

TIP OF THE SPEAR

SEALS celebrate 25th Annual Muster

- ♠ **7th SFG (A) trains with elite Brazilian unit**
- ♠ **Force Recon Marines receive valor award 43 years later**
- ♠ **Inaugural class inducted into USSOCOM's Hall of Honor**





U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

SEALs hold 25th Annual Muster in Fort Pierce, Fla.22



Tip of the Spear



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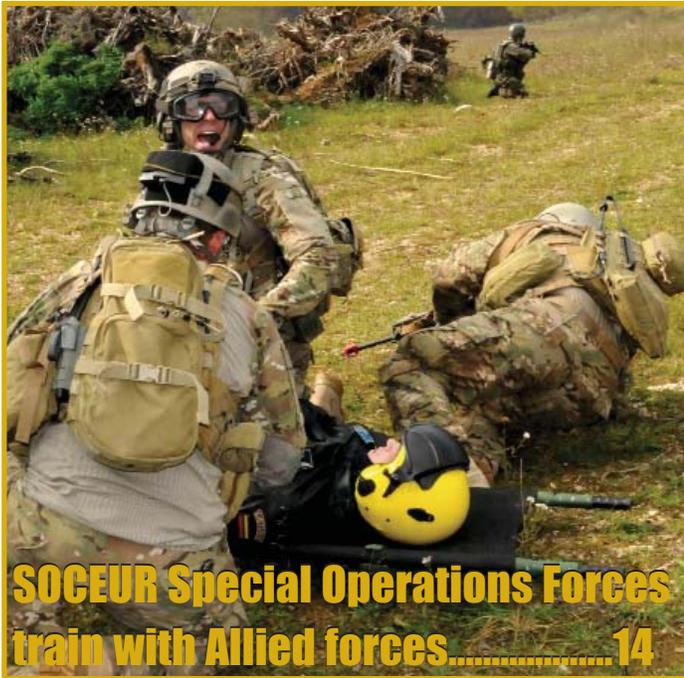
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(Cover) Members of SEAL Team 18 return to shore after releasing the ashes of fallen SEALs into the ocean during a ceremony in Fort Pierce, Fla., Nov. 7. (Above) Retired Navy Capt. Rick Woolard (SEAL) plays "Amazing Grace" during the ceremony. Photos by Senior Airman Anna-Marie Wyant.

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USSOCOM Images of 2010



(Top) Maj. Timothy Ballard with the 1st Special Operations Support Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla., carries a 6-year-old boy from a helicopter to a field clinic Jan. 19 at the Toussaint L'ouverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Photo by Tech. Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.



(Center) A pararescueman from the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla., and members of various rescue teams climb a ladder to get to a 25-year-old woman who has been trapped in a collapsed building for seven days Jan. 19 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Photo by Tech. Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.



(Bottom) A combat controller from the 21st Special Tactics Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, N.C., assesses a potential drop zone for relief supplies during Operation Unified Response in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 19. The U.S. military conducted humanitarian and disaster relief operations in the area as part of Operation Unified Response after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck the country Jan. 12. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dennis J. Henry Jr.



USSOCOM Images of 2010

(Top) Chief Master Sgt. Antonio Travis, named by editors of TIME magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world, conducts an interview for AF.mil and the Pentagon channel in New York City's famed Times Square May 4. Travis, a combat controller, was selected as a hero for his efforts in response to the Haiti earthquake, leading the largest single-runway operation in history, with his team using hand-held radios to control thousands of aircraft. Photo by Staff Sgt. Bennie J. Davis III.



(Center) A combat controller prepares to contact the special tactics operation center by radio while conducting a drop zone survey in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 24. Photo by Master Sgt. Jeremy Lock.



(Bottom) Airmen with the 1st Special Operations Support Squadron offer medical assistance to a Haitian girl at the Toussaint L'ouverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 16. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Justin Stumberg.



USSOCOM Images of 2010



Afghanistan

A U.S. Special Forces Soldier hands out a water drink mix to local Afghan children during a medical engagement in the Gereshk Valley, Helmand province, April 15. Photo by Sgt. Debra Richardson.



Iraq

Members of the Emergency Response Brigade stand ready to train on an Iraqi military compound in early January. The Emergency Response Brigade provides security in areas where coalition forces once engaged. Photo illustration by Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Blackwell.



USSOCOM Images of 2010



Philippines

Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines veterinarian Lt. Col. Stephen Goldsmith gives a deworming medication to a cow at a Veterinarian Civic Action Program in Sulu, Philippines Jan. 9. Photo by Lt. j.g. Theresa Donnelly.

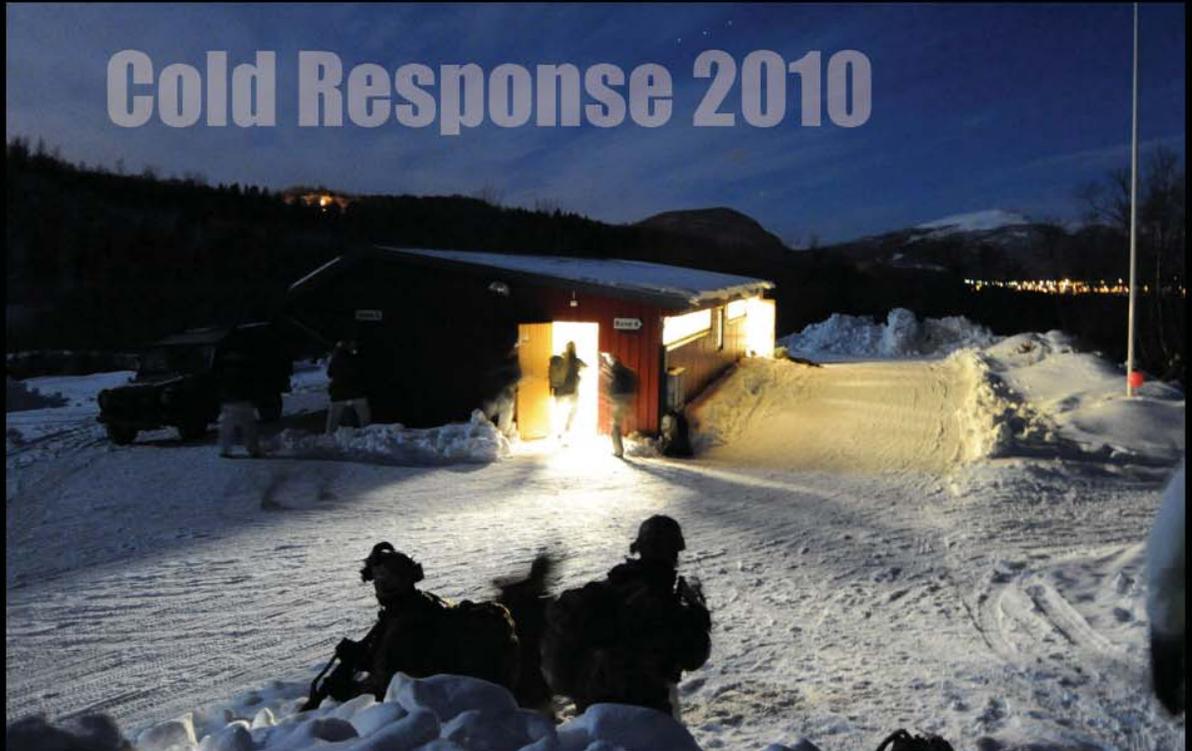


Brazil

Members of the Brazilian Marine Corps Special Operations Battalion practice close quarters combat skills led by U.S. Navy SEALs and Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen during a Joint Combined Exchange Training exercise May 10. Photo by Chief Petty Officer Kathryn Whittenberger.



USSOCOM Images of 2010



Cold Response 2010

SEALs and German Kommando Spezialkräfte enter a building in northern Norway during Exercise Cold Response 2010. CR10 is a Norwegian sponsored, scheduled, and conducted multinational invitational exercise, with more than 9,000 military personnel from 14 countries. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Matt Daniels.



Flintlock 2010

A Marine from the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command observes a Malian fire team conducting counterterrorism operations in an urban terrain environment May 12, as part of Exercise Flintlock 10 in Mali. The exercise is conducted by U.S. Special Operations Command Africa and is a special operations forces exercise focused on military interoperability and capacity-building. AFRICOM sponsors the annual exercise with partner nations in Northern and Western Africa. Photo by Max Blumenfeld.



Members of Brazil's special operations force, *Grupamento de Mergulhadores de Combate*, and Colombia's special operation force, *Batallon de Fuerzas Especiales de Infanteria de Marina*, form a perimeter after fast roping from an MH-47 Special Operations Aircraft operated by the U.S. Army 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment as part of PANAMAX 2010, Aug. 19. Special operations forces from Peru, Colombia, Brazil and Panama trained alongside SEALs as part of the 12-day exercise simulating a multinational effort to defend the Panama Canal. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Joseph M. Clark.



USSOCOM Images of 2010



Soldiers from Polish Special Operations Forces Command assault a target during training near Drawsko Pomorskie, Poland, Sept. 19, in preparation for Jackal Stone 10. The exercise hosted by Poland and Lithuania, is an annual international special operations forces exercise held in Europe. The exercise coordinated by U.S. Special Operations Command Europe had troops from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Croatia, Romania, and Ukraine participating in the exercise. Photo by Staff Sgt. Brendan Stephens.



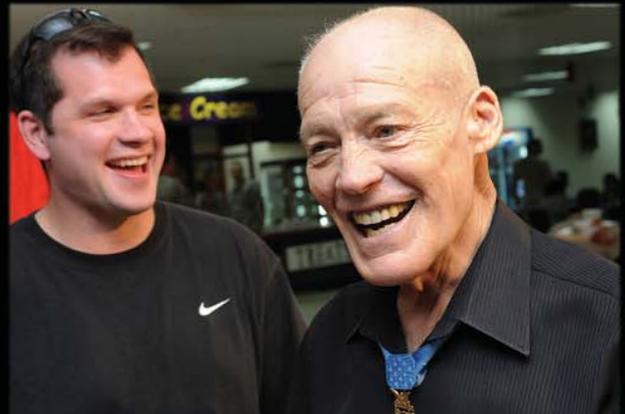
USSOCOM Images of 2010



Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, center, stands with Class 284 at the Naval Special Warfare Center, Naval Amphibious Base Coronado in San Diego, Calif., Aug. 13. Photo by Cherie Cullen.



Staff Sgt. Shaun Meadows, a wounded warrior from the 22nd Special Tactics Squadron, shares a laugh with his son after completing his jump June 14. He became the first active-duty double amputee to successfully participate in a personnel drop at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. Photo by Airman Leah Young.



Staff Sgt. Robert Harris listens to retired Col. Robert L. Howard, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, as he shares a story at a military base in Southwest Asia. Harris is a 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Soldier – the same unit Howard was assigned to when he earned his Medal of Honor in Vietnam. He earned the top medal as a platoon sergeant in December 1968. He was wounded 14 times over 54 months of combat, was awarded eight Purple Hearts, four Bronze Stars, and was nominated for the Medal of Honor three separate times. Howard died Dec. 23, 2009, and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery Feb. 22, 2010. Photo by Dustin Senger.

People



Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander USSOCOM, presents the 2010 Bull Simons Award to retired Maj. Gen. Eldon Bargewell June 16. The award recognizes those who embody the true spirit, values, and skills of a SOF warrior, and is named after Col. Arthur "Bull" Simons. Bargewell's extensive career in special operations and his commitment to ensuring soldiers were properly trained prior to combat were instrumental in his selection for this award. Photo by Mike Bottoms.



The statue of retired Gen. H. Hugh Shelton, 14th chairman of the joint chiefs of staff and Army Special Forces veteran, is unveiled by H. Ross Perot (third from left) and Tony Chavonne (second from right), Fayetteville mayor, as Shelton (second from left) looks on during a dedication ceremony Aug. 27 at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum. Photo by Sgt. Tony Hawkins.



Staff Sgt. Robert J. Miller rides horseback through an Afghan village. Miller was killed Jan. 25, 2008, in Afghanistan while single-handedly holding off Taliban insurgents. At the expense of his life, Miller's actions allowed his team and 15 Afghan soldiers to fall back from a close-range ambush. Miller was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his bravery that day in a ceremony at the White House, where Miller's family received the medal from President Barack Obama Oct. 6. Courtesy photo.



USSOCOM Images of 2010

People



SOF AROUND THE WORLD - IRAQ

COMBINED JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE – ARABIAN PENINSULA

SF Soldier, Air Force JTAC show bravery in face of fire, receive valor awards

By Special Operations Task Force-North Public Affairs

Advising, training and assisting Iraqi Security Forces is one of the key missions for U.S. Forces in Iraq during Operation New Dawn. The Iraqis are in the lead for security operations, and U.S. forces facilitate their requests for help since the capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces are continually developing. One request emerged shortly after the transition to Operation New Dawn.

On Sept. 12, an Army Special Forces warrant officer and an Air Force Joint Terminal Attack Controller from Special Operations Task Force – North, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Arabian Peninsula, became decisively engaged in one of the largest operations since the beginning of Operation New Dawn.

On Oct. 23, the two men were awarded Bronze Star Medals for valorous actions while advising and assisting Iraqi Security Forces in the village of Hadid in Diyala province.

The two servicemen, along with other members of a Special Forces detachment, and members of the Iraqi 5th Emergency Response Battalion, responded to a request for assistance in the small village northwest of Baqubah, Iraq.

“We knew there was shooting going on, but we weren’t expecting to get too much out of it,” the Air Force JTAC said.

Once the combined U.S. Special Forces and Iraqi Emergency Response Battalion force arrived in the village, they coordinated with the Iraqi commander in charge of the operation as well as the senior U.S. commander on the ground. The two commanders discussed a plan of attack. In response to the Iraqi commander’s request, the U.S. commander requested the JTAC call for an airstrike to eliminate one of the enemy’s key positions.

Two bombs were dropped by F-16s overhead, which neutralized a building enemy fighters were using for cover.

The JTAC said he was in the mindset that the team “could be in for a firefight, but didn’t expect to be dropping



Maj. Gen. Anthony Cucolo pins the Bronze Star with Valor on a Special Forces warrant officer from Special Operations Task Force – North, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Arabian Peninsula, during an awards ceremony Oct. 23, at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq. A second Bronze Star Medal with V device (to designate valor) was awarded to a U.S. Air Force Joint Terminal Attack Controller also assigned to the Special Operations Task Force – North. The awards were presented for their actions during a firefight Sept. 12, in the village of Hadid, which is west of Baqubah, Iraq. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Emmanuel Rios.

any bombs” due to the current role of U.S. Forces in Operation New Dawn.

Once the building was neutralized, the 5th Iraqi Emergency Response Battalion and its U.S. counterpart were tasked to clear a nearby palm grove. It was during the clearing operation when the simple task of advising and assisting became not so simple.

After several assaults on the grove by the Iraqi Security Forces, the 5th Emergency Response Battalion, an Iraqi

counterterrorism unit, moved into the palm grove with the Special Forces detachment observing a short distance behind. As the combined force approached suspected enemy positions, it was engaged by small-arms and machine-gun fire.

During the ensuing firefight, an Iraqi soldier was wounded. Disregarding his own safety, a U.S. Special Forces medical sergeant from the detachment went to the Iraqi soldier's aid.

The detachment's chief warrant officer followed the medic to provide cover and was struck in the chin by a piece of shrapnel from a ricocheted bullet. The chief warrant officer said when he ran to accompany the Special Forces medical sergeant, he was struck by a bullet fragment.

"I just saw blood on my uniform and weapon," he added. "I wasn't worried about it at the time. I was worried about [the Special Forces medical sergeant] and getting the Iraqis to mitigate the threat."

The chief warrant officer said he tried to organize the Iraqi forces to regain the initiative. He advised the Emergency Response Battalion to bring gun trucks into the grove to help regain momentum.

At the direction of the U.S. commander, the JTAC coordinated with the detachment leadership to use the supporting AH-64 Apache helicopters to conduct strafing runs on suspected insurgent positions within the palm grove as the combined force moved to a new position.

After reorganizing, the force began a second advance on the enemy's position.

During the renewed assault, several members of the detachment became pinned down as the Emergency Response Battalion forces moved through the grove ahead of them. The JTAC said as the team moved forward, they were faced with sniper and machine gun fire.

Despite the gunfire, the JTAC said they continued moving forward using a trench system for cover. As the team advanced, he continually attempted to employ the available air support to locate the enemy position. During the firefight, the JTAC was shot in the helmet, and the bullet remained lodged in it.

"I believe it was a direct hit," he added. "It rocked me pretty good."

Once cleared by the medical sergeant, he continued directing the aircraft overhead. The team continued

advancing until darkness fell on the grove.

On Oct. 23, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, the U.S. Division-North and 3rd Infantry Division commander, presented the two men their Bronze Star Medals with Valor during a ceremony on Forward Operating Base Warhorse. Cucolo also presented 30 other U.S. Division-North Soldiers with awards for their involvement during the Hadid incident.

"I stand in awe of everyone in this formation," Cucolo said as he thanked them for their deeds.

Both the Special Forces chief warrant officer and the JTAC were modest about their actions.

"I don't really care about the awards," the chief warrant officer said. "I care about my guys ... and I care about improving the 5th Emergency Response Battalion."

The JTAC said he doesn't know why he received the award.

"I was just doing my job," he said, "doing what I was trained to do."



A Bronze Star Medal with V device (to designate valor) hangs from the pocket of a U.S. Air Force Joint Terminal Attack Controller, Oct. 23. The Joint Terminal Attack Controller and a Special Forces chief warrant officer assigned to the Special Operations Task Force – North, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Arabian Peninsula, were awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for their actions during a firefight in the village of Hadid, Iraq, Sept. 12, 2010. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Wilt.



SOE AROUND THE WORLD - GERMANY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - EUROPE



U.S. and Polish Special Operations Forces Soldiers move across a field to their objective as a Lithuanian Mi-17 helicopter hovers above during a casualty evacuation exercise rehearsal held Oct. 14 at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany. The training, coordinated by U.S. Special Operations Command, allows U.S. and partner-nation SOF soldiers the opportunity to train together and share tactics, techniques and procedures prior to deploying in support of International Security Assistance Force missions in Afghanistan.

Unique training links SOF, conventional, allied nation forces

*Story and photos by Master Sgt. Donald Sparks
SOCEUR Public Affairs*

Coordination and synchronization between conventional and Special Operations Forces is crucial on the modern battlefield since both share integral roles within an area of responsibility – whether it involves intelligence gathering or conducting combat operations.

Add the element of Allied and partner nation forces, and the joint-coalition battle space picture can become more complex as all forces must understand the

capabilities each brings to the operational environment.

Recognizing the strategic impact of training all of these forces to seamlessly integrate on the battlefield, U.S. Special Operations Command coordinated a training opportunity at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, throughout the month of October to allow SOF and conventional—both U.S. and Allied—forces to work together.

According to Chris Cobb, lead planner for SOCOM's SOF Planning Response Cell, the training event was part of an annual brigade-level mission rehearsal exercise

hosted by JMRC to prepare conventional force units assigned to the U.S. European Command area of operations for deployment to Afghanistan.

“SOF involvement in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and [International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan] is quite significant, so the integration of Special Operations Forces with the conventional forces is a top priority,” Cobb said.

Just as important, Cobb emphasized having a multinational focus during this rotation helped facilitate partner nation SOF involvement – something SOCOM is actively working to engage.

The training event included coordination between U.S. forces assigned to 1st and 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), the 170th Separate Infantry Brigade and allied forces from Lithuania, Czech Republic and Poland.

The SPRC coordinated with U.S. Special Operations Command Europe to determine which Allied nation participation to request; then it engaged with the U.S. Embassy in Poland’s Office of Defense Cooperation to coordinate participation from the Polish 1st Special Forces Regiment.

“The SPRC helped develop training events, script storylines for use during the exercise, and coordinate many of the logistical functions associated with U.S. and Polish SOF participation in the rotation,” Cobb said.

As part of a training rehearsal prior to the actual exercise, U.S. and Polish SOF units teamed together to form combined operational detachments. The detachments were dropped into a “hostile” area by a Lithuanian Mi-17 helicopter to rescue casualties from a simulated downed aircraft as Czech Mi-24s flew overhead to provide supporting fire.

The SOF elements secured the site, assessed and provided medical assistance for the injured crew members, then provided hasty exfil of all personnel onboard the Mi-17 – all while taking enemy fire. During the actual exercise, the Special Forces command element coordinated with conventional forces to provide Quick Reaction Force assistance.



U.S. and Polish Special Operations Forces Soldiers infiltrate to a hot landing zone from a Lithuanian Mi-17 helicopter as part of a casualty evacuation exercise rehearsal held Oct. 14 at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.

According to the 3rd SFG (A) team leader, the event provided a venue for both habitual training and establishment of a working relationship with his Polish counterparts.

“We were able to communicate ‘best tactics’ and develop situational awareness with each other,” the team leader said. “In a situation like today’s scenario, we got the opportunity to train for one of the many missions that Special Forces are uniquely capable of conducting.”

After the rehearsal was complete, Cobb expressed why SOCOM continues to search for opportunities to train SOF units in various joint command and coalition environments.

“Conducting coordinated training events such as this offers an opportunity to share tactics, techniques and procedures and, equally as important, to develop the sort of personal relationships that will provide lasting benefits between the forces,” Cobb said. “The multinational footprint for offensive operations in Afghanistan is well-established. SOCOM is keen to develop any opportunities for partner nation engagement at training events, both within the United States and overseas.”



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



MAVNI Soldiers look to join Special Operations Forces Elite

*By Sgt. 1st Class Michael R. Noggle
10th SFG (A) Public Affairs*

“No matter what I do, I am looking to be the best,” said Spec. Lukasz Herbst, 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne). “Being Special Forces presents the greatest test, something that is physically, mentally and academically challenging.”

Herbst, a native of Poland and now a U.S. citizen, enlisted in the Army as part of the Military Accessions Vital to National Interest. Along with 27 U.S. Soldiers with native ties to Africa and Europe, he is part of the 10th SFG (A) MAVNI Program designed to train and prepare them for Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Military Information Support and/or Operations, or to stay in the SF unit.

Since July, members of the 3rd Battalion, 10th SFG (A) have established the program that will prepare these individuals for SOF-related jobs. The program is designed to prepare them both physically and mentally as well as placing them on SF teams to gain knowledge for the road ahead.

“There is a lot of value added to having them with the SF teams as we tap into other areas of the world,” said a Special Forces captain. “When that Soldier can talk to guys in this community and tap into that resource, they’re telling him what’s important to prepare for. On the flip side, that Soldier is serving as a translator and an asset for the team while they conduct training exercises in African countries.”

As assets, two of the Soldiers have deployed with SF Operational Detachment – Alpha teams in African countries to conduct joint training exercises. An additional five Soldiers will also have the same opportunity in the coming months, while five others are currently serving in Iraq.

The candidates come from various cultures and backgrounds; however, most of them hold bachelor’s degrees from well-known colleges, speak multiple languages and dialects, and were top athletes at some point in their lives. Notably, 19 Soldiers have completed the Basic Airborne School while the others await their chance to attend.

“Their life stories and what they’ve been through are amazing,” said a sergeant first class training the Soldiers.



A Soldier from 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), supervises small unit tactics movement during the Flintlock 2010 training exercise in Mali, Africa, May 2010. The Soldier is participating in the Special Operations Forces Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) Program, training to become a member of the SOF community. Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael R. Noggle.

“Most of them grew up in a third world country, came to America, got a degree at a reputable institution, all on their own... these are driven guys.”

Herbst, a swimmer for Western Kentucky University, enlisted in the Army as an engineer diver. During physical fitness training, he has helped teach some of the Soldiers how to swim. He graduated from college with a double major in psychology and physiology.

Another Soldier, Private 1st Class Edmond Kiptum, went to the College of Southwest in New Mexico on a track and field scholarship. After attending college for three years, he decided to join the U.S. Army through the MAVNI Program.

At the completion of basic training, a Special Forces recruiter spoke to him about going to 10th SFG (A), and trying out for a SOF position.

“I was really interested in what the recruiter had to say because I knew I would be a great candidate,” Kiptum said. “With my background and language skills, I felt I could be an asset with operations in Africa.”

Kiptum, a native of Kenya, grew up going to school and

working for his father at a local restaurant in his hometown. After completing high school, he worked with a missionary group that provided medication to people with malaria. To work for the group, he had to speak English, Swahili and Kalenjin, a language most commonly used in Kenya.

“I know that I am going to be an asset if I get picked up for Special Forces,” Kiptum said. “I know the culture and the people in Africa, and that would help the team while they have to travel to those countries.”

During their downtime, Soldiers such as Herbst, Kiptum and others, teach each other different cultures and languages including Swahili, Polish, Russian and French.

“We try to help each other out and work as a team while preparing for selection,” Herbst said. “There may be something that someone else has knowledge on, and could be beneficial for the rest of us.”

The Selection Process:

When a Soldier comes to the unit and is identified for the MAVNI Program, he begins in-processing with the Headquarters Support Company, 3rd Battalion, 10th SFG (A). He receives his initial Army Physical Fitness Test, initiates and receives a security clearance, files for a passport and goes through the command language program to be certified in languages deemed critical to the U.S. Army.

After in-processing, the Soldier will either stay at the company to continue training, be utilized at the medical clinic if he is a medic or is placed on an ODA to receive on-the-job training.

“We’ve had some great feedback from the teams as they assess them, and we keep a file on what they are doing,” said the Special Forces captain. “They are being used on operational deployments in Iraq getting that combat experience, and in Africa as translators for those foreign militaries.”

For the Soldiers who stay at the company, they participate in physical fitness activities each day. Since the course began, they have spent four weeks undergoing water survival training, six weeks in land navigation training and took part in a 10-day Special Forces Basic Combat Course – Support training exercise.

“I didn’t even know how to swim when I got to the unit,” Kiptum explained. “But they worked with me, starting off in floatation devices for a couple weeks. By the third week, I was swimming side-by-side with everyone else in the deep end.”

Kiptum explained the physical training and critical

training classes have really benefitted and challenged him, something he feels will better prepare him for the future.

“We have to keep working harder toward our goal,” he said. “I’m not going to say I am ready right now, when I know there is still more to learn. I’m going to keep working hard until the date comes to attend the class.”

In the next few months, the battalion will hold a “decision-making board” with each Soldier to determine his needs and what he wants to do in his career.

“Ultimately, the decision is the Soldier’s,” said the Special Forces captain. “We want to educate them on their options, whether it’s SF, CA, MISO or staying with the unit and finding other ways to contribute.”

“We are pleased that so many have already shown an interest in attending SFAS,” the captain said. “There are so many ways to categorize success, but at the end of the day, we would like for them to stay in the community and find other ways to contribute to SOF.”

So far, three Soldiers have expressed desires to attend the Civil Affairs course, and 15 want to attend SF Selection. While the others continue to weigh their options, they all agree the program has been successful thus far.

“This is one of the best programs to be a part of, and we have yet to reach its fullest potential,” Kiptum said. “We are just at the beginning; we still face a lot of challenges. One of the best things is the continued support and guidance from our leadership.”



A Soldier from 3rd Battalion, 10th SFG (A), receives his Airborne wings from a Special Forces captain during his Basic Airborne School graduation, July 16, at Fort Benning, Ga. Nineteen Soldiers from the SOF MAVNI Program have completed Airborne training. Photo by 1st Sgt. Shawn Sev Dishman.



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

7th Special Forces Group train with elite Brazilian team

*By Amber Avalona-Butler
Paraglide*

At the offshoot of a long dirt road sits Range 74 at Fort Bragg, N.C. A combined arms corrective training facility for military and urban terrain environment, the range consists of 32 cinder block buildings strategically positioned for urban combat training. Many structures feature video and voice recording equipment, used for playback during unit action review. The environment is designed to be unassuming and generic which gives units the freedom to improvise and adapt, said a range official.

For elite teams trained in unconventional warfare operations, adaptation is their calling card. So on Oct. 15, U.S. and Brazilian Special Forces Soldiers crept through the trees and over a dusty bridge, past a deserted gas station and between the sunbleached buildings of Range 74 like ghost Soldiers.

The objective: an urban assault. The target: a high-threat individual. The wild card: a suicide bomber near the center of town. The technique: close-quarters combat.

For two weeks in October, U.S. and Brazilian units traded teams in an effort to strengthen their multicultural partnership. So while a handful of SF Soldiers headed to South America to one of the best jungle schools in the world, Fort Bragg's 7th Special Forces Group hosted 12 members of the Brazilian 1st Special Forces Battalion. For the U.S. and Brazil, it is a partnership steeped in mystery and rich in tradition.

"Our special force was born here in 1957, and it's pretty good to maintain these relationships," said a Brazilian special forces captain, whose team member acted as an interpreter.

Brazilian special forces, or Un Batalhao De Forcas Especiais as they are known in South America, embody the motto "any mission in any place, in any time, in any



A Soldier from 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Operational Detachment Alpha 7133, scales stairs with a Brazilian SF team during a training exercise at Range 74, Fort Bragg, N.C. The SF Group hosted a Brazilian SF team for two weeks, culminating with close-quarters battle drills Oct. 15. Courtesy photo.

way." Stationed near the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro, the 1st Special Forces Battalion supports every Brazilian command area, said the commander. He added there is great satisfaction in completing the hard work of a special forces Soldier.

"We generally get on duty early and go home after all (the others)," he said. "We train a lot and we get proud when we complete our missions ... we know that we are doing our best for the nation."

Training at Fort Bragg gave the Brazilians an opportunity to see a different part of the world, interact with new instructors (cadre) and refine their skills within a larger organization.

“The training is very similar, but we live different realities. We are going to take these skills and we are trying to improve in our country,” the commander said.

The U.S. detachment commander for Operation Detachment-Alpha 7133 highlighted the unique opportunity to train with foreign forces on U.S. soil.

“It’s inherent in Special Forces for both countries to work with a partner nation. We’re not built to work alone,” he said. “So to have an opportunity to do this type of training here, to work together, to exchange ideas and techniques and to work as an integrated organization has been unbelievable,” the detachment commander added.

Last month’s combined joint assault marked the culmination of a variety of exercises including close-quarters combat and live fire (pistol and rifle) on a number of outdoor ranges. The Brazilians received a two-week induction into a traditional five-week Special Forces Advanced Urban Combat course, facilitated by a seasoned cadre of 16 instructors and one noncommissioned officer in charge.

The course, which prepares Special Forces operators

for deployment to various parts of the world, ensures each Soldier is prepared for the intensity of combat operations like clearing a building, conducting an overt raid and rescuing captive U.S. forces.

“My job is making sure that all the 7th Special Forces Soldiers are at their peak before they deploy to combat,” explained the Fort Bragg-based noncommissioned officer in charge. While it’s important for

Soldiers to sharpen their skills, he noted, it’s vital to do so in the controlled environment of a pre-deployment facility like SFAUC.

“(Soldiers) don’t often have the chance to go and train on their own due to various reasons. Our course provides them the chance, just before they deploy, to get their skills back up to par,” he added.

Collaborating with the Brazilians on a joint-operation exercise was an invaluable resource as well, said the NCOIC. Strengthening that bond included some non-military activity, as a group of Soldiers took to the field for their own international soccer match. Overall, the training benefitted American and U.S. Soldiers with exercises both in the field and on the field.

“It’s inherent in Special Forces for both countries to work with a partner nation. We’re not built to work alone.”

— Operation Detachment-Alpha 7133 commander



A Soldier with 7th Special Forces Group, Operational Detachment Alpha 7133, and a Brazilian Special Forces soldier pursue a high-threat individual during a training exercise at Range 74, Fort Bragg, N.C. Courtesy photo.



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



The water sorts it out

*Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Marshall Pesta
USAJFKSWCC Public Affairs*

On the southern tip of the Florida Keys, at what was a fallout shelter during the Cuban Missile Crisis era, is the Special Forces Underwater Operations School. It's where the military's elite Special Operations Forces train at some of the most physically demanding courses in the Army: the Combat Diver Qualification, Combat Diving Supervisor and Diving Medical Technician courses. Soldiers of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Training Group, run the school as part of Fort Bragg's U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

During the six-week qualification course, Special Forces Soldiers learn more than basic scuba diving — they learn a new method of transportation. Master Sgt. J.T. Reed, the operations sergeant for the school, said the schoolhouse focuses on more than the skill of diving; it also focuses on the overall spectrum of waterborne operations, to include tactical infiltration and search and recovery operations.

"To us, it's just another way of getting to work," Reed said. "Some teams can jump into an area using HALO (high-altitude, low-opening airborne operations); our teams use a variety of methods in the water to come in undetected. That gives the operational force a full set of capabilities."

Prior to reporting to Key West, candidates first complete a pre-scuba course with their own units to prepare them for the tasks they'll have to complete the first week at dive school.

Staff Sgt. Samuel Winslow, a dive school candidate from Norridge Wock, Maine, said the three-week train-up was essential for him to be ready for the intensity of this course.

"For me, one of the hardest things was the underwater swim test," Winslow said. "You build up your lung capacity, but it just comes down to being confident. You have to say, 'I know I can do this!'"

For others, even after the pre-scuba course, CDQC was still one of the greatest challenges they've faced in their



Combat Diver Qualification Course students execute a tactical kayak navigation exercise around Key West, Fla.

Special Forces training.

Sgt. Matthew Ruhnke, from Hattiesburg, Miss., said between the train-up and his off-time training, he would spend hours a week swimming prior to arriving at Key West.

"We had to do the pre-scuba class, so we knew what to expect," Ruhnke said. "However, that didn't make it any less hard."

The dive course begins with pool week, where individuals are evaluated on their ability to complete rigorous water testing to include: a 50-meter underwater swim, a 500-meter open water swim in uniform, as well as stress tests, where candidates are bound at the hands and feet and required to perform tasks in the water. This stress is the most effective way to gauge a diver's ability to

remain calm while under pressure and underwater.

“It’s vital for them to not lose their cool when something goes wrong,” Reed said. “We put as much pressure as possible here, so they are prepared out there.

“The ocean does not care, it will kill you.”

Once the candidates show their proficiency in the water, they move on to learn advanced military scuba-diving techniques. Scuba is the acronym for a self-contained underwater breathing apparatus, and candidates at the dive school learn to use both open- and closed-circuit dive systems. Open-circuit systems allow a diver to breathe through a tank, while a closed-circuit system recycles the diver’s air through a rebreather.

Students also gain experience in search and recovery operations and deep-sea diving. After the first week, the dive candidates break into teams and focus on operational missions techniques, such as underwater navigation. They also learn to use diver propulsion systems — submersible vehicles that move two divers and their equipment quickly and quietly through the water.

It is the time saved by having students attend pre-scuba courses that enables then students to get this advanced training, according to Reed.

Sgt. Michael Crotte, a dive school candidate from Redding, Calif., said he was glad the school returned to that requirement.

“Not all of the classes before us had time for all of this advanced training,” Crotte said. “Between the diver propulsion devices, airborne operations and helo-casting, I feel like our class was trained in the best techniques out there.”

The final week of CDQC teaches the candidates tactical application of their skills. They conduct a water navigation course in portable kayaks, custom built for the school. This provides combat divers a quick and quiet way to travel without having to worry about mechanical problems.

The candidates also navigate open waters in a combat raiding rubber craft. These specialized watercrafts are made custom for Special Operations Forces, so that they are easily broken down and easily deployable. The students also use the CRRC to conduct beach landing site assaults.

One of the final training exercises is performing an airborne operation into the open water. There are added risks when jumping into the water, as jumpers can be trapped in the parachute harness, or may have trouble escaping the parachute canopy. Each jumper is trained extensively on how



A Combat Diver Qualification Course candidate gets some help donning his gear in preparation for a dive.

to safely release the harness and swim upstream from the canopy prior to making the jump.

After the students complete their water jump, they begin planning for their final culmination exercise, where they incorporate their six weeks of training into one complex training mission. Each team spends the day planning their route, while considering factors such as wind speeds, tide levels and their rate of oxygen usage while diving. As the sun sets, the teams don their scuba equipment and embark on their rafts to boat, dive and swim to their final targets.

Throughout the night, the students spend hours navigating the dark Key West waters. They combine their lessons in diving, open-water swimming and tactical boating, to quietly infiltrate a shoreline on their way to their final objective: securing sensitive materials from an enemy safe-house.

The night enhances the uncertainty of what resistance the team will encounter as they assault the isolated building in the woods. All is clear and quiet as the team approaches to breach the door.

POP. POP. POP.

The team is ambushed by “enemy-fire”— opposition forces with paint ball guns. Despite the barrage of “bullets,” the team secures the sensitive material, and quickly escapes the objective.

They slip through the woods and return to their boats, finally completing their last training exercise to become combat divers.

Upon earning their Combat Diver Qualification Badge, these Special Forces Soldiers will return to their units as part of a dive team, and enhance the special operations community with one more way to get to work.



NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND

Past, present, future SEALs celebrate 25th Annual Muster

*Story and photos by Senior Airman Anna-Marie Wyant
USSOCOM Public Affairs*





SEALs demonstrate their capabilities for a crowd of nearly 5,000 service members and civilians at the National UDT-SEAL Museum 25th Annual Muster Nov. 6.



NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND

On a brisk November day, two Humvees speed into an open field as two MH-60 helicopters swiftly approach an empty lot nearby. The MH-60s pause and hover 40 feet above the concrete as a thick rope is dropped out the door. Several SEALs begin fast-roping out of the choppers and ducking for cover one by one. Suddenly, the sound of gunfire fills the air while helicopter propellers blow gusts of sand into SEALs faces. Bodies of what appear to be terrorists drop to the ground, and thousands of people cheer.

This may sound like a Special Operations mission in Afghanistan, but in reality, it was a demonstration by members of SEAL Team 18 from Little Creek, Va., who showcased their Special Warfare capabilities to a crowd of more than 5,000 service members and civilians at the 25th Annual National UDT-SEAL Museum Muster at Fort Pierce, Fla., Nov. 6.

The demonstration was just one of many special events that took place at the weekend muster, which is open to the public and draws thousands of active military members, dependents, retirees and interested onlookers from the local community and beyond.

Day One: Special speakers and performances

The muster officially kicked off Nov. 6 with an early-morning 5K run, followed by an opening ceremony. After opening remarks from retired Navy Capt. Michael R. Howard (SEAL), museum executive director, and Willard B. Snyder, president, museum board of directors, the first guest speaker, Charles Grande, St. Lucie County commissioner, addressed the crowd about the museum's significance.

"This is not just a museum; it's an ever-growing, living memorial to the people who have given so much for us in this county and this country," Grande said.

Next, Cmdr. Chris Cassidy, NASA astronaut and the second SEAL who has gone into outer space, presented the museum with a memorabilia coin that has been around the world—literally. Cassidy said he brought the coin with him on NASA's STS-127 mission, which orbited the earth 248 times and traveled 6.2 million miles in the summer of 2009.

"The most memorable thing the coin and I shared was looking out the window down at our beautiful planet," Cassidy said. He said as he looked at the Earth from space, he thought of the various missions being carried out by service members across the globe, and how thankful he was for their efforts.

Cassidy's appreciation for military members' service was voiced by retired Navy Lt. Thomas Norris (SEAL),



Family members, friends and colleagues of fallen SEALs gather at a ceremony Nov. 7 in Fort Pierce, Fla., to pay their last respects. Eighty-two past and present SEALs died since the last muster, five of whom were killed in action.

Medal of Honor recipient, who told the crowd the muster gives past, present and possible future SEALs a chance to reminisce, share stories about operations and endeavors, and recognize they share the same character and strength it takes to be a SEAL. He said he was proud, honored and humbled to have served his country with great units.

"Thank God that we have those folks who are serving for us today; thank God that this country still produces those types of people," Norris said. "Thank God this country has you, and thank God for the United States of America."

Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, was the last speaker to address the crowd, explaining the origins of Naval Special Warfare. He discussed the historical importance of Fort Pierce, which is known as the birthplace of the Navy Frogmen. He also talked about retired Rear Adm. Draper Kauffman, who established underwater demolition training at Fort Pierce during World War II and is seen as the father of Naval Special Warfare.

"It is the DNA of those original members of the Naval Special Warfare Community who have provided so much inspiration, so much tradition, they have served as role models who set the ethos of which today's Navy SEALs are so proud," Olson said.

The nation has never asked so much of so few for so long as they have asked the Naval Special Warfare community in Iraq and Afghanistan... This is an extraordinary group of people out there; the nation can be very proud of them, and I think all of us who wear the trident of the SEAL are certainly most proud to be associated with

all of those who are carrying the fight to the enemy in such a ferocious way today, tonight and every night,” Olson continued.

Following the opening ceremony, the Leapfrogs, the Navy’s official parachute team, did a demonstration jump from an HC-130. After that, SEAL Team 18 performed its capabilities demonstration with the help of local Sea Cadets. Upon completing the demonstration, the SEALs allowed audience members to get an up-close look at their vehicles, their gear and themselves.

Later that afternoon, museum officials broke ground on what will be a new 8,400 square-foot facility, which will double the size of the museum. Construction is slated to be completed by the 2011 muster.

Shortly thereafter, the SEALs Bike America riders rode into the museum parking lot, completing their 3,300-mile journey that began in Coronado, Calif., Sept. 26.

Day Two: A somber mourning

At dawn Nov. 7, eight SEALs lined up on the beach behind the museum as a crowd gathered. Despite the chilly weather and strong winds, the men wore little more than plain brown T-shirts, black shorts and flippers. They barely shivered as they stood ready to submerge themselves into the cold ocean water, feeling honored to do so.

The SEALs were taking part in a traditional ceremony during which current SEALs take the ashes of SEALs who have died since the last muster and release them into the ocean. Five SEALs were killed in combat within the last year. Ashes of retired SEALs were also swum out to sea that morning. One by one, the men received the ashes of their fellow SEALs as retired Navy Capt. Rick Woolard (SEAL) played “Amazing Grace” on his bagpipe. The SEALs simultaneously backed into the water, swam out several yards, and stopped before gently releasing the ashes into the water in unison.

Upon their return from the water, soaking wet and feeling gusts of cold wind, the SEALs stayed on the beach and shook hands with nearly everyone in attendance, the family members, friends, fellow service members or other acquaintances of the SEALs whose ashes they dispersed into the ocean.

Following the somber ceremony, the crowd gathered in front of the museum for the dedication of the new SEAL Memorial, the only such memorial in the world that is dedicated solely to fallen SEALs. The memorial consists of a bronze statue of a Frogman and a wall with the names of the 252 NSW members who have died in the line of duty or due to combat wounds since WWII.



Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander, USSOCOM, speaks at the dedication of the new SEAL Memorial at the National UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Fla. The memorial consists of a bronze statue of a Frogman and a wall with the names of the 252 NSW members who have died in the line of duty or due to combat wounds since WWII.

Olson, who spoke at the memorial dedication, said having a Frogman statue was fitting and proper, but the names on the wall have the greatest significance.

“It’s this wall of names behind [the statue] that’s most compelling, those who have willingly and knowingly accepted increased risk and paid the ultimate price,” Olson said. “Their legacy of courage has now been permanently etched into these hallowed stones.”

Harold Hall, a WWII veteran and original member of UDT-5 who trained at Fort Pierce and served alongside Kauffman, was also a guest speaker at the memorial dedication. He described the early origins of UDTs and mentioned two of his team members from UDT-5 whose names are on the wall. He requested the crowd remember their legacy.

“On this wall, there are ninety-three names of World War II men killed in the line of duty,” Hall said. “For all WWII UDTs, [Naval Combat Demolition Unit] men and their families, never forget, forever. Hooyah!”



SEALs Bike America riders stand in front of the National UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Fla., upon completion of their 3,300-mile trek from Coronado, Calif. Photo by Senior Airman Anna-Marie Wyant.

SEALs Bike America riders complete 3,300-mile, 42-day journey

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Trevor Andersen
Naval Special Warfare Group 2 Public Affairs

Six cyclists from the Naval Special Warfare Foundation charity bike ride, “SEALs Bike America,” arrived at the National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Fla., Nov. 6, completing their 42-day ride from Coronado, Calif.

Retired Navy SEALs Mike Badger and Rob Rambeck, along with an East-Coast based SEAL and three NSW supporters, Paul Resnick, Ron Watford, and Marty Jemison, rode approximately 3,300 miles with only 6 rest days. They were received by a crowd of cheering onlookers who were still enjoying the activities at the 25th Annual National UDT-SEAL Muster, which had officially begun that morning.

“It feels awesome to be done,” said Watford, a Navy retiree. “We raised awareness and proceeds to benefit

NSW families, so it was a success.”

For participants, all the hard work and training in preparing for the trip paid off.

“These guys have been training for six months,” said Bill Hahn, the NSW Foundation special events coordinator. “They rode through eight states where they received a lot of great exposure. It really helped get the word out about supporting NSW families.”

The money raised by the bike ride will go to families of the NSW community via the NSW Foundation, especially to assist with health, welfare, and even activities for children to support spouses of deployed SEALs and NSW personnel, Hahn said.

The NSW Foundation also provides scholarships, tuition assistance and numerous other services for NSW Sailors and their families.

Medical facility in Afghanistan named in honor of fallen Navy SEAL

*Story and photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Jacob Dillon
Naval Special Warfare Group 2 Public Affairs (Forward)*

The Surgical Team at Forward Operating Base Lagman in Afghanistan dedicated a building during a ceremony Nov. 13 in honor of Petty Officer (SEAL) 3rd Class Denis C. Miranda. Miranda was one of nine service members who died in a helicopter crash in southeastern Afghanistan, Sept. 21, 2010.

In early September 2010, Miranda was deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. On Sept. 21, while conducting combat operations in the Ayatalah village within the Zabul Province of Afghanistan, Miranda and his teammates were inserting via a UH-60 helicopter when their aircraft crashed on final approach, resulting in his death.

The forward surgical team chose to name the trauma center after Miranda for several reasons, said Lt. Cmdr. Craig Knott, the medical officer for the Naval Special Warfare task unit.

“The fact that he was a member of a SEAL Team that operated close to this trauma center and he was a prior hospital corpsman, it seemed like the right thing to do to name this facility in his honor,” Knott said.

The ceremony allowed the chance for teammates and colleagues to speak about Miranda’s traits as a person and as a talented Special Operator.

“Denis was always a guy you could go to for advice,” one of his teammates said. “He would always give you a straight answer even if it is not what you wanted to hear. He was also humble enough to take advice himself. He often spoke to me during his medical training; I think it is fitting that a medical clinic bears his name. I know he would appreciate the gesture, just as his family and loved ones do, just as we do.”

Naval Special Warfare leadership in attendance echoed the words of Miranda’s teammates.

“In the special warfare community, Denis will be a battle scar on our legacy that we will wear very proudly,” said Navy Capt. Timothy Szymanski, commander of Naval Special Warfare Group Two. “Those who knew Denis



Hospital Corpsman Senior Chief Petty Officer Mike Langley dedicates a sign in memory of Petty Officer 3rd Class (SEAL) Denis C. Miranda at the Forward Surgical Team’s building dedication Nov. 13, Forward Operating Base Lagman, Zabul Province, Afghanistan.

know he lived by our sacred oath. This is a very fitting tribute that I am very very proud of.”

Cmdr. Ted Edson, the officer in charge of the forward trauma center, also spoke about the honor he feels in naming the facility after a fallen hero.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to name a Navy facility after a member of Naval service, particularly a former hospital corpsman,” Edson said.

The dedication not only honored the sacrifice of Miranda but also allowed the opportunity to recognize the service and dedication of all service members operating in Afghanistan.

“We are all standing side by side with our Coalition partners, we are all standing side by side with Afghan National Security Forces trying to make a difference for the people of this country,” Szymanski said. “That’s what Denis was doing here in Afghanistan and that’s how we’ll remember him.”



AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Special Tactics Airmen finish 860-mile trek for fallen comrades

*By Airman 1st Class Joe W. McFadden
AFSOC Public Affairs*

Hundreds of people gathered at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Oct. 21 to welcome the marchers from the Tim Davis Special Tactics Memorial March.

They had just completed an 860-mile march across five states that started Oct. 9 at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Each of the marching Airmen carried one or more wooden batons, each decorated with a small plate bearing the name of a fallen special tactics Airman.

“For those who understand, no explanation is necessary,” said Chief Master Sgt. Antonio Travis, the Air Force Special Operations Training Center chief enlisted manager and one of the participants in the

march. “And for those who don’t understand, no explanation will suffice.

“I will try to explain for those who don’t: Love. Family is love. Love for family is why the men volunteer to do this.”

Travis carried a baton for Senior Airman Adam Servais, of the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron, who was killed Aug. 19, 2006, in Afghanistan. His baton, like others, represented a special tactics Airman killed in action.

One of the Airmen being remembered was Staff Sgt. Tim Davis, of the 23rd STS, who was killed Feb. 20, 2009.

The march, an idea set forth by Capt. Sam Schindler and Master Sgt. Kenneth Huhman, both of whom are special tactics Airmen, was named in honor of Davis



Surviving family members, a few wounded Airmen and members of Air Force Special Operations Command join 15 Special Tactics Airmen Oct. 21, 2010, on the final stretch of an 860-mile memorial march from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, to Hurlburt Field, Fla. Photo by Master Sgt. Russell E. Cooley IV.

after he was killed in Afghanistan.

The carrying of the batons symbolized the passage through the special tactics training pipeline after Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, until the day they earned their scarlet berets at Hurlburt Field.

“I didn’t have the honor of knowing two of the names called out, but I knew each and every other one,” Travis said. “Some of them were dear friends, my leaders and my Airmen. There’s not a single fiber of my being that could imagine not stepping up and saying ‘yes’ for my family.”

He then completed his speech with a variation of the Airmen’s Creed, beginning with “These are America’s finest Airmen,” and dedicated to those the march memorialized.

“They never left an Airman behind,” Travis said. “They did not falter, and they never failed, and God willing, we will never fail in remembering them.”

The recent passing of Senior Airman Daniel Sanchez, of the 23rd STS, and Mark Forester, of the 21st STS, who were both killed in action in support of Operation Enduring Freedom Sept. 16 and 29, respectively, left a fresh reminder in the minds of the marchers of how their own lives could be on the line in combat.

“If you look over the course of our nation’s history, there has been a very small segment of our population that has been asked to do the types of things we are doing today,” said Lt. Gen.

Donald C. Wurster, commander, Air Force Special Operations Command. “One percent of the U.S. serves in the armed forces. Of that group, an incredibly small fraction performs the duty of close combat and engaging the enemy, and a large portion of that force (in the Air Force) is in AFSOC, particularly in special tactics. And look around: kids are going to school, people are going to work and our nation is secure, thanks to the people who do this.”



Special tactics Airmen conduct memorial push-ups Oct. 21, at the completion of the Tim Davis Special Tactics Memorial March from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, to Hurlburt Field, Fla. Fifteen special tactics Airmen completed the 860-mile trek to honor the memories of their fallen comrades. Photo by Airman 1st Class Joe W. McFadden.

“It just fills my heart up.....This is just one more thing to make sure they’re never forgotten.”
— Kristy Jefferson, widow of Tech. Sgt. Will Jefferson

Kristy Jefferson is the widow of Tech. Sgt. Will Jefferson, a 21st Special Tactics Squadron combat controller who was killed March 22, 2008. She marched for the last five miles of the route with Huhman, the chief of the combat control selection course at Lackland, who carried her husband’s baton.

“It just fills my heart up,” Jefferson said. “This is just one more thing to make sure they’re

never forgotten.”

After completing the march, the marchers said they would have selflessly repeated it countless times over so that none of their comrades’ memories will ever be forgotten.

“No word can really sum up the feeling,” Huhman said. “But seeing the family members — this is what it’s all about. It makes the rest of the walk seem like nothing.”



Airmen prep for Antarctic climb

*By Capt. Lauren Johnson
1st Special Operations Wing Public Affairs*

Two Airmen from Hurlburt Field, Fla., are putting the 1st Special Operations Wing motto to the test.

While most of their friends and colleagues are indulging in the family, food and football of the Thanksgiving holiday, Capt. Rob Marshall, 8th Special Operations Squadron, and Capt. Graydon Muller, 6th Special Operations Squadron, will be leaving behind the comforts of home for the austerity and isolation of Antarctica.

The Airmen will make the long trip to the world's coldest continent Nov. 24 with a goal of scaling Antarctica's tallest mountain, 16,076-foot Vinson Massif. It's a task for which they say the military, and specifically Air Force Special Operations Command's focus on physical fitness and the 1st SOW's "Any Time, Any Place" mentality makes them ideally equipped.

"We think it fits well with the military mindset," Muller said. "There's a lot of teamwork involved in mountaineering, a lot of goal-setting, a lot of risk management."

The climb is part of a larger effort called the U.S. Air Force Seven Summits Challenge, an endeavor for Air Force members to carry the Air Force flag to the highest point on each continent and to be the first U.S. military group to conquer all seven peaks.

"The Seven Summits is about Airmen setting a goal that some would think would be unobtainable and gutting it out to achieve it," Marshall said. "It's about camaraderie and pushing each other to achieve new heights."

While this particular height is relatively low and the climb only moderately technical when compared to the others the group has already conquered - Mount Elbrus (Asia, 18,510 ft.), Mount Kilimanjaro (Africa, 19,340 feet), Mount Aconcagua (South America, 22,834 ft.), and Alaska's 20,300-foot Mount McKinley - the area's remoteness, extreme temperatures and potential for hazardous winds make it uniquely challenging.

Vinson Massif is part of the Ellsworth Mountains, which rise majestically and menacingly from the icy Antarctic landscape. Largely due to its isolation, Mt. Vinson



Capt. Graydon Muller, a member of the 6th Special Operations Squadron (far left, standing), and Capt. Rob Marshall, a member of the 8th Special Operations Squadron (far right, kneeling) pose at the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa, as part of the U.S. Air Force Seven Summits Challenge in July 2006. U.S. Air Force photo.

was the last of the seven summits to originally be scaled. It was as recently as 1966 that an American Team sponsored by the National Geographic Society first summited the peak.

Even decades later, the Airmen said transportation remains an obstacle.

"Probably the most significant hurdle we ran into was getting to Antarctica and close to the mountain," Marshall said. "There's only one commercial company in the world that flies you to Antarctica."

Their route will bring them by way of Punta Arenas near the southernmost tip of Chile, the closest landmass at more than 600 nautical miles away. After two days of preparations in Chile, the Airmen will fly to Antarctica's travel hub, Patriot Hills, the continent's only privately-owned arctic base. From there, they will take a ski-equipped turboprop Twin Otter aircraft to Vinson Massif's base camp.

The odyssey of traveling to the continent epitomizes the distinctive challenges - and for some, the fascinations - associated with the Antarctic adventure.

Antarctica itself is a land of extremes. Southeast from the continent's highest point is the world's lowest exposed elevation, the Bentley Subglacial Trench, which descends

8,200 feet below sea level. Approximately 98 percent of Antarctica's landmass is covered by a vast sheet of ice which measures, at its thickest, more than 15,000 feet. This frozen sheath gives Antarctica an average elevation of 6,100 feet above sea level, the highest of all seven continents. Because its perimeter is defined by ice, the continent roughly doubles in size during the winter.

Despite its topography, though, Antarctica is considered a desert. The interior receives less than two inches of precipitation every year, qualifying it as one of the driest places on earth. The base camp of Vinson Massif accumulates only about 18 inches of snow every year. It is also the coldest, averaging around negative 20 degrees Fahrenheit in the month of November, and, thanks to gravity-driven katabatic winds, the windiest continent.

Marshall and Muller admit that the thought of entering Mother Nature's untamed lair is a bit intimidating but say their experience in AFSOC has helped prepare them for operating in such harsh conditions.

The Airmen met with Dr. (Maj.) Michael McBeth, 6th SOS flight surgeon, who has seven years of AFSOC medical experience. She discussed altitude sickness and frostbite symptoms, prevention and self-treatment. The medics also provided the Airmen with individually-tailored travel medicine kits and training on how to administer treatments for both minor issues and more serious conditions such as altitude-related illnesses.

"The special training the medics have been through was extremely useful," Muller said. "They obviously have a wide range of experience with all kinds of environments. At the 6th SOS we almost always have people spread across the six populated continents so our medical team is constantly ready for anything."

His position in the 6th SOS offered another advantage for Muller as well. As an incoming member to the squadron, he recently participated in the Combat Aviation Advisor Mission Qualification Course through the AFSOC Training Center.

According to the course director, Vincent Milioti, the training is roughly one year long and is designed to equip special operators to deploy, operate and survive in a variety of environments fulfilling missions in foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency operations and unconventional warfare. The curriculum covers areas such as advanced survival skills, small unit tactics, land navigation, mission planning, advanced communication and tactical combat casualty care.

"It's a broad range of skills that you might use as a military member deployed to an isolated area," Muller said, adding that the physical demands of the course were specifically beneficial in his off-duty pursuits. "It put me in the best shape of my life and incidentally prepared me quite well for the climb."

Embracing the principle of "train like you fight," the Airmen have also been stair climbing with 60-pound backpacks and towing a weighted kayak to simulate pulling a supply sled.

"I think it's awesome you can train for a 16,000-foot arctic mountain living in Florida at sea level when it's 70-degrees in November, purely using the facilities available to us on base," Marshall said.

The training is the final piece of a puzzle the Seven Summits team has been building for several years. Other key pieces seemed to recently fall into place.

"You need a lot of experience to go to Antarctica," Marshall said. "The fact that we had two experienced climbers stationed together who could handle the funding and the schedule; it was too good an opportunity to pass up."

The Airmen won't be completely on their own, however. Once in Antarctica, they will be joining a group of fellow mountaineering enthusiasts eager to scale Mt. Vinson's summit.

"We ended up getting support from a mountaineering mentor, who happened to be going down to Antarctica at this time," Marshall said. "He basically said, 'team up with me!'"

The mentor, Phil Ershler, has himself conquered the seven summits and was half of the first husband and wife team to accomplish the feat.

If all goes well, he may soon be part of another first as the Air Force Seven Summits team passes a critical milestone in their mission to climb all seven peaks.

But beyond the glory of that looming accomplishment, and what will perhaps be a greater driving force in the Captains' success than their training and preparation, is a humble reminder of what unites them as AFSOC personnel, Airmen, and U.S. military members.

"(The Seven Summits) has become a tribute to the U.S. service members who have fallen in battle since 9/11," Marshall said. "We'll be placing a plaque on the summit in their memory."

Once the Airmen begin their travels, the expedition is expected to take approximately two to three weeks.



Force Recon Marines awarded for valor 43 years later

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Ethan E. Rocke
MARSOC Public Affairs*

Five Marines and a Navy corpsman who served with 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division in Vietnam were recognized with awards for valor in combat operations conducted more than 43 years ago during a ceremony at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., Oct. 27.

Retired Maj. James Capers was awarded the Silver Star Medal, the nation's third highest award for valor, for his actions as a patrol leader during a reconnaissance mission in which his team, codenamed "Broadminded," supported Company M, 3rd Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment, during a search and destroy mission against a suspected regimental-sized enemy force.

Four members of Team Broadminded – Ron Yerman, Richard Crepeau, John Moran and Billy Ray Smith – received the Bronze Star Medal with a V device (to designate valor) for actions during the same mission. Jack Wright received the Bronze Star with Combat V for his actions on a separate mission.

Team Broadminded engaged the enemy seven times during their mission, which took place March 31 to April 3, 1967, in the vicinity of Phu Lac, Vietnam. On the final day, a larger enemy force ambushed the nine-man patrol with small-arms fire and several claymore mines. The team was immediately pinned down, and every member was wounded - most of them severely.

Capers, a second lieutenant then, took more than a dozen pieces of shrapnel to his legs and abdomen. Despite his wounds, Capers directed his team to lay down suppressive fire to gain fire superiority and set up a hasty defense. He called for mortar and artillery strikes against the enemy, directed the treatment of the wounded and called for the team's evacuation, ensuring all his men made it out alive.

Maj. Gen. Paul E. Lefebvre, commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command,



Retired Maj. James Capers was awarded the Silver Star medal, the nation's third highest award for valor, during a ceremony at the MacDill Air Force Base officers club Oct. 27. Capers was one of five Marines from 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company who received awards for valor in combat operations conducted more than 43 years ago.

recounted Capers' accomplishments as a Marine, a husband and a father before presenting him with the medal in front of more than 100 guests, including family members and friends of the awardees, several general and field-grade officers and current members of the Marine Corps Special Operations community.

Lefebvre said Capers is "one of history's most outstanding special operations team leaders."

After thanking the assembled guests and humbly accepting his award, Capers recounted the anti-war culture that was prevalent during the Vietnam era. He spoke directly to the assembled general officers, challenging them to ensure that today's generation of warriors never have to suffer the bureaucratic failures that plagued the Vietnam generation, such as poor

treatment for post-traumatic stress.

“When we came home, there were no yellow ribbons,” he said. “There was no music playing, no bands. Most of us came home on ambulance planes, badly damaged ... with post-traumatic stress disorder, which nobody understood.”

Capers also spoke directly to his team, commending their service and commitment.

“Gentlemen, I thank you so much for your faith,” he said.

Lefebvre then joined Capers while he pinned the medals on his Marines.

Yerman, a sergeant in Vietnam, served as Capers’ platoon sergeant, assistant patrol leader and radio operator during the roughly 11 months they served together in 1st Platoon, 3rd Force Recon Co., 3rd Recon Battalion, 3rd Marine Division. After Capers pinned the medal on Yerman’s chest, the two men shared a warm embrace.

Yerman addressed the crowd, speaking with great reverence about his friend and mentor.

“He was always the last man on the chopper,” Yerman said. “I was the second to last man. I’d get aboard and I’d nod. If I didn’t nod, he’d know that all the men weren’t there, and we wouldn’t leave.

Crepeau, also a sergeant in Capers’ team, spoke with great zeal about the bond of brotherhood that exists among men in battle.

“The worst day of my life was Phu Lac,” he said. “Not just because I was wounded but because my team was split and we didn’t see each other for years.”

Crepeau also spoke of Capers as an exceptional, selfless leader.

“At Phu Lac, when we were at our absolute worst, we were at our absolute best,” he said. “Jim Capers had taught us to function as a collective unit. I don’t think any officer could have a better career record than Major Capers has.”

Moran, a corporal in Vietnam, was Team Broadminded’s dog handler. King, the team’s scout dog, was the only team member killed in action in the ambush at Phu Lac, and Moran was one of the most severely wounded. Moran beamed after receiving his medal but opted not to speak.

Jack Wright was a private first class when his

reconnaissance patrol was ambushed July 29, 1966.

Serving as point man for the patrol, Wright was severely wounded by enemy fire. He continued to shout warnings to his team and provided suppressive fire against the enemy, killing two enemy soldiers.

Wright was overcome with emotion when he received his medal and when he addressed the crowd.

“When I went into the Marine Corps and became attached to 3rd Force Recon ... [those men] became my heroes,” he said.

Smith, a Navy corpsman in Vietnam, was the only award recipient not present. His award was posthumous.

Capers described Smith’s service and heroism during the ambush at Phu Lac.

“Most of us would be dead today if it had not been for Billy Ray Smith,” he said.

For all of the awardees and their fellow Marines from Vietnam who came from all over the country to attend the ceremony, the event marked a day of healing and release after 43 years.

“Yesterday, I was wondering why I was alive,” Crepeau said. “Today, I know that it’s for this day.”



(From left to right) John Moran, Jack Wright, Retired Maj. James Capers, Richard Crepeau, and Ron Yerman stand for a photograph after a ceremony at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Oct. 27, recognizing them for valor for actions in Vietnam. Capers was awarded the Silver Star and Moran, Wright, Crepeau, and Yerman, received the Bronze Star Medal with V device. (to designate valor) Billy Ray Smith was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star with V device.



USSOCOM inducts inaugural class into Commando Hall of Honor

*By Senior Airman Anna-Marie Wyant
USSOCOM Public Affairs*

U.S. Special Operations Command inducted its first 14 members into its Commando Hall of Honor at a ceremony in front of USSOCOM headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., Oct. 27.

The Commando Hall of Honor, located in the USSOCOM headquarters lobby, “will be considered the most prominent space in the building, remaining dedicated to ensuring past, present and future warriors and members of the Special Operations community will remember the bravery and innovation of our founding fathers and significant contributors to Special Operations,” Lt. Cmdr. Brian Olavin, master of ceremonies, told the crowd at the event.

After an invocation by Col. Thomas Solhjem, USSOCOM chaplain, Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander, addressed the inductees and the crowd, thanking them for attending.

“Your presence here is the greatest tribute to those who we are inducting into the U.S. Special Operations Command Commando Hall of Honor today,” Olson said.

The Commando Hall of Honor was intended to honor and recognize accomplishments of individuals who distinguished themselves through their unique and prestigious contributions to the Special Operations community he explained.

“Each of today’s inductees epitomizes the professionalism, commitment and courage that have made Special Operations Forces the world’s most respected fighting force,” Olson said.

Olson said the first 14 inductees set a high standard for the Special Operators who followed in their footsteps, and he voiced the command’s appreciation for their actions that helped shape modern day SOF.

“We owe these men our gratitude, and we must recognize that we in uniform now live in their shadow,” Olson said of the honorees, who were each nominated



Adm. Eric T. Olson officially inducts retired Master Chief Petty Officer Rudy Boesch into the SOCOM Commando Hall of Honor at a ceremony Oct. 27, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Boesch was the first senior enlisted advisor for USSOCOM. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter Jr.

for the Commando Hall of Honor by their respective service components’ commanders from U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Naval Special Warfare Command, Air Force Special Operations Command and Marine Corps Forces Marine Special Operations Command.

He said the inductees paved the way for SOF currently fighting in Afghanistan, Iraq, and 75 other



Adm. Eric T. Olson unveils the official plaque for the SOCOM Commando Hall of Honor at a ceremony Oct. 27, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Photo by Senior Airman Anna-Marie Wyant.

countries worldwide. He credited them with developing the tactics, techniques and procedures that make SOF effective, and he said SOF culture evolved from their actions. He also noted how the honorees successfully used unconventional methods and innovation instead of merely going by the book.

“Their team foresight helped them navigate the bureaucratic processes of their day, and in some cases, straddle the line between leading edge, military innovation, and downright rebellion,” Olson said. “They’re men who understood the conventional processes and procedures were templates from which they should knowingly and carefully deviate, and they all had the audacity to bring their ideas to fruition.”

He continued, “They all asserted themselves; they all broke the rules; they all invented and innovated. They stuck to their guns and to their convictions, and they broke trade. They are here because they did what they did, and we are here because they did what they did. We and our great nation are forever in their debt.”

Before unveiling the official plaque displaying the names of the Commando Hall of Honor’s members,

Olson again voiced gratitude for the inductees leading the way for SOF.

“The contributions of this inaugural class will be forever remembered within this Hall of Honor where they will serve as teachers and role models for us and those who follow us,” he said. “Lessons of leadership, of intellectual and operational agility, of physical prowess and raw courage, are all worthy of our careful attention.”

The following Commando Hall of Honor inductees were present for the ceremony: retired Air Force Maj. Gen. John R. Alison; retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer Rudolph Boesch; retired Marine Maj. James Capers Jr.; retired Navy Capt. David Del Giudice; and retired Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Michael I. Lampe.

The following Commando Hall of Honor inductees are deceased and were posthumously awarded at the ceremony: Army Col. Aaron Bank; Army Col. Charlie A. Beckwith; Marine Brig. Gen. Evans F. Carlson; Army Brig. Gen. William O. Darby; Army Command Sgt. Maj. William R. Grimes; Army Lt. Col. Michael C. Grimm; Navy Rear Adm. Draper L. Kauffman; Army Maj. Gen. Robert A. McClure; and Air Force Col. William E. Takacs.



Lt. Gen. Donald C. Wurster, commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, talks with retired Maj. Gen. John R. Alison, the first inductee in to the Commando Hall of Honor, before the official ceremony. Alison, 97, a highly decorated combat ace of World War II and veteran of the Korean War, is considered the father of Air Force Special Operations. Photo by Senior Airman Anna-Marie Wyant.



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - HEADQUARTERS



USSOCOM members honor wounded warrior during 6th annual SOF Run

Runners with the 6th Special Operations Forces Run led by Brig. Gen. Mark Clark, USSOCOM director of operations (far right), plus several honored guests finish the more than 600-mile relay from Duluth, Ga., to the Special Operations Forces Memorial located outside USSOCOM headquarters Nov. 10. The run is designed to raise awareness about Operation One Voice.

*Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter Jr.
USSOCOM Public Affairs*

Twelve members from U.S. Special Operations Command participated in the 6th annual Special Operations Forces Run, a 600-mile relay run, Nov. 7-11, honoring Marine Master Sgt. Eden Pearl from Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command.

The run consisted of a team of 27 runners, forming two squads of law enforcement, firefighters, and members of USSOCOM who ran in one-hour increments, 24 hours a day from Duluth, Ga., to the Special Operations Forces Memorial at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Lt. Bill Stevens, from the Duluth Police Department and founder Operation One Voice, said the purpose behind the SOF Run is to raise awareness for OOV, expand support within the public safety community and honor a

specific SOF warrior, SOF branch and all veterans. Stevens started the program six years ago in Duluth to support the troops a year after he created a similar program to assist firefighters and law enforcement affected by 9/11.

“Operation One Voice is a program designed by police officers, fire fighters and community leaders to raise funds to help support the immediate needs of children and families of fallen and wounded Special Operations Forces,” Stevens said.

To date, OOV, a non-profit organization, has assisted 1,681 wounded or fallen SOF members and their families.

The relay took the runners from Duluth to Albany Ga., where Mayor Dr. Willie Adams spoke to the group, through Tallahassee, Fla., and to their final destination at the SOF Memorial near USSOCOM Headquarters.

“As difficult as the process was, this year was the most successful because everyone understood that this was

above themselves and they set aside personal preferences, that there was a greater good that we were all doing this...everyone was mission focused on the Marines, and in this case Master Sgt. Eden Pearl,” Lt. Col. Jeb Downing said.

Every year the OOV board of directors decides the service member in whose honor the team will run. This year, Pearl was chosen as the honoree. Pearl was severely injured in Afghanistan in 2009 when his vehicle encountered an improvised explosive device.

Stevens said he follows what is going on in the SOF community while seeking input from those within the community, as well as gathering information from OOV’s board of advisors.

“We chose Eden because we became aware of his injuries last August,” Stevens said. “We knew that he is one of our more severely wounded warriors, and we want Eden and his family to know we care.”

Stevens is not only the founder of OOV, but he is also an active participant, putting “boots to ground” and getting in his miles to support the cause. But when it comes down to why he does it, Stevens said it’s simple.

“We all want to do something in life that is bigger than we are, something that we can really be proud of being a part of, and this is my something,” he said. “The ‘kids’ within the Special Ops community are just solid Americans, and I think our team at OOV is making a difference in their lives.”

Downing, the SOCOM team leader, has deployed three times with SOF: once to Afghanistan and twice to Iraq. He said he has similar sentiments as to why he has continued to be a part of the SOF run for three years.

“I feel like I have a duty to help those that came back from duty physically changed or not at all,” Downing said. “I do it for the people that will benefit from the money OOV raises for the fallen Soldiers, wounded Soldiers and the families left behind.”

Downing said he knows firsthand how OOV has helped wounded SOF warriors while working with the USSOCOM’s Care Coalition. OOV paid for rental cars for family members visiting wounded soldiers at the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital in Tampa, Fla.

“There are things that OOV does that folks don’t even realize,” Downing said.

Once the individual teams finished their respective portions of the trip, the night and day teams united

together to finish the symbolic conclusion of the trip together on Veterans Day. All 27 runners plus several honored guests ran the last two miles in formation, crossing the finish line at Busch Gardens in Tampa.

“I was motivated by the attitudes and the esprit de corps that everyone shared and I don’t know how it could possibly be better,” Downing said. “I look forward to next year.”

To learn more about OOV go to <http://www.operationonevoice.org>.



(Left) Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Kapaczewski, 75th Ranger Regiment, runs with Bill Stevens, a lieutenant with the Duluth Police Department and founder of Operation One Voice during the 6th Special Operations Forces Run into the Special Operations Memorial at MacDill Air Force Base Nov. 10. Kapaczewski also completed the New York City Marathon Nov 7.



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - HEADQUARTERS

U.S. SOF in the Balkans

By James P. Herson Jr., Ph.D.
USSOCOM History Office

In December 1995, NATO initiated Operation Joint Endeavor in response to ongoing religious and ethnic violence in the former Republic of Yugoslavia, deploying more than 60,000 troops from both NATO and non-NATO nations into Bosnia under an Implementation Force in what was then the largest combined military mission in the existence of the NATO alliance. These forces were given the principal mission of enforcing the provisions of the cease fire agreement articulated in the Dayton Peace Accords that called for an end to the violence that plagued the Balkans. U.S. Special Operations Forces contributed to this effort and to IFOR's subsequent success, demonstrating flexibility and specialized capabilities through effective coalition liaisons, psychological operations, and civil affairs.

In order to manage the task of restoring peace in Bosnia, NATO established the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, which divided the country into three sectors controlled by British, French, and the Americans, respectively. The U.S. IFOR effort, composed mostly of the 1st Armored Division and supported by other U.S. elements, was named Task Force Eagle.

Previous ethnic clashes had destroyed all suitable bridges over the Sava River, which U.S. forces had to cross. In order to meet tight timelines for occupying their respective sector, Task Force Eagle engineers needed to construct a bridge over which its forces could cross into Bosnia. Divers from SEAL Team Two were dispatched from Germany to the Sava River, where they would conduct a hydrological survey to ensure obstacles, mines, and other debris would not unnecessarily delay bridge construction. Because of the SEAL's efforts, the bridge was completed, and more than 20,000 Task Force Eagle troops moved to occupy their assigned sectors in accordance with their directed timeline.

All-weather capable SOF aircraft contributed an unexpectedly important role throughout Operation Joint Endeavor. Among their first assignments was the transporting of the Task Force Eagle commander, Maj. Gen. William Nash, into Bosnia when conventional aircraft

proved incapable of flying through severe winter weather. Because of the aviators' proven abilities and aircraft capabilities, SOF further transported the commander thereafter. In addition to transporting senior leaders, SOF aviation executed other supporting missions, most notably combat search and rescue. In April 1996, a plane carrying U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown, crashed into a Croatian mountainside, killing all passengers. With very little delay, Special Operations Command - Europe, tasked with the high-profile recovery mission, responded with the platforms and personnel to reach the site, recover remains, and retrieve critical equipment.

On the ground, NATO forces recognized the necessity of communicating the purpose of its presence clearly to the local population, ensuring they understood IFOR was a neutral entity there to enforce the Dayton Peace Accords. Psychological Operations personnel published the newspaper Herald of Peace and aired radio broadcasts, including Radio IFOR. They drafted and distributed posters in addition to other media directly to Bosnian communities. While certain messages explained the purpose of the international presence, others worked to educate locals on mine awareness and repatriation.

As PSYOP personnel communicated IFOR's critical messages, Civil Affairs units helped facilitate and coordinate the Non-Government efforts and the distribution of government aid while simultaneously restoring municipal services that had been lost in the conflict. CA further helped orchestrate elections and provided non-partisan support to the contentious election process.

Operation Joint Endeavor was followed by Operation Joint Guard, which was replaced by Joint Forge. U.S. forces remained in Bosnia for nearly a decade until relieved by the European Union Force.



Navy SEALs from Little Creek, Va., conduct a hydrological survey of the Sava River. Courtesy photo.



Staff Sgt. Kevin Matthew Pape
75th Ranger Regiment

**Editor's note: Honored are SOF who lost their lives since
October's Tip of the Spear.**

GILBERT ALANIZ JR. PVT USA 830125
RALPH L. TROIANO JR. PVT USA 830125
WESLEY B. BALDWIN PVT USA 830027
ALAN T. BERTON PVT USA 830111
VANCE B. PVT USA 830125
WILLIAM C. HAYES SFC USA 830412
ROBERT A. BRANSHALL SFC USA 831118
KENNETH W. CAMPBELL SFC USA 830111



Morning with Daddy

Andrea Hubbard captured her husband, Tech. Sgt. Daniel Hubbard, 27th Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron, and their children, as he prepared to go to work at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M. The photo, "Morning with Daddy," won first place in the MyAirForceLife.com contest, earning Hubbard new camera equipment and a showing of her photograph at the Pentagon. Photo by Andrea Hubbard.