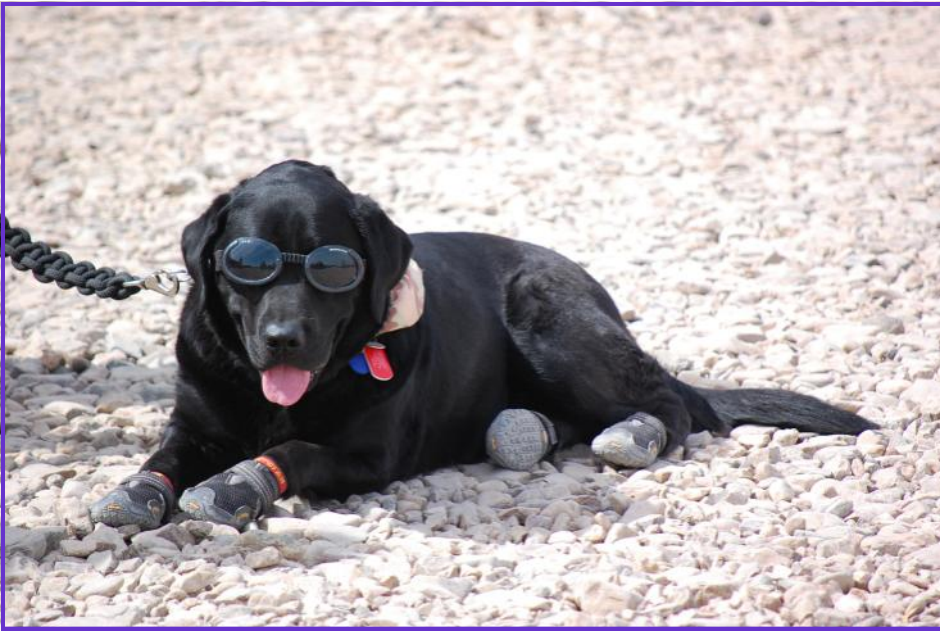
298th CSSB NCO of the Year

SGT Ortiz- Diaz, Damaris is a prime example of the multi-faceted and diversified Warrior Leader that our Army has to offer. Primarily assigned as a 91B Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic, her expertise is translated in the form as the lead vehicle and Assistant Convoy Commander for over 40 combat logistical patrols for the Knights logistic convoy team, delivering millions of pounds of life support equipment to countless FOB's, COP's and Airbases throughout RC (W), (S) and (SW) in support of the Counterinsurgency Operations in Afghanistan. Her dedication to mission accomplishment and desire to win has made SGT Ortiz-Diaz one of the top Noncommissioned Officers in the 183rd Maintenance Company. She attended the 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion NCO/Soldier of the month board for January where she was selected as the Non-commissioned Officer of the Month. Her countless hours of work, effort and desire to go beyond expectations enable her to be selected above her peers to represent the 298th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and the 183rd Maintenance Company at the 7th Sustainment Brigade NCO/Soldier of the year competition, held on April 4th 2011 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Her immense knowledge of military subjects and mental toughness were exemplified as she was tested during 3 rigorous events during the NCO/Soldier of the year competition. The events included the Army Physical Fitness Test, a 50 question written exam and a formal Board appearance. Because of her preparation, vast knowledge and outstanding performance she took runner up at this year's NCO/Soldier of the year completion. For all of her accomplishments SGT Ortiz- Diaz was awarded the Army Achievement Medal by CSM Ward.



SGT Ortiz- Diaz was awarded the Army Achievement Medal by CSM Ward.

Meet SFC Apollo Our Combat Stress Dog



Animal-assisted therapy (AAT) is a type of therapy that involves an animal with specific characteristics becoming a fundamental part of a person's treatment. Animal-assisted therapy is designed to improve the physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive functioning of the patient.

Apollo, a black lab, hails from Long Island, New York. He came to the military from an organization called America's Vet-Dogs. He was selected from a group of 60 dogs, and was chosen mainly because of his demeanor, his high-sensitivity, and his energy. Since his mission requires him to be in theatre, Apollo's training included becoming acclimated to helicopter noise, explosions, gunfire, sirens and people from many cultures.

Currently, Apollo is deployed to a Forward Operating Base, where he conducts "walkabouts" and interacts with service members. Apollo acts as a magnet, as service members tend to congregate around him wherever he goes. He is expected to remain in theatre for about one year.

*SFC Apollo is an E-7.
Handlers are often E-5s.
The idea is that the therapy dog will hold one rank above their handler. This instills in the handler a sense of respect. They are to treat the animal as an NCO. Mistreatment of the animal is punishable by the UCMJ.*



Participants in the Boston Half Marathon (Afghan style)



Runners completed a 13.1 mile course around Shindand Airbase that coincided with the running of the Boston Marathon. There were over 60 participants in the half and full marathon. Participants, in no particular order were: SGT Schwartz, SGT Larrea, 1LT Scotto, SSG McDonald, 1LT Gondela (104th); SSG Pereira, SPC Godwin, SSG Joel, SSG Gordon, SPC Stambaugh, CW3 LeBlanc (183rd); CPT Lowry, MAJ Michael, LTC Phippen, SPC Bostick (298th).

SFC Deer and SFC Downs take notes on what 89th OMLT team needs for the new fuel point.



Kudos to SGT Jones for his artistic ability. Thank you for painting the Logfire logo at the TOC.

The Passing of the Torch

The 104th Transportation Company recently supported the 377th Quartermaster Company with Drivers training on the MAXX PRO, MRAP All Terrain Vehicle (MATV), and the Palletized Loading System (PLS). The 104th worked hand-in-hand to validate thirteen personnel from the 377th on Convoy Logistics Patrols, through a left seat-right seat ride from Shindand Air Base to Camp Leatherneck.

During three weeks of training, the 377th received class room instruction from the 104th Master Driver's Staff Sgt. Antoinette Mitchell and Staff Sgt. Mitchell Amos. The 104th Master Drivers prepared in depth classroom activities giving the 377th Soldiers a better understanding of the systems and their capabilities both on and off road.

Mitchell was very surprised by the knowledge the 377th Soldiers had prior to class. "These Soldiers are very knowledgeable and possess a

willingness to learn," said Mitchell.

Further, Mitchell noted the Soldiers picked up on the training quickly despite the newness of the vehicles and the tricky nature of dropping and retrieving flat rack systems.

SPC John Wiggins spent time going over the communications systems, making sure each Soldier was comfortable. Once on the road, knowing how to communicate can sometimes be the difference between life and death.

Wiggins was confident the 377th would have no trouble performing communication tasks. "They picked up on all the systems rather quickly, and had lots of questions, which is good."

Sergeant First Class Raymond Craig, the 104th Transportation Company Truck Master, spent time overseeing the training and was very impressed with the high moral and dedication the 377th Soldiers brought into the classroom. "They came in each day

very energetic and ready to learn. You could see that they were very excited about getting to know the gun trucks and preparing for their upcoming mission."

The 377th Quartermaster Company is preparing to replace the 104th Transportation Company's Forward Logistical Element (FLE) during the latter part of the month of April. They will move up to Camp Stone in Herat and conduct CLPs on a regular basis.

Within the past eight months, the 104th FLE have conducted over 600 missions, a testament to the great mission focus and resiliency. The 377th have some very large shoes to fill replacing the 104th.

CPT Max Donaldson
104th Company Commander



“Always on the Move” 226th Quartermaster Platoon Finally Makes its Move Back to CONUS

During an emotional ceremony, the soldiers of the 226th Quartermaster (QM) Platoon were honored in their End of Tour awards ceremony. The 226th had an extremely demanding mission during their tour in Afghanistan and they performed with overwhelming success, and numerous achievements. The 226th QM Platoon was the first group ever trained on the Atlas II 10 k forklift and for a time, had the only two soldiers in RC-West that were qualified to run the Petroleum Quality Analysis System Enhanced (PQAS-E) lab which provides fuel sample testing to the local area. The 226th arrived in Afghanistan in April 2010 and established the first Supply Support Activity (SSA) in RC-West. Some of the platoon’s arduous daily missions included, but weren’t limited to, distributing 11,000 gallons of fuel, and producing 45,000-60,000 gallons of potable water.

Since deploying, the soldiers of the 226th QM platoon have served under two battalion headquarters, the 529th and 298th Combat Sustainment Support Battalions. LTC Clifton “Lynn” Pippen was the battalion commander at the time of the 226th redeployment and presenter of the awards during their End of Tour Awards ceremony. LTC Pippen presented his first Bronze Star Medal to CW2 Telacy McGee for her outstanding service as the supply support activity accountable officer. LTC Pippen also awarded numerous Army Accommodation Medals and Army Achievement Medals to the soldiers. Two names that stood out during the awards presentation were Pinkham and Pinkham, a married couple that had the unique opportunity to deploy together. “It’s difficult and easier,” said SPC Brandy Pinkham, “It’s difficult, because we are both away from our three year old daughter, but easier as far as having each other here for support.”

The expertise and camaraderie of the 226th will be greatly missed. Safe travels to them as they return to their loved ones in Fort Stewart Georgia. The 226th QM platoon left theater in April 2011 and were replaced by the 377th Quartermaster Company, a Reserve unit out of Macon Georgia.



LTC Pippen presented his first Bronze Star Medal to CW2 Telacy McGee.





Dogs of War

Lassie, Benji, and faithful Old Yeller are well known fictional canines that are revered for their exceptional abilities to help people and save lives. Shindand Air Base had the privilege of meeting the real deal. Elsa, Dori, and Dudex put on quite a show during an exhibition of the talents that come from the unparalleled world class services of American K-9 Detection Services, Inc. (AMK9). Alex Reeb, the AMK9 Regional Training Manager for RC-WEST, hosted the event which displayed the canines' specialty in detecting explosives and explosive materials.

AMK9 provides canine services both domestically and abroad. The AMK9 team has been at Shindand for more than a year. The AMK9 missions in Afghanistan started around 2008 with Special Forces units. Since then their missions have spanned to cover multiple Regional Commands in Afghanistan. Shindand Air Base currently has 8 canines at its location.

At first glance these beautiful dogs

look like any other household pet and beloved family member, but the expert demonstration revealed these canines were trained to do far more than go fetch. AMK9 provides canine security services to governmental, non-governmental and private entities worldwide. The Explosive Detector Dogs (EDDs) are a crucial part of the efforts being used on Shindand to neutralize the threat of explosive based attacks. The dogs and their trainers demonstrated how the EDDs perform searches at entry check points, vehicle sweeps, and personal protection. The EDDs are trained to detect between 9 to 12 different types of explosives.

The all female demo team (the EDDs) put on an impressive display that made all in the audience feel more secure knowing that AMK9 is providing an added level of protection to Shindand Air Base. Don't worry if you missed Shindand's first K-9 demonstration, Mr. Reeb assured the audience there would more to come. For more information on AMK9, please visit their website at www.amk9.com.

The Afghan 8

Eight members of the original 298th who served in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004 are known as "The Afghan 8". Left to right are: MSG Clyde Gardner, SFC Bonnie Hughes, SFC Willie Deer, SFC Howard Tucker, SSG Randy Thomas, SGT Roy Arinder, SSG Joshua White and SGT Paqutia Jackson.



Safety Message

Heat injury and illness pose a significant threat to Army personnel, whether deployed, assigned to a training center or just partaking in outdoor recreational activities. Heat-related injuries are the third-most reported medical event within the military over the last 10 years and are responsible for more than 1,300 hospitalizations in the Army alone. Minor heat illnesses such as heat cramps are often the first sign of a heat injury. If not treated properly, the result can be heat exhaustion, which can turn into a major injury such as heat stroke.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are muscle pains or spasms — usually in the abdomen, arms or legs — that can occur during strenuous activity. Soldiers who perspire a lot are more likely to suffer from heat cramps because sweating depletes the body of salt. Drinking large quantities of water after exercise can dilute body salts even further, which can worsen heat cramps.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the most com-

mon heat injury. A Soldier suffering from heat exhaustion will often look pale with cool, moist skin, but will be sweating profusely. This can be accompanied by feelings of dizziness or faintness, headache, nausea and weakness, as well as increased thirst and a rapid heartbeat.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a medical emergency often resulting from exercise or heavy work in hot environments combined with insufficient fluid intake. When the body's mechanisms for handling heat stress fail, the result can be heat stroke, which can be life-threatening. The main indicator for heat stroke is an elevated body temperature, generally greater than 104 F. This can lead to changes in mental status, unconsciousness and coma. Other signs to look for are rapid heartbeat, hurried and shallow breathing, headache, nausea, irritability, confusion and a cessation of sweating. Sometimes, fainting can be the first sign for older adults.

Preventive Measures

To help avoid heat-related injuries,

Leaders and Soldiers should:

- Drink plenty of fluids.** In hot environments, it's possible for the body to lose one liter of fluids per hour. Thirst is not a good indicator of fluid loss. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink fluids.
- Be aware of their environment.** If you work in the heat or around heat sources, take whatever steps are possible to control the heat externally. It's also recommended that ice sheets be readily available during high-risk activities to reduce the severity of a heat injury.
- Take frequent breaks.** As the temperature increases, take more frequent breaks to stay cool.
- Wear proper clothing.** Loose, lightweight fabrics encourage heat release.
- Acclimatize.** It takes at least seven to 10 days to get used to working in a hot environment.
- Stay in shape.** A healthy heart and good muscle tone work more effi-

ciently and generate less heat.

•**Eat light during the workday.** Hot, heavy meals add heat to the body and divert blood flow to aid with digestion. Normal dietary intake typically replaces all salt lost during the day, so there is no need to take salt supplements.

•**Be aware of special heat stress risks.** Caffeine, alcohol, diabetes or medications for high blood pressure and allergies can increase the risk of heat stress.

Each year, Soldiers fall victim to preventable heat injuries. Although Leaders are accountable for their Soldiers' health, Soldiers also have an obligation to mitigate their risk. Stay fit to fight this summer. Take the appropriate preventive measures and monitor yourself and your battle buddies for the signs of heat-related injuries.

“Army Safe is Army Strong!”

CW2 James Ballard

Promotions:

(298th)

SSG Dennie Mason

SSG Daniel Gainey

Hope everyone had a



We're on Facebook
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/298th-CSSB/126140340773566>

Thought For The Day

Most of the shadows of this life are caused by our standing in our own sunshine.



On The Funny Side

Son: Dad, if you saw a \$10 bill and a \$5 bill on the floor, which would you take?

Dad: The \$10 of course!

Son: Dad, you're so STUPID! Why not take both?

Dad: