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Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

Sgt. Tryell Kelly, a designated marksman for Company A, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, uses an M14 sniper rifle to provide cover for a team of Soldiers going to inspect an observation post April 28 near Zambar, Afghanistan.

'White Devils' recon area of operation in Khost province

By Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen
Editor

ZAMBAR, Afghanistan - Led by a Marine captain who spent the last six months leading his company of Marines through Khost province, Soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment got a good look at the region they will be patrolling for the next year April 29.

Captain Ken Barr, commander of Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment took the White Devils to three villages in the northern part of Khost province, including one where a patrol he was leading was attacked in January.

The first stop was Yaqobi, the Sabari district headquarters where about 20 elders from around the district had gathered. There, Barr bid the eld-

ers farewell and introduced Capt. Edward Hollis, commander of Co. A, 2-504 PIR, as his replacement in the district.

Following that, Barr led the patrol to Zambar where a patrol he was leading was attacked in the middle of the night Jan. 12 with machine guns and rocket propelled grenades. There, Barr also introduced Hollis to a couple of village elders.

"Zambar district is kind of a hotter area so I wanted in the daylight to get a good recon of the area," Hollis said. "If there are bad guys out there, we're here to root them out, so I wasn't really too worried about (the attack)."

The purpose of the mission, Hollis said, was to let the Soldiers see the village in the daylight. Afterwards, he said it was a good experience for all.

For some of the Soldiers, it was their first time

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Opinion & Commentary

'It don't get no better than this'



Lt. Col. Norm Cooling
3rd Bn., 3rd Marine Rgt. commander

We in the profession of arms are, without question, among the most fortunate people on Earth. Ours is a profession characterized by the selflessness, courage and commitment of the members who join its ranks.

While many others sit on the sidelines and watch as our Nation faces its most serious threat since the fall of the Soviet Union (and potentially before), we get to serve along side those brave souls who go into harms way with a smile on their face. These are the best young men and women that our Nation has to offer.

And, while others may be concerned with how much fame and material wealth they can accumulate and how easily they can acquire it, these young service members ask for little more than a challenging

and rewarding mission. And here, in Eastern Afghanistan, we certainly have one.

Our mission is unique and complex. It is not as simple as the red army lining up against the blue army. Our enemy does not so readily make himself known. And, when he does, it is often on the terms of his choosing. Our mission requires us to fight in the "Three Block War" where on one village block we are distributing school supplies; on another, we are keeping two rival tribes from fighting one another; and, on the third, we are fighting against an entrenched and determined enemy.

And all three of these actions can take place near simultaneously as we routinely have to switch back and forth between the "three blocks." In this environment, non-kinetic fires, or "information operations," are often more suitable than the kinetic fires with which we are typically more comfortable.

This requires us to be smarter and more disciplined than our adversary. We have to quickly discern when it is appropriate to hand out humanitarian supplies, when it is necessary to show force and when it is appropriate to squeeze the trigger on our weapons systems.

It requires our most junior service members to recognize that they are "Strategic Corporals" - to understand that their individual actions on the tactical level can have strategic consequences. And it requires us to maintain a high standard of moral character. The American people count on us to do the right thing, regardless of the amount of stress that a combat situation may place upon us.

Moreover, in a counter-insurgency our terrain is not geographic, it's human. Our

fight is won in the perceptions of the average Afghan citizen. If the population supports us, they will not willingly permit Al Qaeda and other extremist militants to bring harm to us. Instead, they will provide us with the information needed to close with the enemy on our terms.

In earning the trust and support of the Afghan population, they too are looking for us to do the right thing. They count on us to adhere to the rule of law and to respect human dignity and their culture, customs and traditions. They look to us to help them provide for their own security and to help set in place the political and social processes needed to improve their lives. When we fail to do so, we risk forcing them into our enemy's camp.

But, we should make no mistake. Although our mission has significant humanitarian overtones and we can take justifiable pride in the fact that our efforts are steadily increasing the quality of life of most Afghans, this is not a humanitarian mission. This is a mission to identify and destroy those that threaten our values and our way of life ... those who would fly planes into American skyscrapers. This is a fight for the human terrain that can host terrorists. That is why our Nation sent us here.

For me personally, I consider it a genuine privilege to serve alongside those who would take on this mission. Approaching middle age (but still capable of whipping most young bucks), I am beyond the point of looking up to professional athletes, movie stars and politicians.

To me, the foremost heroes are the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines that make up Task Forces Trinity and Thunder. Few others give so much while asking for so little. I am proud to be a part of it.

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Editor

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'Never again'

Salerno personnel remember victims of Holocaust

By 1st Lt. Kristin J. Burt
Logistics Task Force 191

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan - The strength of a message found on a cellar wall in Cologne, Germany, was echoed during the Days of Remembrance observance April 21 at the base chapel here.

"I believe in the sun, even when it doesn't shine. I believe in love, even when I don't feel it. I believe in God, even when He is silent," reads the message written by Jewish faithful who hid in a Cologne basement during World War II.

For Yom Hashoah Ve-Hagevurah, literally the Day of (remembrance of) the Holocaust and the Heroism, the FOB Salerno Equal Opportunity Advisor Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Fagan organized a ceremony that encouraged service members and civilians to do just that: remember.

"If we don't stop to reflect about the atrocities of the Holocaust, it can happen again," Fagan said. "If we don't remember and educate others about that culture, we do ourselves a disservice."

Fagan educated Salerno tenants through an observance that included a candle-lighting ceremony, a poem reading and a multi-media presentation comprising a movie clip and informational posters on the chapel wall.

Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Jerby read the poem "Flame" by Pennsylvania eighth-grader Eric Lashner. The poem, read before the candle ceremony, emphasized the symbolism of each candle that was lit.

"Night comes/ Devours hopes and Dreams/ Day looks the other way/ Ignorance, deceit/ Night deepens/ The Flame flickers."

Maj. Joseph Gleichenhaus lit the first candle, to remember the men and the fathers that suffered in the Holocaust.

He was followed by Staff Sgt. Bethany Matthew who lit a candle in remembrance of the women and mothers that were affected.

Next, Sgt. Christian Monk lit a candle for the children, Staff Sgt. Omri Ibi for the liberators. Sgt. 1st Class Hurley King lit a candle for the Righteous of the Nations, and the candle for the future was lit by the youngest Soldier in CTF Thunder headquarters, Pfc. Trevor Pease.

The guest speaker, Col. Gary Cheek, commander of Combined Task Force Thunder, focused on the danger that Soldiers in Afghanistan face today if they



1st Lt. Kristin J. Burt

Pfc. Trevor Pease lights a candle representing the future at the Remembrance Day ceremony April 21 at Forward Operating Base Salerno.

do not remember the Holocaust.

A flame is extinguished/ Snuffed out/ Blown out in the wind/ Never seen

"It is a slippery slope that we go down. I will ask you: how do you treat the Afghan people," said Cheek.

"Sixty years have gone by and what has the world learned? We have Iraq, where Sunnis are trying to kill Shiites because of lineage and heritage. In Africa we have all sorts of genocide and tribal warfare. Maybe it would seem the world has not learned much in 60 years," he said.

We must remember/ Never forget/ Hope is left

"We fight this war in Afghanistan, and in order to win this war, it is the people, the Afghan people that we must win. We must win their trust and their confidence. If we do that, we deny the enemy support. We deny the enemy manpower. We deny the enemy sanctuary.

"We look at this and see a horrible tragedy of unspeakable and unthinkable dimensions. We think it can't happen, and we are wrong. It is something that will come to us if we are not careful," he continued.

Rebuild/ Burn once again/ Burn flame burn/ Grow and learn

"An American Pfc., in his heart, is a compassionate person who does the right thing. And we will win this war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq because of that American Pfc. out there every day

interacting with these people. He's going to need the right leadership, he's going to need the right example set for him by his leadership. And we will do in April of 2005 just like we did in April of 1945," he finished.

Pfc. Trevor Pease, the Soldier to light the candle for the hope of the future, felt the responsibility of the challenge Cheek put before all privates first class.

"We need to do whatever is possible in the military or as human beings to make sure this tragedy never happens again," he said. "As a Pfc., we're new in the military, but we're given so much responsibility. It's a huge responsibility, but I'm proud to have that responsibility. I'm proud to do what I have to do to get my job done. I'm glad I'm in the position I'm in."

Fagan was pleased that a ceremony to remember could hold so many lessons for the future.

"I strongly believe in the Army's concept of one Army, one team, one fight. By accomplishing that we have to respect differences, value differences and appreciate differences. Every one of us brings something unique to the table, to the fight," he said. "If you allow that [intolerance] to foster, the lives of the Soldiers that have fallen before us will have been for nothing. We need to make things better, not worse."

(Editor's note: Poem excerpts taken from the "Flame" by 8th-grader Eric Lashner.)

Khost PRT helps repair mosque damaged by rocket

By Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen
Editor

KHODIGI KALAY, Afghanistan - Members of the Khost Provincial Reconstruction Team attended a press conference here April 27 that marked the start of reconstruction on a mosque and adjacent buildings that were damaged by rockets fired by insurgents.

The PRT is providing \$22,000 to help repair the buildings, and they will eventually be restored to a state that was better than before the attack.

Enemy fighters had fired several rockets at Forward Operating Base Salerno March 22 from somewhere near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

One of the rockets fell short of its intended target and instead hit near the mosque in the small village of Khodigi Kalay, just outside the southern perimeter of FOB Salerno.

Although the rocket missed the mosque by about three feet, shrapnel from the rocket caused significant damage to the mosque's façade, porch and a support pillar.

A second rocket from the same attack landed on the other side of a wadi damaging three village houses.

Speaking at the press conference, Maj. Carl Hollister, commander of the Khost PRT, said all the members of the PRT are happy to be a part of helping to refurbish and reconstruct the mosque.

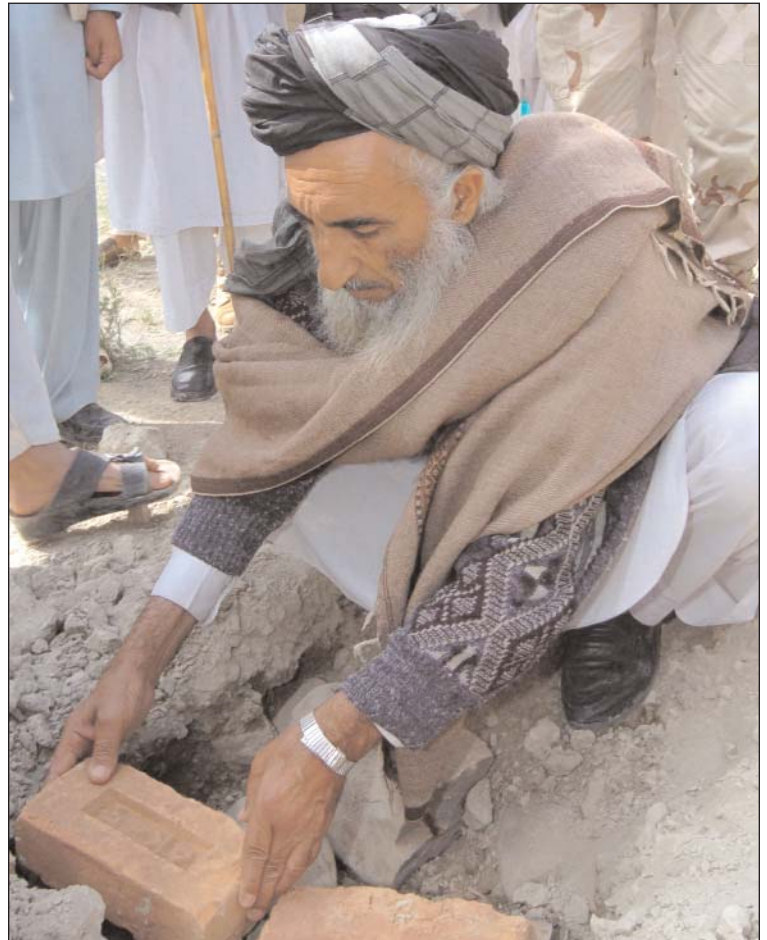
"The carelessness for which al Qaeda acts against its brothers in Islam remains a mystery to those of us from the West," he said. "In this town full of prideful Afghans it is the friendship between the Coalition, the Afghan people and the provincial government that is focusing all our energies on this mosque to make it even better than it was before."

Hollister said this project should be seen as yet another example that the Coalition is a friend of Islam, and is not here to destroy as some say.

"I hope by our involvement in refurbishing this mosque you'll see that our hearts are true, that we want to be your friends and we are not against Islam, we support Islam," Hollister said.

Hollister told those in attendance that Afghanistan is their nation, and they need to take charge of it now.

"No more sanctuary to al Qaeda," he said. "It's time for them to admit defeat so that you can continue to raise your children in peace, and make a better future for all of



Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

A village elder in Khodigi Kalay, Afghanistan, places a ceremonial brick in the ground during a press conference April 27 to mark the reconstruction of a mosque that was damaged by an enemy rocket on March 22.

you."

Mullah Azharudin, director of the Hajj - the department that oversees all the mosques in

Khost province - said it had been a while since he heard news like that of the mosque being hit by a rocket.

"I in Afghanistan, the security was improved for the last one

or two years, but once we heard that the mosque was hit by a rocket, we were very unhappy, we were very disappointed with

whoever did this," he said through an interpreter. "We were very much unhappy because we thought this was a place for worship, and al Qaeda and the Taliban were not supposed to hit it with a rocket."

Azharudin said villagers were going to rebuild the mosque themselves, but they are very happy that the Coalition is going to help out. He said this is an example that the Coalition definitely isn't in Afghanistan to destroy Islam.

"The Coalition forces are not anti-Islam because they are currently working in the mosque," he said.

Azharudin said if the Coalition continues to work with the mullahs, he's sure there will be fewer problems in Afghanistan.



Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

The exterior of the mosque in Khodigi Kalay still bears the scars from the shrapnel of a rocket that landed just a few feet away on March 22.

Coalition opens clinic near Salerno

By Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter
CTF Thunder Public Affairs Office

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan - A new brick and mortar medical clinic building opened April 24 just outside the gates of Forward Operating Base Salerno.

On hand at the event were Mera Juddin Pathan, Khost provincial governor, Lt. Col. Dave Barber, commander of the 249th General Hospital, Lt. Col. George T. Donovan, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment and Afghan doctors Bashir Ahmadzai and Dr. Rasool.

The building will be used by the Coalition forces for Medical Cooperative Assistance Program operations.

The facility is near the north gate of FOB Salerno, which is located near the city of Khost, Afghanistan. Security for the clinic will be provided by the Khost Provincial Force, led by Commander Shafiq.

The new facility is called the Brick and Mortar Clinic, and will not open on a continuous basis. The clinic will be open to the general public during MEDCAP operations.

The MEDCAP operations will be run by Company C, 307th Forward Support



Dr. Rasool, Afghan liaison for the new clinic just outside Forward Operating Base Salerno (left), explains to Mera Juddin Pathan, Khost Provincial governor (right), and Ghakrany, a local tribal elder, how the clinic will benefit the local population.

Battalion and the 249th General Hospital.

The Brick & Mortar Clinic project was proposed by 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, and was constructed by Warak Dilpory, a local Afghan company.

The construction and furnishings

were paid for by United States funding, and was estimated to cost approximately \$20,000.

Notification of dates and times for MEDCAP operations will be made via local media and radio in advance of the operation.



Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter

'America's Battalion' transfers authority to 'White Devils'

Lt. Col. George Donovan, commander of 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, and Command Sgt. Maj. Eric James, uncase their unit's colors at a Transfer of Authority ceremony with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment May 1 at Forward Operation Base Salerno, Afghanistan. The 2-504th PIR assumed authority for Khost and Paktia provinces, while 3/3 Marines moves to Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman provinces.

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outside the wire since arriving at Forward Operating Base Salerno about two weeks earlier.

Many of them spent the majority of the day fending off hordes of Afghan kids who swarmed the Americans during every stop in the efforts to get an up close and personal look or, perhaps, to get a pen or some candy.

"I felt kind of sorry for the kids, but I guess there's not much we can do about that," said Pfc. James Robinson, an M240B assistant gunner with Co. A, 2-504 PIR.

The 23-year-old, Bartlesville, Okla., native made his first trip outside the wire on his first deployment since joining the Army. Robinson said he was nervous at times, but in the end he thought the mission went smoothly.

"It went good because nobody got hurt, we didn't take any fire, we got back here safe, and we're ready to go back out again and do what we got to do," he said

Robinson said this mission was a good learning experience and he thinks it will be useful



Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

Capt. Ken Barr, commander of Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment (center), points out a terrain feature to Capt. Edward Hollis, commander of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (left), and 2nd Lt. Kareem Fernandez, a platoon leader in Co. A, 2-504th (right), April 28 in Zambar, Afghanistan.

never worked with Marines before, but if what he saw is the standard, he said they have an excellent organization.

"Everyone in Weapons Company was extremely professional with all our guys, wanted to pass off as much information as they could prior to us transferring authority, and I was really impressed with all the Marines," he said.

Although he has never worked with Marines before, but if what he saw is the standard, he said they have an excellent organization. "Everyone in Weapons Company was extremely professional with all our guys, wanted to pass off as much information as they could prior to us transferring authority, and I was really impressed with all the Marines," he said.

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"Everyone in Weapons Company was extremely professional with all our guys, wanted to pass off as much information as they could prior to us transferring authority, and I was really impressed with all the Marines," he said.

Although the Army and the Marine Corps are two distinct

services with many different characteristics, Hollis said that once it comes down to having boots on the ground, Soldiers and Marines aren't that much different.

"Everyone is here to do a job, and I think deep down inside everyone just wants to go home to Mom," he said. "The same jokes I hear the Marines mess around with, our Soldiers mess around with and I didn't really see a big difference."



Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

Cpl. Robert Casey, a team leader for Company A, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, lets an Afghan boy look through the scope of his M4 carbine April 28.



Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

A group of Afghan kids gather to watch while a Soldier from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, pulls security April 28.

Blue Stars search out enemy, provide quick response

By Sgt. Douglas DeMaio

20th Public Affairs Det.

KHOST PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Darting past ravines and ridgelines, and soaring through the sky like eagles in flight - Soldiers of Company A, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, race toward their enemy, able to provide a quick response to any anti-Coalition militia action.

Scouring the terrain in UH-60s, these Blackhawk crews search for any avenue available to defeat the enemy.

"We provide lift assets for the Salerno, Khowst-bowl region," said Chief Warrant Officer Chris Palumbo, pilot. "From delivering a quick reaction force to providing casualty evacuation, you call, we haul."

For more than a month, A Co., from Giebelstadt, Germany, has been operating at FOB Salerno. The company's crews provide general support missions for Regional Command East and have displayed the Army values the nation asks of its men and women in uniform.

"Nothing gets your blood pumping like pulling guys out of a hot LZ (landing zone)," Palumbo said.

Palumbo's crew has aided troops in battle on more than one occasion and uses the dynamic abilities of the UH-60 to accomplish the various missions



Sgt. Douglas DeMaio

A UH-60 Blackhawk from Company A, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment flies over Khost, Afghanistan, during a reconnaissance mission March 26.

they are assigned.

"This is a tool we use to insert troops anywhere we need at any time," said 1st Lt. Robert K. Beale. "(The) Blackhawk is the most versatile platform for the execution of any and all missions."

Although the crews and the helicopters have exceptional capabilities, the treacherous terrain coupled with ACM activity in the region make the job inherently dangerous.

"The terrain is a big enemy and the quick-changing weather can make the job more difficult," Palumbo said, "But the Kalashnikov (AK-47) is our biggest enemy."

The risks are worth the reward, said Spc. Bryan Todd, crew chief.

"Our job is to help troops and protect the aircraft," Todd said. "From what I've seen, I think this is one of the better jobs to have in theater."

Providing logistics support to sustain combat operations and ascending to and from the battlefield gives the crew job satisfaction, Todd said.

The crew chiefs spend hours at a time prepping and maintaining the aircraft.

There is definitely a sense of ownership knowing that the preparations allow the crew to operate at maximum performance, Todd said. Hours of preparations

can really pay off by saving someone's life.

From the pilots to the crew chiefs, A Company, 3-158, operates with the knowledge that they are a team and dependent on one another.

Khost PRT helps restore mosque, shrine

By Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen
Editor

FAQUIRANA, Afghanistan - The day before members of the Khost Provincial Reconstruction Team visited this small village in northern Khost province, a man brought his sick son here from Peshawar, Pakistan, in the hopes that powers from the shrine here would cure his him.

No one knows if his visit was successful, but it is just one example of how revered the shrine here is.

Considered the second holiest site in Khost province, the Faquirana shrine is the destination for many Muslims who believe it has healing powers.

At more than 80 years old, however, the shrine was badly in need of repairs. Recently, the Khost PRT gave the village \$7,200 to help restore the shrine and a mosque just down the road.

When members of the PRT visited the village April 24 to check on the progress, they were greeted Said Habib Shah, a villager who was at the mosque.

He told the PRT members how happy everyone is that the shrine and mosque are being repaired. He also dispelled the myth that the people of Afghanistan think the Coalition is anti-Islam and is here to destroy their religion.

"The Taliban are all over the Afghanistan, but we didn't get anything from them," Shah said through an interpreter. "But the Coalition is a friend of Islam."

The visit was a routine one for the PRT, which goes out into the surrounding communities nearly every day to check on projects it is funding and to make assessments, said Capt. David Hofman, the Civil Affairs Team-A leader with the Khost PRT.

The last time the PRT visited this village, Hofman said he was greeted by a mullah who repeatedly thanked him for the helping restore the mosque and shrine.

"He basically said he's heard some of what the bad guys have



Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

Captain David Hofman, the Civil Affairs Team-A leader with the Khost Provincial Reconstruction Team, walks along a dam the PRT helped fund in Suri Pan, Afghanistan, on April 24.

said, and they say that we're here to destroy Islam and we're infidels," Hofman said. "He said, 'How can they say you're infidels? How can they say you're here to destroy Islam when you're rebuilding our sacred mosque?'"

Because of the Afghan people's emphasis on religion, Hofman said the Coalition should help to rebuild as many mosques as possible. While the people may be poor, the one thing they have is religion, he said.

Additionally, Hofman said mosques are not only a place of worship, they're also a cultural and civic center and the main meeting place for the elders of

the village.

"So we're not just doing a church or a mosque, so to speak, we're doing a civic and cultural center and the main meeting place for the entire village," Hofman said.

"We're showing them that the Coalition is indeed a friend of Islam," he added. "We are not here to destroy it. We're here to aid them and their ability to worship and worship in a nice place."

Hofman said the PRT focuses its mosque projects near the border areas to try to show the people that the rhetoric from the anti-government and anti-Coalition militants there is mostly untrue.



Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

Sun shines off the new paint on the shrine in Faquirana, Afghanistan, on April 24.

During the mission on April 24, the PRT members also visited Suri Pan, where the PRT is funding construction of a dam project and the refurbishing of a mosque. The dam was built at a natural spring, and through the years the villagers have built an underground aquifer that supplies their village and all their farmland with fresh water.

"Clean water in this country is a rare commodity," Hofman said.

Suri Pan is near the troubled village Zambar, where a Marine patrol was attacked in January. In addition to focusing on the border areas, Hofman said they put on emphasis on projects in troubled areas as well.

Regardless of where the project is, the PRT is empowering the Afghan people to help themselves. Rather than just finish the projects itself, the PRT donates the materials for all of its projects.

"The Afghans are trying to better themselves," Hofman said. "We just don't want to come in and hand things out to them."

The PRT was scheduled to visit the shrine considered to be the holiest site in Khost province on April 26. The PRT is also funding a restoration project on that shrine.

Eikenberry Takes Command of Coalition Forces in Afghanistan

By Pfc. Vincent C. Fusco
20th Public Affairs Det.

CAMP EGGERS, Afghanistan – Army Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry assumed command of Combined Forces Command Afghanistan as a steady rain fell here May 3.

He succeeds Army Lt. Gen. David W. Barno, who will be the Army's assistant chief of staff for installation management.

"Rain is good luck," said Army Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command, referring to an earlier statement made by Afghan President Hamid Karzai at a breakfast meeting with the generals. The wet weather is welcome in a country suffering from more than six years of drought.

Abizaid presided over the passing of the colors, the traditional ritual that passes command from the outgoing commander to the new one. A formation led by CFC-A Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia Pritchett represented CFC-A elements: Combined Joint Task Force 76, the Office of Military Cooperation Afghanistan, Task Force Phoenix and coalition allies.

Barno was presented with NATO's Meritorious Service Medal. He also received an



Spc. John Chriswell

(From right) Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry, incoming commander; Gen. John P. Abizaid, head of U.S. Central Command; and Lt. Gen. David W. Barno, outgoing commander, prepare for the Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan change-of-command ceremony May 3.

antique rifle from Afghan Defense Minister Abdurahim Wardak. The rifle signifies courage and bravery in Afghanistan.

"General Barno has achieved great victories in the war against terrorism," Wardak said.

Eikenberry served for a year

as the U.S. security coordinator and chief of the Office of Military Cooperation in the Afghan capital of Kabul, and worked to set up the Afghan National Army before leaving the country in September 2003.

Eikenberry said it was an honor to return to Afghanistan

and pledged to continue CFC-A's mission.

"I give a pledge to this command to follow in General Barno's footsteps," he said. "We will continue to work together, build security forces and support the rebuilding of Afghanistan."

As Barno had done for the Afghan presidential election last year, Eikenberry said he will work with the Afghan government to support the upcoming parliamentary elections.

"Our mission will continue in the same direction, ... working with the United Nations, coalition forces, and most importantly, the Afghan government," Eikenberry said.

CFC-A is made up of more than 18,000 troops -- 16,700 U.S. service members and 1,600 personnel from 22 allied nations who conduct full-spectrum operations, from combat to humanitarian activities.

"We will continue to prosecute the war against terror in partnership with the Islamic government of Afghanistan and be relentless as we move forward," said Eikenberry. "So much has been accomplished, and so much has to be done."

Eikenberry's last assignment was as the director of strategic planning and policy for U.S. Pacific Command.

Army announces Combat Action Badge

Army News Service

WASHINGTON - A Combat Action Badge will soon be available to all Soldiers who engage the enemy in battle.

Although the Close Combat Badge was once considered an option, Army leadership created the CAB instead to recognize all Soldiers who are in combat. They said the decision was based on input from leaders and Soldiers in the field.

"Our intent is to recognize Soldiers who demonstrate and live the Warrior

Ethos," said Gen. Peter J. Schoemaker, Army chief of staff.

The CAB may be awarded to any Soldier, branch and military occupational specialty immaterial, performing assigned duties in an area where hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay is authorized, who is personally present and actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy, and performing satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement.

Commanders at the rank of major general will have award authority the CAB.

The CAB is distinct from other combat badges, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge, or CIB, and Combat Medical Badge will remain unchanged, they said.

The Army will release an administrative message outlining exact rules and regulations for the CAB in the near future, officials said.

Although the final design of the CAB has not yet been released, officials said the award should be available this summer through unit supply and for purchase in military clothing sales stores.

69th Trans. Co. at home on the road

By 1st Lt. Kristin J. Burt
Logistics Task Force 191

FORWARD OPERATING BASE
SALERNO, Afghanistan - For many Soldiers, home now is the corner of a tent somewhere in Afghanistan or Iraq.

But even before deployment, from field training exercises to rigorous convoy live fire exercises, many Soldiers were away from home more than not.

For an military truck driver, home is on the road.

Working long hours away from home station is not a new concept to the Soldiers of the 69th Transportation Company. Even before deploying to Afghanistan, a typical week for an Road Runner would begin with a 1 a.m. "spot time" followed by an approximately 60-mile drive to Frankfurt, Germany. The rest of the week would be spent shuttling cargo and mail from Frankfurt to locations throughout Europe, from the snowy countryside of Bavaria to the windy port of Antwerp.

Although it was preferable for the drivers to be sent in teams, often times the Soldiers were on the road by themselves. Because of the huge responsibility of the mission, a Soldier had to accumulate 5,000 miles with an Army Motor Vehicle Instructor (with 500 miles as a passenger) before they were allowed on the road by themselves. Week after week, the Road Runners took their M915s and executed the plan.

For 1st Lt. Josh Kerton, a platoon leader, accomplishing the mission meant rarely having the members of his platoon in one place at the same time. His Soldiers were on the road so much that it wasn't uncommon for his PT sessions to include only him and his platoon sergeant. The term "leadership challenge" was an understatement.

"Even for my platoon field training exercise, 10 of my Soldiers were gone because of the mission," he said. "It was hard because our mission back in Germany was very important. People wouldn't get mail if it wasn't for us. All the mail that was going to Iraq, we delivered it through Frankfurt and Ramstein."

To maintain command and control, Kerton leaned heavily on his squad leaders. It was their job to make sure their Soldiers were doing well in Frankfurt. They were responsible for accountability, for ensuring that Soldiers maintained their physical fitness while accomplishing the mission efficiently and safely. With his soldiers spread across the



1st Lt. Kristin J. Burt

Spc. Chanss Carpenter, a member of the 69th Transportation Company, inspects a vehicle entering Forward Operating Base Salerno.

country, Kerton worked diligently to ensure that each soldier stayed safe and received the proper training for their upcoming deployment.

The leadership challenges that Kerton faced in Germany quickly showed their worth as lessons learned when he was faced with a similar situation after arriving in Afghanistan. Shortly after landing at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Kerton learned that his platoon would once again be spread out across a country.

Not only would his Soldiers work at different nodes across Regional Command East, but the mission they would undertake in Afghanistan would, at first glance, bear no resemblance to their mission in Germany. The Soldiers that drove M915s and delivered mostly mail would now drive 5-tons to deliver troops outside the wire, as well as conduct vehicle search operations and refuel operations on the FOB. Once again, Kerton is looking to his squad leaders to ensure the safety of his soldiers.

Staff Sgt. Philip Spears, one of Kerton's squad leaders, is looking forward to attacking the mission.

"This is a great opportunity. It's a real world mission and the Soldiers are looking forward to it," he said.

Spears maintains a cohesive squad through a rigorous training program.

"We've been training a long time and the training hasn't stopped," he said.

"There's a total focus on squad and team, and it's amazing how they came together. The soldiers are confident, and we're ready."

It's a sentiment echoed by the Road Runner soldiers. One of Spears' Soldiers, Sgt. Jason Bernardy, is realistic about the demanding convoy training.

"Of course, you never want to have to use it," he said. "But the Soldiers are really getting into it."

Bernardy doesn't mind trading in his M915 for a 5-ton.

"I can drive anything," he said. "The soldiers are all licensed on the 5-ton, and we conducted our convoy live fire exercise with 5-tons."

The 5-ton isn't the only vehicle that's newly mission essential to the soldiers of the 69th. The soldiers are also learning how to operate a Tank and Pump Unit, or TPU.

"We go from generator to generator, on a set route, one to three times a day," said Spc. Thomas Farland.

While Farland and his team help refuel the FOB, some Soldiers, like Spc. Chance Carpenter, are inspecting all "Jingle" trucks that come through its front gate. The vehicle inspection team is licensed on the Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System, or MVACIS. The MVACIS is a truck-mounted, non-

Time not always on your side

By Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter
CTF Thunder Public Affairs Office

Some supervisors assume that delegating will instantly lighten their load. In truth, it takes more effort at the outset to delegate most tasks than to complete them yourself, but in the long run it will be more efficient.

Recently, I was reminded of managements' tendency to do multiple jobs themselves rather than delegating tasks out to a subordinate. Is it because they believe they can do it faster and better themselves? Does this sound like you?

You may think you can handle three tasks at once, but don't fool yourself. University of Michigan researchers have found that when you "multitask," you actually switch back and fourth between tasks rather than work on several tasks at once.

"Multitasking can backfire, because we make mistakes when we don't give the task at hand our full attention," says productivity expert Jan Jasper.

In his book *Take Back Your Time*, published by St. Martin's Press, Jasper gives readers tips for working smarter.

One tip is to allot enough time to complete each task without errors. That's smarter than doing three things haphazardly and having to fix mistakes later.

Another tip is to reserve "quiet time" for yourself so you can focus on your most vital projects. You can also make appointments with yourself so that you can concentrate without interruptions on one job at a time.

One way to reduce distractions is to sit facing away from your door so drop-in visitors won't disrupt you. You can also position an in-box near the entrance to your workspace so others can drop off items without disturbing you or post a bulletin board outside of your office for people to leave messages.

Finally, return calls just before you tackle detailed work. If you're awaiting important calls you will find concentration difficult, so try reaching your contacts again. If they're still unavailable, leave a time frame when you'll take their return calls.

Remember, Atlas had big shoulders but he was also on his knees. Delegate.

Road from page 10

intrusive gamma ray imaging system that produces the radiographic images used to evaluate the threat risk of the local "Jingle" trucks that are allowed onto the FOB. In laymen's terms, it's a big X-ray machine.

"It really speeds up the vehicle search process," said Carpenter. "Now we only need two Soldiers to physically search the trucks and two more to operate the MVACIS. It goes a lot quicker."

The varied missions that the Road Runners are accomplishing in Afghanistan are just a slice of what their new higher unit, Logistics Task Force 191, is held accountable for.

Known as the 191st Ordnance Battalion at their home station in Kaiserslautern, Germany, LTF 191 is responsible for providing logistics support to all of Regional Command East. This includes oversight of fuel distribution, ammo storage and distribution, D/S maintenance support, and the ordering and tracking materiel through the Supply Support Activity, as well as water purification duties for FOB Salerno.

Although 69th Trans. Co. is the only transportation company in the LTF, the task force is rife with transporters. In fact, task force commander Lt. Col. Thomas J. Langowski's primary staff shop officers are all transportation

lieutenants. His S1, S2, S3 and S4 all completed their platoon leader time at the 251st Cargo Transfer Company. "I hand-picked them to deploy with me," said Langowski. "I picked them because they're logisticians."

Just as the LTF's mission is now incorporating transportation, the transporters of 69th Trans. Co. are learning more about multifunctional logistics and supporting warriors. Kerton welcomes the change in mission.

"Here we're working with the war fighters," he said. "It's important."

The importance of being trained for their mission outside the wire is not lost on the Soldiers.

"We've done a lot of convoy training, first aid training, and 9-line MEDEVAC training," said Sgt. Jason Haslem, the company's armorer. "I brought as much CLP and cleaning equipment as I could."

The question remains: what is home to military truck driver?

After seeing the agility with which the soldiers of the 69th Trans. Co. have handled their change in mission, and the numerous new requirements that came with it, the answer is clear: Home is the road. Home is behind the wheel.

Home is delivered mail, a topped-off generator, a vehicle search that discovered a potential threat to the FOB, or another squad of troops transported safely to their objective.



Soldiers from the 69th Transportation Company take part in convoy training soon after arriving at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.

1st Lt. Kristin J. Burt

Ghazni citizens turn backs to Taliban 'night letters'

CJTF-76 Public Affairs Office
News Release

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan- In recent weeks, reports have indicated Taliban insurgents have posted three 'night letters' throughout Ghazni province warning citizens to stop supporting the government of Afghanistan and Coalition forces.

Additionally, a Taliban spokesman has stated that because schools and hospitals are run by the government, they should be considered legitimate targets in fighting the insurgency.

The first night letter was reported to have been placed on the body of an Afghan National Army Soldier who had been killed. The Taliban elements, claiming to operate on the foundations of Islam, exhumed the Soldier who had been buried shortly after his death, and proceeded to mutilate the body and post a note on the Soldier's head.

The second letter was posted on several houses in Ghazni province, and again warned the villagers to stop supporting the government of Afghanistan and Coalition forces. The third letter was posted on the door of a mosque.

"The Taliban use night letters in an attempt to intimidate Afghan citizens," said Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya, commanding general of Combined Joint Task Force-76. "They have to operate under the cover of darkness because there aren't many people left in this country who support their efforts. They seek to harm the future and prosperity of this country by using empty threats to incite fear in Afghans."

The citizens of Ghazni province have decided they no longer want to live in fear. Recently, reports indicate that 48 village leaders held a Shura and decided that they would no longer provide safe haven or material support to Taliban fighters. This decision was reinforced when several districts formally told the Taliban fighters to



Spc. Harold Fields

Soldiers from Company A, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment enter a cave used as a fighting position by enemy insurgents to store weapons in the mountains of Ghazni province, Afghanistan, on April 22.

leave their districts, and that they would no longer be supported or given safe haven.

Another example of the support the citizens of Ghazni have shown towards denying insurgents safe haven and opportunity occurred April 6. A Coalition helicopter crashed just outside of Ghazni City, and local citizens were the first to arrive on the scene. They notified the local Coalition base of the downed aircraft's position, and attempted to pull personnel from the wreckage. Additionally, they stood by the site and guarded the scene until a Coalition quick reaction element arrived.

"The efforts to support security and reconstruction in Ghazni have shown Afghans in that province that their government and Coalition forces offer schools, wells, restoration projects and most importantly, a bright future of freedom and democracy. The Taliban offers night letters, threats and intimidation," said Col. Guy Sands, the director of all Civil Military Operations in Afghanistan. "The citizens of this country have made a choice-they've decided to support the future of the country. The Taliban insurgents don't care about the future of Afghanistan, all they care about is terrorizing villages and thwarting growth and education."

Though the Taliban claims to control Ghazni province, Afghan National Army Soldiers and Coalition forces maintain a strong presence in the province. Additionally, the Ghazni Provincial

Reconstruction Team has many ongoing projects throughout the province. Since Feb. 1 alone, the PRT has approved more than US \$330,000 to fund projects throughout the province.

One of those projects is funding for refurbishment of the Returnees and Refugees building in Ghazni City, which has been approved for US \$24,000. An additional project is seed and fertilizer distribution to areas throughout the province, which is estimated to cost US \$110,000. There are also projects to improve and renovate schools, and projects to distribute and plant fruit and nut trees in the Andar, Giro and Wagas districts. One project provides US \$3,000 to refurbish a mosque in Ghazni City.

"The numbers show the truth of what is happening in Ghazni. The government of Afghanistan and Coalition forces are helping to build capacity for citizens across the province. Their efforts can be seen in very real and very tangible ways," said Kamiya. "The Taliban realize they are losing their sanctuaries everywhere, and are using scare tactics as a last ditch effort to try to influence people. The reality is the people have no need or desire to support the Taliban insurgents."

"The future of this country depends on that decision, and the Coalition will continue to stand with the government and the people of Afghanistan in their efforts to create a safer, more secure and more prosperous country."

We want to hear from you

Are you an aspiring writer or photographer? We want to use your stories in the Sentinel to highlight the great things the men and women of Regional Command-East are doing. For more information, e-mail Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter at carterg@cjtf76.cent-com.mil.