



Tien Bien Times

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ANP receive CLS training; continue training in districts



An Afghan National Policeman from Nangarhar Province applies a pressure dressing to a wound during Combat Life Saver training conducted Sept. 5 at the Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team forward operating base.

Courtesy of the 173rd ABCT Public Affairs Office

NANGARHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Eight Afghan National Police officers from Nangarhar Province graduated Sept. 5 from a Combat Life Savers medical course conducted at the Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team forward operating base near Jalalabad.

The class was a joint effort between the ANP and military police Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team and is believed to be the first class of its type to be conducted at the PRT, according to 1st Lt. Amanda Newsom, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173rd Special Troops Battalion (Airborne).

"These articulate policemen were hand selected by their respective district commanders to become the principle medics for their ANP stations," said Newsom.

The class was abbreviated from the normal 40 hours to one day of fast-paced learning, but all of the major life-saving measures were taught: treating sucking-chest wounds, abdominal lacerations,

amputated limbs, blocked airways, and treating for shock.

All of the training culminated in a practical exercise conducted at the end of the day. In the exercise, the policemen had just 10 minutes to secure, treat and evacuate their suffering comrades to safety, said Newsom.

The wounds varied and the treatments were limited to field-expedient measures.

"Through their ingenuity and dedication to duty, these ANP didn't let any obstacle stop them from saving a life," said Newsom.

But the training didn't stop at the PRT. An Afghan National Policeman, ANP Sgt. Mujahid, from Kuz Kunar District which is north of Jalalabad, took what he had learned and passed it on to the fellow policemen of his district Sept. 9.

According to a release issued by the 173rd STB, the training was focused on the basic first aid Soldiers would need during that 'hot minute' when their life was on the line and his peers were extremely receptive.



Bamberg Soldiers inducted into NCO Corps

“You may not always make the perfect decision, but you must be prepared to stand up for what you believe is right, and have the courage to defend your position and your troops,”

Sgt. Maj. Antonio R. Reyes



Staff Sgt. Eric Ingram, Charlie Company, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, leads the new sergeants and attending crowd in the Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer during a ceremony conducted Sep. 7 at Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan.

*Story and photos by
Spc. Henry Selzer,
173rd ABCT Public Affairs*

JALALABAD AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Paratroopers of the 173rd Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne), found out what it means to become a Non-Commissioned Officer during an NCO induction ceremony conducted Sep. 7 at the Nangarhar Airport Terminal.

“This ceremony was designed to instill pride in these NCOs and the organization to which they belong,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel

Smith (41, of Swansea, SC.), Command Sgt. Maj. of the 173rd BSB during the ceremony.

The ceremony’s events consisted of reciting the Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer, guest speakers, refreshment and fellowship.

The new sergeants signed their Certificates of Induction with Smith, and a motivational speech from the guest speaker Sgt. Maj. Antonio R. Reyes, a Brigade Operations Sergeant Major of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team.

“You may not always make the perfect decision, but you must be prepared to stand up for what you believe is right, and have the courage to defend your position and your troops,” said Reyes.

Staff Sgt. Eric Ingram (27, of Dallas TX), Charlie Company, 173rd BSB believes the ceremony is a worthwhile event.

“I think the ceremony helps to keep Army tradition, and is a good right-of-passage and a wake-up call for these newly promoted E-5s,” said Ingram.



Commander's Corner

To the paratroopers and families of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team,

I want to thank the Family Readiness Groups, and the families themselves, for all of their efforts to keep us connected while we are away. This is particularly important with school having just begun. Your extra effort to send us photos, schoolwork, and photos from school or sports activities, help us maintain our connection with home. Please keep up the outstanding work.

To our friends in the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association, I know you are all busier now, more than ever and I want to thank you for all of your support. Your unwavering bond with the 173rd and our family members has proven to be vital during this long tour in Afghanistan.

To the Soldiers and Families alike, I want to remind you about the upcoming holiday season and the challenge we will all face in getting packages to our loved ones. No matter where the mail originates from or where it is going, the mail system will slow down through the end of December. Don't let this discourage you from sending gifts to each other. Just make sure you plan ahead and give your letters, cards and packages extra time to get to their destination. Nothing lifts the spirits of a deployed Soldier like getting a care package from home and likewise nothing brightens the mood of loved ones at home like getting a letter from the front. Continue to make that extra effort to stay in touch.

On the subject of mail, the

postal codes for most of the brigade will be changing to 09310 in the upcoming months. For Soldiers in HHC Brigade, the Brigade Support Battalion, and the Special Troops Battalion, the change took effect October 7th. The new zip code will be phased in for the other battalions later in the tour. The changes will be announced through the Family Readiness Groups and Public Affairs as they take place. The zip code is the only part of the mailing address that will change.

If you have already sent packages or letters with the 09354 zip code, don't worry. They will get to where they need to go. 09354 will be good for 60 days following the change for each unit's zip code.

The change of zip code will better able postal facilities to sort the mail and get it to your loved one quicker. **The Brigade will put something out officially when we are ready to change the zip code.**

On a somber note, three Sky Soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country last month. My thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of these patriots. It is never easy to deal with the loss of one of our comrades.

The loss of their lives reminds the rest of us to cherish the moments we have together with our loved ones. Being deployed, separated by time zones and thousands of miles, makes this a challenge.

Lastly, a reminder that our Afghan partners are entering the second half of the Ramadan season. As the month progresses, remem-



From the desk of
COL Charles A. Preysler
TF Bayonet Commander

ber those participating in Ramadan will probably become more tired, irritable and dehydrated. Be patient. Re-read your Ramadan smart cards and stay sensitive to the culture of the Afghan people. Our interests are rooted in building successful, strong relationships with citizens that live in Nangarhar, Nuristan, Kunar and Laghman Provinces. Maintaining cultural awareness will go a long way in helping to make those bonds we have built stronger.

Sky Soldiers,

COL Preysler
Bayonet 6

Tien Bien Times

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The newsletter is published and distributed monthly in an electronic format. The newsletter can be viewed on the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team website at <http://www.173abnbde.setaf.army.mil>.

This newsletter is a command information product that places emphasis on missions, events and activities occurring throughout the 173rd ABCT's deployed area of operations.

Information and photos included in this newsletter are acquired from sources that highlight events, programs and activities in Nangarhar,

Nuristan, Kunar, Laghman and Paktika Provinces of Afghanistan. Dates, times, locations, and the events themselves might change or be cancelled without prior notice.

To be added to the Tien Bien Times distribution list, please email: Jacob.caldwell@us.army.mil.

This address can also be used to submit photos or information on upcoming events, or you can reach the 173rd ABCT Public Affairs Office by calling DSN 318-831-6028.

SMA and USAREUR CG visit JAF

The month of September saw some notable VIPs come through Jalalabad Airfield.

Most notable were Command Sgt. Maj. Of the Army Kenneth Preston, Gen. David McKiernan and Command Sgt.

Maj. Iuniasolua Savusa.

All were conducting routine battlefield circulation, visiting and talking with troops in Task Force Bayonet and other units deployed in support of OEF in Afghanistan.



(TOP) Sgt. Melinda Fowler, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173rd ABCT, receives a coin from Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston, at FOB Fenty, Afghanistan, Sept. 17.

(MIDDLE) Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa, USAREUR Command Sgt. Maj., thanks Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team for their service Sep. 5 at the Forward Operating Base Fenty dining facility. Savusa was visiting USAREUR Soldiers across Eastern Afghanistan while conducting battlefield circulation.

(LEFT) Gen. David D. McKiernan, USAREUR Commander, shakes hands with Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team Sep. 5 at the Forward Operating Base Fenty dining facility.

From the Office of the Brigade Judge Advocate

Servicemember's Civil Relief Act:

What does it mean for you?

Servicemembers and their families should be aware of various protections afforded them by virtue of their military service.

One such protection, and one that is particularly important to deployed personnel, is the Servicemember's Civil Relief Act (SCRA). The stated purpose of the SCRA is to provide for, strengthen, and expedite the national defense through protection extended by this Act to Servicemembers of the United States to enable such persons to devote their entire energy to the defense needs of the Nation. The benefits and protections to service personnel are many. For example, it calls for the reduction of interest on debts to six percent for those debts entered into before entry on active duty. Other provisions toll statutes of limitations and stay civil proceedings, while others provide protections to servicemembers relating to taxation, voting rights, leases, and mortgages.

The act's protections are not without limitation, however. Although the act benefits service personnel, it does not protect those who would abuse it and may not



be used to indefinitely delay or to cancel a servicemember's just liabilities. Nor is the act a panacea for every legal problem of a civil nature a servicemember might face. It will not, for instance, help rescind a contract for the purchase of an automobile or a set of encyclopedias entered into after entry onto active duty. It is applicable to civil and administrative proceedings, but not to criminal proceedings. It does not excuse a servicemember from his or her obligations, but it will level the playing field so that military personnel are not disadvantaged because of their commitment to our nation.

For a servicemember to avail himself of the SCRA, he must demonstrate "material effect." This notion is best explained through consideration of one of the act's key provisions

relating to stays of proceedings when the servicemember has notice of the pending civil litigation. When a servicemember makes an application for a stay it must "include . . . [a] letter or other communication setting forth facts stating the manner in which current military duty requirements materially affect the servicemember's ability to appear." The 173rd Office of the Brigade Judge Advocate will usually draft a letter both for the Soldier seeking protection under the act and the Soldier's commander explaining that the Soldier is deployed to Afghanistan in support of OEF and is unable to be released from duty to make a court appearance. This inability to make a personal appearance in a case against a servicemember's interests because of his deployed status demonstrates the "material effect" courts will look for in making a determination as to the act's applicability.

For more information, contact your Legal Assistance Office.

Marc Wm. Zelnick
CPT, JA
Office of the Brigade Judge

For a servicemember to avail himself of the SCRA, he must demonstrate "material effect."

From the 173rd Retention Office

In an effort to educate our Soldiers on their Reenlistment Options, the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team Career Counselors will highlight Reenlistment Options in the monthly newsletter.

In this edition we will explain the **Current Station Stabilization Reenlistment Option** as it applies to OCONUS Soldiers. This option is commonly referred to as the present duty station option, current assignment option, current unit option, and the current location option. The Current Station Stabilization Reenlistment Option Rules are as follows:

- **Soldier must be assigned to a MTO&E unit.**
- **Initial Term Soldiers must reenlist for a minimum of three years and will be guaranteed up to 12 months stabilization from current DEROS**
- **Mid-Career Soldiers and Career Soldiers with less than 10 years of active service can reenlist for two to six years and will be guaranteed up to 12 months stabilization from**

current DEROS Soldiers elect 1 to 12 months stabilization at the time of reenlistment

This option guarantees the Soldier stabilization in Europe. Soldiers can still request In Place Consecutive Overseas Tours (IPCOT), Intra Theater Consecutive Overseas Tours (ITTCOT), and Foreign Service Tour Extensions (FSTE) through S-1 channels. Soldiers should be aware that they cannot request IPCOTs, ITTCOTs, or FSTEs until they are 12 months from DEROS. Realistically a Soldier can reenlist for 12 months stabilization and then 12 months from his new DEROS request an IPCOT, ITTCOT or FSTE and extend their service overseas even more. Reenlistment no longer processes IPCOTs, ITTCOTs, or FSTEs; but we will educate you

on any benefits you will be entitled to under these programs. Stop by and see your Career Counselor today and seriously consider continuing your great service to our combat team and great country. Sky Soldiers!

Task Force Bayonet Retention Team:

Jalalabad Airfield
Jalalabad Airfield
Orgn-E

MSG Lopez 831-6051
SFC Dickerson 831-6051
SFC Ortiz 431-8022

Bagram Airfield
Camp Blessing

SSG Kubash 431-3035
SSG McCullers 846-4222

Red Devils and Nangarhar PRT conduct MEDCAP in Pachir Wa Agam



Senior Airman Gina Lauber, a Nangarhar PRT medic, listens to baby's heart beat during a MEDCAP in Pachi Wa Agam, Afghanistan Sept. 9.

Story and photos by Sgt. Brandon Aird, 173^d ABCT Public Affairs

NANGARHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment (Airborne), also known as the 'Red Devils', joined together with Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team to host a medical civil action program at a school in south-east Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan Sept. 9.

The village, Pachir Wa Agam, was shaped by Pash-tun farmers out of a barren region south of Jalalabad.

Medics treated Afghans for skin infections, worms, diarrhea, flu, tuberculosis, headaches and mal-

nutrition, but over all, worms were predominantly the ailment afflicting the Afghans.

A small river that flows through Pachir Wa Agam is used by the farmers and their families for everything- drinking, cooking, bathing, hygiene and even fun.

Unfortunately for the Afghans, the river is heavily contaminated with pathogenic bacteria, parasites and viruses.

Almost everyone who came in for the MEDCAP had stomach pains and head aches.

"The stomach pains are caused by worms and the headaches come from malnutrition and dehydration," explained Capt. Debbie Dye, a

physician's assistant with the Nangarhar PRT.

As far as the headaches go, vitamins and Motrin were given along with instructions to drink more water.

De-worming medicine was handed out in ample supply according to Senior Airman Gina Lauber, a Nangarhar PRT medic.

"Hopefully that will take care of the worm problem," she said.

Medics like Lauber and Sgt. James Freisberg can treat most of the medical problems that arise from the river. Over all, medical issues arise from the lack of personal hygiene and sanitation conditions.

FOB Fenty (JAF) Chapel Schedule



Protestant Services

<i>Prayer-borne Ops</i>	<i>Daily</i>	<i>0330Z / 0800L</i>
<i>Traditional Protestant (Beginning July 8)</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>0430Z / 0900L</i>
<i>Contemporary Protestant</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>0630Z / 1100L</i>
<i>Gospel</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>1400Z / 1830L</i>
<i>Bible Study</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>1400Z / 1830L</i>

Point of contact CH (CPT) Hart

Roman Catholic Services

<i>Mass (English)</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>1030Z / 1500L</i>
<i>Mass (Español)</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>1230Z / 1700L</i>
<i>Weekday Mass (Beginning July 9)</i>	<i>M-F</i>	<i>0700Z / 1130L</i>
<i>Confession / Reconciliation</i>	<i>By Appointment</i>	

Point of contact CH (MAJ) Herrera

Latter Day Saints

<i>Worship</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>0800Z / 1230L</i>
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The FOB Fenty Chapel remains open for personal prayer, worship, and meditation for all faith traditions.

For more information, contact Chapel Office at DSN 831-2222 or 831-2223.

"But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." - Isaiah 40:31

Chaplain's Corner

I have just returned from another Memorial Ceremony for one of our Fallen Heroes; another great American that is being greatly missed by his family and his brothers in arms. As with our other Fallen Heroes, it somehow doesn't seem right that these great men were cut down in the prime of their life when they were the type of men whose character would continue to make this world a better place to live. In fact, it was because of the quality of their character that they came here in the first place, to serve in a cause that is greater than them. But why should we dwell on losing our fellow soldiers? Why continue thinking about something that brings grief? Well I think that is the point. I believe that we are looking at this life all wrong. Because life doesn't end when we die, it begins.

Abraham Lincoln said,

"Surely God would not have created such a being as man to exist only for a day! No, no, man was made for immortality." God has created us with eternity in mind. The Bible says that God "has set eternity in the hearts of men" and we are going to live forever. Yes we will all die; the question is how shall we live? To be alive instead of just existing, to count for something instead of just living for ourselves, to accomplish something that is greater than ourselves, that is what life is all about and that is what these men did, that is what they accomplished. And so can all of us who continue to go on living.

I see life as Basic Training. You come out of a comfortable environment into a cold strange world where you get slapped around. For what? So you can breathe. So you can learn to live in a new environment. So you can function in a world in which you would otherwise not survive. Basic Training teaches soldiers to cope, adapt, and accomplish things. It gives them stamina,

endurance, and a never-quit attitude, it builds character. But Basic Training is hard; it's tough, so tough that many do not make it. It's many hours of hard work, taking tests both physically and mentally. And we volunteered for this? Why? To be prepared to do a job that few others can do. To become someone and something that we were not before. To become a Soldier. Better, wiser, keener, stronger, in spirit and in physical strength than we were before. We spend a few months preparing for a job that will last many years in the military.

That is what life is. Life is Basic Training for eternity. Life teaches us to cope, adapt, produce, accomplish, it creates stamina, and endurance. Yes, life is hard. It is filled with adversity, struggles, pain, heartache and suffering. And then we die. It seems like I saw a bumper sticker once that seemed to echo these same sentiments. So why put up with all the problems? To be prepared to do in eternity, what we otherwise would not be able to accomplish. To be a child of God. Better, wiser, keener, stronger in soul and spirit than we otherwise would be. We spend a few decades on earth preparing for a life which will last forever in Heaven.

What we accomplish here on earth is not just for those who are still here on earth but it is also for how it effects all eternity. The Bible says, "If any man builds using gold, silver, or costly stones...his work will be shown for what it is...it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward." Death is not our termination, but our transformation into eternity. Every action we take will make an impact throughout eternity. When you live with your mind set on eternity, your direction in life

But why should we dwell on losing our fellow soldiers? Why continue thinking about something that brings grief?

changes.

What if today is the last day of your life? Have you prepared for it? We prepare to leave earth by insuring that our family is taken care of financially, perhaps we leave an inspiring letter to our children or a love letter to our spouse. But what about preparing for the next life? To make our peace with God, and to learn and apply life's lessons along the way prepares us to not only leave this world right, but to enter the next one prepared. Then the Lord will say, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."

In the Chronicles of Narnia, C. S. Lewis captured the concept of eternity on the last page of the last book of his seven-book series: "For us this is the end of all the stories... But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world...had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth has read, which goes on forever and in which every chapter is better than the one before."

That is the part of the story when we join together with our loved ones who have preceded us to heaven and have a joyous reunion and talk for endless days of our exploits here on earth.

Chaplain (MAJ) Lee Nelson
TF Bayonet Chaplain

Task Force 1 Fury patrols Pachir Wa Agam district

NANGARHAR PROVINCE -- Paratroopers from 1st Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 82nd Airborne Division, are helping improve security to the Pachir Wa Agam district in south-east Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan.

The district is a flourishing oasis created by farmers using a small river to irrigate the surrounding land. Fields of corn, cotton, wheat, and other crops extend as far as the water can flow.

The farmers have endured heavy conflict for the last 30 years. The district was a stronghold for the Mujahadeen during the Soviet War, and was heavily bombed during the initial phases of Operation Enduring Freedom. The area was also one of the last strong holds in Afghanistan for Al-Qaeda and Taliban.

1st Platoon patrols the district three to seven days at a time, said Spc. Chad Andrews, a 19-year-old mortar man from Colombia, South Carolina.

Their time while in the district is spent working closely with Afghan National Police and village elders.

1st Platoon handles security while the Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team and local leaders like Milik Khangul work with the government to improve economic development in the area.

Khangul visited 1st Platoon while they were camped for the night Sept. 7. 1st Platoon had just finished patrolling the roads for improvised explosive devices.

Khangul, along with a few village elders, walked up to the paratrooper's perimeter to talk about construction, mines and Taliban extremists. Khangul is working to build four bridges in the district to help locals traverse a small river.

Capt. Don Canterna, Bravo Company's Commander, talked with Khangul and village elders until dusk.

The village elder's main concern is land mines from the Soviet War that continue to plague the area. Rival farmers are digging up old land mines to replant in rival fields in an attempt to kill off the competition.

"Except they're hurting more kids than farmers," explained a village elder.

Canterna told the group that Bravo Company would remove and destroy any land mines in the area.

"All you have to do is tell us where they are," Canterna said.

After agreeing to pass the word around the village the local elders and Khangul retired to their houses for the night.

The next few days while 1st Platoon patrolled the roads, loud explosions could be heard- the result of an explosive ordnance disposal team using controlled detonations to destroy turned in explosives.



Soldiers from 1st Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment (Airborne), pull security at a school in Pachir Wa Agam District in south-east Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan Sept. 7.

PRT working hard to improve roads in Nuristan



2nd Lt. Jonathan Reabe, from Whiteland, Ind, Company C, 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, assesses the situation after the road crumbled underneath a Humvee in Titin valley Aug, 22.

Story and photos by Spc. Henry Selzer,
173rd ABCT Public Affairs

NURISTAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The roads of Afghanistan can be treacherous paths to travel but the Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team and local construction workers, who travel them daily, are doing their best to improve them.

The Nuristan PRT assessed the ongoing construction of a road running from Titin to Kordar Aug. 22, which will eventually run through the rest of the Nuristan Province.

The construction of the road, an Afghanistan Engineer District managed project, began in June 2006 and will make it easier and more safe for Afghan National Security Forces and Coalition forces to conduct their security patrols and expand the number of troops present in the area.

During this trip, the Nuristan PRT and Com-

pany C, 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment Soldiers found themselves with the tires of one Humvee within an inch of the edge of the road, looking down the side of a cliff, as it disintegrated beneath them.

As the sun started to go down, it was time to get the truck moved before it got dark. Army 2nd Lt. Jonathan Reabe, from Whiteland, Ind., of Co. C., 1st Bn. 158th Infantry, decided to put the Humvee on jacks and manipulated the front wheels so he could turn away from the eroding mountain and drive the vehicle out of danger.

This episode further emphasized the importance of improving the roads in the province.

“A road through the area will allow the villages along the road easier access to government services and commerce, and it will facilitate economic growth in the area,” said Navy Lt. Stanley Lam, of Seattle, Wash., with the Nuristan PRT.

Heaven Can Wait: The Soldiers of Aid Station Orgun-E

Story and photos by
Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Bellis,
AFN Afghanistan

ORGUN-E, Afghanistan -- A Black-hawk helicopter screams down to the airfield blasting waves of dust, dirt and pebbles. The medics turn their backs to shield their faces from flying debris. Seconds later, they sprint to the helicopter door where a Soldier in a flight suit and helmet pounds chest compressions on a patient hidden from view. They grab the litter and sprint for the hospital doors. Life depends on their speed.

Inside, it's a frenzy. Chest compressions continue. Voices are loud and commanding, but no one is yelling. Medics dart around the room grabbing supplies and equipment: needles, machines, tubes. Doctors sweat and furrow their brows as they work to stabilize the patient. A nurse stands to the side mentally sifting the tumult, documenting the essentials. The scene appears wild and random, but it isn't.

The team is focused; every move is deliberate.

"The best way to describe it is controlled chaos," said Army Capt. Brian Shultz, of the 541st Forward Surgical Team from Fort Bragg, N.C., and one of two general surgeons here.

"You try to remain detached, do your job effectively and to the best of your ability and maintain the efficiency of the team. Afterward, if we do lose people, we sit down and talk about it — if there are things we could've done better."

Despite the team's best efforts, the patient has passed away.

Some of the medics sit motionless around a table on the aid station's porch staring at the plywood floor. They only move to bring



Aid-station Soldiers run with a patient suffering from a gunshot wound to the leg. The aid-station staff is made up of two units: 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) from Vicenza, Italy, and the 541st Forward Surgical Team from Fort Bragg, N.C. They function as one. The only thing separating them is the patches on their shoulders, said one medic.

cigarettes to their lips. No one is ready to talk. One stands in the gravel and pours hydrogen peroxide on his boot. This helps get the blood stains out.

"Everybody deals with it a little differently," said Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Junod, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) medical platoon sergeant. "Sometimes, I think just being together is the part that helps the most.

"I've been doing this for about 20 years now; I see a lot of stuff. People that you wouldn't think would get up and walk out, get up and walk out. People you expect to get up and walk out, never leave. Some people, if you did everything right, are still not going to make it. It's obviously not in our control, but

we'll do everything we can to give them the best chance."

"It does take an emotional toll," said Shultz. "Everyone has their own way of dealing with the shock of losing someone and realizing the finality of it that they're not coming back. Some guys go to the gym, some guys run, some guys read."

Chess is a mainstay here. All but two of the 19 staff members play. Some of the junior members once played while wearing night-vision goggles. It helps pass the time between patients, keeps their minds busy, fuels bragging rights. They use the matches as a jumping-off point to mock each other and poke fun. Swarms of jokes and biting sarcasm ensue.

"You use a lot of humor

Continued from previous page



The forward surgical team and I-503rd medics work to stabilize a critically wounded Soldier. The aid station is often the first stop for injured Coalition Soldiers evacuated from combat. The team's job is to perform surgery if necessary, stabilize the patient for transport and prepare them for higher echelons of care at Bagram Airfield or Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.

amongst the team," said Air Force Capt. Jeffrey Marsh, a critical care nurse. "It's not humor about what you're seeing; it's humor about what you're doing [outside of here]."

Marsh is here temporarily, filling in for another nurse who is on leave. He's been here for about five weeks.

"It's been truly an amazing experience. Some of this stuff, the emotion, the trauma, the death, the burns and everything I've seen here, I'll probably feel later. You kind of tuck it away. I'm sure once I'm away from this environment and I'm back in the States, I'll have time to recollect some of what I've seen and done."

This team has done plenty. Some have been tasked with a nearly impossible chore: growing up facing loss, tough calls and suffering. Army Pfc. Joshua Ashford, of

HHC 1-503rd and just 20 years old, is the youngest on staff. By American standards, he isn't old enough to drink a beer, but he's old enough to have someone's life in his hands.

"When they come in, I kind of just 'blank' and I just work. You just do it," said Ashford. "All your training comes back; you know what has to get done. You don't really think about it. Once you're all done and they leave, you kind of sit out back and think about what you went through."

Medical care here runs the gamut from IED blasts to gunshot wounds, shrapnel, burns and broken bones; intravenous lines, X-rays, splints, atropine and morphine.

"I think we do good things," said Shultz. "I think we've made an impact on the field medical care available, especially in the forward emergency resuscitative realm. All

in all, everyone likes what they're doing here. This is what we've been trained to do, so everyone here is happy taking care of injured patients."

"I sleep so well at night," said Junod. "I like knowing that what I do counts for something."

The helicopters will still deliver every mother's bad dream. The staff here fights to keep that from becoming her nightmare. Sometimes, the nightmare wins. More often than not, it disappears under the care of experts. The doctors, medics and nurses of the Orgun-E aid station remember the Soldiers who go home to long hugs and family dinners. They keep these memories handy, close to their hearts. It's just another tool in their medical bag of tricks. It fits snugly next to hope, chess and an overdose of reality.

SNAKES ON A FOB

By Maj J. Steven Birchfield,
MAJ (P)/MC
TF Bayonet Surgeon

To quote a famous movie actor from "Snakes on a Plane." "I am sick and tired of these Snakes, on this....Plane"

Afghanistan is a deadly place, and many of the creatures that survive here, survive because they are tough and poisonous. We have recently had five separate incidences of deadly snake finds on our FOB's, and one scorpion sting. None of these snakes have been one of the friendly garden snakes. We found two deadly Sawtooth Vipers (pictured below), one that was three feet long with a lizard in its mouth. The fact that this snake had a lizard in its fangs probably saved the lives of the soldiers who found it and who were poking and trying to trap the snake with an aluminum baseball bat.

Some authorities call the Sawtooth Viper one of the biggest killers of humans in the world.

We also found three smaller Cobras slithering around one of the DFACs at one of the closed compounds on Fenty Air Field.



Lastly we had a scorpion sting out in Rock's AO.



If you encounter one of these creatures:

If it is going on its way and no one is at risk of being bitten. Leave it alone. Do not try to capture it, do not attempt to make this a pet or mascot. If it is a threat, kill it: from a distance. Do not pick up the head as the head will often reflexively bite down, even after the snake is killed.

If you are bitten, get medical help immediately.

If you are in a remote place, try to remain calm.

1. Remove the victim from the snake's territory
2. Call for Medevac.
3. Clean the wound.
4. Immobilize the affected body part, hang the bitten extremity below the level of the heart.

6. Apply lightly placed tourniquets two inches above and below the bite. (Controversial)
-The intent of these tourniquets is not to cut off blood supply

but to keep the poison from spreading below the skin.

7. Do not attempt to suck out the venom.

-Many of these venoms are neuro-toxins and may affect the person trying to help his buddy.

8. Do not give alcohol or drugs because it may confuse the patient's condition

9. Provide supportive care while waiting Medevac.

-Start an IV, give IV fluids if your buddy starts to look pretty sick, like he might be going into shock.

-Be prepared to do rescue breathing if your buddy stops breathing.

10. Kill the snake for identification if it does not put anyone else at risk

We have acquired Anti-Venom at the C Med, but please do not take risks and don't harass the animals unless they are harassing you.

Ways to Stay in Touch with Home

The 173rd ABCT Public Affairs Office has many different programs in place to help you and your loved ones back home stay in touch.

These programs are broken down into four different venues:

Print

Our shop's photojournalists make regular rotations throughout the AO, but you or your Unit Public Affairs Representative (UPAR) can also submit stories and photos for use in The Outlook, Bavarian News, the Tien Bien Times and service member's hometown newspapers.

Also ask your UPAR about Post Cards from the Front!

Video

Video coverage for use on AFN in Europe and Afghanistan is popular with every unit and we have two broadcasters that also make regular rotations throughout the AO.

Whenever one comes through your area, take advantage of the opportunity to record a Hello Honey or Holiday Greeting.

Radio

AFN Vicenza, AFN Franconia and AFN Afghanistan are all ready and willing to serve the 173rd while we are deployed.

We have also established a program with AFN called Call Back from the Front that highlights an individual from one battalion per week on a rotating basis. Please encourage you Soldiers to participate.

Internet

All of our news articles, video stories and Holiday Greetings are posted on the 173rd website: <http://www.173abnbde.setaf.army.mil>.

The website is updated on a weekly basis and first batch of Holiday Greetings are being posted this week. Tell your friends and family to check the site often over the coming weeks.

UPARs

To schedule coverage using any of the programs listed above, please contact you battalion UPAR. They are:

1-503 IN—CPT Christopher Frisbie
 2-503 IN—CPT Jeffrey Pickler
 1-508 IN—SGT James Tolson
 1-158 IN—MAJ John Bozicevic
 1-91 CAV—CPT Kevin Calkins
 4-319 AFAR—MAJ Anthony Lugo

173d STB—CPT Diane Collver
 173d BSB—CPT Jennifer Carr
 Nangarhar PRT—MSgt Dean Miller
 Nuristan PRT— MCPO Jesse Slothower
 Kunar PRT— CPO Marc Croteau
 Laghman PRT— CPT Heather Kekic

Smaller units without a UPAR, please contact SFC Jacob Caldwell at the TF Bayonet Public Affairs Office at DSN 318-831-6028.

“He was the kind of man that would immediately light up a room with his presence and personality,” wrote Staff Sgt. Jeremy Carey

TF Rock remembers Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Blaskowski

Story and photos by Sgt 1st Class Jacob Caldwell, 173rd ABCT Public Affairs

KUNAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Soldiers from Task Force Rock gathered to remember the life and service of Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Blaskowski at a memorial ceremony conducted Sept. 28 at Camp Blessing in Kunar Province, Afghanistan.

Blaskowski died Sept. 23 from gun-shot wounds when his platoon’s forward operating base was attacked by insurgents.

Blaskowski enlisted as an infantryman Nov. 17, 1998. His first duty station was at Fort Drum New York with the 10th Mountain Division (Light). He was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry as a Rifleman and a Scout. He was later assigned as a Team Leader in 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry in the same division.

After completing Airborne School in 2002, he reported to the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vicenza, Italy where he was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne).

Blaskowski served in multiple leadership positions in The Rock. Those positions included Team Leader in Battle Company, Battalion Assistant Operations Sergeant in Headquarter and Headquarters Company, 2-503rd, and Rifle and Weapons Squad Leader in Chosen Company during Operation Enduring Freedom VI where he was awarded a Silver Star. His most recent leadership position was as Platoon Sergeant for 1st Platoon in Battle Company.

His personality and long tenure with The Rock left a lasting impression on the battalion and all of the people with whom he served, particularly with 1st Lt. Bradley Winn, 1st Platoon Leader, Battle Company. The two worked closely together since they met in March during a training rotation in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

“It was hard to not get along with Sgt. Ski because his personality and humor were so infectious to so



The helmet, rifle, ID tags, boots and photo are displayed in memory of Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Blaskowski during a memorial ceremony conducted Sept. 28 at Camp Blessing, Kunar Province, Afghanistan. Blaskowski died in combat Sept. 23.

many people,” said Winn during the ceremony.

“He was the mentor and Platoon Sergeant that I had always dreamed of,” said Winn, “Leading from the front and being an everyday hero that all of the Soldiers, including myself, looked up to. Sgt. Ski was the epitome of a professional Soldier that will forever set the bar for Battle Company, Chosen Company and the whole Rock family.”

“Sgt. Ski passed away doing what he did best. Taking charge and being the great NCO that everyone

We will not forget those who have fallen



Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Blaskowski
Battle Company, 2-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA September 23, 2007



Spc. Matthew Taylor
Delta Company, 1-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
Died from wounds received in action
September 26, 2007



Pfc. Christopher Pfeifer
Bravo Troop, 1-91 Cavalry (Airborne)
Died from wounds received in action
September 25, 2007

Continued from previous page

knows him to be," said Winn.

"He was always quick to greet you with a friendly insult and make you laugh," said Sgt. Brian Hissong of Chosen Company in remarks written for the ceremony.

"He would go out of his way to help Soldiers with any problem they might have, spending his entire day fixing someone else's problem because that's how much he cared about his Soldiers," stated Hissong.

"He was the type of leader that elevated the Soldiers under him, and even the people around him, to perform better," said Hissong, "Not unlike a quarterback or great player in sports, he could help elevate his team to excellence. This was Sgt. Ski."

"He was the kind of man that would immediately light up a room with his presence and personality," wrote Staff Sgt. Jeremy Carey, Headquarters

and Headquarters Company, 2-503rd in remarks written for the ceremony.

"He was never the center of attention, but it wasn't the same without him around," said Carey, "He could bring something to a crowd that no one else could: a true, honest, take-me-as-I-am personality."

"Matt loved being a Soldier. His unmatched leadership and professionalism is what non-commissioned officers in the United States Army should strive to match. He was a Soldier's Soldier," said Carey.

"The magnitude of his life is a testament to the kind of man he was," said Carey, "He will be missed greatly."

Blaskowski is survived by his wife Daniela of Vicenza, Italy and his parents Terry and Cheryl Blaskowski and family of Levering, Michigan.

Medal of Honor Recipient Staff Sgt. Glenn H. English, Jr.

Staff Sgt. Glenn H. English, Jr., Company E, 3rd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroic actions taken Sept. 7, 1970 in Phu My District of the Republic of Vietnam.

English was born April 23, 1940 in Altoona, Penn. He entered the service from Philadelphia.

His citation reads as follows:

Staff Sgt. English was riding in the lead armored personnel carrier in a 4-vehicle column when an enemy mine exploded in front of his vehicle. As the vehicle swerved from the road, a concealed enemy force waiting in ambush opened fire with automatic weapons and anti-tank grenades, striking the vehicle several times and setting it on fire. Staff Sgt. English escaped from the disabled vehicle and, without pausing to extinguish the flames on his clothing, rallied his stunned unit. He then led it in a vigorous assault, in the face of heavy enemy automatic



Staff Sgt. Glenn H. English, Jr., Company E, 3rd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroic actions taken Sept. 7, 1970 in Phu My District of the Republic of Vietnam.

weapons fire, on the entrenched enemy position. This prompt and courageous action routed the enemy and saved his unit from destruction. Following the assault, Staff Sgt. English heard the cries of 3 men still trapped inside the vehicle. Paying no heed to warnings that the ammunition and fuel in the burning personnel carrier might explode at any moment, Staff Sgt. English raced to the vehicle and climbed inside to rescue his wounded comrades. As he was lifting one of the men to safety, the vehicle exploded, mortally wounding him and the man he was attempting to save. By his extraordinary devotion to duty, indomitable courage, and utter disregard for his own safety, Staff Sgt. English saved his unit from destruction and selflessly sacrificed his life in a brave attempt to save 3 comrades. Staff Sgt. English's conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the cost of his life were an inspiration to his comrades and are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

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