



# The Mountain Warrior





## Brigade Commander and Command Sergeant Major's letter



To the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines,  
and Civilians of Task Force Mountain  
Warrior:

With the pace of current operations, it's hard to believe the vast majority of TF Mountain Warrior has just arrived within the past six weeks. I've been privileged to meet many of you, but to those I haven't met, I would like to welcome you to our team. Our expertise comes from across the military and Department of State. I've quickly learned that our diversity and broad backgrounds are what makes this team so strong and so incredibly talented. Another reason for our immediate successes during our first six weeks are the phenomenal units, such as Chosin (1-32 IN) and Palehorse (7-17 CAV), our Embedded Training Teams (ETTs), and several key civilians who remained on board to assist us through a busy and eventful transition period. Thanks to all of you for humbly passing on your experiences and tough lessons learned – your extra efforts have made the difference in helping the entire MTN Warrior team hit the ground running.

We have already seen how the heroics of one trooper or the actions of one leader can make the difference in mission accomplishment. I spoke with countless Soldiers, NCOs and officers who describe their tough conditions and harrowing missions like they're average occurrences – in every case I'm in awe at what our troopers accomplish on what to them, is "just a normal day" here in Afghanistan. We appreciate the talent, courage and devotion you show daily. These qualities serve as an example for both the Afghan National Security Forces and the Afghan people. I've yet to meet one Afghan who doesn't remark in amazement about how hard each of you works to improve the lives of ordinary Afghans.

As we gain momentum in this endeavor, we must constantly remember that we are here to do more than just defeat the enemy; we are here to protect the Afghan people and help their government build the capacity to stand on their own. We all recognize it is oftentimes easier for us to just complete a task on our own rather than teaching the Afghans how to complete that task. However, we must remember that the mark of our success lies in our ability to build our Afghan partner's capacity to act independently. I ask that you make your Afghan counterparts part of every solution because this type of mentoring will truly move them toward developing into the strong and independent force they must become in order for their entire country to succeed.

In August, our primary mission will be assisting our Afghan partners through their second free election.

This is a historic event that will be watched around the world. The next few weeks of election preparation will be complex and demanding; it will take all of our combined efforts to successfully support the Afghan government through the election process. We all understand the importance and significance of a free election, and I am confident that our tireless efforts will ensure the Afghans of N2KL will be able to safely exercise their right to vote.

In the past month, six troopers from our Task Force made the ultimate sacrifice. These great American Soldiers will be deeply missed and always remembered. The stories of how these men were willing to sacrifice themselves for their buddies and for our country remind me why our military men and women are respected around the world. These men are the truest of American heroes.

Thank you for all that you do and thanks to your families for their own sacrifice and commitment to our mission here in Afghanistan. It is an honor to serve on this team with each of you. Together we form a most formidable team; one that will accomplish a tremendous amount over this next crucial year.

Led By Love of Country!

Colonel Randy A. George

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To the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and  
Civilians of Task Force Mountain Warrior:

I want to thank you all for the hard work you've put in so far to make our first couple of months in N2KL a success. As a team I would ask each of you to look out for each other. Take pride in the fact that we are making history by helping people that have seen decades of war and oppression. We have the ability to make a change for the better, to give a nation a chance at a peaceful way of life. As we all move along at a very fast pace I challenge everyone to keep safety as a top priority. Maintain your edge and your equipment along with your physical, mental, and spiritual stamina. Use all the resources available to you at every level from small gyms to Internet cafes to chaplains to a free magazine or book.

Tons of things we do on a daily bases will be easier said than done. That's why it's important that to know we can count on everyone. The way we do that is by our daily actions and interactions with our counterparts, fellow troopers, and leaders. Stay Mountain Warrior Strong!

-CSM Charles V. Sasser, Jr.

# Contents

- 4** -Pfc. Drees' Memorial  
2-12 Infantry honors fallen hero
- 6** -TF Steel Commander visits Alingar
- 7** -2-77 FA patch ceremony  
Field Artillery joins 4 ID history  
-Gunnery Sergeant keeps troops safe
- 8** -ABP open new HQ in Naray  
-Gryphon, ANP make elections safer  
Joint polling center assessments
- 9** -TF Surgeon and Medics give care  
and comfort
- 10** -554th MPs assess polling sites  
Ensuring Afghan freedom  
-1-12 pushes to secure Kandahar
- 11** -Agriculture teams teach  
techniques to Afghan students
- 12** -Honoring the fallen  
remembering those we've lost

On the cover: A Non-Commissioned Officer from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, passes through a small village while scaling a mountain in the Pesh River Valley

# Chaplains Corner:

By Maj. Paul Madej

Throughout our lives, many of us will find ourselves in the desert: some, by entering a period of challenge and struggle; some, by heading to war and



experiencing the heat of combat. For many of us in the Task Force Mountain Warrior family, we experience both. Leaving loved ones behind is never an easy thing, and war does not take the place of, or make us forget those we love. If anything, war forces us to examine what is really important in our lives and realize that little annoyances and petty issues do not represent fully our relationships.

Today, let us resolve to be thankful for this time in the desert, where we have an opportunity to review and rebuild those broken relationships.

May we resolve to work for peace, not only throughout the world, but in our communities and families as well.



The chapel moved last month to a new building located by the dining facility on Forward Operating Base Fenty

## Kabul Bank Opens New Branch for ANA

Story and photos by Sgt. Michael Masterson

4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs Office

The Kabul Bank opened a new branch in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province on July 7 to service Afghan National Army Soldiers stationed in the area.

The bank is located on FOB Hughie in Jalalabad City, where there is a contingent of ANA Soldiers.

Air Force Maj. John Matthews, a Pittsburgh, Penn. native, explained why the new branch was beneficial and what it took to build it.

"The idea behind the project was to make it easier for Afghan Soldiers to get their pay," he said.

Matthews, who is assigned to the 21<sup>st</sup> Force Support Squadron of Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., which currently falls under the 48th Brigade Combat Team in support

*"The idea behind the project was to make it easier for Afghan Soldiers to get their pay."*

- Air Force Maj. John Matthews

of Regional Command-East, said before the branch was established, the Afghan finance officers for the area had to make dangerous trips to and from Kabul.

"With as many Soldiers as the ANA has in this area, they would typically have to disperse 35 million Afghani," Matthews said.

Matthews said although he worked with the ANA finance officers and the regional manager for Kabul Bank, Salam Safi, to get the new branch opened, the project would have gotten nowhere without the ANA.

Afghan Army Maj. Azimullah, the chief financial officer for the ANA in the area, was the driving force behind arranging for the new Kabul Bank office.

"I feel very happy that our Soldiers will be getting their money correctly and in a timely manner," Azimullah said.

Matthews had positive remarks about the ANA finance team who made the construction of the bank possible.

"I am very proud of these guys," he said. "I gave them an idea and they made it work."

# Lethal Warriors search mountains of Kunar

*Story and Photos by Army Spc. Eugene H. Cushing 4 BCT, 4 ID Public Affairs Office*

U.S. Army Soldiers of 1st platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, assigned to Task Force Mountain Warrior, conducted reconnaissance in the Pesh River valley on July 21 to gather information for future combat operations.

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Chris J. Capasso, of Nashua, N.H., the platoon leader for 1st platoon, explained his unit was conducting reconnaissance of possible enemy positions and escape routes.

Capasso said the platoon found actionable intelligence, including several enemy fighting positions and trails.

“It helps plan and shape future operations,” he said. “The mission’s purpose was to gather information on the enemy.”

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joseph S. McKinney, of Fairfax, Okla., the platoon sergeant for 1st platoon, explained why reconnaissance missions are important to the success of future operations.

“The enemy we’re fighting is an enemy we can’t see,” he said. “These missions set up the future operations.”

Capasso praised his Soldiers for the work they did on the day’s mission and the work they continue to do in hunting down the enemies of Afghanistan.

“These guys have been working real hard,” he said.

“They’ve been doing missions back to back with little complaint. They understand that to go after these guys we have to get out there and patrol the mountains.”



U.S. Army Sgt. Dustin Kaminiski, of Chicago, Ill., a team leader for 2nd squad, 1st platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, assigned to Task Force Mountain Warrior, and U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Johnny L. Bates, of Winchester, Ky., the squad leader for weapons squad, 1st platoon, stand guard in a small village in the Kunar province. Bates and Kaminiski were part of a reconnaissance operation their platoon was conducting in support of larger combat operations planned for the near future.



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joseph S. McKinney, of Fairfax, Okla., the platoon sergeant for 1st platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, assigned to Task Force Mountain Warrior, examines a hillside through his rifle scope while conducting a reconnaissance mission in the Kunar province.

# TF Steel Commander Visits Alingar District

*Story and photos by Pfc. Elizabeth Raney  
4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Important issues, such as security, district needs, and the growing relationship between Afghans and the International Security Assistance Force, were discussed when ISAF Soldiers met with Woluswal Nangali, a sub-governor of the Alingar district of the Nuristan province, for a key leader engagement July 6.

Lt. Col. Michael J. Forsyth, a native of Mayville, Ky., commander of the 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Steel, was the one to speak with Nangali during the engagement.

"I just wanted to come down and pay a personal visit to you," Forsyth said to Nangali.

Forsyth first asked Nangali about any security concerns he had in Laghman Province. Nangali freely expressed his concerns, and was met with encouraging words of what solutions may come with the help of Afghan and ISAF forces.

"I hope that we can work together to help make Afghanistan truly free and prosperous," Forsyth said to Nangali.

Forsyth thanked Nangali for the recent police assistance in locating and securing improvised explosive devices.

"If we can work together in taking the reports and securing the IEDs, we can ensure that the population is safe," he said.

Forsyth also invited Nangali to do a radio address with him on forward operating base Kalagush.

"I think the more we talk together, including on the radio, to the public, the more support we can gain," Forsyth said.

Forsyth showed Nangali, on a globe, where the Soldiers of Task Force Steel are from, and the path that was taken to get to Afghanistan.

The two also discussed the reinstallation of the small rewards program, reconciliation of former enemies, and provincial reconstruction team projects.

"We don't want to do any projects without the local leaders leading the way," Forsyth said. "We want you all to tell us what you need and what would be best and we can work it from there."

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Lt. Col. Michael J. Forsyth, a native of Mayville, Ky., commander of 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, out of Fort Carson, Colo., Task Force Steel, speaks with Woluswal Nangali, the sub-governor of the Alingar district of the Nuristan province, during a key leader engagement July 6. Forsyth and Nangali discussed security and possible improvement of the Alingar district.



Lt. Col. Michael J. Forsyth, of Mayville, Ky., commander of 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, Fort Carson, Colo., Task Force Steel, shows Woluswal Nangali, the sub-governor of the Alingar district of the Nuristan province, where, on a globe, the United States is, during a key leader engagement July 6. Forsyth and Nangali also discussed security and possible improvement of the Alingar district.



# TF Steel Soldiers become a part of 4<sup>th</sup> ID history

*Story by Spc. Eugene H. Cushing  
Photo by Pfc. Elizabeth Raney  
4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, of Fort Carson, Colorado, received their 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division combat patches at a ceremony on Forward Operating base Kalagush in Laghman Province of Afghanistan July 4.

Lt. Col. Michael J. Forsyth of Mayville, Kentucky and Command Sergeant Major Michael A. Mendoza Sr. of Scottsdale, Arizona, the battalion Commander and Command Sergeant Major, awarded their Soldiers with combat patches during the ceremony.

“Conducting a combat patch ceremony is important for what it symbolizes,” Forsyth said. “First, it represents the proud history of



4th ID warriors who blazed a trail for us and the current warriors who will carry their legacy forward. Second, receiving a patch on your

Spc. Leveron C. Moore, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Mountain Warrior, holds his units guidon during a combat patch ceremony on Forward Operating Base Kalagush in the Laghman Province.

right shoulder becomes a source of pride for the Soldiers. They are now part of that storied history and the patch symbolizes that they have contributed to it. Finally, a formal ceremony recognizes their service in war, which is the ultimate reason why they volunteered to serve.”

Since 1945 the wear of the shoulder sleeve insignia on the right arm, known as the combat patch, symbolizes wartime service and denotes a Soldier’s participation in combat operations as directed by the secretary of the Army.

# Gunnery Sergeant helps keep enemy at bay

*Story and photo by Pfc. Elizabeth Raney  
4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Whenever forward operating base Kalagush receives an incoming attack, there must be someone there to react and fire back.

That’s the job of Staff Sgt. Cory J. Cummings, a native of Birmingham, Alabama, and the gunnery sergeant for Battery A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Steel. Cummings said he was influenced by 9/11 and a family history of military service to join the Army in 2002. He was influenced to choose Field Artillery by his father.

“When I was young, my dad took me to Civil War reenactments,” Cummings said. “He was the gunnery sergeant for the artillery line. I always thought it was cool. That’s where my interest for artillery came in.”

As the gunnery sergeant, Cummings has a long list of things to attend to. In addition to taking care of his 19 Soldiers, he must also make sure the maintenance of the equipment is always up to par, he said.

“Every morning, I go to the fire base to make sure the guns have been laid and check on maintenance



Staff Sgt. Cory J. Cummings, of Birmingham, Alabama, the gunnery sergeant for Battery A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Steel, looks through the scope of a mortar tube to check the azimuth during routine daily operations July 5.

and ammunition,” Cummings said.

Position improvement has also been a priority lately, he added.

“We’re taking something that the previous unit had established and making it better,” Cummings said. “Most of the bunkers have only two layers of sandbags and that’s just not enough to sustain a rocket.”

Cummings said the best part of his job is mentoring his Soldiers.

“When the FOB takes incoming and the sirens go off, the gun line, the mortar team, we all run out and get on the mortar and gun for a counter-fire mission to

come down,” Cummings said.

“That’s the combat side of artillery,” he said. “We’re on the FOB, standing beside our guns when incoming comes down.”

Cummings said he feels his job is mission essential.

“In order for the enemy to think that they can be touched, we need to be here,” he said.

“At a moment’s notice, we can reach out and touch them.”

“That’s the benefit of artillery, that’s the importance of it being here,” Cummings said. “There’s no threat to them if we’re not here.”

# Afghan Border Police open new headquarters in Naray



Lt. Col. Robert B. Brown, of Commander 3-61 Cavalry, meets with local leaders during the dedication and opening of a new Afghan Border Police Headquarters compound in Naray District, Kunar Province, Afghanistan on June 16, 2009.

Staff Sergeant Kevin J. Poyer, of Delta Company, 704<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, a Forward Support Company for 3-61 Cavalry, pulls security near a vehicle during the opening of a new Afghan Border Police Headquarters.



*Story by 2LT Liz Silver, Photos by Spc. Eugene Cushing  
4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Afghan Border Police dedicated a new headquarters building in a ceremony in Bari Kowt, Naray District on June 16.

The ceremony was attended by Provincial Governor Sayed Wahidi, as well as Lt. Col. Sher Mohammed, Commander of the 6<sup>th</sup> Afghan National Army Kandak. ISAF leaders in attendance included Lt. Col. Robert B. Brown, Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Squadron, 61<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Regiment of Task Force Mountain Warrior, and Lt. Col. James C. Markert, Commander of the 6<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment of Task Force Duke.

A second event of the day was a Joint Shura between Ghaziabad and Naray District leadership.

Shura leaders from these two districts met with district leaders, Afghan National Security Force leadership, and International Security Assistance Force personnel to thank the 6-4 Cavalry leadership for their efforts over the past year in northeastern Kunar province. Shura leaders met with and discussed local security concerns of District Sub Governors with the leadership of the incoming 3<sup>rd</sup> Squadron, 61<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Regiment.

Although Kunar province has some of the most difficult terrain to navigate in Afghanistan, Governor Wahidi has strived to visit rural areas and ensure all citizens are reaping the benefits of new schools, police stations, and other civil projects.

“We are lucky we have a governor who comes to the people wherever they might be,” stated one village elder.

## TF Gryphon Engineers work with Afghan National Police to make elections safer

*Story by Pfc. Elizabeth Raney  
4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Engineer Soldiers from 1st platoon, Company A, Task Force Gryphon, conducted a polling center assessment in the Pachir Agam District of Nangarhar Province on June 14.

The Soldiers partnered with Afghan National Police to assess potential polling center locations for safety and security that could be used during the Afghan National Election scheduled for August 20.

“The most important goal of today was to make sure that the polling

sites for the elections are safe and secure for the Afghan people,” said 2nd Lt. Brian Schroeder of Davenport, Nebraska, 1st Platoon leader, Company A, Task Force Gryphon. “The Afghan National Police that were partnered with us today played an instrumental role in pulling security and helping us assess the condition of the sites.”

Gryphon Soldiers expressed the importance and effectiveness of partnering with the Afghan National Police.

“It’s great getting to work with the Afghan National Police.

I think the locals really appreciate seeing the joint effort between us,” said Spc. Sean Heffron, a member of 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Gryphon, of Syracuse, New York.

Engineer Soldiers from Company A, Task Force Gryphon, will continue to accompany Afghan National Police on missions to ensure the sites are safe and able to sustain the people of Nangarhar province as they vote in the second national election since the fall of the Taliban.



# Task Force Surgeon and Medics give care and comfort

*Story and photo by Pfc. Elizabeth K. Raney*

*4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Whenever a Task Force Mountain Warrior Soldier heads out for a mission, he knows if something happens, he will be taken care of.

That's the job of Capt. Joe Mazzoncini, TF Mountain Warrior's brigade surgeon, based out of FOB Fenty, Afghanistan. If the unspeakable happens, the Soldiers will be treated with speed, expertise, and compassion.

Although Mazzoncini holds the title of Brigade Surgeon, you will never find him near an operating room. According to him, the title is the traditional Army title given to the head doctor of a brigade.

"My job is to make sure all of our medics are the best in the world, and our systems are firing on all cylinders," said Mazzoncini. "No matter what, our Servicemembers get the fastest and best medical care possible."

Keeping those 'cylinders firing' often take up large portions of Mazzoncini's day.

According to him, he may only get to see 15 to 20 patients per week. Because he is so busy with administrative work and other demands of his leadership position, Mazzoncini relies on his fellow medical professionals for help.

Mazzoncini went on to say, it's the professionalism of the medics, doctors and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) personnel of TF Mountain Warrior that give our Soldiers the courage to fight in combat.

"We have, without a doubt, the best team out there," he said proudly.

According to Mazzoncini the largest threat his team sees is from non-combat related injuries and diseases.

"They are the number one threat here," Mazzoncini said.

The most commonly contracted diseases in Afghanistan are malaria, passed through mosquito bites, Leishmaniasis, passed by sand flies, and less commonly, rabies from unvaccinated animals, according to Mazzoncini.

Mazzoncini described steps the Army has taken to help prevent



Spc. Cassandra L. Benes, from Newton, Mass., a medic with Company C, 704<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Task Force Mountain Warrior, cleans a patient's wound at the aid station on Forward Operating Base Fenty.

these diseases and other injuries. Every soldier is given a medical threat brief prior to deployment, and is also taking daily antibiotics to help prevent malaria.

Additionally, Servicemembers are warned not to touch unknown animals in case of rabies. As a precaution, animals are kept off of the military installations.

Mazzoncini also said there are other injuries that are common to Servicemembers in Afghanistan

such as dehydration and problems adapting to the altitude.

"Heat and cold injuries are also a big deal here," said Mazzoncini.

Mazzoncini went on to say, "The best cure is prevention." Leaders need to watch out for their Soldiers and Soldiers watch out for each other.

"Everything we do here is to ensure the best medical care for our fellow Soldiers," Mazzoncini said.

# Military Police assess polling sites to ensure safety

*Story and photos by Pfc.*

*Elizabeth Raney*

*4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Soldiers from the 554<sup>th</sup> Military Police Unit, out of Stuttgart, Germany, currently serving under Task Force Mountain Warrior, have been conducting polling site assessments in the Nangarhar province for the upcoming election in August.

Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class John Moyle, the platoon sergeant for 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, "UGLY", 554<sup>th</sup> MP, and native of Sunbury, Penn., said the purpose of these missions is to assess local security posture.

"If there're any concerns that locals have, we send them up to the PRT," Moyle said, referring to Provincial Reconstruction Team. "We let the PRT take a look at them."

Moyle, referring to a specific mission on July 1, said he thinks they accomplished the mission and then some.

"Our mission was just to go out and assess the security of the polling stations," he said. "We did that, along with some relationship building and also identifying where humanitarian assistance is needed."

According to Moyle, the 554<sup>th</sup> MPs have been assessing polling sites every day.

"It was a short suspense, we had about 30 days to do them all," he said. "There are over 500 in Nangarhar province alone."

Moyle said, while most villages are friendly, his platoon has encountered only one village, in all of their assessments, that was suspected to be unfriendly to coalition forces.

"The thing that has to be determined is why it's not friendly,"



Sgt. 1st Class John Moyle, the platoon sergeant for 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, 554<sup>th</sup> Military Police Unit, out of Stuttgart, Germany, currently serving under Task Force Mountain Warrior, gives a child a high-five while pulling security during polling site assessments July 1.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Haskell, from Lewiston, Maine, a squad leader for 2<sup>nd</sup> Squad, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, 554<sup>th</sup> Military Police Unit, out of Stuttgart, Germany, currently serving under Task Force Mountain Warrior, speaks with the elder of a village, during polling site assessments July 1.



Moyle pondered. "Is it by choice? Is it the village themselves that are anti-coalition forces? Or is it because somebody pushed their way into the village and the village people are scared?"

Moyle said they have three areas that they are responsible for: the Dari Knorr region, Kuz Kordar, and Jalalabad main.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Haskell, from Lewiston, Maine, a squad leader for 2<sup>nd</sup> Squad, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, 554<sup>th</sup> MP, conducted the actual assessment of the villages on July 1.

He explained what they must ask the village leader during their assessments.

"We have certain stuff that we're looking for to assess," Haskell said. "We need to know what they have around already for currently existing security measures."

"For instance, if they have a wall around their compound or if they have any kind of wire, if they have

guards or watchmen or anything to keep an eye on the place," he explained. "We're just trying to determine what they actually have."

"We're also looking for any specific threat that may be there," Haskell said. "Usually, everyone seems to think they're really safe where they're at but I try to find out if they think there's any specific threat against their facility."

"Another thing we're looking for is a landing zone," Haskell said. "We look around the area for any kind of HLZ."

Haskell said, disappointedly, that an IED was found in a polling place the day after their assessment was done.

"Nonetheless, assessing the polling sites for the upcoming election lets the enemy know that we are around, and lets the locals know that we are here for them, to help," Haskell said.

# Red Warriors push to secure Kandahar

*Story by Air Force Staff Sgt.*

*Justin Weaver*

*1 BN, 12 INF REG Public Affairs*

The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment's Red Warriors battled temperatures above 105 as they conducted two back-to-back missions in the Zhari District, located in the Western part of the

Kandahar Province. Operation First Call and Operation Tora Arwa 4 were aimed at disrupting Anti-Afghan Forces and Taliban movement in areas where insurgents have had an unopposed safe haven to base their operations.

During Operation First Call, Soldiers met little resistance as

they cleared several compounds and met with village elders west of Kandahar.

Within several hours of the Operation First Call offensive, Soldiers had already detained several suspected Taliban and found a weapons cache, said

**See 1-12 on next page**

# Guardsmen, Afghan students, share agriculture techniques

*Story and photos by Pfc. Elizabeth Raney*

*4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Army National Guardsmen and Air National Guardsmen from the Kansas Agribusiness Development Team, of Task Force Mountain Warrior, conducted an agricultural development class at Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam's District Research and Demonstration Farm, July 12 through 16.

The five day class, coordinated with members of the United States Agency for International Development, taught students from Nangarhar University more effective farming techniques so that they may teach the current and next generations of Afghan farmers.

Lt. Col. Roger Beekman, an animal specialist, from Olympia, Wash., said "These classes are designed to teach future agricultural leaders modern techniques of growing, irrigating, harvesting, and preserving their crops, as well as taking better care of their livestock."

Beekman began the instruction with classes on food storage and preservation, and sanitation.

Fellow instructors taught additional farming techniques, such as irrigation, soils management,

care of livestock, preventive veterinary medicine, and pest management.

A favorite among the Afghan students was the hands-on soil management class, given by Capt. Jeffrey Mann, a soil scientist from Manhattan, Kan.

"The students loved to dig into and analyze the soil samples," said Mann. "They were very curious about the chemicals used to separate the nutrients from the soil and asked many questions."

Beekman said that he felt the classes would have long term positive effects on agriculture in Laghman.

"If these students take just some of these ideas and work with local farmers, who will then put them into practice, we'll see a more productive and efficient farming society in Afghanistan," said Beekman.



Capt. Jeffrey Mann, of Manhattan, Kan., shows students from Nangarhar University how to collect soil samples during an agricultural development class at Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam, July 9.

## **(1-12 Continued)**

Lt. Col. Reik Andersen, 1-12 Infantry commander of Plymouth, Minnesota.

"One of the goals of these operations is to try and win over the local populace," said Andersen.

"The population is the key - when they turn their back on the insurgents is when the insurgency fails - this can only be done through meaningful engagement with the locals."

In one village, Andersen met with the village elder and his children and discussed their concerns, needs and whether or not the Taliban had been operating in the area.

"Many villagers have family or friends associated with the Taliban and are scared into being a sympathizer," said Mike Warren, the 1-12 Infantry Human Terrain

Team leader from Alton, Ill. "They don't want to help them but they feel they have no choice."

During Operation Tora Arwa, Soldiers from the 1-12 Infantry were part of an air assault into the Zhari District to disrupt insurgent routes and Taliban strongholds.

"We were very successful during this operation," Andersen said. "We made the insurgents pay attention to us and our intentions for three days; these are three days that they had to react to us instead of planning and preparing their own destructive operations against the people of Afghanistan and coalition forces."

Despite the intense heat, Soldiers cleared multiple compounds while taking direct fire from insurgents during the three-day operation.

"Next to my Soldiers safety,

support of the local populace is the most important aspect of this current conflict," said Andersen. "The people have to be convinced that the Taliban and its influence is not good for their community. It is a difficult mission to balance the needs of an apprehensive and sometimes untrusting population with the destruction of the insurgency, but we are committed to making progress for the people of Afghanistan."

The Red Warriors of 1-12 Infantry are one of six battalions of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, of Fort Carson, Colo. and have been placed under the control of Task Force Kandahar, responsible for Coalition Operations for the Kandahar region of southern Afghanistan.

# Fallen Heroes- July 3 through July 18

## Pfc. Steven T. Drees

*Story and photos by Spc. Eugene H. Cushing 4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

On July 3 Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, assigned to Task Force Mountain Warrior, held a memorial in the Kunar Province to honor Pfc. Steven T. Drees who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend freedom and the lives of his comrades.

Drees, of Peshtigo, Wis., an infantryman assigned to 2-12 Inf., was killed by enemy small arms fire while conducting combat operations in Kunar Province.

When the unit came under attack Drees continued to man his weapon, exposing himself to enemy fire, in order to provide covering fire for his fellow Soldiers, saving their lives.

Sgt. Anthony W. Hinton Jr., Drees' squad leader described Drees as an energetic Soldier who knew his job as an infantryman.

Drees left behind two families when he was killed: the family who made him the man he was, and the family of his brothers-in-arms. Hinton understood this when he said a few words about it at the memorial.

"I speak for the platoon when I say Drees wasn't only a Soldier, he was also our Brother."

Pvt. Chance B. Gordon, of Everett, Wash., a rifleman for Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Mountain Warrior, holds his salute during taps played for his fallen comrade, Steven T. Drees, at a memorial held in Kunar Province July 3.



## Spc. Gregory J. Missman

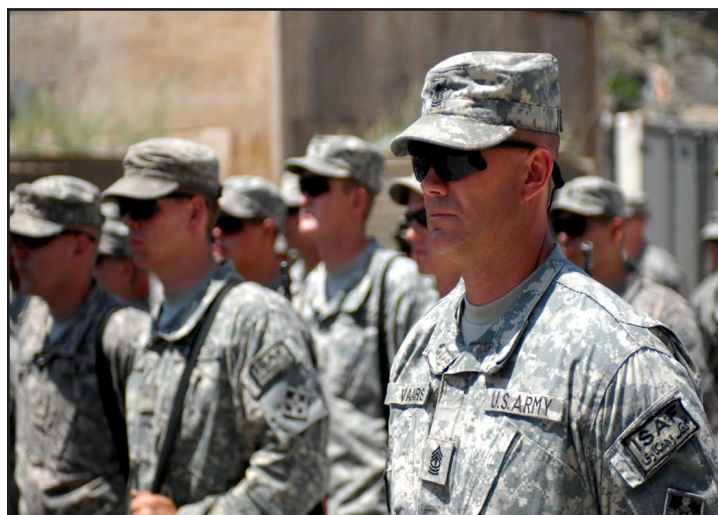
*Story by Spc. Eugene H. Cushing 4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

Spc. Gregory J. Missman, a truck driver from Company F, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, of Fort Carson, Colo., who made the ultimate sacrifice for his country, was honored by his comrades at a memorial on Forward Operating Base Fenty on July 14.

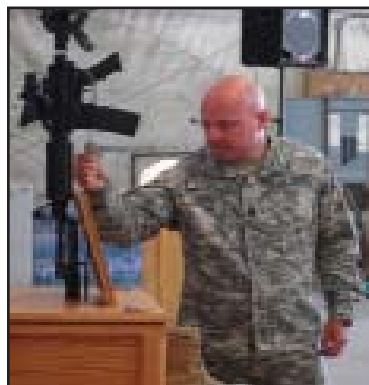
Missman died from injuries sustained when his unit came under attack while on patrol in the Kunar Province.

Missman rejoined the Army to provide for his son after a previous enlistment as an infantryman.

**Cont. on next page**



1st Sgt. Edward Vaars, the first sergeant for Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Mountain Warrior, pays his respects to Pfc. Steven T. Drees at a memorial ceremony July 3.



Command Sgt. Maj. Charles V. Sasser, honors the sacrifice of Spc. Gregory J. Missman at a memorial held July 14. Sasser is the command sergeant major for Task Force Mountain Warrior



The display erected for Missman at the memorial held for him July 14.

Photos by 2nd Lt. Elizabeth Silver 4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs

**(Cont.)** Capt. Edward M. Gutierrez, Missman's company commander, recounted Missman's spirit and motivated attitude.

"He loved the Army, loved being a Soldier and loved the Soldiers around him," he said.

Pfc. Christopher Moors, a gunner assigned to Co. F, 2-12 Inf., spoke about Missman's leadership capabilities and the impact he had on his unit.

"He always was and always will be a part of our team," said Moors.



Missman's fellow Soldiers pay their final respects at a memorial for him July 14. Missman died from injuries received when his unit came under attack while on patrol in the Kunar Province.

The shadows of two Soldiers saluting are seen through the American flag at a memorial held for Spc. Gregory J. Missman. Missman died of injuries sustained when his unit was attacked while on patrol in the Kunar province.



## Sgt. 1st Class Jason J. Fabrizi

*Story by Spc. Eugene H. Cushing  
4th BCT, 4th ID Public Affairs*

The Soldiers of C Troop, 3<sup>rd</sup> Squadron 61<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Regiment honored a fallen Soldier, friend, and role model on July 18 at Combat Out Post Pirtle-King, in Afghanistan's Kunar Province.

Sgt. 1st Class Jason J. Fabrizi was a dedicated father and husband. A seasoned leader, who served as a model for his Soldiers, Fabrizi always sacrificed his own comfort to ensure they were well taken care of. Fabrizi made the ultimate sacrifice when he was killed in a complex attack while on patrol in the Kunar Province.

At the memorial, 1st Lt. George H. Rhynedance, Fabrizi's platoon leader, said he will always remember Fabrizi as the man who gave him direction.

"My heart is torn up over the loss of my friend," he said. "Jason Fabrizi was my mentor and my teacher. He took care of me just like he took care of any other Soldier. Everything I know about being a good leader, about holding this family together, he taught me."



Lt. Colonel Robert B. Brown, Commander, TF Destroyer, Capt. Adam MacAllister, Commander, C Troop, TF Destroyer, and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. George H. Rhynedance, of TF Destroyer, render salutes in honor of Sgt. 1st Class Jason J. Fabrizi, during a memorial ceremony at Combat Out Post Pirtle King July 18.







# Retention NCO's Letter:

By Master Sgt. JAMES L. PUGSLEY  
Senior Career Counselor

**DON'T LET YOUR  
ETS DATE PASS**

**PREPARING FOR  
FY10**

Task Force Mountain Warrior Career Counselors are located throughout the region to support the retention needs of all Soldiers serving in the N2KL Regional Command East AOR. Some of the services my Retention Team can provide are: reenlistment counseling, reclassification counseling, education counseling, CSRB requests, CSB(Reduct) counseling, service computations, ETS changes, ERUP code changes, and Post 9/11 GI Bill information.

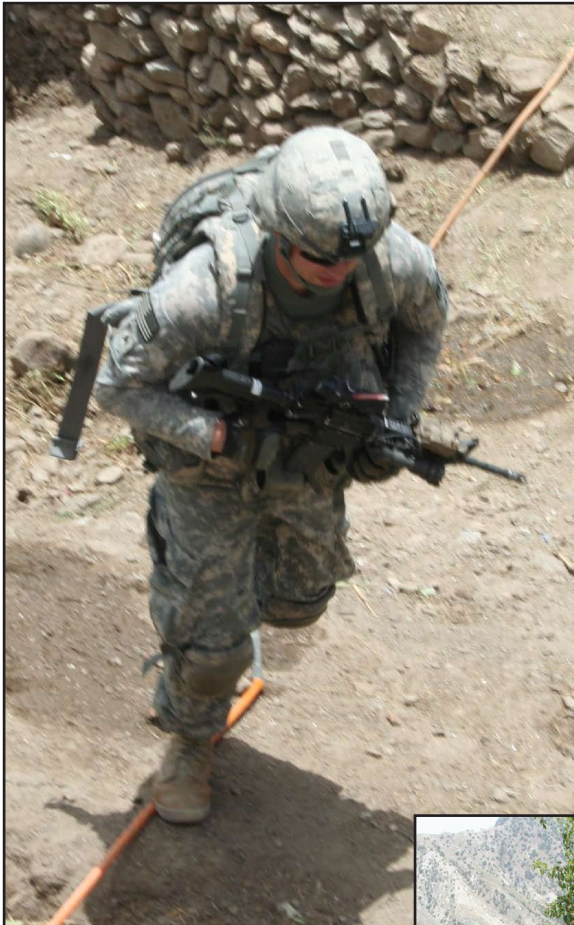
Soldiers whose ETS was or will be administratively adjusted by HRC using delayed separation reason code "S" (Stop-Loss) and have a contractual ETS greater than 30 June 2009, are eligible to reenlist, if otherwise qualified. The reenlistment must be executed prior to the Soldier exceeding his/her contractual ETS. However, once a Soldier begins serving UP Stop-Loss (dayafter contractual ETS), he/she cannot reenlist without an exception to policy.

In an effort to get a jumpstart on the FY10 Retention Mission. Task Force Mountain Warrior Career Counselors are currently requesting assignments and school seats for Soldiers that desire to reenlist in October. Our mission is simple: take care of Soldiers by giving them quality counseling and a strong vision of their future with the United States Army.

Led By Love of Country!

## CAREER COUNSELOR DIRECTORY

NAME	UNIT	LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL
MSG Pugsley	4th IBCT, 4th ID	FOB Fenty	831-6051	james.l.pugsley@afghan.swa.army.mil
SFC Davis	1-12 IN	FOB Ramrod	841-6011	edward.davis@afghan.swa.army.mil
SFC Cabana	2-12 IN	FOB Blessing	481-2155	stephen.m.cabana@afghan.swa.army.mil
SSG Gutierrez	2-77 FA	Bagram	431-5102	luis.a.gutierrez@afghan.swa.army.mil
SSG Herron	704th BSB	FOB Fenty	831-6058	carmen.herron@afghan.swa.army.mil
SSG Berry	4th BSTB	FOB Finley-Shields	SVOIP 776-9711	martha.e.berry@afghan.swa.army.mil
SSG Holman	7-17 CAV	FOB Fenty	831-6152	shaun.holman@afghan.swa.army.mil



**Hey There!**  
**Want to see your pictures**  
**in the Mountain Warrior? Shoot us**  
**an e-mail or send your photos to:**  
**TFMTNWarrriorPAO@afghan.swa.**  
**mil and we'll make sure they get in**  
**the next issue!**

