



TIP OF THE SPEAR

U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLA.

June 2004



SOF *search for Taliban weapon caches*

**SOF continue to impact OEF, OIF
SOF Medal of Honor Valor Day
USSOCOM HQ realignment**

SF retrieve munitions cache in Pesch Valley

By *Spc. Daniel P. Kelly*
25th Infantry Division (L) Public Affairs

Special Operations Forces deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom are recovering hidden enemy munitions throughout Afghanistan.

One small group of Green Berets recovered a large cache of weapons and ammunition May 11 when they were given a local tip that a man hid munitions in his home in a small village in northeastern Afghanistan in the Pesch Valley.

“We went to the house, we talked to the man, we told him we knew he had something, and we’re going to search his house,” said a Special Forces team leader.

The detachment commander said local nationals have three options when it comes to hidden munitions and weapons.

“If anyone brings the weapons to us, we have a small rewards program,” he said. “Basically they’ll get compensation to get the ordinance out of their house. The second option is we go to their home, and they cooperate. If they cooperate, we’re still going to take the stuff, but they’re not going to get a reward. The third option is, they don’t cooperate, we find the stuff, and we bring them back here for questioning for however long it takes to better understand the situation.”

The man in the nearby village took option two,

Soldiers of the Afghan National Army inspect weapons found by 20th Special Forces Group soldiers in Camkani, Afghanistan, May 2.



Video still by Pfc. Mary Simms

A Special Forces team leader is led to a hiding place of weapons and munitions in Afghanistan.



Spc. Melissa Harvey

Tip of the Spear

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Cover: A Civil Affairs captain conducts a search for suspected Taliban weapon caches in a Bahgron Valley compound in February to prevent the re-emergence of terrorist activities in Afghanistan. (Photo by Spc. Preston Cheeks)

and was not detained due to his cooperation with SF. The team recovered a 107mm rocket launcher with eight rockets, eight mortar rounds, 27 82mm recoilless rifle rounds and nearly 1000 rounds of 12.6mm ammunition.

“He actually led us to a place that would have been very, very difficult for us to find,” the team leader said. “These are all rounds that we can use back on the base, we have these weapons systems.”

Special Forces recovered 74 caches in Afghanistan since late January with leads from and the cooperation of local nationals. All recovered usable munitions go toward arming Afghan forces. U.S. Army explosive ordnance disposal teams destroy unusable munitions.

“We were glad that he cooperated,” the detachment commander said, “or it would have been a very long day.”



Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan personnel move across the southeast part of the country pulling security at the rear of a convoy. Part of the joint task force mission is to locate and secure Taliban-era weapons often found in rural areas.

Senior leadership visits SOF on the ground in *Afghanistan*



Gen. Doug Brown (right), commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, and Lt. Gen. Paul V. Hester, commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, are briefed on a recoilless rifle while on the ground visiting Special Operations Forces with Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan April 21. The trip to Afghanistan by USSOCOM's senior-most leadership was part of a weeklong personal visit with SOF and coalition assets deployed throughout the U.S. Central Command's theater of operations.



Command Chief Master Sgt. Bob Martens (right), senior enlisted adviser, is shown communications equipment at a forward operating base for Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan during April.



Vice Adm. Eric Olson (right), USSOCOM deputy commander, is briefed by members of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group during a February visit to Afghanistan.

Special Forces clinic treats Afghan citizens

By Sgt. Frank Magni
17th Public Affairs Detachment

For many in the Konar Province, Afghanistan, access to proper medical care is very limited. A lack of medical training and equipment within community clinics has prompted coalition forces to send their own medical personnel into communities to assist.

But in Konar Province, medical civilian aid projects are also being supplemented with an unconventional approach. The same clinic that treats coalition forces at this Special Forces A-camp leaves its doors open for Afghan citizens, as well.

The clinic—made up of a doctor, Special Forces medics, Navy and Marine corpsmen and interpreters—treats more than 100 patients a day. Open five days a week for sick call, the medics also stay on call around the clock for emergency care, either for military members or Afghans.

The rise in the clinic's popularity is simple, said Sgt. 1st Class Kyle Hill, a Special Forces medical sergeant in charge of the clinic assigned to 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne), headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. "We are the most definitive care facility in the area. We are much better supplied and much better trained than any clinic within hundreds of miles."

Konar Province, like many areas in Afghanistan, lacks the level of medical care many are accustomed to throughout the world. With the nearest equivalent medical care facilities in the neighboring country of Pakistan, a combination of crumbling roads, unpredictable weather and a high crime rate, make a journey to see a doctor a large undertaking.

"If a family had the means, it would take them one day of travel to see a doctor," said Hill.

With poverty still rampant in the area, injuries often go untreated, contributing to a high mortality rate prior to the clinic operation.

Able to handle everything from gunshot wounds and burns to motor vehicle and mine accidents, Hill said he and his team have seen a wide variety of injuries and diseases in their nine months in Afghanistan. "Everything in the book," he said. "Whether it is an arm or leg that's blown off, or passing out soap and tooth brushes, we don't have the luxury of practicing just one kind of medicine," said Capt. Brent Hale, the clinic's doctor and the 1st Bn., 19th SFG battalion surgeon.

Averaging two trauma cases a week, the clinic's team even has the ability to call in medical evacuation helicopters for more serious cases involving life, limb and loss of eyesight.

Malaria, upper respiratory infections, rare genetic disorders, liver disease and burns round out the laundry list of conditions the medical personnel in the clinic have encountered — burns being one of the more common injuries Hill and his team have seen in the prominently agricultural area.

Hill said he knows there are people in the community who still ignore their services because of the lack trust in coalition forces—something he tries to change with every new face in the clinic.

"They are very stern in presentation and are not vocally gracious and thankful," said Hill. "It's also very difficult to gain

A Special Forces medical sergeant cuts a cast off the arm of a young Afghan girl at a Special Forces medical clinic in the Konar Province. The girl was treated for her injury at the clinic and brought in by her father for follow-up care.

This clinic is the only one of its kind for at least 100 miles in every direction and treats more than 100 Afghan patients daily with moderate to severe ailments and injuries. Ten percent of the clinic's patients are Afghan women who previously had no access to health care.



their trust. This is because we are different, but not in a bad way.”

Hill’s secret in building relationships doesn’t come from his experience as a Special Forces medic or Soldier, but as a father.

“I use family pictures and stories,” he said. “I portray myself as a family man. If we don’t have anything else in common, we both love and take care of our families. I think everyone can understand this.”

Breaching the cultural gap at the personal level, Hill said he has built long-lasting relationships with repeat Afghan patients. To the point where many patients use his first name and even bring him gifts.

Aside from the success of the clinic, the medics also take part in medical capability exercises throughout the Konar Province. These MEDCAPs, keeping a focus on treatment, also allow the medics and corpsmen to do other things.

During his time here, Hill said the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan has provided medical equipment, generators, medical supplies and improved medical buildings throughout the province.

Hill estimates his team has treated several thousand patients in nine months. He admits that progress has sometimes been slow, but he points to a few indicators that show more people trust the coalition as an extension of the central government.

First, he has seen the number of women coming to the clinic rise exponentially. Haje Sharin, father of Wahida Maslim, said after his daughter was treated at the clinic, “Right now I feel like I’m in America, I’m so happy.”

Hill said this feedback keeps him going. “I feel like without my intervention on a few occasions, people would have died,” he said. “That and the thank you at the end make it all worth it.”

Spc. Melissa Harvey



A 20th Special Forces soldier treats a young Afghan boy with wounds from unexploded ordnance in Gardez, Afghanistan, May 5.

Special Forces medic volunteers for Afghanistan

*By Sgt. Frank Magni
17th Public Affairs Detachment*

Back in the United States, Dr. (Capt.) Brent Hale can normally be seen in a Harley Davidson T-shirt. His appearance normally doesn’t convey the fact that he is a doctor, let alone one that graduated from Harvard Medical School. Then again, a lot about him defies the norm, including his reasons for coming to the Konar Province, Afghanistan.

Hale, an ER doctor from the Midwest of the United States, served in Afghanistan for eight months as the battalion surgeon for 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group.

Temporarily leaving his family and a \$400,000-a-year job, Hale, a member of the Army National Guard, volunteered for his assignment in Afghanistan. “I make in a month here what I normally make in a weekend back in the States,” he said. But to him there is more to life than money, and serving as an Army doctor where he’s needed, is what he considers pay back.

Son of a Korean War veteran, Hale said his father would not have survived a war injury if it weren’t for a U.S. Army doctor.

He used duty as his motivation, not only to become a doctor, but also to serve in the Army. Hale said he likes the adventure, but most of all covets his opportunity to practice medicine in Afghanistan.

“I just feel it is my duty,” he said.

Since working in the Special Forces clinic in Konar Province, he said practicing medicine has become very rewarding.

Citing bureaucratic challenges with health maintenance organizations and a hospital overcrowded with doctors as some of drawbacks to being a doctor in the United States, he said Afghanistan offers him rare medical opportunities.

“Everyday I have new challenges. In this clinic, if you are the most highly-trained person to do something, you have to do it,” he said. “Many times I am that person. Over here you do what you can with what you got.”

But even the most highly trained doctor in the region needs a little help. Occasionally using what he’s got has meant calling colleagues back home for advice.

“There are many different cases,” he said. “I’ve learned so much.”

Although the facilities are not what he is used to, the conditions don’t deter him from his own high standards.

“You must always practice medicine at a high level,” he said. “I give the best possible treatment to every patient I see, whether it is here or at my home hospital.”

As Hale finishes his tour in Afghanistan, he said he is looking forward to seeing his family and taking back the lessons he has learned practicing medicine in Afghanistan.

Asked if he would do the whole thing over again, Hale responded with a resounding “yes.” In fact, when he returns to the United State he wants to volunteer for another assignment – Iraq.

Four special operators killed in Afghanistan

By Sgt. Maj. Keith Butler
CJSOTF-A Public Affairs

In a somber Memorial Day ceremony at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, May 31, the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan honored four service members who were killed May 29 in the southern part of the country.

Killed in action were three soldiers, Capt. Daniel W. Eggers, a Special Forces detachment commander; Pvt. 1st Class Joseph A. Jeffries, a Psychological Operations specialist; and Staff Sgt. Robert J. Mogensen, a Special Forces weapons sergeant. Petty Officer 1st Class Brian J. Ouellette, a U.S. Navy SEAL, was also killed in action.

About 300 members of the CJSOTF-A stood in formation under a flag at half-mast. The command sergeant major called roll call. While several answered “present,” four representatives answered on behalf of fellow service members who could not answer, echoing – “killed in action.”

“They didn’t back down from trouble,” the CJSOTF-A commander said of the warriors who spotted and tracked anti-coalition forces before rolling over a mine in their vehicle. “They put their lives on the line so our families can live in peace.”

The honored service members cherished their families, said friends. Jeffries, a newlywed, was known to light up a room when he entered.

“He wore a smile like it was part of his uniform,” said Jeffries’ commander citing from a group eulogy compiled by his fellow PSYOP troops. “(His wife) meant more to him than anything. He was excited to be a husband and more excited to be a dad. We’ll miss our brother always – but he will always be

CJSOTF - Afghanistan service members stand before one of four displays of rifles with head gear, this one with a green beret atop an M-4 rifle, with ID tags and boots set before it to symbolize fallen service members.



in our hearts and minds.”

The SEALs met before the ceremony to reflect on their teammate and refocus on their Afghanistan mission. The SEAL commander held up a piece of metal from the World Trade Center. The commander said Ouellette knew why he was in Afghanistan, as well, to bring security to this nation and rid the country of anti-coalition forces who attacked the WTC Sept. 11, 2001, and brutalized the Afghan people under Taliban rule.

“Brian was always a professional, whether filling sand bags or guarding the president of the United States,” said the SEAL commander.

The ceremony continued with “Taps,” sharp salutes, a prayer and folding of the colors. In honor of the special operators, the “Ballad of the Green Berets,” the “Army Song,” and “Navy Song” ended the ceremony attended by friends, generals and coalition force members.

But the ceremony did not mark an end.

“We stopped today to show honors to these heroes,” said the CJSOTF-A commander who said the “mission continues through great special operators willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.”

He said that his special operators would continue the fight undeterred. “We will maintain contact with the enemy.”

A CJSOTF-A honor guard salutes with rifles during the playing of ‘Taps.’



Chaplain works to rebuild Muslim mosques

By Sgt. Maj. Keith Butler
CJSOTF-A Public Affairs

A military chaplain is spreading good will in villages by working with local religious leaders in the Konar Province, Afghanistan, to refurbish and rebuild centerpieces of the Muslim society – mosques.

In six months, Chaplain (1st Lt.) Eric Eliason and local Muslim leaders worked hand in hand to secure funds and direct the rebuilding of nine mosques.

A Christian chaplain, Eliason overcame many of the initial Muslim leaders' feelings that Americans did not care for the Muslim faith primarily practiced here. Ultimately, both Muslims leaders and a Christian chaplain learned to respect one another's beliefs and build a bond of trust, while turning crumbling buildings into new structures for local Muslim followers to worship.

"That makes me feel excited to promote religious diversity," said Eliason, a National Guardsman who teaches in civilian life in the U.S. "I see the way religious tolerance and diversity work in the United States. Tolerance and having a faith makes for a peaceful society. The people here are learning that a Christian and a Muslim can get along fine."

Analogous to a local leader or pastor figure, the local Mullah, named Maseullah, actually looks at the chaplain as an equal and refers to Eliason — as "mullah," as well. Prohibited from attempt-



Afghans rebuild a mosque in the Konar Province with the help of Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan emergency funds and a military chaplain's support.

ing to convert Muslims to Christianity or interfering with the Islam faith, the two leaders focus on making mosques, a primary place of worship and occasional meeting place and sometimes schoolhouse for Muslim believers.

"Here a mosque is important in a community," Eliason said. "The guiding principle is to broadcast the love and enlighten people — that comes with worship regardless of the faith. All religions promote peace and harmony."

The mosques required restoration due to neglect and battle damage during the Taliban-era, said Maseullah through an interpreter.

The coalition forces brought aid to a place where it's needed most. Working with Special Forces and Civil Affairs personnel from the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-

Afghanistan, the chaplain used less than \$30,000 from what's known as Commander's Emergency Relief Program, or CERP funds from the coalition, money to restore the mosques. More than 40,000 Muslims in the surrounding area now have a suitable place to worship.

"That's a big bang for the buck," said Eliason. "Our common goal and Maseullah's goal is to stop Afghanistan from becoming a breeding ground for al Qaeda. It's hard for al Qaeda (or Taliban) to say that Americans are against Islam when we're building mosques."

Local Afghans hired to fit windows, make and lay bricks, and paint the structures complete the actual work. Along with mosques, the CJSOTF-A members and local Afghans are building a high school for the area and a

clinic. The number of children that will attend school will double and include boys, as well as girls, who were prohibited to study during the Taliban-era.

The rebuilding plan in the Konar Province is part of the central government's goal to reach its citizens in remote regions with coalition aid. "In the long term the stability we brought, the Afghan security forces we've trained and our work with the local people — that's what going to keep this a safe little prosperous valley," added Lt. Col. Marcus Custer, a coalition Special Forces commander from the CJSOTF-A.

"This is why I volunteered to come here," said Eliason, looking at the latest mosque, green and yellow paint still drying on the classic dome atop the structure. "People need and deserve peace."

Civil Affairs mission continues to grow in Iraq, Afghanistan

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

Winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi and Afghan people is much more than just a slogan for the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne).

The Army's only active-duty civil affairs battalion, based at Fort Bragg, N.C., focuses 24/7 on bridging the gap between U.S. and coalition forces and the local populations. It's a mission that continues in peacetime as well as war.

Maj. Don Sculli, executive officer for the battalion's Company C, said his most valuable tool in carrying out the job typically isn't his weapon or combat gear. "The most important thing you bring in may be your Rolodex," he said.

Civil Affairs teams support commanders on the battlefield, forming relationships with "movers and shakers" to gain cooperation and, ideally, support for the operation. Using their language skills and expertise about the local culture, they work with local governments and civilian aid organizations to rebuild infrastructure and restore stability.

In the war on terror, the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion made important inroads into the local populations. Unit members helped get power plants and other infrastructure in Iraq up and running. They got local power brokers to help them move excess military medical supplies to Iraqi medical facilities that had none.



Staff Sgt. Quinton Russ

Spc. Marlene Edior with the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, helps a young Iraqi girl learn proper dental hygiene techniques at the Al Uruba grade school in Baghdad, Iraq, May 10. Battalion members donated toothbrushes to the students.

In Afghanistan, they trained and armed a 295-man militia, set up a police force, provided much-needed medical care and personally built six schools with the first flushing toilets ever seen in the region. The list goes on and on.

On the surface, some might not see the military implications of these efforts, but unit members say they're considerable. Shortly after the ground war kicked off in Iraq, Sgt. 1st Class Keith Ducote, team sergeant for the battalion's Company B, said troops were getting "sniped at" in a village outside Baghdad. Ducote's team started handing out toys to children in the village to begin forming bonds with the people. But what really made the difference, he said, was when the team sponsored a dental hygiene class to teach about 300 local children how to brush and floss their teeth, then handed out dental kits.

After that, Ducote said, people within the village started approaching him to report where insurgents had hidden weapons. "Just about every cache of weapons we've found has been the result of someone coming forward," agreed Victor Anderson, a medic with the battalion's Company E.

Military leaders may have given the Civil Affairs mission relatively short shrift in the past, but no more. They've come to recognize the important role of civil and are incorporating civil-military operations into their battle plans from the earliest planning stages. Trained civil affairs staffs now are an integral part of every command staff.

"The words 'civil-military operations' are now in the Army lexicon," said Anderson. "It's not an afterthought anymore."

But just as the military is gaining a better appreciation for the value of Civil Affairs, the Army is finding itself stretched painfully thin in manpower to cover the demand.



Spc. Patrick Tharpe

Spc. Danielle Curtis, 401st Civil Affairs Battalion, demonstrates the proper way to apply a field dressing during a basic first aid class at the Mehry Girls School in Herat, Afghanistan, April 29.

Soldier earns Silver Star *USASOC Public Affairs Office*

An Army Special Forces Soldier killed April 11 during combat in Iraq was posthumously awarded the Silver Star, officials at U.S. Army Special Operations Command announced April 30.

Sgt. Maj. Michael B. Stack, a Special Forces company sergeant major assigned to Company C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Campbell, Ky., was awarded the medal for his valorous actions when his convoy came under attack during a patrol in Iraq.

Stack's Special Forces team was traveling from Baghdad to Al Hillah, Iraq, when they first came under fire. His vehicle was pulling rear security for the convoy. Stack began to fire upon the enemy so others in the kill zone could escape from the enemy fire.

Stack then led a security force into the kill zone to eliminate the remaining threat and allow for the safe evacuation of casualties. After the casualties were evacuated, Stack then prepared for a counterattack on the enemy position.

Stack manned a .50 caliber machine gun to cover the element's movement toward the

enemy position. Because of a damaged vehicle, the counter-attack was abandoned, so he directed a link-up with a nearby quick reaction force and returned to Forward Operation Base 52 to refit. Knowing that the element was in danger of being attacked, Stack began to lead the Soldiers in reinforcing their position.

That night, as their convoy moved toward Al Hillah, the Special Forces element was ambushed several times from several directions by a high volume of enemy fire in a multiple-kilometer kill zone.

In the midst of ambush, Stack remained calm and continued to direct fire upon the enemy while keeping control of his element and allowing other vehicles to maneuver to concealed positions.

The enemy began to concentrate fire on his vehicle. An explosion killed Stack instantly. Stack's personal sacrifice and courage allowed the remainder of the element to fight its way out of the ambush and ultimately, to survive the attack.



Sgt. Maj. Michael Stack

PSYOP product quells attacks in Baghdad

*By Sgt. 1st Class Rachel Davis
USSOCOM Public Affairs*

The Passport of Friendship, created by Maj. Allen McCormick of the 346th Psychological Operations Company, was developed last year to attract the attention of high value targets in Iraq, also known as the "top 55" senior leaders in the Saddam Hussein Regime. The product's purpose was to ease surrenders of the 55 leaders to coalition and U.S. forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The passport was originally called the Passport of Honor. Like all PSYOP products, the passport concept was pre-tested for effectiveness. It was reviewed by a senior Iraqi official while in American custody. His critiques implied that the name of the passport should be changed from the Passport of Honor to the Passport of Friendship. He also suggested to include the image of the Martyr's Memorial, a Iraqi religious site. These changes were implemented to better appeal to the

sense of honor of potential surrenders.

"Only members of the Iraqi Regime were allowed to carry passports. It symbolized importance," explained Lt. Col. Michael Ceroli, 8th PSYOP Battalion commander, with the 4th PSYOP

Group.

The passport proved successful Dec. 24, 2003, when Fadhil Mohammad Ahmed, also known as Maj. Gen. Galen, surrendered by using the product.

"He ended up with the passport because task force members captured his wife and released her with a copy to take to her husband," recalled Ceroli. "Ahmed liked the idea and was determined that he should be part of the solution and not part of the problem in Iraq."

"The significance of this event is remarkable," said Col. William Darley, public affairs officer, Combined Joint Task Force 7. "At the time of his surrender, Ahmed was responsible for coordinating all Former Regime Element attacks in the Baghdad area."

"Ahmed's surrender resulted in a serious decline in the region's violence," added Ceroli, who was the officer that signed the passport with Ahmed.

Products such as the Passport of Friendship are a series of initiatives created by PSYOP units as a means of communication to influence human attitudes and behavior.



Fadhil Mohammad Ahmed, also known as Maj. Gen. Galen, surrenders to members of Combined Joint Task Force 7 in Iraq with the Psychological Operations product called the Passport of Friendship, Dec. 24, 2003.

1st SOS loadmaster earns Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism in Iraqi Freedom

By Master Sgt. Michael Farris
353rd SOG Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Joshua Aldrich, a loadmaster with the 1st Special Operations Squadron, received the Distinguished Flying Cross in a ceremony at Kadena Air Base, Japan, Feb. 25.

The Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command Gen. Doug Brown presented the Air Force's eighth highest honor to Aldrich saying, "No other force on earth could have performed such a mission."

The loadmaster flew as part of a six-ship package of MC-130Hs infiltrating U.S. Army Special Forces troops into Bashur, Iraq, Mar. 22, 2003 – establishing the northern front. During three hours and 700 miles of grueling low-level flight at 250 feet, his aircraft plunged into one of the most murderous enemy engagements ever experienced by an MC-130H crew.

At one point, the planes crossed a ridgeline when an entire battalion of enemy anti-aircraft artillery and more than 30 guns opened fire. The sky lit up with tracers as Aldrich directed the pilots to maneuver the plane.

The Illinois native said the experience was both sobering and unforgettable.

"We knew we were flying into a war before we took off," he said. "Nobody was expecting a walk in the park."

Nonetheless, a split second of shock and horror gripped the crew when they realized the aircraft was a slow-flying prize, and the \$115 million Combat Talon II would be a great trophy for hundreds of Iraqi soldiers shooting at them.

"Almost immediately, our training kicked in," he said. "We train hard and stay so incredibly focused, it's difficult to find time to worry."

The crew maneuvered around the threats and delivered the troops to the objective. After returning to base, and

hours of debriefings, Aldrich said sleep was elusive.

"It took me a long time to fall asleep the next morning," he said. "At the time I didn't realize it – realize how close we were to cashing it in. But our job was to get these SOF operators into a landing zone. So that's what we did."

Due to Aldrich's quick actions, his aircraft received only minor battle damage, and the lives of 58 personnel on board were saved.

Aldrich is humbled at joining the small group of Flying Cross recipients, but said his thoughts and prayers are reserved for those who have died fighting and will never stand to receive their awards.

"We're a pretty tight community and the people are the best part of this job. No matter how complex or dangerous a mission is, it's always carefully planned out down to the finest details," he said. "I have the greatest confidence in the people around me — they are absolute special operations professionals. From maintainers to planners and support personnel, everyone's top-notch."

Brown praised the loadmaster and his fellow aircrew members flying in and around Iraq.

"This war on terrorism is serious business," he said. "The aircrews took heavy fire that night and it's important to

know their training took over when it had to. They were ready to carry out a dangerous mission when asked."

The Distinguished Flying Cross is presented for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. The act of heroism must be evidenced by voluntary action above and beyond the call of duty. The extraordinary achievement must result in an accomplishment so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set the individual apart from his comrades or from other persons in similar circumstances.



Staff Sgt. Joshua Aldrich

Renovated clinic fulfills long and short-term goals

*By Sgt. Dan Purcell and Pfc. Erik LeDrew
122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

"This is just the first step in a long road we will share together, to improve the people's lives in Iraq," said Lt. Col. Gary J. Volesky, commander 2nd Squadron, 5th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force 1st Armored Division, during reopening ceremonies for a neighborhood clinic in Sadr City, Iraq, March 27.

With a medical staff consisting of a doctor, a pharmacist and three nurses, the clinic serves a neighborhood of 4,500 people, said Capt. Jeff L. Hembree, Alpha Company, 478th Civil Affairs Battalion commander.

Once known as Saddam City, Sadr City is named for the Imam Mohammed Sadr, an Iraqi religious leader killed by Saddam Hussein. According to estimates, there are about two million people living there in a six-square mile district.

The clinic is located one of Sadr City's more impoverished neighborhoods.

"Proper medical care for Iraqis is a high-priority," said Hembree. "We only had to come out here to Sadr City to realize that improving this clinic would have a positive impact on the community."

About \$10,000 was invested into the clinic, he said. The clinic was closed for about six weeks for renovations, obtaining supplies and staff training.

Groundwork for the clinic's renovations was started by a German non-governmental organization called Anamur.

"My Civil Affairs guys have been working with Anamur on this. You need to give them credit because they were the ones who came in and really started this foundation," said Volesky. "We've just expanded on it."

Volesky said the existing work on the clinic was expanded by hiring Iraqi contractors to work on the refurbishing project.

Doing this fosters the goodwill of the people and helps build confidence, he said.

Immediately following the reopening of a refurbished clinic outside Sadr City, Iraq, mothers and children wait in line to be seen by the clinic's doctor.

Volesky said humanitarian projects such as this will be carried on into the future.

Civil Affairs aid in reopening Abu Ghraib primary school

*By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD*

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Armored Division, the 425th and 478th Civil Affairs Battalions, and members of the Abu Ghraib Municipal Council, celebrated the reopening of the Al Anef primary school in Abu Ghraib, March 25.

Renovations initiated by the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion four months ago are completed and classes are in session. The ribbon cutting ceremony signified the accomplishments made through American-Iraqi cooperation in the Abu Ghraib school district.

"I think these (events) are great," said Staff Sgt. William Smith, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion team leader. "Everybody says that Civil Affairs are supposed to win hearts and minds. I think that you have to start with the kids. They are the ones who are going to be the future of Iraq."

The renovations made to Al Anef school included fixing leaking roofs, installing a water source and providing new school supplies. The 1st Armored Division's Commanders' Emergency Response Program provided funds for the renovations and Iraqi contractors carried out the work.

The 414th, 425th and 478th Civil Affairs Battalions made periodic visits to the school to monitor the progress of the renovations.

Students gathered up in the school's courtyard to welcome the soldiers to their newly renovated school. A group of boys marched out and raised the Iraqi flag while other children sang the new Iraqi national anthem.

Following speeches by Smith and a representative from the school, everyone was invited inside for refreshments.

The school was badly damaged and in poor condition before the renovations began, said Ali Mohammed Kareem, Al Anef's principal. "(Renovations) to such a school are very difficult," he said. "But it is very different now. It is very nice."

With the help of programs like the renovation project at Al Anef, Iraqi children are ensured the possibility of a better future for themselves, he said. At the same time, cooperation between local Iraqi authorities and American soldiers can help foster relationships that will ensure a better future for Iraq.

"I am very pleased," said Sheik Saad Abaidkadum, chairman of the advisory council in Abu Ghraid and the Abu Ghraid municipal council. "Many schools have already been renovated by the Coalition Provisional Authority."

"Our relationship is based upon friendship," he said. "I hope the Iraqi people can be good friends to the Americans, allowing both peoples to cooperate for a democratic Iraq."



Iraqi children raise their country's flag during opening ceremonies for their primary school in Al Anef, Iraq.

Rear Adm. Maguire takes helm of NSWC

NSWC Public Affairs

Rear Adm. Joseph Maguire relieved Rear Adm. Bert Calland III as commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, during a change of command ceremony at Naval Base Coronado, Calif., March 12.

Maguire takes the helm at NSWC after serving as director, Center for Force

Structure, Resources, Requirements and Strategic Assessments, for Headquarters, United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Following his commissioning as an Ensign in 1974, Maguire began his naval career as a division officer in Deck Department aboard *USS Coronado*. Three years later, he began Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (sea, air, land) training and graduated as Honor Man of Class 93.

Maguire then began his special warfare career as platoon commander at Underwater Demolition Team 21. Other tours included Naval Special Warfare assignment officer and community manager at the Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington, D.C., commanding officer of Naval Special Warfare Center, and deputy commander of Naval Special Warfare Command.

"This is certainly a challenging and exciting time to lead our unique fighting forces who serve almost continually in harm's way," Maguire said. "Naval Special Warfare knows that our nation's and our community's focus is the war on terrorism and we will continue to be bold and aggressive in support of this campaign."

sive in support of this campaign."

During his 18-month tour as NSW commander, Calland successfully directed the SEAL and SWCC (Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen) communities in two major ongoing operations in the war on terror: Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq, which incorporated the most comprehensive use of NSW in history.

As the leader of the Navy's SEAL Teams,

Special Boat Teams, SEAL Delivery Vehicle Teams, and their training pipelines and supporting infrastructure, Calland forged a highly-effective combat force deployed worldwide and laid the foundation for the future of the NSW community for decades to come.

Calland's leadership ensured the flawless execution of essential missions, such as capturing Iraqi oil platforms in the Northern Arabian Gulf, clearing of two key waterways in southern Iraq, and removing mines and suicide boat units threatening the southern flank of coalition forces during OIF.

Calland's next assignment is associate director of Central Intelligence for Military Support, Central Intelligence Agency, McLean, Va.



Rear Adm. Joseph Maguire



Gen. Doug Brown, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, awards the Distinguished Service Medal to Rear Adm. Albert M. Calland III, during the NSW change of command March 12.

NSW salutes spouse sacrifice

*By Senior Chief Austin Mansfield
NSWC Public Affairs*

Deployments are part of life for Naval Special Warfare, and they've always been rough on families. While commands do all they can to ease some of the burden, the spouse left on the home front shoulders an incredible load. Deployments are even more difficult now as the hectic pace of the global war on terror has increased their duration and frequency.

Being a Navy spouse is often touted as the hardest job in the Navy, and rightly so. The decisions and responsibilities that are usually shared become a double burden

for the spouse at home. Bill paying, school events, shopping, car repairs, and all the other household duties that were joint efforts, fall on one person to handle for the duration of the deployment.

Add to that the additional wartime possibility that the spouse may be wounded or killed in action. While the overwhelming majority of NSW operators return home unscathed, there is always the chance that they may not. This is a risk that their spouses live with each day.

The decision to stay in the NSW community, whether SEAL (sea, air,

[See Spouse Sacrifice, page 14](#)



Lt. Cmdr. Chris Cassidy, center, answers questions during NASA's webcast at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., alongside fellow astronaut candidates, mission specialist Shannon Walker and pilot Jim Dutton. Cassidy, a member of SEAL Team 10 located in Virginia Beach, Va., was selected for NASA's Astronaut Program. The announcement was made during a Space Day ceremony hosted at the National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Va.

Navy SEAL selected to go to space

By Naval Special Warfare Group 2
Public Affairs Office

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration announced May 6 that Lt. Cmdr. Chris Cassidy, a Navy SEAL (sea, air, land) assigned to a locally based SEAL team, was selected for NASA's Astronaut Program. The announcement was made during a Space Day ceremony hosted at the National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Va.

Cassidy will join a diverse group of pilots, engineers and educators as "The Next Generation of Explorers," NASA's 2004 Astronaut Candidate Class. Cassidy has been selected to begin astronaut training this summer as a mission specialist at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

"I always had an interest in astronauts," Cassidy said, but it wasn't until he heard about another astronaut—Capt. Bill Shepherd, a Navy SEAL

himself, that his imagination was stirred and realized that he too had the possibility of going into space.

"I followed Capt. Shepherd's career and was inspired by him to be an astronaut," Cassidy said. Shepherd, like Cassidy, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and served with Virginia Beach-based SEAL teams and Special Boat Team 20. Shepherd was the commander of the first Space Station expedition.

Cassidy received the news of his selection to the astronaut program late April just days after returning from his second deployment in support of the global war on terrorism. He was awarded the Bronze Star after his first deployment for his efforts in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom as his platoon was sent forward shortly after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

As he begins making preparations to start a new

career, Cassidy said he feels honored to have had the opportunity to serve as a SEAL and along side some of the best warriors in the world. "I am going to miss the camaraderie that exists within the SEAL community. I will miss serving with these guys," he said.

Moving from an elite special operations group, he now looks forward to joining an elite group dedicated to the exploration of space.

"This will be a whole new adventure—a whole new unknown. I am excited about the chance to travel in space," Cassidy commented about joining NASA.

He will report for training June 14. Other astronaut candidates, like Lt. Cmdr. Cassidy, who do not have previous flight experience in high performance aircraft will travel to Florida for water survival training and flight training at Naval Air Station, Pensacola.

Once the new astronauts

are settled in Houston, they will begin the intensive training that will become the norm for their astronaut career. Initially, they will undergo land survival training, T-38 jet ground and flight training, Shuttle Orbiter systems training, Space Station systems training, science and engineering briefings, and orientation tours at all NASA centers, including the Kennedy Space Center and Marshall Space Flight Center. Cassidy will go through this training process for approximately 18 months, going from astronaut candidate to full-fledged astronaut.

Cassidy is from York, Maine. He graduated from the Navy Academy in 1993 and Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL School in April 1994 as part of class 192. He holds a master's degree in ocean engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Rear Adm. William H. Payne earns highest reserve rank for SEALs

By Jennifer Whittle

USSOCOM Public Affairs

Somebody had to be the first. With eleven years active duty, five successful commanding officer assignments, a master's



degree in government from Georgetown, and numerous joint tours of duty —Bill Payne set himself to be the first. Payne earned the highest rank yet achieved in the U.S. Naval Reserve SEALs (sea, air, land), as he pinned on rear admiral, lower half, April 1.

Returning for active duty last September as director of operations for the Center for Special Operations, USSOCOM, Payne oversees the warfighting and operational planning element of the headquarters.

"In my career I've had the opportunity to take a variety of challenging assignments which gave me a broad base of experience," he said. "I served three years in the Joint Staff J3, Special Operations Division, Combating Terrorism Branch, and 15 months with the J-5 deputy director of Political Military Affairs. I had multiple deployments and assignments in the Middle East and Far East. I also had the opportunity to be in the planning stages for Desert Storm, early operations in Bosnia and in Somalia, and helped the initial establishment of the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict."

It is this variety of experience that Payne recommends specifically to reservists. "The reserve officer has to be willing to do the hard job, be willing to travel—to commit," he said. "Some reservists get comfortable serving close to home. I encourage them to look for opportunities outside of their expertise to broaden their skills—get out there and meet those people who can make a difference in their careers."

With the star comes significant responsibility, said Payne. "It's a different perspective. Having recently been the one implementing changes, I am now part of the candid senior level discussions focusing on the future of special operations, it is enlightening."

Payne said that with the day-to-day focus at USSOCOM being the global war on terrorism, the days are long. "It is important that those in the field know that we are working very

hard here to support them," Payne stressed. "This headquarters is not an impediment—folks are 100% dedicated to help the warfighter."

"This is a long fight with a difficult enemy," Payne continued. "They adapt quickly to our changes in technology and tactics. We are responding with innovation. I'm confident we will evolve faster than them using our global presence, and capitalizing on the joint warfare skills we have honed since the stand up of USSOCOM."

The admiral emphasized his open door policy. "I encourage full and candid discussion from my staff on all issues, I want the complete picture so we can maximize help to our forces forward," he said.

Payne was commissioned in 1976 and reported to Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training. He served with SEAL Team One and Underwater Demolition Team 11. Payne also drafted the SEAL Cold Weather Operations Manual and was operations officer for Naval Special Warfare Unit One, Republic of the Philippines.

After joining the Naval Reserve, Payne entered law school in his home state at the University of New Mexico. He was recalled to active duty with the Joint Staff during Operation Desert Storm. He served as commanding officer of USSOCOM Detachment 108 from 1996 to 1998. His last assignment when selected for flag was as commander, Naval Special Warfare Command (Reserve).

After Payne completes his duty at USSOCOM, he will return to his duties as a state senator for New Mexico.

Spouse sacrifice, from page 12

land), SWCC (Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman), or technician, is a family one: it is not made by the Sailor alone. The job that NSW Sailors are doing is so important that despite the risks and loneliness, their spouses agree to continue to be part of this community. The NSW retention rate is remarkably high, and that is due to the willingness of spouses to endure the hardships involved.

"The most difficult part is seeing how much the kids miss their dad," said Lisa Lugo, whose husband recently deployed to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. "But knowing in my heart that he's doing the right thing makes it a little easier. I'm proud of what they're doing."

Naval Special Warfare appreciates the sacrifices spouses make to support their country during these difficult times.

"This tremendous effort, however, is not without its costs at home, and I am well aware of the daily sacrifices our spouses make," Maguire, commander NSWC, said. "Their unselfish support enables our SEALs, SWCCs, and technicians to remain fully focused on their mission."

Combat controllers play key role in war on terror

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

The largest class of future combat controllers is training at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., to provide critical skills required in the war on terrorism.

The current class of 32 students will help bolster the cadre of 360 combat controllers, or CCTs—Special Operations Forces who deploy quickly into restricted, often hostile territory, set up landing strips, and guide in helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft.

The new CCTs will provide a wide range of support during combat operations, including controlling air traffic, setting up drop zones and calling in air strikes, said Master Sgt. Tim Tennant, director of operations for the Combat Control School.

“We’re the air-to-ground link,” said Tech. Sgt. Robert Boulanger, noncommissioned officer in charge of the course.

“We talk Air Force language to SEALs and Soldiers on the ground. It allows us to get more airpower into a theater of operations in a (shorter) amount of time.”

Like most of his fellow combat controllers, Boulanger has deployed frequently to support the war on terrorism—three times to Afghanistan and once to Iraq. He said he was the 13th person to jump from the first U.S. aircraft into Afghanistan in October 2001, just one month after terrorist attacks. “I was still angry,” he said.

During Boulanger’s first four-month mission to Afghanistan, he established an airhead to support combat operations and identified where the enemy was to direct U.S. military ordnance onto key Taliban and al Qaeda targets.

“It was a combination of precision-guided munitions and a guy on the ground telling them where they need to go,” he said.

During his deployment to Iraq for the first three months of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Boulanger was attached to a Navy SEAL team providing a liaison between the air and ground forces.

Well-versed on the real-life demands on combat controllers, Boulanger said he strives to instill in his students the physical and mental skills needed to do the job.

Before starting the 13-week school at Pope, students complete the 15-week Air Force Air Traffic Control School at Keesler AFB, Miss. They also attend the three-week Army Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga., and the three-week Air Force Basic Survival School at Fairchild AFB, Wash.

The training at Pope focuses on field training, demolitions, battlefield communications, land navigation and small-unit tactics. It culminates with a field exercise that requires them to set up drop zones and landing zones, establish a runway and direct in an aircraft, all within strict timeframes.

Boulanger said the school’s intensive fitness standards ensure that CCTs can carry communications equipment and other gear in rucksacks that often exceed 100 pounds. They frequently move long distances with other SOF.

“You have to be in great shape to keep up and not be a liability,” Boulanger said. “Sometimes you’re leading and sometimes you’re following,” Boulanger said. “You have to be able to do both.”

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld praised combat controllers’ dedication during a visit to the school in December. He said, “(It) produces some of the finest warriors in the Air Force and the armed services.”

Rumsfeld said that some 85 percent of the air strikes in Operation Enduring Freedom were called in by Air Force CCTs—a testament, he said, to the quality of the training they receive and the Airmen’s courage and skills.

Today’s CCTs carry out far more diverse missions than envisioned when they were established as Army Pathfinders during World War II. These parachute infantrymen, trained in air traffic control, first earned their stripes in 1943 when they used radios, smoke pots and flares to mark the way for 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers jumping into Salerno, Italy.

Since then, Army Pathfinders—which became Air Force combat controllers after the Air Force was established in 1947—expanded their missions to include navigation aid and air traffic control. Now they are an integral part of a huge percentage of U.S. military combat, humanitarian assistance and other missions.



Staff Sgt. Jeremy T. Lock

A combat controller walks back to his teammates after practicing firing movements at an undisclosed location during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Seminar focuses on recruiting operational weather airmen

By Capt. Denise Boyd
AFSOC Public Affairs

The Air Force Special Operations Command weather directorate hosted a Special Operations and Airborne Weather Familiarization and Recruiting Seminar, March 3-5 at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

The first of its kind, the seminar was focused at members of the four continental United States operational weather squadrons: the 15th Operational Weather Squadron at Scott Air Force Base, Ill.; the 28th Operational Weather Squadron

at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., the 26th Operational Weather Squadron at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and the 25th Operational Weather Squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. Five Airmen from Shaw and Scott were selected to attend this seminar.

According to Lt. Col. Michael Davenport, chief, operational weather division, AFSOC, combat weather recruiting efforts have not produced enough volunteers to fill enlisted vacancies.

“Special operations weather team manning has been critically low for many

years, so we’re doing all we can to identify and recruit the right kind of Airmen to fill our shortages. We require skilled weather technicians who can also become highly proficient in battlefield Airman ‘shoot, move, communicate’ tactical skills,” he said.

Enlisted manning in both SOWT and Army airborne weather support is under 70 percent and has been hovering around this level for years.

During the seminar, the Airmen were given the opportunity to interact with Special Operations Weathermen from the 10th Combat Weather Squadron who participated in combat operations during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. They also received familiarization training in Special

Operations infiltration techniques, airborne operations and land navigation.

Airman 1st Class Jackie Miller, a weather forecaster at the 28th OWS, was the only female to attend the seminar. Women may only be assigned to Air Combat Command airborne combat weather teams.

“This recruiting trip was a great motivator,” she said. “You only get so much about airborne combat weather from reading books and stories. After hearing their experiences, and seeing what they do, I can see how much they enjoy their jobs, and it makes the specialty a lot more real to me.”

For Airman 1st Class Trevor Killip, weather forecaster from the 15th OWS, it was the challenge and adventure of the job that prompted his interest in special operations weather.

“It appears to be a much faster-paced career than my current assignment, and I really enjoy the camaraderie I’ve experienced while visiting Hurlburt,” he said. “The combat weather job satisfaction has got to be unbelievable.”

“We designed the orientation program to show Airmen the reality of SOWT and jump weather,” said Davenport. “We hope that by giving attendees ‘hands-on’ interaction on a small portion of SOWT tasks, they would gain a realistic understanding of the AFSOC and Army airborne missions, that they would return to their home units better able to prepare for the training challenges ahead of them, and they would become our best salesmen among their peers after they return to their home station.”

Officials hope to hold recruiting seminars at least twice a year. Personnel interested in combat weather must attain their five-level upgrade training prior to being assigned to a combat weather unit. Individuals interested in applying should contact Chief Master Sgt. Mark Campbell, AFSOC/DOW, at DSN: 579-2145.



Senior Master Sgt. Andy Hopwood, 10th Combat Weather Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla., demonstrates the AN/PSC-5 Spitfire Radio to Airman 1st Class Russell Beye, regional forecaster, 15th Operational Weather Squadron, Scott Air Force Base, Ill., during the Special Operations and Airborne Weather Familiarization and Recruiting Seminar at Hurlburt Field, March 5. Special operations weathermen use the radio to pass observations, forecasts and imagery to and from forward locations.

Capt. Denise Boyd

Talon II effort begins Cobra Gold 2004

By Master Sgt. Michael Farris
353rd SOG Public Affairs

The sky over this rural northern city was filled with parachutes May 13 as an MC-130 Combat Talon II crew flew more than seven hours of airdrop missions in support of Cobra Gold 2004 in Phitsanulok, Thailand.

Aircraft commander Capt. Trevor Benitone, a pilot with the 1st Special Operations Squadron, Kadena Air Base, Japan, said his crew put forth extraordinary effort in providing the platform for 181 static line jumpers and 42 freefall jumpers from U.S. and Thai forces.

"I've dropped 180 personnel before, but this is my first time reaching 200 in one day. It took a lot of hard work to finish this job," he said.

Benitone and six other crewmembers flew 18 passes over drop zones. At one point the troop compartment was reconfigured to switch from ramp jumps to door jumps.

"Except for the volume, this was a fairly typical friendship drop mission," Benitone said. "The intent is to establish a baseline training regimen. It allows each jumper to establish currency and qualification."

The captain said initial phases of most exercises are designed to breed familiarity with the aircrew and the jumpers. When procedures are completely seamless, the mission profiles can become more robust.

In addition to providing a training opportunity to the jumpers, the Talon II crew also satisfied a few training requirements of their own—such as night mountain low-level flight and assault landings with night vision goggles.



Master Sgt. Michael Farris

Staff Sgt. Jeremy Troia, 1st Special Operations Squadron loadmaster, opens the troop door at 1,250 feet over Phitsanulok, Thailand.

Benitone said the biggest challenges to the drop mission were having only one airplane, language barriers and the setting sun. The crew began their duty day at 8 a.m. and landed well after dark at their maximum limit.

Benitone is participating in his third Cobra Gold. He said the training for aircrews in Thailand is fantastic because of the good low-level mountain training, uncongested air traffic environment and the opportunity to work with counterparts from other nations.

Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled joint-combined exercise and is designed to improve U.S., Thai, Singaporean, Mongolian and Filipino combined readiness and joint interoperability, enhance security relationships, and demonstrate U.S. resolve to support the security and humanitarian interests of our friends and allies in the region.

Reservist earns Pitsenbarger Award

AFSOC Public Affairs

A reservist from Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., has been named the 2004 Pitsenbarger Award winner.

Senior Master Sgt. Dale Berryhill, an MC-130 airborne communications systems operator with the 711th Special Operations Squadron, was selected for his heroism while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Berryhill was a crewmember aboard an aircraft about 50 miles northeast of Baghdad when a fire erupted. The flames and smoke quickly engulfed the cargo compartment and flight deck of the aircraft, filling the aircraft with toxic fumes and creating a hazardous situation.

While other crewmembers donned their personal protective gear, Berryhill recognized the dire situation and unhesitatingly reacted to immediately control the fire. He then discharged the halon fire extinguisher at the source of the inferno with no personal protective gear. His actions ensured the safety of the crew and the aircraft, according to Lt. Col. Kenneth Ray, 711th SOS commander, who nominated Berryhill for the award.

Berryhill then relayed in-flight emergency calls; successfully managing five different radio nets simultaneously while ensuring all incoming air traffic and the landing area were clear. When his aircraft was engaged by small arms and

rocket propelled grenades upon landing, he displayed amazing situational awareness when he relayed pin-point coordinates to the 3rd Infantry Division, according to Ray.

"I just did my job," Berryhill said. "There were nine other people on that airplane that night and it took all of us doing something right to survive, and get us all back safely. Fortunately, we had an experienced crew that night."

The Air Force Sergeant's Association gives the Pitsenbarger Award annually to an Air Force enlisted member for heroic acts, on or off duty, that save a life or prevent serious injury.

Medals of Honor

Special Operations Forces recipients visit U.S. Special Operations Command to be honored on 'Valor Day'



Special Operations Forces who received the Medal of Honor gather with Commander Gen. Doug Brown at the SOF Memorial, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., May 11 in commemoration of 'Valor Day.' Shown left to right are retired Sgt. Maj. Jon Cavaiani, retired Col. Joe Jackson, retired Col. Ola Mize, retired Maj. Drew Dix, Brown, retired Col. Bernard Fisher, Sgt. Gary Beikirch, retired Col. Robert Howard and retired Col. Roger Donlon. Mize earned his Medal of Honor in the Korean War. The other seven service members earned theirs during the Vietnam War.

Tech Sgt. Norma Martinez

Years ago in their youth, these eight military men deployed to the other side of the world to fight a war for their nation. They found themselves in severe combat where the conditions were terrible and the odds for survival were low. It was there that these particular men achieved beyond what was expected of them.

Their actions under fire were to save the lives of others—a combat control team, a nurse, civilians or fellow servicemen. These eight men are special operators and earned the Medal of Honor—the nation’s highest decoration for valor—and stood before their president of the United States to receive it. And some of them were sent right back to war.

Special Operations Forces Medal of Honor recipients were personally invited to the U.S. Special Operations Command by Commander Gen. Bryan Doug Brown in May to be recognized for their heroism during a ceremony at the SOF Memorial on a day that Brown christened “Valor Day.” The ceremony kicked off the command’s annual SOF Week, Advanced Planning Briefings to Industry and SOF-specific technology vendor exhibits in downtown Tampa, Fla., May 11-13.

Brown addressed hundreds of Headquarters personnel and special operators during the warm morning ceremony. “Today we are extremely fortunate to be honoring our special operations Medal of Honor heroes,” he said. “But it is the members of USSOCOM and this community that are truly honored by their presence here at MacDill.

“We have 35 portraits that hang in our Hall of Heroes and we have eight of those men here with us today,” Brown went on. “A hero is marked purely by his achievement and these men are real heroes—heroes that were needed by our nation, heroes that were needed by fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines.” Brown then welcomed the heroes home—to the U.S. Special Operations Command.

The general said that heroism doesn’t have a starting or stopping point, that the United States of America was built on the shoulders of heroes just like these eight special operators.

Quoting S.L.A. Marshall’s book *Men Against Fire*, Brown said the basic principle in the Soldier’s psychology is that he is sustained by his fellows primarily, and by his weapons secondarily. “Warriors fight for each other first and our SOF heroes are no exception. Each of their stories are amazing.”

Like the story of retired Col. Ola Lee Mize. He earned his MOH in the Korean War, June 1953, when he returned three times to his position after grenade blasts to repel hostile attacks. Then-Master Sgt. Mize continued to lead his men from bunker to bunker, neutralize enemy positions, save the life of a fellow soldier in hand-to-hand combat, and then proceeded to kill 10 of the enemy to regain a machine gun position—all while he distributed ammunition and shouted words of encouragement to his men.

“No reaction force could get to us any way,” Mize modestly said. “And I attribute my being alive to God, tremendous training, and the good men assigned to me.”

Then there is retired Col. Roger Donlon who earned his MOH in July 1964 in the Republic of Vietnam. His citation states that he



Command Chief Master Sgt. Bob Martens (right) laughs with Medal of Honor recipient retired Col. Joe Jackson during a reception that welcomed Jackson and seven other Special Operations Forces Medal of Honor recipients to Tampa, Fla., May 10.

inspired his men to “superhuman” levels. Then-Capt. Donlon was commander of a Special Forces detachment where hostile forces initiated a full-scale predawn attack on his camp. Donlon secured ammunition and weaponry over and over again. He dragged a 60mm mortar weapon 30 meters away through heavy gunfire and falling grenades while suffering from a severe stomach wound. He successfully led his men through the violent five-hour battle and sustained a total of three serious wounds. His amazing courage, leadership and fortitude resulted in defense of the camp.

“I rarely talk about the actions that day,” Donlon said. “I have a military family. I tried to quit school to join the Army when I was 17 and was told by my older brother, ‘Stick to your job—school. Your time will come.’

“Being one of 10 children, and my father died when I was 12, I learned there is always someone in charge and to stick to the mission. I tell special operators out there now: stay the course.”

Retired Sgt. Maj. Jon Cavaiani also received the MOH in Vietnam. “This staff sergeant rallied his platoon in a desperate fight for survival,” Brown explained Cavaiani’s circumstances in June 1971. “He purposely exposed himself to heavy fire to protect his men, and he kept the enemy at bay with small arms and hand grenades. Those who survived last saw him standing with a machine gun spraying two columns of advancing enemy soldiers and they reported his heroic death.”

But Cavaiani survived and evaded capture for eleven days before being taken as a POW.

“You know, there are some things you cannot put into words,” said retired Col. Joe Jackson about his actions that earned him the MOH in Vietnam, May 1968. “Things happen and you react. It is a result of training and it was a matter of minutes. It was a ‘roger, we’re going in’ kind of thing.”

Then-Lt. Col. Jackson served as a pilot of a C-123 aircraft. He volunteered to rescue a three-man Combat Control Team from a Special Forces camp being overrun in Kham Duc. Jackson landed his bird on a debris-riddled airstrip in bad weather and under intense hostile fire to retrieve the men. Then he had to get the aircraft off the ground, again under intense fire.

Continued next page

Valor Day from page 19

"I was just doing my job," Jackson said. "To get the MOH for doing my job was really humbling. My mother taught me to do the right thing. And I always tried."

Sgt. Gary Beikirch served in the 5th Special Forces Group in April of 1970 when he distinguished himself above and beyond the call of duty. "In spite of a devastating enemy attack," detailed Brown, "this sergeant moved without hesitation through a hail of fire to recover fallen comrades, not once, not twice, but three times. During his efforts he sustained serious injuries due to mortar fragments. But he refused treatment and continued to search for other casualties until he collapsed."

Maj. Drew Dix was personally responsible for saving the life of a young nurse and other civilians in Vietnam, January 1968, during the Tet Offensive. "Two heavily armed Viet Cong battalions attacked the city of Chau Phu resulting in a complete breakdown and fragmentation of the defenses of the city," his citation reads.

On his own accord, then-Staff Sgt. Dix assembled a team of Vietnamese troops to rescue a young nurse trapped in a house in the city. He chose to go back into the city to rescue more civilians the next day. The third day, Dix again returned to the city, this time with a 20-man force and under heavy mortar and small-arms fire he cleared the enemy from the central hotel, theater and other buildings. In the end, Dix and his men captured 20 prisoners.

He said when he earned his MOH that he felt anyone with his training who knew about the civilians being trapped in the city would have done the same thing. "I am very pleased the young nurse lived," Dix said. "She has a family now."

Col. Bernard Fisher was given the Medal of Honor for his actions in Vietnam, March 1966. "(Then-Maj. Fisher) flew a propeller-driven A-1 Skyraider to a Special Forces camp on the verge of being overrun," Brown explained. "While enroute, he rescued a fellow Air Commando pilot he believed to be in imminent danger of capture after crash landing. Under arduous conditions and severe enemy ground fire, with 19 bullets striking his aircraft, he rescued the downed pilot."

And there's Col. Robert Howard who served five tours in

Vietnam. "During one, (then-Sgt. 1st Class Howard) saved his platoon against a force of about 250 North Vietnamese—despite wounds from a mine, he killed an enemy flamethrower and several others enabling his platoon to survive," Brown said.

"You can't help but have memories," Howard said about that December day in 1968. "A young kid was with me, Alexander. He had an M60, an asbestos glove on and magazine belts around his neck. After four hours of fighting, we must have taken out 30 or 40 Viet Cong. I later found him laying over three dead Vietnamese soldiers. He was dying. I tried to make him comfortable. He looked up at me, smiled with blood in his mouth, and said, 'we whooped 'em, sarge.' He died right then."

"So many battles," Howard went on, "and in every one the overriding concern was for my fellow Soldiers."

It is the same on the battlefields today in the Middle East said Brown.

"Now we are fighting the global war on terrorism and this generation's heroes are on the battlefield," Brown said. "I recently returned from Afghanistan and Iraq. I've seen the look, the dedication in the eyes of our warriors. They're ready. They're committed. Heroes like Rangers Pat Tillman and Marc Anderson and many others speak volumes on the commitment of our men and women in today's military to this nation. Those who might challenge us in the future would be making the same mistake of all our other defeated adversaries. As our SOF heroes have seen firsthand, the price of freedom is enormous, but essential to protect what we cherish."

The Joint Service Color Guard posted the colors for the Valor Day ceremony, both the Robinson High School band and chorus performed, and the sobering notes of "Taps" echoed through the memorial walls in memory of all special operators

who lost their lives in the global war on terrorism. Many wiped tears remembering family, friends and comrades.

The Command Parachute Team demonstrated a flawless airborne operation exhibiting one of the many refined skills that are second nature to special operators. Brown also uncovered an engraved plaque dedicated to all SOF fighting the global war on terrorism that will become a permanent part of the memorial.

The plaque reads, "Dedicated to ALL Special Operations Forces who have bravely answered the nation's call to duty and have served to protect its citizens and its freedoms during the ongoing global war on terror. May God bless America and all the SOF 'Quiet Professionals.' Dedicated in the presence of SOF Medal of Honor recipients on SOF Valor Day, May 11, 2004."

The SOF Memorial displays the engraved names of all special operators who were killed in action or training since the inception of the force. The stone walls also present the names of the 35 SOF Medal of Honor recipients. The Valor Day ceremony marked the addition of more names—names of SOF personnel who recently made the ultimate sacrifice fighting terrorism.



The plaque shown above was dedicated to all Special Operations Forces who served and continue to serve in the global war on terrorism and was uncovered during a Valor Day ceremony at the SOF Memorial May 11. The plaque will become a permanent part of the memorial.

SOF Week 2004

Tabata earns Bull Simons Award

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Earnest Tabata smiles upon receiving the coveted Bull Simons award from USSOCOM Commander Gen.

Doug Brown during Special Operations Forces Week 2004 in Tampa, Fla., May 12. Tabata is the first enlisted service member to receive the acclaim. He served in every active duty special forces group and is an icon within the special operations community. At 74 years old Tabata is still airborne and continues to impact the SOF community by teaching all Special Forces engineers their trade at the school house at Ft. Bragg, N.C.



Excalibur Award

Senior Chief Petty Officer Stephen C. Bass (SEAL) receives the Excalibur Award of Excellence May 12 during the SOF Mess Night. The award was established to recognize enlisted individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, gallantry, integrity and moral courage and has only been awarded two other times since its inception. In eight and a half months, Bass conducted over 100 special reconnaissance, direct action, counter narcotics, support and influence, and humanitarian affairs missions throughout Afghanistan.



SOF Week ladies

Former first lady Barbara Bush visits the United States Special Operations Command during Special Operations Forces Week and takes a photograph with Commander Gen. Doug Brown's wife Penny. Bush was the keynote speaker for the spouses luncheon at the Officers' Club May 13.



USASOC unveils new modified Chinook helicopter MH-47G

By Kelly Tyler

160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne)

Army Special Operations Forces received their first MH-47G Chinook helicopter during a rollout ceremony at aircraft manufacturer Boeing's compound at Ridley Park, Pa., May 6.

The military's newest rotary-wing airframe, updated and better equipped than its Chinook predecessors, will be flown exclusively by the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne),

headquartered at Fort Campbell, Ky.

To kick off the event, an older MH-47D model flew directly over thousands of Boeing employees who had gathered to watch the ceremony.

Landing nearby, the Chinook discharged its cargo of three special operations Soldiers and a Ground Mobility Vehicle, which rolled slowly across the flight ramp as the door to a hangar opened and the new

asset for your armed forces."

The MH-47 is more than just an airframe, Shanahan said.

"The design and manufacturing of this aircraft (have) been a labor of love and a model of working together," he said. "Teamwork has characterized our program from the start."

Lt. Gen. Philip R. Kensinger Jr., commander of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, N.C., also spoke to the crowd.

The general reminded those gathered – civilian and military – that the aircraft itself is secondary.

"As magnificent as this aircraft is, it is only as good as the people who design it, build it, fly it and support it," Kensinger said.

Kensinger told the gathered Boeing workers that anyone who contributed to the construction of the aircraft was also contributing to victory in the global war on terrorism.

"The equipment (the 160th SOAR flies) is what gets the boots on the ground to fight," Kensinger said. "It is also the equipment that gets them back safely to their families."

The event was more than just a presentation of USASOC and Boeing's newest collaboration. It also gave the Boeing workers a chance to understand the role of the MH-series aircraft, and it allowed those workers to speak directly to Soldiers who have been affected by the capabilities of the MH-47. Workers and guests checked out both the older "D" model and the newest "G" model following the ceremony, speaking with aviation crew members as well as members of a Special Forces operational detachment.

"This is a great bunch of guys," said John Williams, flight engineer for Boeing. "We want them to be well-protected up there," he said. "I feel better knowing these guys have the best equipment there is."

The MH-47G has capabilities not found on any other rotor-wing aircraft in the world. Its specialized mission equipment includes: multi-mode radar that permits terrain following and terrain avoidance in all climatic conditions; a Common Avionics Architecture System-equipped cockpit that enhances joint operability and pilot situational awareness; next generation forward-looking infrared, or FLIR; M-134 Gatling "miniguns" and M-240D machine guns for increased defensive firepower; advanced, integrated aircraft survivability equipment; and oversized main fuel tanks.

The Army approved the purchase of 61 MH-47G airframes. Procurement and distribution will continue through fiscal year 2011.



Kelly A. Tyler

Special Forces Soldiers stand near the new MH-47G during the rollout ceremony May 6 at the Boeing plant in Ridley Park, Pa.

brand-new MH-47G rolled out.

Patrick Shanahan, vice president and general manager for Boeing Rotorcraft Systems, then handed the first set of symbolic "keys" to the modified aircraft to Chief Warrant Officer Andrew Sentiff and Staff Sgt. Michael Luna, both of the 160th SOAR.

"All of us at Boeing are extremely proud of the Chinook and its record of service with the U.S. Army, Army special operations and our allies around the world for more than four decades," Shanahan said. "The Chinook's unique capabilities show clearly why the Chinook is and will continue to be a central warfighting



President Bush reacts to cheers from Soldiers, their families and civilian employees at Fort Campbell, Ky., as Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division commander, introduces him during the president's March 18 visit. Visible on the president's front right is the insignia of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command sewn onto his jacket.

Donna Miles

President visits, thanks SOF

By Sgt. Kyle J. Cosner
USASOC Public Affairs

President Bush visited thousands of Soldiers at Fort Campbell, Ky., March 18 on the eve of the anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom, singling out among them hundreds of Army special operations troops who he credited with helping to free the oppressed citizens of two nations during the global war on terrorism.

Both the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) were lauded by the president during his remarks, which were delivered inside a sea of 101st Airborne Division and special operations combat veterans gathered to hear the commander in chief's thoughts on their wartime service.

"I am proud to be here once again with the Screaming Eagles of the 101st ... with

the Green Berets of the 5th Special Forces Group ... and with the Night Stalkers (of the 160th SOAR)," the president said.

"Many of you have seen action in the global war on terror," he continued. "Some of you have just returned to Fort Campbell from your deployments. Thank you for a job well done.

"You have delivered justice to many terrorists, and you're keeping the rest of them on the run," Bush said to thunderous applause. "You've helped to remove two of the most violent regimes on Earth. With daring and skill and honor, you've held true to the Special Forces motto: to liberate the oppressed."

Bush thanked the 101st and Special Operations Forces for their resolve over the past year, since they first entered Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein's rogue regime.

"One year ago tomorrow, the armed

forces of the United States entered Iraq to end the regime of Saddam Hussein," he said. "After his years of defiance, we gave the dictator one final chance. He refused. And so in one year's time, Saddam Hussein has gone from a palace, to a bunker, to a spider hole, to jail. Because America and our allies acted, one of the most evil, brutal regimes in history is gone forever."

Bush told the service members he knew they'd been among the busiest, from ousting the Taliban in Afghanistan together during Operation Enduring Freedom to cornering Saddam's sons Uday and Qusay in Mosul, Iraq last year.

"Fort Campbell was the first Army post I visited in the weeks after our country was attacked," he said. "Since we last met, the sons of the dictator went into hiding, until they were found and dealt with by the 101st and special operations.

"Like your fathers and grandfathers before you, you have liberated millions from oppression," Bush said just before concluding his speech. "You've added to the momentum of freedom across the world. You have helped keep America safe. You make us all proud to be Americans, and you have made me proud to be your commander in chief."

'Father of Special Forces' dies at age 101

USASOC Public Affairs

The man most often credited with founding the U.S. Army Special Forces died April 1 at his home in Dana Point, Calif., at the age of 101.



Retired Army Col. Aaron Bank, known throughout the military's special operations community as "The Father of Special Forces," died of natural causes with his family at his side.

Bank most notably broke new ground when in 1952 he was named commander

of the Fort Bragg-based 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) — the Army's first official special warfare unit, for which he led the fight to create.

The announcement of Bank's death has been difficult news for Green Berets around the world, said Special Forces spokesman Maj. Robert Gowan.

"Col. Bank's passing marks a sad day for the Special Forces regiment," Gowan said. "Col. Aaron Bank was a legend. His initiative and vision allowed the Army to create the U.S. Army Special Forces as we know them today, and every Special

Continued next page

Tiger Woods visits USASOC

By Spc. Jennifer J. Eidson

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

Golf superstar Tiger Woods got a taste of special ops at Fort Bragg, N.C., when he got a firsthand look at what it takes to be a U.S.

Army Special Operations Command Soldier.

Woods began a five-day visit with airborne and special operations Soldiers April 12. He spent April 13-14 watching, learning and participating in a variety of special operations demonstrations, ranges, and training with Special Forces Soldiers, Rangers and Psychological Operations Soldiers.

Army special operations is a topic of great interest to Woods—his father, Earl Woods, once served with the now-deactivated 6th Special Forces Group (Airborne)—and he made that clear to the Soldiers of the U.S. Army Special Operations Support Command (A) before they all took off for a run on an unusually cold morning April 14.

“My father used to be stationed here with 6th Group, and you’ve given me the chance to basically see what my father used to do,” Woods said. “It is an honor and a privilege.”

Woods put down his golf clubs for a piece of the action out on Special Forces demonstration and training ranges.

At the ranges, Woods shot a variety of weapons and got a look at the equipment and training special operations Soldiers need to conduct their missions.

After the demonstrations, Woods told the Soldiers in attendance he was grateful to them for allowing him to get a glimpse of how they do their jobs.

“Thank you for letting me come out here and letting me be a part of your world,” Woods said. “I keep telling my dad that if I wasn’t introduced to golf, I would be right here following in his footsteps.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Kocher of the 7th Special Forces Group (A) told Woods he was glad the golfer could take the time to visit with the special operations Soldiers.

“The fact that you are here tells all of us...that you support what we do,” Kocher said. “We want to simply thank you for coming and showing that you care.”

At the range, Woods told the Soldiers that he understands the sacrifices they have made for the country and appreciates what they do on a daily bases.

During the visit, Woods and his father visited the Special Forces Association headquarters in nearby Fayetteville, N.C., to spend time with retired Soldiers who’d served alongside the senior Woods in the 1960s and 1970s at Fort Bragg and in Vietnam.

Woods held a free golf clinic for children of Department of Defense employees April 16 at Stryker Golf Course before getting back to the professional golf circuit.

Col. Bank, from previous page
Forces Soldier in the Army will
mourn his death.”

Born Nov. 23, 1902, in New York City, Bank traveled extensively in Europe and became fluent in French and German before entering the U.S. Army in 1939.

In 1943, after completing Officer Candidate School, Bank volunteered for duty with the Office of Strategic Services and was assigned to a Jedburgh team—a small, first-of-its-kind unconventional warfare outfit. Bank and his Jedburgh team made a combat parachute jump into Southern France in August 1944, where they successfully employed hit-and-run tactics to harass Nazi forces withdrawing up the Rhone River.

After World War II ended, the OSS was disbanded, but Bank and Col. Russell Volckmann, another OSS operative, both remained in the military and worked to convince the Army to adopt an unconventional, guerrilla-style force. They found an ally in Brig. Gen. Robert McClure, who at the time headed the Army’s psychological warfare staff at the Pentagon.

Special operations, as envisioned by the two men were a force multiplier. It was a bold idea that went against the grain of traditional concepts, but by 1952 the Army was ready to embark into a new era of warfare. After months of preparation, the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) was activated at Fort Bragg, N.C., with Bank as its commander.

When activated, the strength of the group was 10 Soldiers, but that would change, and more than 50 years later, the nearly 10,000 Soldiers of the U.S. Army Special Forces Command (Airborne) continue to sustain the fight that Bank began at the opening of the Cold War.



Gillian Albro

Golfer Tiger Woods simulates freefall with military instructors at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School April 14 during a five-day visit to Fort Bragg, N.C.

Sergeant Major of the Army Preston visits USSOCOM

By Jennifer Whittle
USSOCOM Public Affairs



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston is greeted at the U.S. Special Operations Command Headquarters building March 11 by senior enlisted adviser Command Chief Master Sgt. Bob Martens.

“We are an Army at war for a nation that is at war,” said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston during his visit to U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Fla., March 10. “Our soldiers are the best trained, the best equipped—and their morale is high. We are a combat land force and we are ready to do what the ground commander needs.”

Preston is the 13th sergeant major of the Army and arrived at MacDill with a full schedule that began with meeting soldiers for breakfast, visiting U.S. Central Command, visiting USSOCOM, and attending the Association of the U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer of the Year luncheon as guest speaker. The SMA concluded his trip with a press opportunity with local television and print media.

Preston was sworn in Jan. 15 and is Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker’s personal adviser on all Army enlisted issues like training, equipment and quality of life.

“I came here to introduce myself, talk to you, hear any concerns and let you know what is going on at the Pentagon,” Preston told soldiers at USSOCOM.

He answered questions about up-and-coming changes in the Army uniform and quality of life issues like shorter deployments and longer stays at military installations for Army families. He spoke about Army transformation—and the global war on terrorism.

“I recently testified before Congress... and spoke with delegates on the Hill and I told them that after being on the ground with the troops in Iraq, that I couldn’t have hand-picked a better team,” Preston said. “The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are first class and the news doesn’t give them credit that they deserve. They are ambassadors for this country. The team is joint and will remain joint in everything we do.”

Preston returned from Iraq in December. He served as the command sergeant major of

Combined Joint Task Force 7. He said he gets asked the same question: how does America bring democracy to Iraq? “You know, when I think of Europe in 1939, democracy wasn’t there. It is now. The men who fought in World War II were the ‘greatest generation.’ The troops on the ground fighting terrorism today are what I call the ‘next greatest generation.’”

In downtown Baghdad, Iraq, Preston said one can see satellite dishes on nearly every other home. “There are Internet connections and cell phones now,” he said. “Once these people see how others live in the world, the globalization process will speed up. I have seen the country change for the better firsthand. The Iraqi people are wonderful people and they are thankful that we are there. It is a rewarding and heart-warming situation and I am proud of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines. It’s kind of like football. Operation Iraqi Freedom carried the ball at

first. We are advancing the ball now.”

Preston spoke about a modular Army. “Our Army is relevant and ready,” he said. “Traditionally we were division-oriented. Now we are focusing on brigades—units of action. The brigades will deploy on their own, operate independently, and plug into theater assets.”

The SMA reiterated the Warrior Ethos. “Mission comes first,” he said. “Never accept defeat. Never quit. And never leave a fallen comrade. This is what our Soldiers take to heart. These are the priorities.”

Army-wide soldiers are now wearing the American flag patch on their right shoulder. Preston asked how the soldiers like it, getting thumbs up in response. “I think it’s awesome,” he said. “It is worn on your uniform as it would be seen flying from a staff into combat. I think of each one of you as a staff, carrying the colors like that, and going forward.”

Special Forces support Pan Sahel Initiative in Africa

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) teach infantry tactics to soldiers from the Malian Army in Timbuktu, Mali, as part of the Pan Sahel Initiative. The initiative is a State Department program in the northern African countries of Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Chad designed to enhance border capabilities throughout the region against arms smuggling, drug trafficking, and the movement of transnational terrorists.



*By 1st Lt. Phillip Ulmer
American Forces Press Service*

Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Stuttgart, Germany, are training African soldiers along the outer reaches of the Sahara Desert in support of the global war on terrorism.

Special Forces training teams from Special Operations Command Europe are in Bamako, Gao and Timbuktu, Mali; and Atar, Mauritania, in northwestern Africa to provide foreign internal defense training for the Pan Sahel Initiative, a U.S. State Department security assistance program.

“We’re training basic platoon level tasks to one company of the 33rd Parachute Infantry Regiment in Bamako in order to enhance their capabilities to police their border regions in the north,” said the battalion’s operational detachment commander in Bamako. “They’re really a sharp unit, and they’re picking it up quickly.”

Key aspects of the training include basic marksmanship, planning, communications, land navigation, patrolling and medical care. This foreign internal defense training, officials said, will help the countries involved better protect their borders and regions.

Lt. Col. Robert Warburg, the battalion commander, met with the 33rd Parachute Infantry Regiment commander in Bamako

during a recent visit and discussed the challenges and highlights of the training.

“The training here is a two-way street,” said Warburg. “While we’re here to train the Malian soldiers, we’re also receiving tremendous training from them.”

The African soldiers are not the only ones to benefit from the Pan Sahel Initiative. The SOCEUR forces, known throughout the U.S. European Command for their abilities to excel in the most austere locations with the command’s area of responsibility, are getting the opportunity to learn new cultures, terrain and languages by working with these African forces.

They’re also conducting Special Operations Forces-specific training requirements in a new environment that they don’t normally encounter in central Europe.

“One of the highlights of our training was our joint airborne operation with the Mauritanian 1st Battalion Commando Parachutists using their aircraft and their airspace,” said the battalion’s operational detachment commander at Atar, Mauritania. “The soldiers are very motivated, and they have a good attitude.”

The commander of the battalion’s area operating base near Gao, agreed. “This is a good program, and we’re glad to be a part of it,” he said. The base near Gao serves as the Pan Sahel Initiative’s headquarters, and two Special Forces teams conduct training there with local Malian forces. “The guys in the unit are working hard and doing a great job,” said the AOB commander.

State Department officials said this region of Africa has become important in the global security arena. Vast expanses of unpopulated areas, instability, and porous borders make Africa an inviting playground for terrorists.

“By cooperating with Mali to better protect its borders and territory, we can help keep it from being used by terrorists. This makes Mali a very important partner in the war on terrorism,” said Vicki Huddleston, U.S. ambassador to Mali.

Soldiers from the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) teach mounted infantry tactics to Malian Army soldiers in Timbuktu, Mali, in March.



USSOCOM personnel honor Bataan Death March

By Tech Sgt. Frank Provenzano Jr.
SONC-J6

A 26.2 mile “stroll” in the high desert of White Sands Missile Range, N.M., wearing full battle dress and a 35 lb. ruck may sound tough to some and a cakewalk to others, but it will never compare to the hardship and horror that really occurred in April of 1942 when Luzon, the Philippines, surrendered to Japan.

About 12,000 American, British, Australian and 65,000 Filipino troops surrendered. They were forced to march 65 miles to the POW camps. About 1,000 of the Americans and 10,000 Filipinos died or were murdered on the way.

U.S. Special Operations Command commemorates the Bataan Death March by sending competitors to the annual memorial march in New Mexico. Why participate? USSOCOM’s investment in this event is personal: a handpicked unit from the 6th Ranger Battalion that liberated the POWs from Camp O’Donnell on Luzon.

As participants march through the New Mexico sun, sand, desert valley heat at 4100-5300 foot altitudes, and deal with blistered feet, twisted ankles and dehydration, they’re spurred on by the ringing in their ears of that cry in the spring of 1942: “No mama, no papa, no Uncle Sam. The battling bastards of Bataan.”

Memorial marchers know that failure “is not an option,” as they not only strive to finish the marathon, but compete.

USSOCOM personnel take a group photo prior to competing in this year’s Memorial Bataan Death March in White Sands, N.M., March 21. Left to right are Staff Sgt. Louis Sisneros, Maj. Mike Dupra, Lt. Col. Bradley Thompson, Capt. John McConnell and Tech. Sgt. Frank Provenzano. Not shown is participant Staff Sgt. Kenneth Bryant.

Participants agree that stopping is disrespectful to the fallen, their families and survivors. After all, in 1942, the marchers didn’t have 13 water points, medical personnel, latrines, band aides, moleskin, power bars, Gatorade, and a Jacuzzi waiting at a hotel at the end of the day. They had nothing.

U.S. Special Operations Command sent six competitors this year.

Lt. Col. Bradley Thompson (SORR) won the bronze medal in the Male Military Heavy category with a time of 5 hours, 36 minutes, in a category that only 172 people dared to compete. Capt. John McConnell (SOCCENT) competed in the same category with a time of 6 hours, 43 minutes.

Maj. Michael Dupra (SORR) came in 11th against 61 competitors in the Male Military Light - Over 40 with a time of 6 hours, 3 minutes.

Staff Sgt. Louis Sisneros (SOCS) came in 5th against 244 competitors in the Male Military Light category. Time: 4 hours, 46 minutes. Staff Sgt. Kenneth Bryant (SOIO) finished 158th against 244 other competitors in this same category with a time of 7 hours, 51 minutes.

And Tech. Sgt. Frank Provenzano (SOIO) finished 35th against 61 competitors in Male Military Light - Over 40 with a time of 7 hours, 51 minutes.

The bottom line for me is that the chance to meet, listen and speak directly to the survivors was an honor greater than meeting any political dignitary or pop star. The experience rejuvenated my belief in the profession of arms and the realization that any contribution I have made these past 27 years is insignificant compared to the sacrifices of those who came before me.

The competitors would like to thank those who supported our participation at the Bataan Memorial Death March with funding, morale and materials: Commander Gen. Bryan Doug Brown; Command Chief Master Sgt. Bob Martens; USSOCOM Clinic; 6th Air Mobility Wing Vehicle Operations; and our center directors and supervisors. A special thanks to Public Affairs and the USSOCOM Booster Club. Finally, to those USSOCOM personnel that tried out but didn’t make the cut, you were with us on the march and see you in October when training begins for 2005.



Flying frogs

celebrate 30 years of excellence

*By Petty Officer 1st Class Kristina Brockman
Navy Parachute Team Public Affairs*

Why would anyone jump out of a perfectly good airplane? It's a common question that members of the Navy Parachute Team hear, and one that spectators have asked for the past 30 years.

The team, nicknamed the "Leap Frogs," kicked off its 30th anniversary this year by performing at the Naval Air Facility El Centro Air Show March 13.

The Leap Frogs joined many other performers, including the Navy Blue Angels.

This air show marks the Leap Frogs' first opportunity of the busy season to demonstrate their skills to the public after two months of training eight hours a day, five days a week. This will also be the first public performance for the team's newest members. Veteran members on the team also know it is the first chance to answer the "perfectly good airplane" question.

Petty Officer 1st Class and SEAL Tony DelVecchio has been on the team for one year and his answer is always the same.

"It's a great way to get exposure for the Navy," he says. "We jump into a lot of places around the country that have little, if any, Navy presence, and our shows always make people stop and watch. That's what we want to do, so when we get

down to the ground we already have an audience who wants to know what we're about. That's when we can tell them about the Navy."

But DelVecchio, his 15 teammates, and those who have been members on the team during the last 30 years wouldn't do the job if they didn't enjoy it. Members come to the Navy Parachute Team on a volunteer basis, as they did early in the team's history. The Leap Frogs originally formed in the early 60s, when Navy SEALs began voluntarily jumping at air shows on weekends. The Department of Defense officially sanctioned the Leap Frogs in 1974, designating them officially as a military demonstration team.

In addition to Navy SEALs, the team now also has SWCC (Special Warfare Combatantcraft Crewman) commandos. When assigned to Special Boat Teams, SWCCs operate and maintain the state-of-the-art, high-performance, high-speed boats used for special operations missions.

While the Navy Parachute Team has had some changes in its 30-year history, the team maintains its original mission — supporting Navy recruiting by demonstrating Navy excellence to the American people.



A member of the Naval Special Warfare Command parachute team, the Leap Frogs, prepares to jump.

The Command Parachute Team

By Master Sgt. Jurita Barber
USSOCOM Public Affairs

Since 1991 they have soared through brilliant blue skies—wind rushing in their faces and adrenaline coursing through their veins. They are exactly where they want to be—free falling. They are the members of the U.S. Special Operations Command Parachute Team, or CPT.

The CPT is the only joint parachute demonstration team in the Department of Defense and is made up of about twenty-five USSOCOM volunteers. These volunteers, who have full-time jobs at the headquarters, are active duty military and DOD civilians assigned to USSOCOM and must under-go a rigorous training program before being selected to join the team. Free fall parachuting is one of many specialized techniques used to insert Special Operations Forces into hostile environments and team members gain a high level of experience through their CPT training and demonstrations.

What kind of commitment does it take to be on the team? Here's a sample of a typical year of forty or more events:

Training: 25 men x 26 training Saturdays a year, plus 12 Unit jumps = 800 man-days per year. Air show demos: 12 men x 3 days x 23 shows = 828 man-days per year. High school football demos: 8 men x 12 Fridays = 72 man-days per year.

Add it up: 800+828+72=1700 man-days per year, or 68 days each year per team member.

It's roughly the same as a 16-man SEAL (sea, air, land) platoon training for 106 days per year, or a 12-man ODA (operational detachment alpha) training for 141 days per year. In other words, team members give an enormous amount of personal time to further the goals of USSOCOM and contribute to building strong community relationships.

Sgt. Maj. Russell McDaniel, Joint Experimentation Operations sergeant major, has been on the team for 16 months and says it is the allure of skydiving and the camaraderie of the team that makes all the effort worthwhile. Training and practices are done during off duty hours and on weekends, while actual events usually take place on Fridays and weekends. "Our number one job is to tell the USSOCOM story," McDaniel said. "When our boots touch the ground we can mingle with the crowd and explain our mission."

Team members are traveling ambassadors and represent nearly 50,000 elite Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines of the Special Operations Command. Requests for demonstrations are numerous and the team is already scheduling events into 2005. The impact of the CPT is literally felt far and wide with performances from Key West to Indianapolis—to their own backyard.

In addition to their public appearances, this highly-specialized team is in demand within the active military community. Team members, past and present, are former Golden Knights, world record-holders in skydiving disciplines, jumpmasters, and were instructors for both of President George Bush's accelerated freefall jumps. They also provide video and instructor support for USSOCOM component commands. In 2003, they provided

coaches, video and freefall instruction to the Ranger Regiment. Many team members are requested "by name" by special mission units to provide video and instructor support during freefall training courses.

Due to their commitment to excellence, this goodwill team is well received at each demonstration. They take time to sign autographs, answer as many questions as possible and swap stories with Veterans. According to Lt. Col. Steve Walters, CPT narrator, the team receives an enormous amount of respect and admiration from the audience.

The CPT jumps into high school football stadiums throughout the local area in the fall. It is the perfect opportunity to talk to students, parents and teachers about Special Operations Forces and the USSOCOM mission. More often than not, students who have signed up for the delayed enlistment program are also recognized at the event. Ron Horvath is the public affairs officer for the U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion in Tampa and he thinks the team is terrific. "They help create a lot of awareness in the local community when they jump into school events," Horvath said. "They give a real-life example of the military and what people can do or be in the military."

The Command Parachute Team takes their real-life experiences to another level – Quiet Professionals soaring high to thrill – coming back to earth as a real-life link to the next generation of Special Operations Forces.



USSOCOM Parachute Team members perform a 'two-stack' during Airfest 2004, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., April 4.

Headquarters breaks ground for new warfighting facility

By Jennifer Whittle
USSOCOM Public Affairs

“This facility will help us (on our mission) to track down and to destroy terrorist networks around the world,” said Gen. Bryan Doug Brown, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, referring to the command’s latest construction project in which a new addition will be added onto the headquarters building.

The general addressed hundreds of Special Operations Forces and headquarters personnel who gathered outside of the main building’s westward annex to hear about the new structure during its ground-breaking ceremony, April 30.

“A little over a year from now we will see a facility that consolidates more capable warfighting efforts within our force protection perimeter,” Brown said. “This center will run 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and be a world class facility for world class people.”

The new 112,000 square-foot addition will cost \$20.5 million and take 18 months to build. The present structure, Annex Alpha, will be demolished over a four-week period this summer to make way for the new concrete and steel facility.

“We couldn’t have this type of center without the help of Congress,” Brown said, introducing Congressman C.W. Bill Young, (R-Fla.).

“I am very proud of the people who

serve for this country,” Young began.

“And you special operators are called ‘special’ for a reason. Everything you do, you do well. And Congress supports your quality of life.

“Gen. Brown and I agreed a long time ago that we needed to construct a (new mission-oriented) center here,” Young went on. “And I support what our military needs. I will fight every step of the way, as my constituents all agree, to get you whatever you need to fight the global war on terrorism.”

The congressman also spoke on behalf of Americans, stating that not only Congress—but the American people as well—respect, appreciate and support the

tremendous job of the U.S. military.

Harold Bosse, USSOCOM command engineer, is elated the project is taking shape.

“Working on a project of this magnitude is rewarding,” he said. “It will enhance USSOCOM’s ability to fight which makes the project more worthwhile. This building will not only eliminate expenses for leasing temporary or permanent facilities, but the center allows USSOCOM to fully exploit the synergy between its many functional areas. It results in a more focused and centralized fight against terrorism.”

The new facility is scheduled for completion late 2005.



USSOCOM's latest construction project kicks off with a ground-breaking ceremony, April 30, at the Headquarters. Shown left to right are: Lt. Col. Bob McCall, Mobile District deputy engineer, Corps of Engineers; Gen. Doug Brown, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command; Congressman C.W. Bill Young (R-Fla.); Brig. Gen. "Tanker" Snyder, commander, 6th Air Mobility Wing; and Tony Gallivan, vice president, Clark Construction Company, Inc.

Master Sgt. Steve Huard

USSOCOM continues realignment

USSOCOM Public Affairs

U.S. Special Operations Command completed May 1 the second phase of a headquarters staff realignment that began in June 2003 when the command designated the Center for Special Operations as its headquarters warfighting center. This phase consolidates all intelligence, operations and planning functions, previously performed in three distinct staff centers, in the CSO. The realignment enhances USSOCOM's capabilities to provide geographical combatant commanders with Special Operations Forces and, when directed, carry out its new role as a supported command in the global war on terrorism.

During the realignment's third phase, which will be complete on July 1, USSOCOM will establish a deployable, standing joint task force headquarters embedded in the CSO. This action complies with the Secretary of Defense's guidance and will provide USSOCOM with additional capability in the command and control of SOF. The establishment of a standing joint task force headquarters will also give the command additional flexibility to meet its charter as both a supported or supporting command.

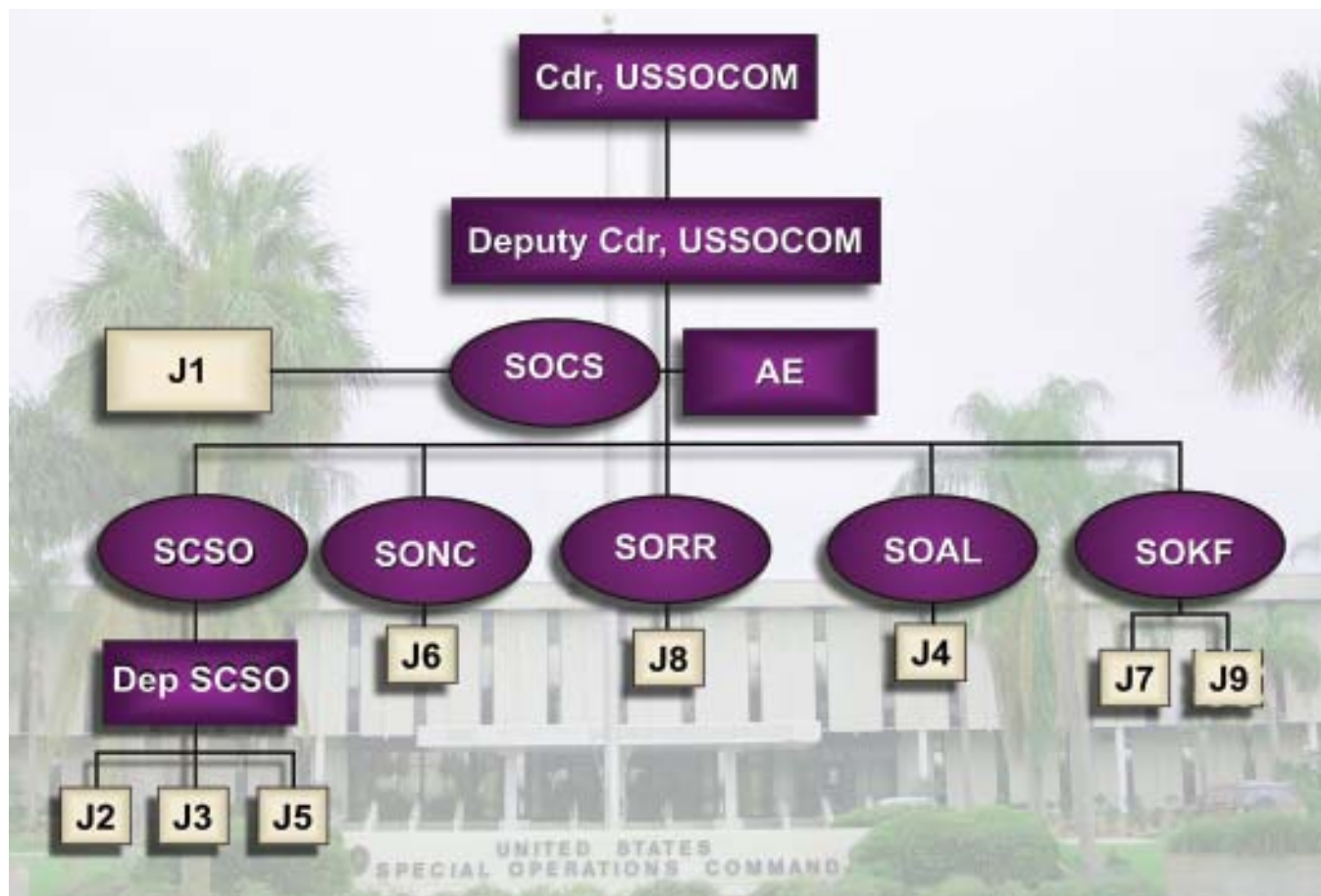
The current headquarters realignment is a course correction to the 1997 reorganization which converted the headquarters staff into functional centers. In addition to realigning some staff functions, USSOCOM will supplement center designations with standard joint staff "J" codes for directorates subordinate to a

center. These "J" code assignments will better facilitate coordination with outside agencies, the services and the joint staff.

The Directorate of Personnel (J1), special and commander's personal staffs remain aligned under the chief of staff and the Command Support Center. Functions previously assigned to the Operations, Plans and Policy, or SOOP, and Intelligence and Information Operations, SOIO, centers have been consolidated in the CSO under the Intelligence Support Group (J2), the Operations Support Group (J3), and the Campaign Support Group (J5). The center designations of SOOP and SOIO will no longer be used.

The Directorate of Logistics (J4) is aligned under the Center for Acquisition and Logistics, SOAL, the Directorate for C4I (J6) reports to the director, Center for Networks and Communications, SONC, and Resourcing and Programming functions (J8) is aligned with the Center for Force Structure, Requirements, Resources, and Strategic Assessments, SORR. Finally, a newly created Center for Knowledge and Futures, or SOKF, will head two subordinate directorates, the Directorates of Knowledge (J7) and Futures (J9).

When all phases of the realignment are complete, USSOCOM will be better postured to carry out its lead role in the global war on terrorism and its service-like responsibilities to man, equip and train SOF.



Quality of Life

Supplemental life insurance Is it for you?

By Col. Bob Rupp
USSOCOM Tiger Team

Editor's note: Col. Bob Rupp provides clarity to service members on what can sometimes be a complex topic. Below is Part One of a two-part series submitted to the Quality of Life column initiated by Gen. Doug Brown and his Tiger Team. The team and the column are dedicated to education of service members and retention issues.

Part One

The push is on by many life insurance companies to sell their products to military members. You see the ads everywhere: "Is your Servicemen's Group Life Insurance enough?" and "Protect the future of your loved ones" and "Obtain secure and lasting protection, no war clause."

Life insurance policies to supplement your SGLI coverage have become a very popular option by members of all the uniformed services. The ads are convincing, the concept makes sense, so you are seriously considering the idea of buying some supplemental life. But before signing on the dotted line, most financial experts agree that it is vital you first do your homework.

You would never think of undertaking a mission without first clearly understanding and defining the objective; learning as much as you can about the terrain; gathering information from all your sources; coordinating and staffing with all the key players and then choosing the course of action that best assures mission success. Your approach to making key financial decisions (to include buying supplemental insurance) should be no different.

Define your objective

The first question you should ask yourself in undertaking this "mission" is: do I really need supplemental insurance? And if so, how much and for how long? How much can I afford to pay in premiums? The answers to these and other similar questions will greatly depend on your personal financial situation and what

you intend the insurance to cover. Do you want life insurance to replace lost income? Or, do you have other reasons such as: covering future educational costs, paying estate taxes, supplementing retirement, canceling personal debts or paying off the mortgage—just to name a few. The goal in this step of the decision-making process is to define your objective as clearly as possible. The better you understand why you need the insurance the easier it will be to determine how much and what kind of policy to purchase.

Research pertinent information

Next, you need to become familiar with the lexicon of insurance and gather as much information on the topic as possible. "Whole Life," "Term," "Universal Life," "Variable Life," "Second-to-die," "Accidental Death," "Act-of-war exclusion," these are but a few of the many terms used in the complex world of insurance. Because insurance requirements are different for everyone and must be tailored to each individual's needs, a basic understanding of terminology and a working knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of the many different types of policies is essential in determining what is best for you. Just like in mission planning, the devil is in the details. The more you know about the mission and the objective, the easier and the more confident you will be in eventually choosing the best COA.

Read Part Two in the next issue of the Tip of the Spear for information on types of insurance and recommendations on how to proceed with a plan that is right for you and your family.

Reengineering defense travel

By Cynthia S. Harris
USSOCOM Comptroller Office

The new Defense Travel System mandated by the Department of Defense was implemented last month at U.S. Special Operations Command.

The new DTS represents a new way of doing business for the command. It's designed to make the travel process faster, easier and better than ever before. The command began a slow phase in of the new travel system over a six to nine month period. DTS is designed for routine domestic and overseas travel with travel scenarios not contained in the DTS being fielded in the previous manner.

The vision of DTS is a seamless, paperless, automated system that meets the needs of travelers, commanders and process owners such as finance and accounting services. Using DTS, traveler settlements will be paid in two to three days, travelers will have access for personalized, online reservations, itinerary changes for airlines, lodging, rental cars, usage of simplified TDY regulations, and easy system access from their desktop workstations. When the TDY is complete, the traveler can quickly create a voucher from the data already stored in the DTS system, and then electronically route it for approval and submission to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. An electronic funds transfer from DFAS to the traveler's bank account completes the process.

The DTS system is paperless and uses DOD Public Key Infrastructure certificates to digitally sign documents all from desktop workstations. DTS is totally web based. There is no need to load software onto workstations other than a web browser plug-in for digital signature authentication and system security.



SOF troops get single point of contact for all SOF equipment issues

The Equipment Help Desk, created by the Center for Special Operations Acquisition and Logistics and activated in April, provides the special operator on the ground a single point of contact to get an equipment problem resolved or an equipment question answered.

Issues are addressed via e-mail at equipmenthelpdesk@sofsa.mil, at DSN 745-3114, or toll free at 1 (888) 763-7259. There is also a website available at <https://ssavie.sofsa.mil> to access the help desk.

The help desk ensures the individual's question gets answered and does so by a centralized single button or "one stop shop" the operator can go to. The help desk will then track and contact the specific subject matter expert who in turn will resolve any issues, including repairs, parts, problems or technical data.

'Need to know' means need to know

Column by Mike Sweat, USSOCOM OPSEC Officer

Editor's note: Mike Sweat's operational security information on need-to-know is a two-part series. Part One ran in the April 2004 Tip of the Spear. Part Two follows.

Portions of this article were taken from the DIA pamphlet "Understanding Need-to-Know."



Just Talking

Another area where we overlook the need-to-know principle is in discussing our specific job projects with co-workers. If we are having a "bad day," or if something connected with a project is not going well, we look for a sympathetic individual who will listen to our problems.

Usually, that individual is a coworker. Keep in mind, however, that although your coworkers are fully cleared, they may not have a need-to-know. If you are having problems, or if you need help, talk to your supervisor or other individuals who are affiliated with the project. Remember, possessing a badge that indicates a clearance does not automatically grant individuals the need-to-know.

Working With Contractors

Every so often, we may deal with cleared contractors who are tasked to design or develop projects or equipment for SOCOM/SOF use. Command personnel must work closely with these contractors. Once again, the need-to-know principle comes into play. The question is how much does the contractor need to know in order to complete his/her portion of the contract? In many cases, contractors are only tasked to develop specific portions which contribute to a certain

section of the project. This reduces the risk of a significant compromise. Therefore, it is important to determine the degree of need-to-know before disseminating project information.

Computer Concerns

More than likely, your job involves using a computer. The need-to-know principle also applies to computers, in particular, to controlling access to classified information on computer systems. A password is one means to prevent such unauthorized accesses. A password should be used only by the individual to whom it is assigned and should never be divulged to coworkers. Remember, when you leave the work area for any length of time always secure the system by logging out or locking your terminal to preclude unauthorized access to your classified data.

Keep in mind that computer media, i.e. diskettes, tapes, cartridges, assume the classification and protection of the highest level of classified information ever processed on the system in which it is used. Always take time to affix a classification label and secure the media when finished.

Need-to-know and the Telephone

Although the red and the secure telephone units provide means for secure

communications, care should be taken when using them. Again, assess need-to-know with the individual you speak to.

What kind of information can we disseminate when contacted by individuals not affiliated with SOCOM? What information do they need-to-know? Some information they request may not be officially classified, but may be considered sensitive.

Your Responsibility

Each and every one of us who has access to classified information has an obligation to protect it. Of course, not everyone who casually inquires about your job is a spy. But, continued questioning concerning classified information where need-to-know does not exist could indicate a security concern. If you begin to notice this type of behavior, discuss it with your supervisor, your unit security officer, or the Counterintelligence Staff Office at (813) 828-3013 and/or the Office of Special Investigation at (813) 828-4921.

Remember, the need-to-know principle was developed as a sound security measure to prevent unauthorized disclosures of classified information. Let's all do our part to ensure that it is implemented as intended.

HQ Annual Awards

U.S. Special Operations Command annual award winners take a photo with the commander and senior enlisted adviser March 12 at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Shown left to right are USSOCOM Commander Gen. Bryan Doug Brown; Petty Officer 2nd Class Stephen Curtas, Reserve Enlisted of the Year; Maj. Derek Hirohata, Reserve Officer of the Year; Marcy Whittle, Civilian of the Year; Staff Sgt. David Sutherland, Marine of the Year; Petty Officer 1st Class William Love, Sailor of the Year and Service Member of the Year; Staff Sgt. Psota Rajeev, Airman of the Year and Staff Sgt. Emmett McCallister, Soldier of the Year.



ELDP participants

Command personnel who participated in this year's Executive Leadership Development Program are photographed during 'Air Force Week' at the 547th Intelligence Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Left to right are Joe Vigil, Air Force Special Operations Command; Nancy Farnsworth, U.S. Special Operations Command; and Brenda Leggett, U.S. Army Special Operations Command. The program is designed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to produce leaders who study the national security decision-making process, understand defense strategy, experience joint training in the field, and who understand that the mission of DOD is to support the warfighter.



Strategic Concepts Working Group

Members of the first of three panels designed to garner innovative perspectives against terrorism take a group photo at the Headquarters in April. Shown left to right are Maj. Gen. Sydney Shachnow, Maj. Gen. James Hobson, Maj. Gen. Albert Zapanta, Lt. Gen. Maxwell Bailey, Gen. Bryan Doug Brown, Command Chief Master Sgt. Mike Lampe, Master Chief Petty Officer John Kirby, Rear Adm. Cathal Flynn, Command Sgt. Maj. William Rambo, and Navy Capt. Robert Gormly. The first panel included prominent retired members of the SOF community. The second is a strategist panel and convenes futurists and strategic thinkers in July. The third panel is a scientific venue scheduled to meet in August. These panels will meet twice annually. The recommendations proposed by each panel will be compiled and staffed for appropriate action by the newly formed Special Operations Center for Knowledge and Futures.



Acquisition excellence

Command Acquisition Executive Dr. Dale Uhler presents acquisition excellence awards to command personnel March 31 in St. Petersburg, Fla., for outstanding acquisition support to the warfighter during Operation Iraqi Freedom and the global war on terrorism during fiscal year 2003. Shown left to right are Uhler, Richard Smith, DEVGROUP; Sue Griffin, Sam Thompson, John Doland, and Charlotte Delli, Center for Special Operations Acquisition and Logistics; and Maj. Chris Lehner, U.S. Army Special Operations Command acquisition.

Levitow awardee

Senior Airman Ignatius McAdams, an imagery analyst in the command's Center for Special Operations, Imagery and Geospatial Intelligence Branch, was recognized as the top Airman Leadership School graduate during a ceremony April 8 earning him the John L. Levitow Award.



SOF conduct evacuation in Operation Firm Response

USSOCOM History Office

Civil unrest in Brazzaville, the Congo, led U.S. European Command to direct Special Operations Command Europe to deploy a European Survey and Assessment Team with follow-on forces for an embassy reinforcement and possible evacuation during the summer of 1997.

Twenty-two American and six Marine guards remained in the embassy as the security situation deteriorated quickly. The French had about 1,500 troops on the ground with armored vehicles and commandeered private vehicles outfitted for mounted patrols.

Geoffrey C. Lambert, commander SOCEUR, sent a 12-man ESAT with six support personnel in a 7th Special Operations Squadron MC-130H to Brazzaville to link up with the defense attaché and French at the airport, proceed to the embassy, and assess the embassy's security June 10.

Arriving at Maya-Maya Airfield amidst heavy gunfire, the ESAT unloaded the aircraft, and French paratroopers put 56 evacuees on the MC-130. The team moved to the embassy and began to harden their areas and improve living conditions. During their in days in Brazzaville, Lt. Col. David Mamaux led the team on multiple trips outside the compound to retrieve much needed supplies and sensitive materials, and to coordinate with the French military.

The team loaded the 12 remaining embassy personnel, their baggage, all sensitive items, and one dog, onto a chartered DC-3 aircraft June 18. The ESAT members and one Peace Corps volunteer departed Brazzaville later that same day. The assessment team provided crucial assistance to the U.S. ambassador when rebel forces attacked Brazzaville. The team conducted reconnaissance, coordinated with the French military, provided communications support, and organized the embassy staff for the NEO. Amidst considerable violence and looting, this SOF team insured the safe evacuation of 69 Americans.

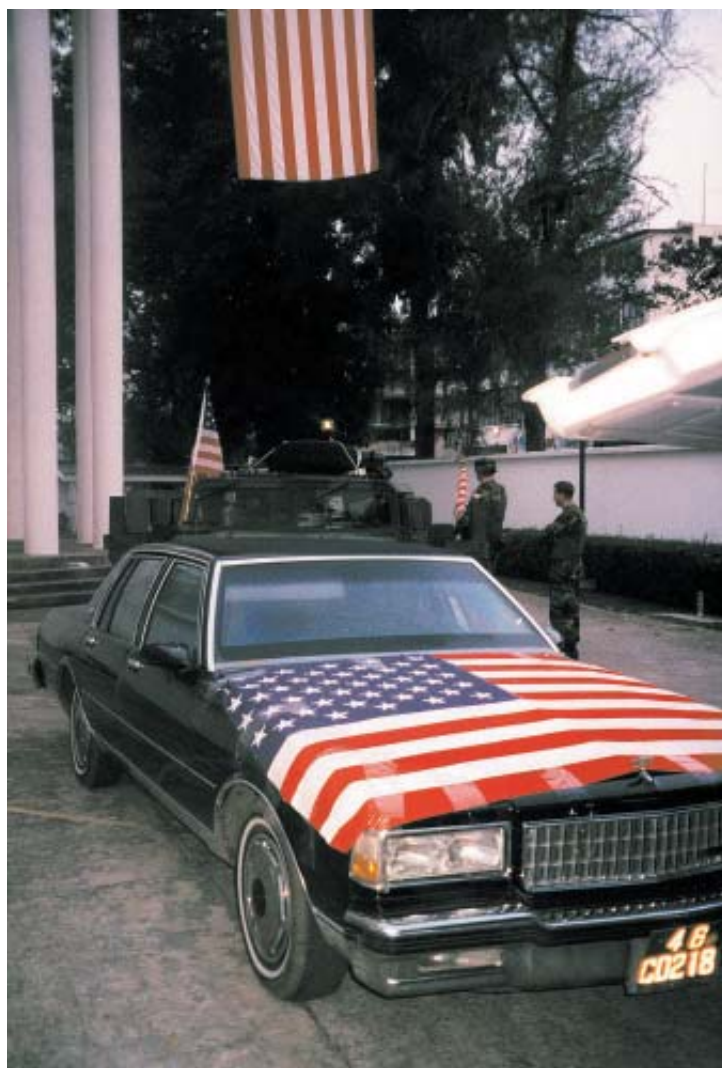
This operation, named Firm Response, proved the obvious value of engagement, area orientation and situational awareness. Firm Response also illustrated the good and bad of command and control. CINCEUR directed that this be a low profile mission. The decision to deploy only an augmented ESAT on a single aircraft constrained how the SOF ground commander conducted the operation and, ultimately, put SOF at risk on the ground. Moreover, Lambert had to accept responsibility for the mission but gave up control to EUCOM operations.

In stark contrast to EUCOM's handling of this operation, Lambert picked the team leader for all the right reasons—experience, Africa time, and warrior and diplomatic skills. And, he empowered him to operate in the fluid circumstances in Brazzaville. Lambert's trust and confidence in his subordinates paid off.

Operation Firm Response demonstrated what Special Opera-

tions Forces “bring to the fight”—rapid planning and force sizing; an integrated package of air, ground, and maritime capabilities; mature, motivated, and well-trained military personnel; and an ability to operate in an ambiguous environment.

Firm Response exposed the dilemmas and opportunities confronting SOF leaders and operators as they faced the complex battlespace, which characterized the post-Cold War era and the early 21st century. It had a classic merging of all levels—tactical, operational, strategic and diplomatic, where a bullet, word or a gesture could have had ramifications far beyond Brazzaville.



While in Brazzaville, Congo, U.S. Special Operations Forces clearly identify their vehicles to not be confused with French forces who were involved in the civil unrest. The American flags deterred attacks upon SOF who were sent to the American Embassy in 1997.

Best Ranger Competition



A Ranger captain attempts to land in a target area on a drop zone during the Spot Jump event in the 2004 Best Ranger Competition held at Fort Benning, Ga., in April. The competition began in 1981 to create a contest that would place extreme demands on two-man Ranger teams to test their physical, mental and technical abilities. The grueling 60-hour, multi-event competition determines the best of the best.