



Tien Bien Times

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

AUGUST 1, 2007

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Pace visits the Herd 2
- Commander's Corner 3
- 'Valley of Fire' 4
- Keeping the Rock rollin' 6
- Building on the front 7
- Chaplain's Corner 9
- Airmen teach ANP new tactics 10
- Joint MEDCAP reaches out 11
- Laghman builds flood protection wall 13
- Lifeline of the battalion 15
- Leishmaniasis? 16
- 173rd History 17

TIEN BIEN TIMES IS A COMBINED EFFORT OF THE 173RD ABCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE AND THE 22ND MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT



1-158th hunt insurgents in Laghman

Story and photo by Pfc. Daniel Rangel, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MEHTAR LAM, Afghanistan (26 July) – Taliban and Al-Qaeda insurgents manufacturing IEDs in the caves and compounds of the Alishang Valley are being hunted day and night by infantrymen of the 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, an Arizona National Guard unit.

The 1-158th, has been conducting regular patrols, combined with Afghan security forces, as part of a greater effort to push farther into northern Laghman Province where up until now, insurgents have been known to roam relatively freely.

"We've seen an increase in insurgent activity in the Alishang Valley," Army 1st Lt. Darcy Jones, the battalion intelligence officer from Maricopa, Ariz., said.

"Foreign fighters, IED financiers, and weapons caches have been identified in the valley," Army Capt. Jon Cookson, the battalion plans officer from Phoenix, said.

The 1-158th mission in Afghanistan is two-fold. In addition to the traditional infantry missions involving patrols and area responsibility in Laghman Province, the battalion also provides security forces for Provincial Reconstruction Teams across Afghanistan.

"The security our troops provide the PRTs is essential so that the teams can focus on their mission – working with the local Afghans to build schools, roads, infrastructure and support for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan," Army Maj. John Bozicevic, the 1-158th public affairs officer from Chandler, Ariz., said.

The vast majority of the unit's



The infantrymen of Company A, 1-158th return drenched in sweat from a dismounted night patrol conducted July 18 in the Aleshang Valley in Laghman Province.

citizen-Soldiers hail from Arizona. Additional troops fill the ranks from the Individual Ready Reserve along with Hawaii, New Jersey, and New York National Guardsmen. For some, this is their fourth deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

When not deployed, most of these Soldiers have regular full-time jobs or attend college, but after mobilizing on Jan. 3, 2007, the 1-158th began training for their mission at Fort Bragg, N.C and arrived in Afghanistan in late March.

The 1-158th Soldiers out of FOB Mehtar Lam make regular visits to the Afghan National Police compound in Laghman Province to link up and conduct patrols along side them.

The unit also maintains a combat outpost halfway up the Alishang in Najil in order to maintain a presence there with the Afghan National Army.

"The COP is very austere," Bozicevic said. "We need a place where we can operate out of, a place to store water and food. G Battery, 4-319th AFAR

Cont. on page 12

Pace visit brings encouragement, coins, rumor control

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan – Gen. Peter Pace, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Service members of Task Force Bayonet today at Forward Operating Base Fenty, near Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

Making a whirlwind tour of both Iraq and Afghanistan in his final months as chairman, Pace took extra time to greet and speak with every Service member that he saw; handing out coins and offering words of encouragement.

Travelling with Pace was Medal of Honor recipient and Vietnam veteran H.C. Barnum Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Reserve Affairs).

"I'm here as a grateful American," said Barnum, addressing an enthusiastic crowd in the FOB Fenty chow hall, "and I want to look each one of you in the eyes and say thank you.

"I'm also here as a fellow combat warrior," the retired Marine Col. added, "I wear this [Medal of Honor] to remind myself what it's all about. It's all about teamwork. It's not about you... it's about the team, and that's how we get things done."

During a question-and-answer session, Pace addressed the validity of rumors circulating about the possibility of 18-month deployments.

"An 18-month tour has zero, zero, none, nada, squat, nothing, none ... validity, ok? I want to make sure you got that," said Pace, "I want you to pretend that the 18-month thing is Dracula, and I want

you to drive a wooden stake through its heart. It's not fair to our families to have ... rumors like that out there."

Pace explained that while deployments were increased to 15 months for the plus-up of troops both in Iraq and Afghanistan, in September he will be recommending shorter deployments and more time with families.

"A portion of that is the understanding that we can get back from 15 months deployed to 12 months deployed and then increase dwell time from 12 back up closer to 24 months, so that over time – not tomorrow – but over time, units, brigades, will deploy for 12 months and be home for 24 months, and in that 24 months, get family time, get full-spectrum training and be ready to go wherever the nation needs them to go," said Pace, "But between now and then, I can guarantee you that your secretary and your service chiefs are dedicated to ensuring that we do not break the promise that we made to you about 15 months de-

ployed and 12 months at home."

Deployed Service members aren't the only audience that Pace is seeking out. He will spend the next few days with family members in Germany addressing their unique concerns as they also cope with a 15-month deployment.

"I want to stand in front of them. I want to explain to them how it is that I came to the judgment that the troops should be extended, and allow them to ask me questions, because I think it's very important that we respect our families. I'm going to stand in front of them and explain to them our logic for what we've done and answer their questions," said Pace.

"Because the fact of the matter is, the families serve this nation as well as anybody in uniform, and I want to make sure that we respect them in as many ways as possible, to include standing in front of them, thanking them and answering their questions for what I intend on doing."

"An 18-month tour has zero, zero, none, nada, squat, nothing, none ... validity, ok? I want to make sure you got that," Gen. Peter Pace, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.



Gen. Peter Pace, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff greets Master Sgt. Karen Beckford, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) July 19 with a coin at Forward Operating Base Fenty, Afghanistan.



Commander's Corner

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

Ten Sky Soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country in the month of July. They were more than just Soldiers. They were husbands, fathers, brothers and close friends. Each and every loss hurts in ways that cannot be adequately described with words. Each and every one will be sorely missed.

Although it is very difficult to come into the middle of a fight and start operating, we can't let up. Not even for a second. Our resolve must, and will, remain firm as we continue our partnership with our Afghan counterparts. The enemy is determined but it won't be enough as we will continue to bring the fight to the enemy and he will continue to lose.

I know that dealing with these losses can be difficult and I want to emphasize that there are people that truly care that you can talk to; whether it be here or in the rear. Additionally I would ask that all ban together and support each other.

To the Soldiers here in Afghanistan, I would remind you that your chain-

of-command, NCO support channel as well as the best chaplains in the Army are here to help. I rely upon their counsel and advice daily and I hope that you will take the opportunity to do the same.

To the families of the 173rd, please continue to send the photos, letters and care packages. You mean the world to us and every little scrap of home that we receive is cherished. Your support is important and vital to keeping us strong.

I want to thank the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association for their sterling support during this long deployment. They are ensuring that there is a 173rd representative at each and every funeral of our fallen heroes as well as paying visits to those Sky Soldiers who are still recovering from their wounds. Their assistance and support is invaluable to us all, I can't thank the association members enough.

As we move into the month of August, we will begin to take R&R leave. I just want to confirm the fact that because of the 15-month deployment, R&R leave is now a full 18 days. Enjoy those 18 days with your friends and family. Cherish them and make special memories that will



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

help you in difficult times.

I also would like to reiterate the fact that this deployment will be only 15 months. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Peter Pace clarified during his recent visit here, 18-month deployments are only a rumor that needs to be stopped.

I want to thank each and every one of you; Soldiers, family members, friends, and Association members for your service to our Nation, TF Bayonet, and each other. The efforts that you all make are what makes our nation great and this team successful.

"SKY SOLDIERS"
Bayonet 6

TF Rock prepared to tame 'Valley of Fire'

Story and photos by Spc. Jon Arguello,
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan (29 June) – Deep in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan, the horizon is nearly overwhelmed with mountain ridges that seemed to have crashed through the surface of the earth with ferocity. Snaking through some of these rocky valleys and ravines runs what seems at some points a gentle but quick moving river, at others, an untameable rush of water desperately trying to escape its own riverbed.

More recently the area has been home to dramatic scenes of a different nature. Between the two large valleys called the Pech and Korengal, lies the bulk of intense fighting between insurgents and Coalition Forces in the northern half of Regional Command-East. The fighting however has not deterred 'Rock' Paratroopers from completing their mission.

Clashes between the combined US and Afghan forces and terrorists have been consistently occurring in the Pech District since the 10th Mountain Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team 1st Battalion 32nd Infantry Regiment ventured into the area in 2006 and 2007 with operations like "Mountain Lion" and with the establishment of small firebases in this area where the land is as inhospitable as the insurgents who are being evicted.

The terrorists meanwhile, who are finding themselves with fewer and fewer places to hide, have been desperately trying to hold onto one of their last staging grounds as newly arrived paratroopers prove their lethality and desire to move deep into areas terrorists are used to calling home.

The 2nd Battalion 503rd Infantry (Airborne) of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, which replaced the 1-32 Infantry over a month ago, is now charged with completing the task of taming the area now called the "Valley of Fire" by the Soldiers who patrol it because of the frequency of fire fights.

It's been almost a year and a half since Task Force Rock, as the 2-503rd is called, left



The view from a gun position at Firebase Phoenix overlooking the Korengal Valley. Battle Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne) paratroopers occupy several small firebases along the valley in one of the most hard fought areas in in eastern Afghanistan's Regional Command-East.

Afghanistan after proving its capabilities against insurgents and coming home with multiple battlefield victories of Hollywood calibre throughout a hard fought-over area of operations in the southern part of the country.

The battalion's success was notable as they established relationships with the population and helped the Afghan authorities develop into a respectable fighting force, while intensely finding, fixing and destroying large numbers of enemy on several occasions.

Once again TF Rock has been given a tumultuous area and plans to tame the area are multi-fold.

"We are to conduct counter-insurgency operations in RC-East to destroy and defeat the insurgents and build the capability of Afghan national security forces in order to enable the government of Afghanistan to provide a secure and stable environment that deters the re-emergence of terrorism in the region," said 1st Sgt. LaMonta Caldwell, of Battle Company 2-503rd Infantry (Airborne). "The troopers of Battle Company 2-503 understand our task at hand: first to finish what 1-32 has already started -- working with locals to establish a sound living environment, to help train and work side by side with ANA, and second -- to eliminate forces that cause disruption to the process of a good, trustwor-

"The insurgents as you may want to call them will never match up with any troopers from Battle Company ..."

thy government in our area of responsibility.”

Already the “Sky Soldiers” placed along the triangularly shaped intersection of the two valleys have been in several fire fights and repelled various ambushes. But the attempts to challenge the Rock’s paratroopers is a waste of the insurgents’ time said Caldwell

“The insurgents as you may want to call them will never match up with any troopers from Battle Company or Rock Battalion,” said Caldwell. “This is not our first Rodeo. We just left Afghanistan 16 months ago. A lot of those veterans are still around, like myself. We have been shot at before, mortared before and we know what to do. Taking care of your buddy to your left and right is the key to our success and getting after [terrorists] when they try to attack us is our motto and that comes from the heart of these troopers in Battle Company, and no insurgent can match that.”

The Soldiers based in and around the dangerous valleys have proven they have heart and much more in the short time since their arrival. As their war stories accumulate their vested interest in the progress of the Afghan authorities becomes a personal matter.

“We have fought with these guys,” said Sgt. Raul Padilla, a Battle Company team leader at Firebase Phoenix in the Korengal Valley. “This has become personal to us. The people, not just the soldiers and policemen of Afghanistan, are depending on us to help them get control of their country.”

Personal is the only way these hardened paratroopers can take the death of one Soldier and several combat injuries in their battalion. But not even the death of their fellow Soldiers will deter them, said Padilla.

“We won’t leave this valley until the insurgents leave, and if they won’t leave we’ll make it personal for them too,” said Padilla, a veteran of TF Rock’s last deployment to Afghanistan. “This area is now under



A paratrooper from Able Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne) scans the ridgelines across the Pech River as he pulls guard at Firebase California.

the control of US and Afghan forces. The Taliban are going to have to go away or go around us because they aren’t welcome here anymore.”

Although not every Soldier is a veteran of the hard type of fighting Afghanistan is known for, it is possible that every Soldier in the Valley of Fire will see contact at some point, as many already have.

“It was supposed to be a recon patrol into Aliabad,” explained Spc. Jason Mace of a fire fight on June 18. “It was very quiet as we reached the village. A couple of villagers were out and seemed happy to see us.”

“There was an area we had to cross that had little to no cover so we started bounding until we reach a school building. We stopped at the school to catch our breath behind a small wall. All of a sudden we heard shots.”

“At first we only heard shots from one ridgeline, then a second ridgeline. For a brief moment there was a lull and we thought it was going to stop, but then another ridgeline opened up on us. We had fire coming from a lot of directions, even behind us at one point,” described Mace.

“We just kept calling in rounds,” said Battle Company forward observer Pfc. Sterling Dunn of a separate fire fight. “We were landing rounds no more than 20 feet from them. They would seek cover and then continue firing. Me and the

other [forward observer] were taking turns firing our M-4s and calling in missions to the south, southeast, southwest and east. We called in 60mm and 120mm mortars and 155mm Howitzers and we almost made each other deaf. I couldn’t hear for three days.”

Dunn, who participated in both battles and helped carry the Rock’s only fallen Soldier back to vehicles for extraction said he re-evaluated his job after the June 5 battle.

“It’s extremely important,” Dunn said. “Before, I didn’t like my job because I hated carrying the radio with a passion. Now I realize people’s lives are in my hands. On that day my buddies were taking fire below me. I had to call in rounds with urgency. I realize that everybody has a part.”

The sense of purpose these troops have gained goes beyond their specific jobs and ranks at this point Mace explained.

“Slowly we are accomplishing things here. We’ve already done things we were told were impossible. They said we couldn’t go to this area or pass that line but we have. It’s taking time but it’s not going to stop until we do something about it and we are.”

Knowing their importance and their role in Afghanistan is important said a platoon sergeant from Able

Mechanics keep ‘Rock’ rolling

Pfc. Andrew Davis, from Oregon, a mechanic in Fusion Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), screws in the oil pan on a vehicle at Forward Operating Base Fenty July 13.



Pfc. Andrew Davis, a mechanic in Fusion Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), endures the 125 plus degree heat while working on a vehicle at Forward Operating Base Fenty July 13.



Sgt. Juan Velazquez, a mechanic in Fusion Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), puts together an oil pan for a vehicle at Forward Operating Base Fenty July 13.

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan (18 July) —When it's 125 degrees outside, the only place you want to be is inside with the air conditioner on high. Sitting outside on a slab of metal with over 6,000 pounds of steel above your head doesn't sound like much fun. All the metal makes the air in the vicinity even hotter- acting like an oven.

Mechanics from Fusion Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), work 12 to 13 hours a day in these conditions making sure that the "The Rock's" vehicles keep moving between their forward operating bases.

After the convoys come back from missions, they get dropped off at the motor pool on Forward Operating Base Fenty.

"The road conditions and (heavy) armor on the vehicle wears on the vehicles," said Pfc. Andrew Davis, a mechanic in Fusion Company, 2nd Battalion 503rd Infantry (Airborne).

The convoys are only back on FOB Fenty for a day or two and all the maintenance on the vehicles has to be done in that short time span.

The mechanics work all day and late into the night repairing vehicles and executing scheduled maintenance.

"When the mission is over, I get my satisfaction from knowing no one got hurt," said Sgt. Juan Velazquez, a mechanic in Fusion Company.

In a theater where the terrain is as inhospitable as the enemy, the mechanics' work produces tangible results.

"When the vehicles roll out I know that I've done my job," said Davis.

Sky Soldiers build FOB on the front

Story and photo by Pfc. Daniel Rangel,
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LONESTAR, Afghanistan (12 July) – The Forward Operating Bases in Iraq and Afghanistan don't just magically appear. They're a product of the hard work of American servicemembers conducted at the front lines.

Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team began day five of construction July 11 at FOB Lonestar which is about 20 kilometers from the Pakistan border according to Army 2nd Lt. Zachariah J. Paul of the 173rd ABCT, Special Troops Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

"It's going great. The FOB is turning out real well," said Paul who helped lead the construction effort and described his relationship with the Officer-in-Charge. "This is Lieutenant Brown's party, I'm just bartending it."

Security was the primary concern at the new FOB. Up-armored Humvees made a perimeter around the site. Each of the Humvees were loaded down with .50-caliber machine guns, 240-Bs and M-249s. Those Humvees have been manned 24 hours a day by at least two Sky Soldiers living inside the vehicle and carrying either an M-4 carbine or M-16 rifle.

FOB Lonestar is tactically positioned on a hilltop near Pachir Wa Agam in Rachiragam Province located along the Pakistan Border. The FOB overlooks the foothills of the Tora Bora Mountains where Taliban combatants are known

to come through from Pakistan, according to Paul.

Army Spc. Ricci Angel, an infantryman and Humvee driver for the 173rd ABCT, Special Troops Battalion explained part of the logistics challenges of building a FOB in this area.

"We've been making the three-hour trip out here every day," Angel said. "Tomorrow's going to be even longer."

The days get longer when Soldiers must meet one of the biggest challenges in FOB construction—transporting heavy equipment to the front lines. Convoys have been taking out supplies to the new FOB from the Jalalabad PRT daily. But the FOB also needs heavy construction equipment such as cranes and dump trucks. The dump trucks are used to fill the wall barriers with soil that would provide additional security to the triple-wire barriers.

In addition to security from combatants, the single-strand wire keeps out the local children and livestock. With the new supplies from the convoy that arrived on July 11, the triple-strand wire will soon be complete. The convoy also supplied basic necessities like water and MREs, the military food ration.

As of July 11, besides the security perimeter and facilities, there are two tents storing supplies and a two story watch tower.

The FOB also has temporary showers and latrines. But with the steady flow of supplies to the area, a more complete FOB, and better security for the Tora Bora region, is on the way.



A Sky Soldier from the 173rd ABCT pulls guard duty near the Pakistan border in a Humvee turret July 11 at FOB Lonestar.

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>
----------------	------------	----------------------

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

In the fourth chapter of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Philippian church, he writes: "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me. Still, you did well by sharing with me in my hardship" (Philippians 4:13-14).

Verse 13 (I am able to do all things...) is probably one of the most quoted texts of the Bible when hardship or great adversity comes our way. And indeed, nothing could be truer. The grace and strength offered by a loving heavenly Father is sufficient to get us through even the darkest night of trial and tragedy. We hurt, we cry, we struggle with why we must go through it, but even in the face of great suffering, as David wrote in Psalm 23, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."

But often overlooked is verse 14: You did well by sharing with me in my hardship. God indeed gives us the ability to endure anything, from the smallest inconvenience even up to the greatest of tragedies. But how does He do it? How does God most often bind up our deep wounds of the heart, those

arrows of anguish that pierce us to the very core of our being? I don't know about you, but He has most often given me the greatest comfort through the people that He has divinely appointed to cross my path at just the right time: someone to offer a shoulder to cry on or an ear to listen; someone to speak a gentle, reassuring word or to just come alongside and say nothing at all; someone to address a physical or material need so that I didn't have to concern myself with it at the moment.

Who can better identify with us and with our circumstance than someone who is walking, or has in the past walked, the same path on which we find ourselves? One of Webster's definitions of the word "family" is "a group of people united by certain convictions or a common affiliation." If that doesn't apply to us as a brigade, then I don't know what does. And in a family, people look out for each other. They take care of each other. They circle the wagons and defend one another. And when tragedy strikes, they are there to care for and support one another, in whatever manner the circumstance calls for.

Who can better identify with us and with our circumstance than someone who is walking, or has in the past walked, the same path on which we find ourselves?

God has divinely ordained each of us for this place and time to be the "ordinary miracle" – that daily, often overlooked blessing from God Himself – that someone else might need. Let us as the 173rd ABCT family stand ready to bless one another whenever, wherever, however it might be called for.

And when this is all said and done, may we be able to say to one another: "You did well by sharing with me in my hardship." May God's blessings and tender mercies be with each of us during this season of our lives.

Chaplain (CPT) Michael Hart
173rd Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne)

Airmen teach ANP, ANAP about tactics and training

Story and photo by Capt. Nora Eyle
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Daniel Smith, non-commissioned officer in charge of the Police Technical Advisory Team (PTAT) has been stationed at the Mehtar Lam Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan for almost four months.

Since day one, he and his team have been training 10 to 20 Afghan National Police and Afghan National Auxiliary Police every week about community policing, use of force, hand-to-hand combat, searching and handcuffing, ethics, riot control, rifle fighting, offensive and defensive tactics, as well as other skills.

"This PTAT program will have touched virtually every ANAP & ANP in the Laghman province by the end of our tour," said Smith from Butler, Pa.

Senior Airman Zackary Osborne, Morgantown W. Va., Security Forces Police Tactics and Training (PTAT) mentor underlines the program's importance, "The PTAT program is really important because it is a tool that refines, and reshapes these people's way of thinking, and makes the ANP and ANAP better police officers," said Osborne.

"Training of the ANP and ANAP are critical to the long-term stability of Afghanistan," said Lt Col. Robert Ricci, Mehtar Lam Provincial Reconstruction Team commander. "Nothing happens without security in this nation. The ANP and ANAP are the first-line defenders against insurgents and general crimes to the public."

The training of the ANP and ANAP in Laghman Province actually happens in several stages. First, individuals are trained at the Regional Training Center in Jalalabad for basic police duty. Then, they are trained by the PTAT personnel that include Smith, Osborne and Tech. Sgt. Drayton Denson for one week. There they concentrate primarily on tactical level tasks and capabilities. Lastly, the individuals are placed back in their district units where the Military Police platoon assigned to the Forward Operating Base can work

with the personnel in the field to put into practice what the PTAT spent time teaching.

"After one week of classes, Sgt. Smith and I conduct paperwork and prep for the next class on the seventh day, and then start again on Saturday," said Osborne. "It's a pretty hectic schedule."

The students all work hard to perform their tasks and Osborne has been impressed by their efforts.

"They show a real understanding for all the subjects, but the ones that stand out the most are ethics, and use of force. They all want to become better at their job," he said.

But the ANA and ANAP are not the only ones who are learning things; the instructors are also getting educated by their students. "I am learning phrases, some Dari but more Pashto than anything," said Smith. "The majority of the students speak several different languages from Dari, Pashto, Pashai and Urdu. So I try and pick up on the different dialects. I know my interpreter wishes I knew a lot of Dari, because he has to answer or ask questions in two different languages a lot of the time."

"Every day I see the ANP and ANAP getting better," said Ricci. "If I were to take a snapshot from when we first arrived and compare it to where we are now and where we're going, the pictures would look

nothing alike. Everyday they're getting better ... and I have my PTAT to thank for a significant part of that."

"Much as we seem to forget, policemen in the United States are often forgotten until they're needed ... well they're needed here," said Ricci. "As the son of a policeman and the grandson of a policeman, I understand fully the important role they play in society. I've lived with it my whole life. It's no different here. The ANP and ANAP are going to help the long term stability of this region."

The instructors know that they are making a difference with their program.

"It is always a good feeling when people come back to the FOB and say the ANP are doing a great job out there and they are showcasing their newly



Air Force Tech. Sgt. Drayton Denson, the Mehtar Lam PRT's Police Tactics and Refresher Training Superintendent teaches riot control techniques to a recent class of Afghanistan National Police students.

Joint MEDCAP reaches out to Nuristan

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan (9 July) — The weather was gloomy with a slight drizzle from over head, but that didn't affect the enthusiasm or the pace of the people walking through the marshland. The ground was muddy and it made areas difficult to navigate.

Choices had to be made—either get wet or try to jump from stone to stone or even navigate a log to cross areas of question. In the rush to get there some got wet.

Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team's enthusiasm for the mission at hand couldn't be denied as they marched to the site.

With the help of a few local donkeys, the team carried hundreds of pounds of medical supplies on the 10-kilometer trek through marshes and meadows to the village of Parun nestled in the beautiful Hindu Kush mountains.

The two days leading up to the medical civil action project were spent walking the valley and talking with local Afghans about the best suitable site.

Sailors, Airmen, Soldiers, Marines, Afghan National Army Soldiers worked side-by-side to provide medical care for Parun and the neighboring villages.

By the time the equipment was in place and the doctors were ready to see patients, most of the town had already gathered around



The world for Staff. Sgt. Michael Ortiz, HHC, 2-503rd Inf (Abn), stands still as he listens to a local Afghan child's heart during a medical civil action project in Parun, Afghanistan June 28. Ortiz worked together with another Coalition Forces medic to treat over 60 patients between the two.

the site.

Afghans from as many as seven neighboring villages made the walk to the MEDCAP to see the doctors.

"I like helping out (the) local people," said Doctor Bashir, Surgeon for 2nd Kandak, 201st Corps.

Bashir worked side by side with his American counterpart Capt. Joel Dean, Battalion Surgeon for 2-503rd.

Often during the two days the two could be seen both evaluating patients and comparing notes learning from each others knowledge.

The three treatment rooms worked simultaneously and treated over 220 Afghans during the two-day mission.

"We saw roughly 150 the first day and 70 on the sec-

ond," said Ortiz.

The local Afghans showed up to get treated for numerous ailments ranging from skin rashes, tuberculoses, and open wounds to fever and even malnutrition.

"The worst thing we saw was an infected thumb that required drainage, cleaning and antibiotics," said Chief Hospital Corpsman Arwin Ariles, Nuristan PRT.

"The man is going to get checked up with the local doctor here who also helped with the MEDCAP."

The PRT has consistently brought aid to Parun and the surrounding villages.

This wasn't the first and certainly won't be the last time the PRT and ANA will work together in the region.

The local Afghans showed up to get treated for numerous ailments ranging from skin rashes, tuberculoses, and open wounds to fever and even malnutrition.

Airmen teach ANP from page 10

learned skills and are saying that they learned it from the PTAT Teachers," said Smith. "Some of the students even mention Tech. Sgt. Denson, Airman Osborne, and myself by name. I am always glad to be able to help where I can. Especially knowing that the teaching it is leading to the Afghans securing their own land."

"There is enough reward knowing that the individuals you teach walk out that day knowing that they have learned something new or learned more about something that they already knew," Smith said. "It is a great feeling to know that the subjects you teach to these people could be the very item that helps them save a life."

Since training started the Mehtar Lam PTAT program has trained over 200 ANP and ANAP students.

Hunt from page 1

of the 173rd [Airborne Brigade Combat Team] runs supplies up all the time."

While conducting dismounted night patrols, visibility can be extremely low and the Night Observation Devices may be of limited help since they don't give the viewer the depth perception necessary to traverse the rugged terrain of Laghman Province.

During one mission, the 1-158th conducted a foot patrol in the dark and traversed the many different ruins in Laghman Province. For this particular mission, the unit was searching for an IED manufacturing site hidden in the bombed out mud

huts of the province.

"Night patrols deter IED emplacement in key areas," Cookson said.

"The majority of IEDs are emplaced at night," Jones added.

"We walk the mountains almost every day," Seth A. Lowell said, a full-time student and Criminal Justice major from Quakertown, Pa. "We'll hike miles."

The team going out on the dismounted patrol conducted July 18 included Army Sgt. Corey Conaway from Chandler, Ariz., Army Sgt. Jose Rodriguez and Army Command Sgt. Maj. John Bauer also from Chandler, Ariz.

"I think we had good discipline out there," Rodriguez said.

The terrain is challenging and keeping a low profile requires discipline, strength and stamina.

The process of spreading the influence and authority of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan into these austere places where Humvees can't reach begins with dismounted patrols. After securing a site, Soldiers construct a combat outpost that can store basic supplies for long term operations.

Now the battalion leadership is establishing another combat outpost in the northern end of the Alishang near the Dawlat Sha district center.

"We want to establish a foothold in an area that's historically been a hideout for insurgents," Jones said.

This will require building a bridge, yet another challenge for the battalion and with winter coming, it's a race against time, Bozicevic said.

TF Bayonet EO office requests ...



volunteers to assist in planning and conducting events for HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH (15 Sep – 15 Oct) If you are interested see MSG Christopher Camacho or SFC Alfredo Woods At Bldg D9 or Call, 831-6034.

DO YOU NEED A MENTOR?

Benjamin Franklin perhaps said it best: "He that can't be counseled can't be helped." Mentoring relationships have been significant factors in career development, organizational success, and career satisfaction. Having a mentor can be a key to opening doors for your professional and personal growth.

‘Valley of Fire’ from page 5

Company who lives at Firebase California on the Pech Valley. His platoon’s job is to secure an area that includes a road project, seven villages and an unknown number of enemies.

“I hope they know by now why they are here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jose Magaña of his Soldiers. “To look out outside the base and see people doing things, selling things, kids going to schools, even girls. That’s why were here. So that the Afghan people can do things many take for granted. It’s not easy to bear all the sacrifices these Soldiers are making but their role is historic in granting people the same freedoms we have at home.”

One of the platoon’s specific tasks is focused around a road project linking several population hubs through three districts.

“Our job is to secure an area of the Pech River Road,” said Magaña, also a veteran of the battalion’s last rotation to Afghanistan. “The strategic location and purpose of this road make it very valuable. We need to ensure the road’s progress moves forward. This road will improve the lives of the people who live here, enhance the Afghan security forces’ ability to control the area, and stimulate economical and social development.”

Just hours after Magaña’s interview, Firebase California fended off an insurgent attack. Despite persistent

“Slowly we are accomplishing things here. We’ve already done things we were told were impossible. They said we couldn’t go to this area or pass that line but we have ...”

but apparently futile attempts to disrupt TF Rock’s work, the battalion continues to push economic and social development. A good relationship with the local populace is a theme the battalion is working hard to achieve.

“It’s important to concentrate on both lethal and non-lethal aspects,” said Maj. Scott Himes, TF Rock’s plans and operations officer.

“Historically this has been an area of safe haven for the insurgents. If we don’t have a lot of positive interaction with the people, they will be susceptible to the Taliban’s leverage. We have to rely on a partnership with the people.”

“We have to prove to them that there is a positive alternative,” Himes said, “As we build trust with the people and the people trust more in the capacity of the Afghan governmental agencies, we can build long term partnerships. They’ll know we are going to stay and provide security.”

A recent flooding of the Pech River that killed three people, destroyed one home and nine bridges, may have demonstrated the local government’s commitment. As US forces came to offer aid, they were already in full swing of planning repairs. The Pech District’s sub-governor not only planned but, with US help, repaired the only road leading to the victims of the flood and delivered emergency relief.

Even with the 2-503rd’s tremendous efforts to develop Afghanistan’s security forces, the trust of the locals, and to stimulate their living conditions in a positive direction, it’s impossible to ignore the kinetic side of the war, especially in the “Valley of Fire.”

Laghman Province builds flood protection wall

Story by Capt. Heather Kekic, Mehtar Lam Provincial Reconstruction Team

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MEHTAR LAM, Afghanistan (14 July) — A contract worth more than \$75,000 to begin the construction of a flood protection wall was signed July 14 at Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam, Afghanistan.

The contract between the Provincial Reconstruction Team and the New Sahak Construction Company provides for all the necessary labor, equipment, and materials to construct a 300 meter Flood Protection Wall. The wall will be located in

Kandah, a village in northern Mehtar Lam Province.

The contract states that the construction project will last approximately three months and calls for the employment of local villagers to work on the project.

The project was nominated by the Laghman Provincial Council and endorsed by the governor of Laghman Province, Gulab Mangal.

“From an engineering perspective, the PRT and provincial engineers have worked together to develop a long-lasting design which will serve the people in Kandah for many years to come,” said Matthew Brennan, PRT engineer.

“This is a great example of the government of Afghanistan working to improve the lives of the Afghans,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Robert Ricci, Mehtar Lam PRT commander.

Additional benefits of this project include enhancing the legitimacy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, improving the local economy and the personal sense of accomplishment the workers will experience because they directly contributed to improving their village, Ricci said.

Once completed, the wall will protect more than 400 houses and 10,000 square meters of land in Laghman Province from future flooding and land erosion.

Golf Battery lifeline of the battalion

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MEHTAR LAM, Afghanistan – Though it may not be the most glorious job, paratroopers of Golf Battery, 4th Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, are working hard nonetheless at Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam by logistically supporting their fellow soldiers.

“We basically act as a lifeline to the companies of our battalion, delivering supplies by any means necessary to make sure the job gets done,” says Capt. Jonathan Beck, 29, of Oswego, New York, Commander of Golf Company.

The paratroopers of Golf Battery are supporting their battalion by conducting sling-load operations to be sent to nearby traffic-control points, consisting of Hesco barriers, ice water and Gatorade.

The paratroopers also conduct combat logistic patrols to the battalions observation posts and forward operating bases, delivering mortar rounds, supplies and maintenance repair parts, along with the necessities to keep every-

one safe.

One of the lessons that the soldiers have learned during their most recent



A five-ton truck from Golf Battery, 4th Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment squeezes around a tight turn while traveling through the Alingar valley on a support mission June 28, 2007.

missions, is that CLP's are what keeps the fight going.

“If it wasn't for these soldiers, the outlying FOB's would not be able to get the necessities they need to complete their mission properly,” said 1st Sgt. George Lee, 41, of Christiansburg, Virginia.

The soldiers of Golf Battery, increase morale by delivering mail, chow, cold beverages, and air conditioners to improve the living conditions for paratroopers living in the outlying FOB's.

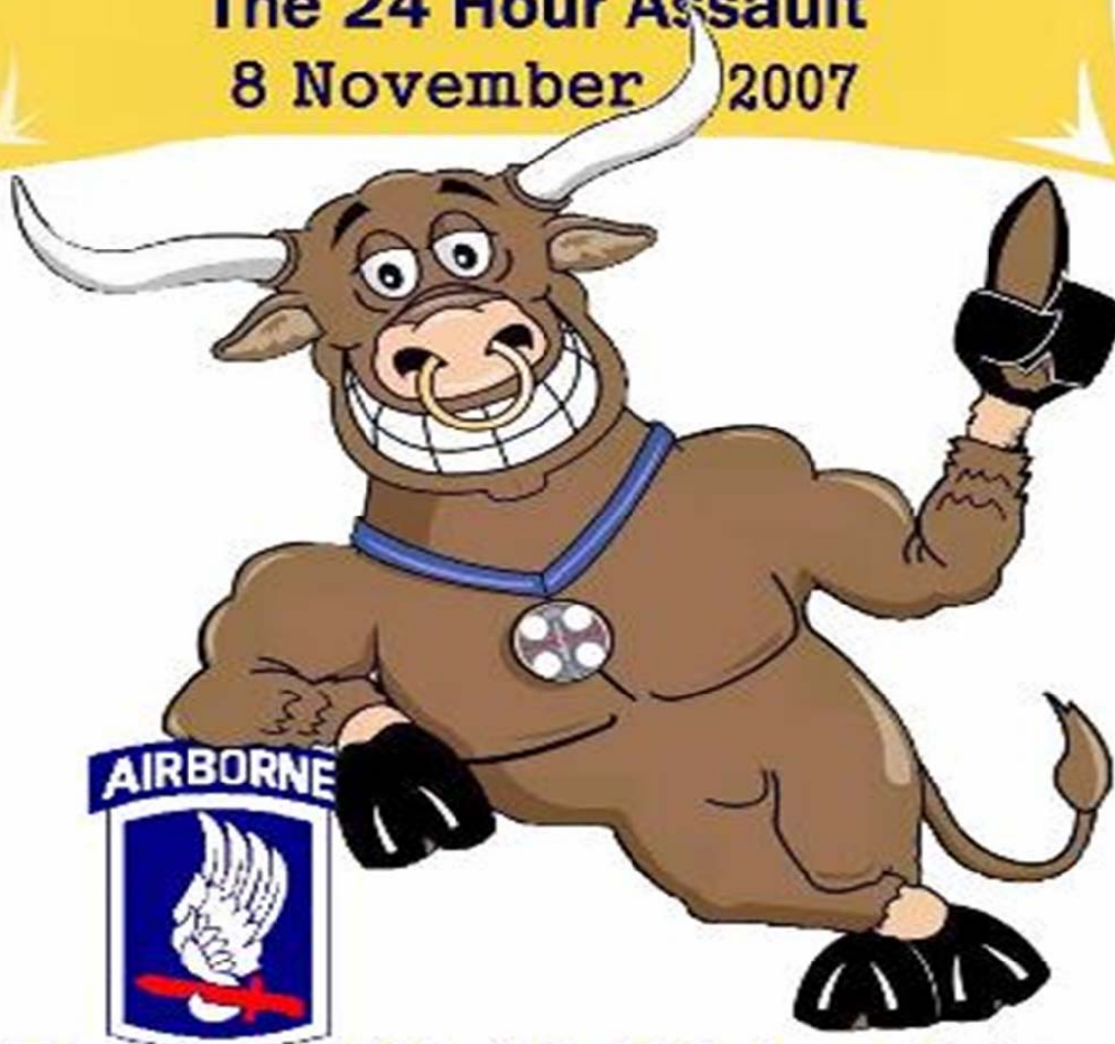
Though it is only about 35 kilometers from FOB Mehtar Lam to FOB Kalagosh, one of their regular stops, the roughly three hour convoy is quite a rough ride for these soldiers, traversing tight curves in the road along steep cliffs and ravines.

It may be have been a good day for travel given the weather and scenery during this CLP, but don't let this fool you, the road along the way was a very bumpy ride.

Army Sgt Lee Stephenson, 25, Unionville, Tenn, and Army Spc. Carlos Lopez, 23, of Bakersfield, Calif, from Golf Battery, 4th Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, rig a load of Hesco barriers June 23, 2007, at the Mehtar Lam PRT to be slung-load out to improve security at a local traffic-control point.



**1st Annual Running of the Herd
The 24 Hour Assault
8 November 2007**



Fenty Airfield, Afghanistan

- o Seven Soldiers Per Team, only one may be running at a time
- o continuous laps around the airfield, team with the most laps wins
- o limited slots, the first 21 teams receive T-Shirts upon completion
- o Someone from each team must be running at ALL times
- o Sign up at the C MED TOC

T-Shirts and Prizes provided by the Florida Chapter 173D Association

Leishmaniasis

CDC excerpts by
MAJ. J. Steven Birchfield, TF Bayonet Surgeon

Leishmaniasis
sore

WHAT IS LEISHMANIASIS?

Leishmaniasis is a parasitic disease spread by the bite of infected sand flies. There are several different forms of leishmaniasis.

The most common forms are **cutaneous leishmaniasis**, which causes skin sores, and **visceral leishmaniasis**, which affects some of the internal organs of the body (for example, spleen, liver, bone marrow).

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CUTANEOUS LEISHMANIASIS OR VISCERAL LEISHMANIASIS?

People who have cutaneous leishmaniasis have one or more sores on their skin. The sores can change in size and appearance over time. They often end up looking somewhat like a volcano, with a raised edge and central crater. Some sores are covered by a scab. The sores can be painless or painful. Some people have swollen glands near the sores (for example, under the arm if the sores are on the arm or hand).

People who have visceral leishmaniasis usually have fever, weight loss, and an enlarged spleen and liver (usually the spleen is bigger than the liver). Some patients have swollen glands. Certain blood tests are abnormal. For example, patients usually have low blood counts, including a low red blood cell count (anemia),

and low white blood cell count.

HOW IS LEISHMANIASIS SPREAD?

Leishmaniasis is spread by the bite of some types of sand flies. Sand flies become infected by biting an infected animal (for example, a rodent or dog) or person. Since sand flies do not make noise when they fly, people may not realize they are present. Sand flies are very small and may be hard to see; they are only about one-third the size of typical mosquitoes. Sand flies usually are most active in twilight, evening, and night-time hours (from dusk to dawn).

IF I WERE BITTEN BY AN INFECTED SAND FLY, HOW QUICKLY WOULD I BECOME SICK?

People with cutaneous leishmaniasis usually develop skin sores within a few weeks (sometimes as long as months) of when they were bitten.

People with visceral leishmaniasis usually become sick within several months (rarely as long as years) of when they were bitten.

HOW IS LEISHMANIASIS PREVENTED?

The best way for soldiers to prevent leishmaniasis is by protecting themselves from sand fly bites. Vaccines and drugs for preventing infection are not yet available. To de-



crease their risk of being bitten, soldiers should:

- Wear your uniform appropriately, sleeves down.

- Apply insect repellent on uncovered skin and under the ends of sleeves and pant legs. The most effective repellents are those that contain the chemical DEET. Repellents with DEET concentrations of 30-35% are quite effective, and the effect should last about 4 hours.

- Treat your uniforms with Permethrin. A "Shake and Bake" Treatment is good for 50 washes. Use a bed net. If possible, use a bed net that has been soaked in or sprayed with permethrin. Fine-mesh netting is needed for an effective barrier against sand flies.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I MIGHT HAVE LEISHMANIASIS?

See your Doc for appropriate referrals.

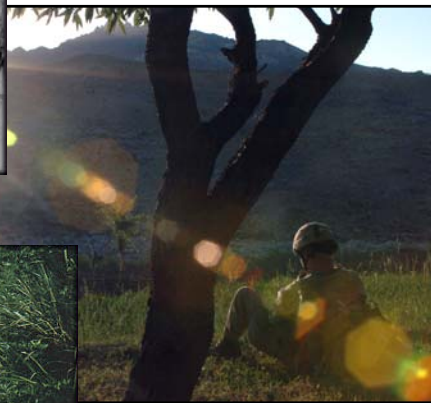


Sand fly

Have you heard?

173rd History

Old (and not so old) photos of The Herd ...



Pfc. John A. Barnes
Company C, 1st Battalion, 503d
Infantry 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Dak To, Republic of
Vietnam, 12 November 1967

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Pfc. Barnes distinguished himself by exceptional heroism while engaged in combat against hostile forces. Pfc. Barnes was serving as a grenadier when his unit was attacked by a North Vietnamese force, estimated to be a battalion. Upon seeing the crew of a machine gun team killed, Pfc. Barnes, without hesitation, dashed through the bullet swept area, manned the machine gun, and killed 9 enemy soldiers as they assaulted his position. While pausing just long enough to retrieve more ammunition, Pfc. Barnes observed an enemy grenade thrown into the midst of some severely wounded personnel close to his position. Realizing that the grenade could further injure or kill the majority of the wounded personnel, he sacrificed his life by throwing himself directly onto the hand grenade as it exploded. Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his own safety, and profound concern for his fellow soldiers, he averted a probable loss of life and injury to the wounded members of his unit. Pfc. Barnes' extraordinary heroism, and intrepidity At the cost of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in the highest Traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

We will not forget those who have fallen



Spc. Christopher Honaker
Alpha Company, 2-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 5 July, 2007



Pfc. Joseph Miracle
Alpha Company, 2-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 5 July, 2007



Pfc. Juan Restrepo
Bravo Company, 2-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 22 July, 2007



1st Sgt. Michael Curry
Delta Company, 1-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 23 July, 2007



Pfc. Adam Davis
Delta Company, 1-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 23 July, 2007



Pfc. Jessie Rogers
Delta Company, 1-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 23 July, 2007



Staff Sgt. William Fritsche
Bravo Troop, 1-91st Cavalry (Airborne)
KIA 27 July, 2007



Sgt. Travon Johnson
Delta Company, 1-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 23 July, 2007



Maj. Thomas Bostick
Bravo Troop, 1-91st Cavalry (Airborne)
KIA 27 July, 2007



1st Lt. Benjamin Hall
Delta Company, 2-503rd Infantry (Airborne)
KIA 31 July, 2007

JAF's # 1 Hit Station

THE HERD

107.3 FM



Broadcasting a Massive 1 Watt of Power