



# TIP OF THE SPEAR



**Gen. Brown to retire after 40 years of service**  
**SOF making progress in Sangin, Afghanistan**  
**Special Forces building Iraqi SOF successes**

*U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLA., June 2007*



# From VIETNAM



# to USSOCOM

Gen. Brown interview page 22



## Tip of the Spear

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*Front cover: Gen. Doug Brown, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, is pictured visiting troops in Tolemaida, Colombia. Brown is retiring July 9, 2007, after 40 years of service. He entered the Army in 1967 as a private in the infantry. He immediately entered training for Special Forces. After completing the Qualification Course, he served on an A Team in the 7th Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, N.C. After completion of Officer Candidate School, he attended Army Flight School at Fort Rucker, Ala. During his career, he has been involved in combat operations in Vietnam, Operation Urgent Fury, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and others. He is the first member of the Army's Aviation Branch to be promoted to the rank of four-star general. Photo by Lt. Col. Dagvin Anderson.*

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# Special Forces, paratroopers make progress in Sangin, Afghanistan

*By Army Spc. Daniel Love*

*Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan Public Affairs*

**F**irst Kandak, 209th Afghan National Army Corps soldiers advised by U.S. Special Operations Forces, fought alongside 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers and other coalition forces in the Sangin District of Helmand province during Operation Achilles, an operation to clear the area of Taliban fighters.



***U.S. Army Special Operations Soldiers, assigned to the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan, arrive in a convoy of Medium Tactical Vehicles at a staging area on an undisclosed forward operating base in Helmand province as two CH-47 Chinook helicopters fly overhead, April 9. Coalition and ANA forces have killed more than 400 Taliban fighters. Photo by Spc. Keith Henning.***





Hundreds of Taliban and foreign fighters had previously considered the area a safe haven and heavily taxed local poppy farmers to support their war effort.

U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers assisted the ANA in setting up strong points along the roads of the Sangin District. As coalition forces pushed Taliban fighters further and further north, they set up the strong points to promote security in the

*(Top) British soldiers fire an M-777 155mm Howitzer field artillery gun at identified Taliban fighting positions near the Sangin District Center area from an undisclosed Forward Operating Base in Helmand province. (Left) A Special Operations Forces Soldier, assigned to the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan, fires on a Taliban fighting position during an afternoon battle in the Sangin District area of Helmand province. Photos by Spc. Keith Henning.*

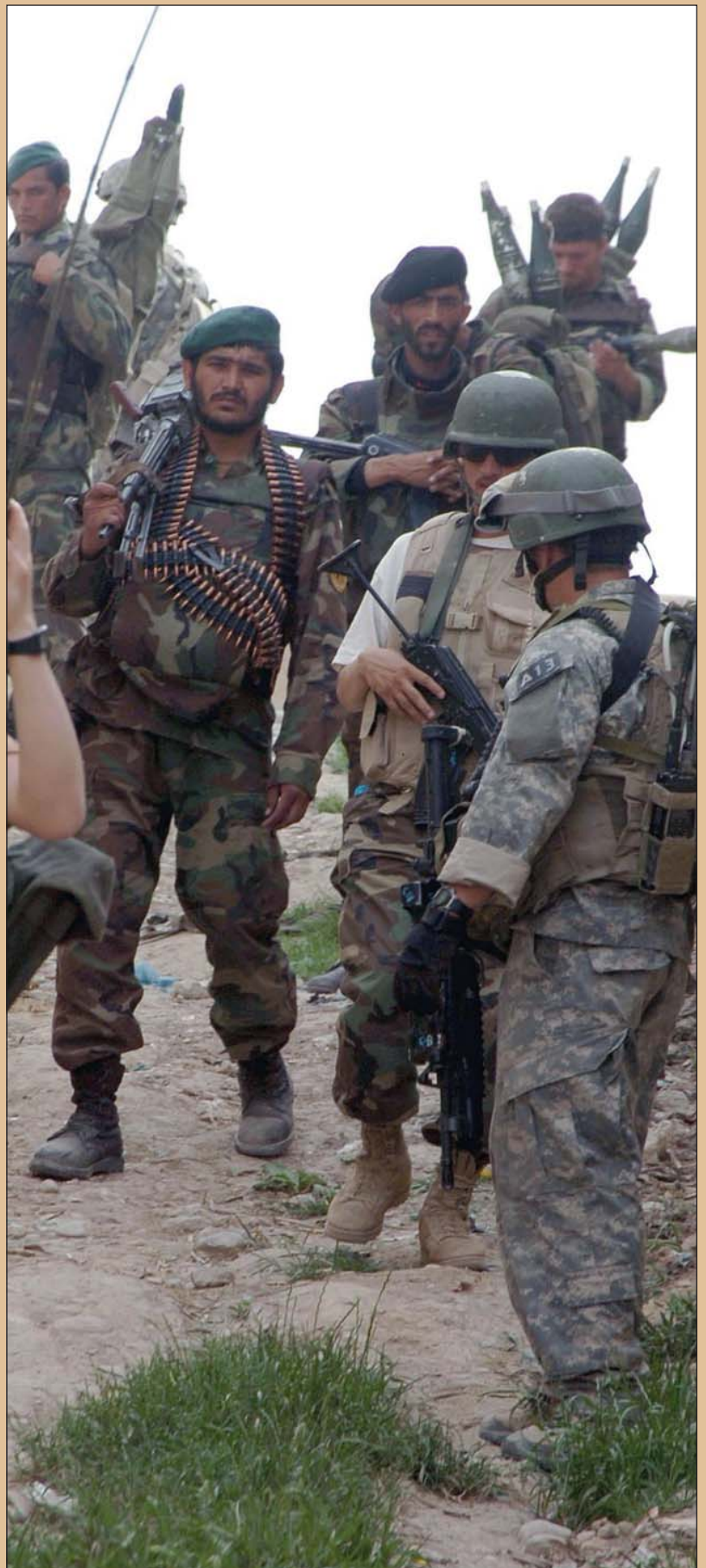




rural surrounding areas as much as in the city.

ANA and coalition forces have united to provide security on the roads in and surrounding Sangin since April 9. Coalition representatives estimate more than 400 Taliban fighters have been killed, with numerous more wounded or detained by the ANA. Numerous weapons and improvised explosive device material caches have been

***(Right) A U.S. Special Forces sergeant, assigned to the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan, issues guidance to a squad of soldiers assigned to the 1st Kandak, 209th Afghan National Army Corps as they prepare to battle with Taliban fighters in the Sangin District area of Helmand province. Photo by Spc. Keith Henning.***







found and destroyed.

“We sent out warning of our intentions to civilians in the area long before the battle in order to decrease the risk of them being harmed during the operation,” a U.S. Special Forces officer said.

Civil Affairs and Engineer teams are currently planning construction efforts to improve the quality of life for residents of the Sangin District. Additional training for the local ANA and Afghan National Police forces is underway.

Coalition medical personnel have conducted

*(Left) A plume of smoke begins to fill the sky in the far distance as coalition forces fire artillery rounds at identified Taliban fighting positions on the edge of the Sangin District Center area. (Bottom) Special Forces and British Soldiers take a tactical pause during a combat patrol in the Sangin District area of Helmand province. Photos by Spc. Keith Henning.*





medical relief missions and are planning for more. Elsewhere, alternative farming and agriculture plans are being developed to replace the poppies grown in the area and simultaneously bring wealth and stability.

“We’re here to bring peace and stability in the Sangin District for the generations to come,” said a U.S. Special Forces senior non-commissioned officer. “We’ve seen positive signs that what we’ve done so far has been correct, and we intend to continue until the mission is finished.”

***A Special Operations physical therapist examines an Afghan child’s wrist during a medical relief mission at the Sangin city district center in Helmand province. More than 500 Afghans received medical treatment during the 3-day MEDCAP. Photo by Spc. Keith Henning.***





*An Iraqi Special Operations Forces soldier conducts a clearing exercise during ISOF training. ISOF are trained by U.S. Army Special Forces. CJSOTF-AP photo.*

# Iraqi SOF building successes


*By CJSOTF-AP Public Affairs*

Iraqi Special Operations Forces increasingly are fulfilling a significant role in the Global War on Terrorism through successful operations targeting the Iraqi insurgency. With Coalition Forces on scene for observation and advising support, ISOF are

demonstrating their improved war-fighting capabilities in hunting down insurgents and disrupting terrorist cells, while working toward the goal of becoming a self-sustaining, fully operational security force in Iraq.

ISOF are elite warriors who take on some of the most challenging and dangerous missions. In recent operations, the Iraqi forces have targeted and captured





individuals suspected of involvement in insurgent activities including death squad attacks, crimes against local civilians, ISOF and Coalition Forces.

In an early morning raid on a residence in the Al Kamalaya neighborhood in east Baghdad, ISOF captured and detained a target believed to be linked with extremist elements of the Jaysh al-Madhi and personally

responsible for the kidnapping and murder of a female Iraqi interpreter who was working for Coalition Forces. In a second raid in Sadr City, ISOF captured four suspects believed to be involved in death squad activities and attacks on Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces.

ISOF are working also to methodically dismantle





deadly improvised explosive devices networks, including IEDs made with chlorine, as well as vehicle-borne IEDs. Because of their increasing sophistication and the difficulty in detection, IEDs have become a favorite among the insurgents as one of the main weapons against the Iraqi people and Coalition Forces in the multinational security effort.

In one early morning air assault operation, ISOF captured two targets suspected for involvement in an IED cell operating out of Fallujah that specifically targeted Coalition Forces vehicles. Additional raids in Al-Anbar province and Baghdad also produced successful disruption of IED cells.

Multinational Force Iraq spokesman Lt. Col. Christopher Garver said, "Every time we eliminate another member of the deadly IED networks in Iraq, the people of Iraq are one step closer to a safer existence."

During the operations, ISOF often seize caches of conventional weaponry, such as sniper rifles, automatic rifles and ammunition, as well as electronic communication devices.

ISOF's progression into Iraq's elite counterterrorism force is the result of high level training conducted by U.S. Special Operations Forces and modeled after their own rigorous regimen. Using the same sophisticated equipment as SOF, such as M-4 carbines, night-vision goggles and armored Humvees, ISOF are Iraq's best.

ISOF engage in intense physical



*(Top) Coalition Forces advise Iraqi Police Forces on a mission in northern Iraq in order to capture and detain known insurgents. Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Watkins. (Bottom) Coalition Forces advise Iraqi Special Operations Forces on a combat operation to detain known terrorists in Baghdad, Iraq. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Joe Laurel.*





*An Iraqi Special Operations Forces soldier on a combat operation to capture insurgent forces in Baghdad, Iraq. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Joe Laurel.*

conditioning, along with scenarios designed to develop skills in land navigation, small-unit tactics, unconventional warfare operations, direct action operations, marksmanship, live-fire structure clearing, helicopter rooftop insertions, escape and evasion training and quick ground assault strikes.

This broad range of operational abilities enhances the multinational effort to bring security to the Iraqi people. Relying on American forces mainly for observation and advising support, ISOF have a high level of proficiency and are ready and able to take the lead in some of the toughest missions, and with few losses. According to the news releases of the recent raids, no Iraqi or Coalition forces were injured during the operations.

ISOF had the opportunity recently to demonstrate their improved capabilities to two of the Army's top enlisted soldiers in Iraq during a training demonstration at Baghdad International Airport. The Multi-National

Force-Iraq command sergeant major, Jeffrey Mellinger, and 1st Army command sergeant major, Marvin Hill, observed ISOF as they conducted two mock raids and a live-fire exhibition.

Hill became the new Multi-National Force-Iraq command sergeant major, relieving Mellinger of his 33-plus months of service as the top enlisted Soldier in Iraq.

Mellinger and Hill watched as the ISOF employed combat maneuvers and equipment to infiltrate, raid and clear a room constructed within the "shoothouse," a two-story, multi-room building designed for facilitating ISOF combat training within a controlled environment. ISOF stormed the site in four Humvees, raided the compound and quickly detained two suspects without incident.

Mellinger and Hill commended the ISOF's abilities and expressed their satisfaction to the ISOF commander regarding the soldiers' professionalism, discipline and combat capabilities. "You have some very, very professional soldiers," Hill told the commander.

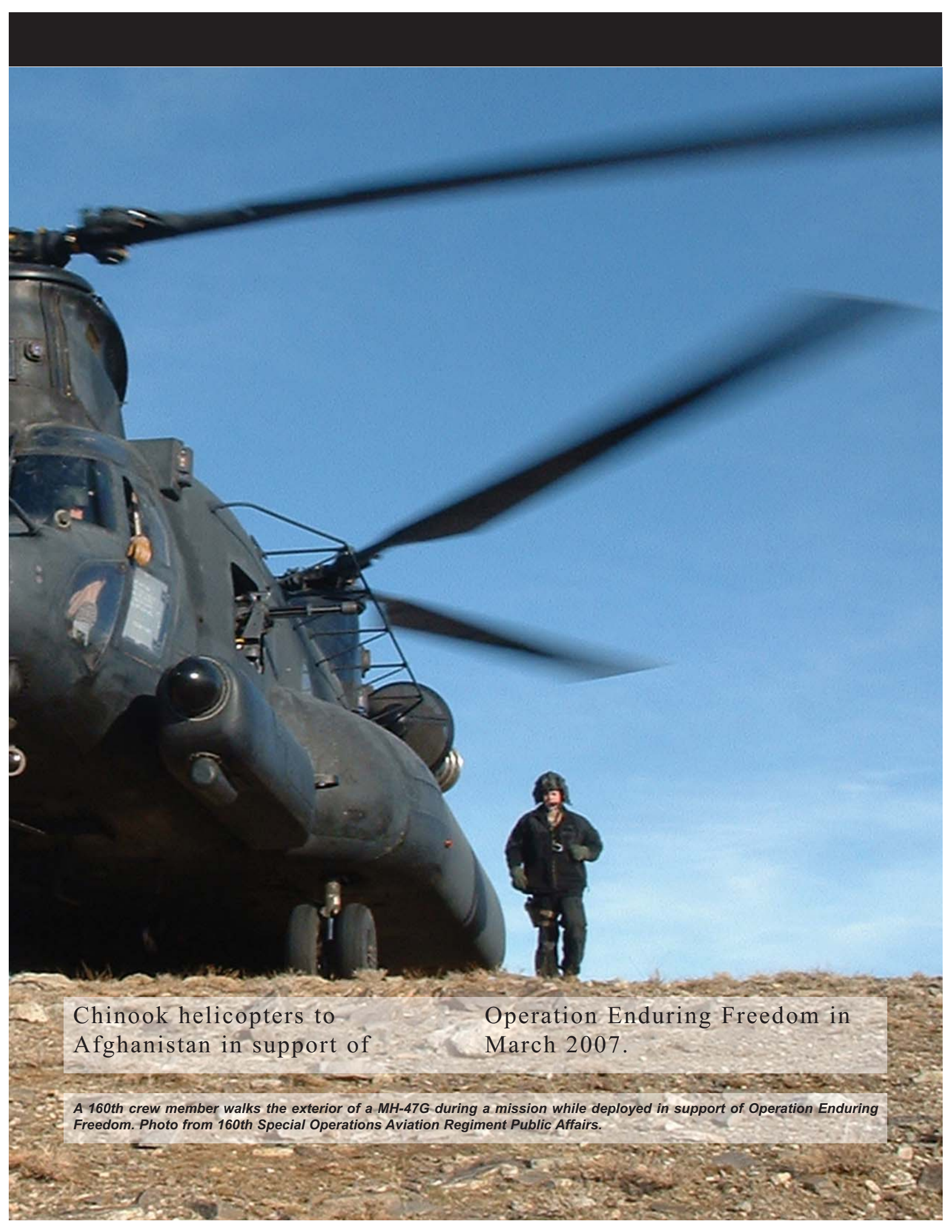


# MH-47G Chinook deploys to combat

*By Kimberly T. Laudano  
160th Special Operations  
Aviation Regiment  
Public Affairs*

**T**he 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) deployed the first MH-47G





Chinook helicopters to  
Afghanistan in support of

Operation Enduring Freedom in  
March 2007.

*A 160th crew member walks the exterior of a MH-47G during a mission while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Photo from 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment Public Affairs.*





After the first 2 ½ months of the deployment, the detachment of aircraft executed numerous combat missions, flying more than 460 flight hours and maintaining a readiness rate of more than 97 percent.

Lt. Col. Manfred Little, commander, 3rd Battalion, 160th SOAR, who deployed the new aircraft, said the MH-47G is proving to be an impressive aircraft for his aviators who are conducting extremely challenging operations in Afghanistan, often on zero illumination nights with limited visibility from blowing dust and haze.

“The MH-47G Chinook provides an increased safety and situational awareness capability by allowing the pilots to navigate utilizing a digital moving map display with a height-above-terrain feature, a fused image display and a radar picture of the terrain along the flight path,” said Little.

“These mission aids allow our pilots to safely navigate above the hazardous terrain to put the ground force on target plus or minus 30 seconds.”

*(Left) Night Stalkers conduct maintenance work on a MH-47G under the cover of darkness while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Bottom) An MH-47G Chinook is staged on a flight line for potential missions while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Photos by 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment Public Affairs.*







**An MH-47G Chinook flies over mountainous terrain in Afghanistan while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Photo from 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment Public Affairs.**

New technology onboard the MH-47G is also taking mission planning to a whole new level.

“On our first direct action mission with the G-model, the Flight Lead (FL), with unprecedented speed and accuracy, was able to perform calculations on the fly for both the infil and exfil on three different flight routes with various allowable cargo loads to multiple helicopter landing zones,” recalls Little.

This allowed the FL to provide more options to the ground force commander than ever before, enabling the commander to provide maximum combat power on the objective.

On another occasion, 160th crews received a time-sensitive mission during flight. The crews leveraged the technologies onboard the MH-47G to develop a plan enroute to

their staging location. They quickly transferred the information electronically between aircraft at the staging area, providing an accurate mission plan within the short mission timeline.

“This is a tremendous leap in planning capabilities and accuracy compared to previously establishing a plan in flight with paper maps and in a blacked out cockpit,” said Little.

The 160th is growing its fleet of Chinooks and replacing the aging mixed fleet of D- and E-model Chinooks with the newest G-models. These modernized rebuilt aircraft include all the features of the MH-47E with the addition of a new cockpit and selected airframe sections, and the Common Avionics Architecture System (commonly referred to as CAAS) with five full-color-multi-function



displays.



# Special Operations medical team treats hundreds in Maruf, Afghanistan

*By Spc. Daniel Love  
CJSOTF-A Public Affairs*

Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan medical personnel performed medical relief missions to improve regional quality of life and strengthen bonds with local residents May 8 - 10.

The medical team set up a treatment center, with the support of local doctors and Afghan National Border Police, to provide medical treatment to more than 450 people.

“Our mission is to give these people quality medical treatment, something they might otherwise have great difficulty getting access to,” said a Special Operations medical officer. “A lot of them can’t afford the medicine we’re giving them, but it’s all free as part of a campaign for healthy bodies and pro-Afghanistan hearts and minds.”

After passing through security and screening, patients were separated by gender and treated accordingly by male and female doctors.

“It’s hard to get good medicine here, and what we do get can be expensive” said a Maruf doctor. “It’s not often that anything is free, so people are showing up in large numbers to be treated for injuries or sicknesses they may have been living with for years.”

“Most of the people who come here have problems that are preventable or easy to fix,” said a Special Operations medical officer. “By using our resources to improve perceptions, we can make simple advice and a little bit of medicine go a long way.”

Medical assistance is one of many ways Coalition Forces are helping the people of Afghanistan. Coalition Forces continue to support the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan by conducting humanitarian and development operations throughout the country.



*(Left) A Special Forces medical sergeant browses through shoes trying to find the correct size for a girl who showed up with bare feet, during a medical relief mission in Maruf, Afghanistan. (Top) A Special Operations medical officer examines a baby, during a medical relief mission in Maruf, Afghanistan. Special Operations medical personnel provided treatment to more than 450 people in the remote town near the southern border of Pakistan May 8 – 10. Army photo by Spc. Daniel Love.*



# Three Soldiers from 3rd Special Forces Group earn Silver Star

*By Staff Sgt. Jason Cauley*

*3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) Public Affairs*

Three soldiers from 3rd Special Forces Group were awarded the Silver Star Medal Tuesday for gallantry in action during the unit's 2005 rotation to Afghanistan in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Maj. Christopher Wells and Sgts. 1st Class Cliff Roundtree and Nicholas Gross were presented their medals by Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, commander, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, during a ceremony held in Heritage Auditorium at the USASOC Headquarters at Fort Bragg.

"Each one, to the man, will tell you he just did his job," stated Maj. Gen. Thomas Csrnko, commander, U.S. Special Forces Command (Airborne), prior to the presentation of the medals.

Wells received his medal for his actions taken after he and his men came under immediate attack upon entering the village of Syachow in southern Afghanistan on July 25, 2005. Then a team captain, Wells acted as the ground commander during the 14-hour battle in temperatures reaching 115 degrees. His actions resulted in the killing or capture of nearly 30 enemy fighters and dozens of light and heavy enemy weapons.

Typical of most Silver Star recipients, Wells gives the credit for his successes to his team members saying, "Me by myself up there...I wouldn't be here. They did things that inspired me."

Roundtree, a weapons sergeant, and Gross, a communications sergeant, echoed Wells' sentiments. Each gave more of the credit to one another and to their fellow team members. Both men received the Silver Star for actions taken during a reconnaissance patrol in the mountains of southern Afghanistan in August 2005. Their patrol turned into a 56-hour running firefight that included seven enemy ambushes. Both men were serving as gunners in the first and second vehicles of the convoy.

Their continuous efforts to engage the enemy, despite their constant exposure to heavy enemy fire and dwindling ammunition, are credited as being the instrumental factor in the team's overall security and success in the mission. One Special Forces Soldier, Staff Sgt. Christopher Falkel, perished during the battle.

"We lost one of our brothers that day. He can't wear his," said Roundtree. "We'll wear this for him."

All three men serve in 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group.



*(Top) Maj. Christopher Wells receives a hug from his mother, Judith, after being presented the Silver Star Medal at an awards ceremony Tuesday. (Bottom) Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, left, pins a Silver Star Medal onto Sgt. 1st Class Cliff Roundtree of 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group during an awards ceremony Tuesday. Photos by Sgt. Corey Dennis.*





# USASOC memorializes 42 fallen Soldiers during Fort Bragg ceremony



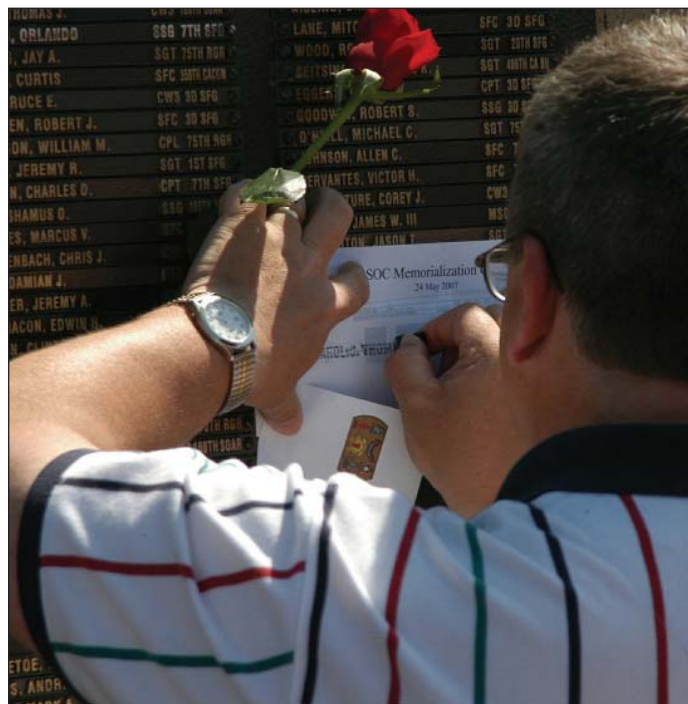
**By Mark Tate**  
**U.S. Army Special Operations Command**

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command paid homage to Soldiers who died in combat during the past year with a somber ceremony at Fort Bragg, May 24.

The ceremony was the culmination of two full days of remembrance and understanding for the Gold Star Families of 37 Army Special Operations Soldiers killed during combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and five Korean War Soldiers.

Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, commanding general of USASOC, addressed an audience of more than 500 fellow Soldiers, family members, friends and special guests.

"They are friends that we will never forget," Wagner



*(Left) Family, fellow Soldiers and friends congregate in the USASOC Memorial Plaza following the 2007 Memorialization ceremony which added the names of 37 Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom Soldiers and five Korean War veterans to the memorial wall. Photo by Walt Sokalski. (Top) A family member makes a rubbing of a fallen loved one's name after the Soldier Memorialization Ceremony at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Memorial Wall. Photo by Adam Luther.*

said. "Their service was selfless. They are our heroes. They represent the best of where they came from."

Approximately 250 family members of the fallen warriors traveled from across the United States and Mexico to participate in the ceremony on Fort Bragg's Meadows Memorial Plaza. Family members celebrated the life and military service of their loved ones, placing roses at the base of the memorial wall and touching the engraved legacy of courage and selfless sacrifice of their Soldier.

"The absolute and lasting truth is that our fallen Soldiers are good men and women of the highest order," said Wagner. "They come from strong families and strong communities of character, with strong traditional values and work ethics. They come from your homes and from your heart. The families here today are the most incredibly strong and patriotic body in America, and the rest of us are



*(Right) A family member prepares to place a rose at the base of the memorialization wall at U.S. Army Special Operations Memorial Wall. Photo by Sameria Amerson.*

in absolute awe of you and the example you set for America.”

Renee Dickenson, the sister of Staff Sgt. Michael Dickenson, who died in Iraq, said the memorial ceremony was important for the families.

“We got to meet each other and exchange stories,” she said. “We can talk to people who have gone through the same thing.”

Wagner said the families are important to the Soldiers, not just those who have fallen, but those who have family members still in the service, as they fight what will probably be America’s longest war.

“I encourage you to remain a strong part of the military family,” he said.

The Memorial Wall originally listed Soldiers killed in action during combat in Vietnam, but was updated in the 1980s to include Soldiers who were missing in action or declared dead. The wall was later expanded to include all Army Special Operations Soldiers killed in action from 1983 to present.

The Memorial Wall now displays the names of 1,007 fallen Special Operations Soldiers.

During the Special Operations Forces modular demonstration and again at the conclusion of the ceremony, the families and friends of the fallen Soldiers gravitated back toward the wall to preserve this commemorating moment in time by capturing the impression of the respective loved one’s nameplate with rubbings.

The names of the following Soldiers were added to the Memorial Wall during the ceremony:

#### **Operation Enduring Freedom**

Sgt. 1st Class William Brown  
Staff Sgt. Eric Caban  
Staff Sgt. Kyu Hyuk Chay  
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Scott Dyer  
Spc. Ryan Garbs  
Spc. Brandon Gordon  
Sgt. 1st Class Meredith Howard  
Staff Sgt. Christian Longsworth  
2nd Lt. Scott Lundell  
Capt. Shane Mahaffee  
Master Sgt. Thomas Maholic  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Hershel McCants, Jr.  
Staff Sgt. Robert Paul  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 John Quinlan  
Pfc. Kristofer Thomas  
Spc. Travis Vaughn  
Sgt. Adam Wilkinson



#### **Operation Iraqi Freedom**

Sgt. Dustin Adkins  
Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Crabtree  
Staff Sgt. Michael Dickinson  
Staff Sgt. Carlos Dominguez  
Capt. Brian Freeman  
Sgt. 1st Class Richard Herrema  
Lt. Col. Daniel Holland  
Maj. Alan Johnson  
Spc. Adam Knox  
Sgt. Marco Miller  
Sgt. 1st Class Tung Nguyen  
Staff Sgt. Ronald Paulsen  
Sgt. James Regan  
1st Sgt. Carlos Saenz  
Spc. Teodoro Torres  
Staff Sgt. Nathan Vacho  
Sgt. Thomas Vandling Jr.  
Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jamie Weeks  
Sgt. Daniel Winegeart  
Maj. Matthew Worrell

#### **Korean War**

Pfc. Bernard Almeida  
Pfc. Anthony Arezzo  
1st Lt. Wayne Button  
Pfc. David Cooper  
Cpl. Joseph Ratti





# 40 Years

*completing the Qualification Course, he served on an A Team in the 7th Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, N.C. After completion of Officer Candidate School, he attended Army Flight School at Fort Rucker, Ala.*

*During his career, he has been involved in combat operations in Vietnam, Operation Urgent Fury, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and others.*

*He is the senior aviator in the U.S. Army and is the first member of the Army's Aviation Branch to be promoted to the rank of four-star general.*

*Gen. Doug Brown, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, is retiring July 9, 2007, after 40 years of service.*

*Brown entered the Army in 1967 as a private in the infantry. He immediately entered training for Special Forces. After*

*Gen. Brown was interviewed by Tip of the Spear editor Mike Bottoms*

**♠: Where is Special Operations Command today?**

**A:** First let me say how proud I have been to command the great forces of U.S. Special Operations Command. Over three and a half years ago I took command of SOCOM after commanding Army Special Operations and JSOC, and those eight years have allowed me to see all of our forces operating around the world. Every unit, every operation in every part of the globe has had SOF Operators performing incredible missions, from foreign internal defense to unconventional warfare to civil affairs

and psychological operations to direct action. These Operators are dedicated to the task of freeing populations from oppression through the elimination of human suffering, improving peoples' lives, giving them hope and training foreign forces so they can maintain their own sovereignty through security and good governance. Aircrews and boat operators continue to operate in the toughest of environments imaginable, doing missions that no other force could accomplish. Daily our people validate our system of selecting the right people, giving them world-class training and equipment, then empowering them to make decisions and operate as they need to. I am also extremely proud of our families. They have continued to

sacrifice so that we could deploy these great forces to do the missions that are critical to this nation. Today SOF are in great shape. Our forces are better trained and equipped than ever in history. Our modernization is on track to ensure the future relevancy of our force. Our schools are resourced at a level never seen in history. Over the past few years SOF have been in the spotlight as the nation struggled to find the right force for the type of warfare in the Global War on Terrorism. The realization that cultural awareness, language capability, high-level problem solving and the maturity that have been emphasized in our SOF training schools has made our impact in the GWOT critical and was the catalyst for the growth and aggressive resourcing of our force.

♠: **What is your vision for Special Operations Forces' future?**

**A:** The future of SOF is very bright. We have been very well resourced, but the environment we find ourselves in today is more complex than any this nation has ever faced. This type of global war requires a different

type of warrior, a warrior who understands cultures, languages, and who understands the secret to success is not in the direct action role, but in a combination of direct and indirect roles. The future is bright because there has been an acknowledgment within the Department of Defense and other government agencies that the skill sets SOF bring to the battlefield are critical in this type of war. However, we are not without challenges. SOF growth is a challenge. We will not sacrifice our standards in the selection process to Special Operations Forces as we grow. I am also very concerned about ops tempo. I don't see a change when our ops tempo decreases in Iraq and Afghanistan; it will increase in other areas. We will continue to train around the world with our partners as we continue to eliminate terrorism overseas. We are on a positive path to a strategy of capability designed at SOCOM and validated in the Quadrennial Defense Review. So again, I think SOF's future is bright, but I do not think there will be a reduction in the demand for what we do.





♠: **The command celebrated its 20th anniversary this year. You have been part of this command since day one. Has the command fulfilled its intended role?**

A: I think the command has performed

better than ever imagined. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to people who built this command, such as the first SOCOM commander, Gen. Lindsay; Rep. Dan Daniel; Sens. Sam Nunn and William Cohen; the first Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, Jim Locher; and retired Army generals Sam Wilson and Dick Sholtes; and former Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Shy Meyer, to name just a few.

These are the men who not only had the vision that resulted in the creation of USSOCOM; they had the courage to create the command in the face of what was not a popular idea. I think their vision has been realized many times over. Without these men and their vision, I don't think our nation would have been able to respond as quickly or in the manner that it did after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. Nor would we have had a Special Operations Force that could conduct sustained combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, plus deploy forces in other parts of the world in support of the broader war on terrorism, for more than five years. The Nunn-Cohen Amendment gave us great authorities. In my opinion, as SOF become more important on the type of battlefield we are on today, we have to ensure



there is no erosion of the authorities granted to SOCOM under the Nunn-Cohen Amendment. We need to redouble our effort to educate our own forces within the command, as well as our service partners, about the authorities vested to the SOCOM commander.

♠: **What is the state of interagency relationships since SOCOM became the lead planner and synchronizer of the Global War on Terrorism?**

A: Interagency relationships are even better than I had envisioned. The interagency partners we have in our headquarters and the liaison officers we have in Washington, D.C., increase efficiency every day. I think one reason the interagency piece is working better is because throughout the

government people understand the strategy SOCOM has written and see that SOCOM understands the importance of all the elements of national power to win the Global War on Terrorism. DoD is just one element and will not always be in the lead. I think the other agencies appreciate the fact that USSOCOM understands the complexity of the Global War on Terrorism strategy. Interagency relationships are getting much better, but there is obviously room for improvement that we are all striving for. We have a constant stream of interagency principals who visit the headquarters for discussions on the Global War on Terrorism that is working toward that end.

♠: **What is your legacy to SOF?**

A: I don't think I have a legacy specific to

SOF. I think the wonderful performance of the people on the battlefield and doing the missions around the world are the legacy of SOF leadership. The members of Special Operations Command have taken the tools we have given them and taken this command to an extremely high level. I was fortunate to be here when this new role was envisioned for SOF with its associated growth, and I believe we have aggressively taken advantage of it. The SOCOM staff, which I could not be more proud of, has really developed the plans for the command to place it in a good stead for many years to come, both in operations and in resourcing.

♠: Do you foresee any challenges for the command?

A: I have already talked about the importance of not allowing the erosion of the Nunn-Cohen Amendment. I think in Special Operations Command we have allowed separate communities to grow, and quite frankly, that is not helpful. We need commanders at all levels to fix it now. I think it comes from a lack of understanding of the capabilities of the different communities, an imbalance of resources, and a blurring of mission sets. Another challenge is that bigger is not always better. I worry about people trying to build conventional capabilities in Special Operations. As our forces know, Special Operations units are trained, organized, and equipped to perform missions that conventional forces are not trained and organized to perform. We do not want to build conventional capabilities in SOCOM, nor should we. Bigger is not always better; we want to get it right, not just bigger. I think our plans for the future fix those problems, provided the plans are executed with discipline.

On the battlefield we have had a lot of

direct action successes. While that is very important, direct action is not the key to success. Special Operations must be involved in separating populations from insurgents. SOF have those skills. I think the professional SOF Operator understands all this. Again, being in Special Operations has nothing to do with what kind of equipment you carry or certifications you hold; it has to do with how you think. Everyone in SOF has an important role to play and they must play their specific role to the absolute best of their capability. We owe that to

the American people.

♠: Is there anything you would like to say to the men and women of SOF upon your retirement?

A: I would like to say to the

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, DoD civilians and contractors that it has been a real honor to work with them and serve with them for the last 40 years. I am especially proud of all my time in SOF, and specifically how the command has taken on these new missions with skill and professionalism. I'd also like to say a special thanks to the families. We are blessed with incredible families who put up with incredible hardships, and very seldom do we get a complaint. I am told that the ops tempo and battlefield exposure experienced by our forces today is greater than that experienced by our great veterans of World War II. This places enormous pressure on young families, and we owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

It has been an incredible 40 years, and there is no greater honor than to depart as the commander of the world's most capable Special Operations Forces. I will watch from the sidelines with great pride as SOF continue their unparalleled successes. God bless all of you.

*Today SOF are in great shape. Our forces are better trained and equipped than ever in history. Our modernization is on track to ensure the future relevancy of our force. Our schools are resourced at a level never seen in history.*

— Gen. Doug Brown



# AC-130U SPOOKY



**The AC-130 Spooky Gunship is an extremely effective aerial fire platform. Placing 25mm, 30mm, 40mm and 105mm munitions on target makes it a deadly addition to ground troops arsenal. The Spooky is especially effective in Military Operations in Urban Terrain environments due to its accuracy.**

**1. COCKPIT** - Three crewmen/women are here on station. Pilot/co-pilot/flight engineer pilot craft and maintain continuous mission refueling, time lines, and mission coordination. The rest of gunship crew.

**2. BATTLE MANAGEMENT CENTER** - The battle management center includes the Network

# AWY

IP



## 19th SOS - Mission

The 19th Special Operations Squadron, located at Hurlburt Field, Fla., is the Air Force's most advanced Weapons Instruction and Mission Rehearsal unit. The 19th Special Operations Squadron is the AFSOC formal school for AC-130H, AC-130U, and MC-130E training and mission rehearsal. The squadron teaches more than 1,100 classes in 70 distinct syllabi of instruction for initial mission qualification, instructor upgrade and continuation refresher training.



Page design by  
Staff Sgt. Timothy Lawn

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on status;  
ation with  
  
ER - The  
avigator,

Fire Control Officer, Electronic Warfare Officer,  
Infrared Operator and T.V. Operator.  
**3. 25mm GAU Gatling Gun** - Fires 1,800 -  
rounds per minute and has capacity for 3000 rds.  
Soon to be replaced with an automatic 30mm  
Gatling Gun.  
**4. 40mm Bofors Cannon and M102**

**105mm Cannon** - The 40mm fires 100 rounds  
per minute. The 105mm can fire 10 rounds per  
minute.

**5. Loadmaster Position** - The crewman in this  
position scans for visual threats to the aircraft. The  
position requires the person to be prone and on  
back of upper ramp.



# 19th SOS keeps AFSOC's fliers flying

*By 2nd Lt. Lauren Johnson  
1st SOW Public Affairs*

On the east side of Hurlburt Field is a labyrinth, a maze of a building where inexperienced visitors could easily lose their way. Nestled inside its walls is a self-contained unit responsible for the training of Special Operations Aviators worldwide.

The building is home to the 19th Special Operations Squadron, which provides training for all aircrew positions: pilots, navigators, fire control officers, sensor operators and gunners, according to Maj. Karl Marusak, 19th SOS electronic warfare evaluator and AC-130 instructor.

"Pretty much any Air Force Special Operations Command airframe training comes through the 19th in some shape or form," Marusak said. This includes students from active duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian sectors.

Between mission qualification, refresher training, special qualification training and upgrade training for instructor status, the 19th SOS sees approximately 2,600 graduates every year, according to Tom Gasper, squadron registrar.

The squadron is best known for its aircraft simulator training, where students get hands-on experience for their specific crew position within their specific aircraft. Simulators are designed to provide a realistic training environment that looks and feels like a real airplane.

Inside, the crew is nestled into a snug cockpit, surrounded by the same switches, controls and displays they see in their aircraft. The crews' visual experience is a virtual reality of one of many global terrains available through the simulator's programmed display.

"The level of training is much better now than it has been in the past," said Lt. Col. Charles Stoner, 19th SOS commander. He credits the advanced technology of the simulators and the experience of the instructors for the vast improvements and for preparing students to perform their real-world mission.

The simulators allow students to do things they can't do in real-world training scenarios, such as practicing emergency procedures. Maintaining currency in emergency procedures and other skills is an on going process. Each active duty flying unit at Hurlburt is given time in the simulators for proficiency and currency training.

The 19th SOS can set up simulators and instruction to focus on specific terrains or events at the request of the units.

The imagery projected in the simulators, which is constantly being updated to make it as realistic as possible, can incorporate other aircraft, such as refuelers, friendly aircraft and various targets.

Stoner said it's important for students to be able to see the planes they're going to fly with.

To make the training even more realistic, the 19th SOS has the capability to link its simulators with others throughout the Department of Defense and with Coalition equipment worldwide.

In addition to aircraft simulators, the squadron also operates the Visual Threat Recognition Avoidance Trainer.

The VTRAT is a simulator that gives scanners practice recognizing shoulder-fired missiles, Marusak explained.

Sitting in an armchair in front of a screen, students experience incoming missiles from different angles. The system tests their ability to respond quickly in releasing flares to divert the incoming missiles.

For the students, training is a full-time job. Marusak said initial qualification training generally lasts five to six days a week for six to eight months, depending on weather and aircraft availability.

On the academic side, students are taught mainly by Lockheed civilian contractors. Each crew position has a full academic syllabus, including classroom instruction and computer-aided training.

Stoner said one of the best parts of his job is working with new students.

"The new crewmembers come in with such enthusiasm," he said. "Once they're all checked out, it's great to be able to shake their hands and send them home to their squadrons."



***Pictured is the MC-130 simulator, one of several simulators managed by the 19th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla. The squadron has the capabilities of linking its simulators and conducting training with other Department of Defense and Coalition units worldwide. Photo by 2nd Lt. Lauren Johnson.***

# AFSOC helps SOCOM mark 20 years

*By Chief Master Sgt. Gary Emery  
AFSOC Public Affairs*

The Air Force Special Operations Command credo promises the Air Commandos will deliver “Special Operations power anytime, anywhere.”

Evidently that also includes birthday parties. U.S. Special Operations Command’s 20th anniversary celebration held April 23-27 at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., to be exact.

USSOCOM, made up of about 48,000 Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps Special Operators, specializes in counterterrorism and unconventional warfare missions. The command leads America’s Global War on Terrorism.

To celebrate its birthday, USSOCOM gave local and national media outlets a rare glimpse into the shadow world of Special Operations through access to Special Operators, their weapons and other unique gear.

AFSOC’s contributions to the party included a display manned by a special tactics officer, special operations weathermen, combat controllers and pararescuemen of the 720th Special Tactics Group at Hurlburt Field. Special Operations Airmen provided information on the CV-22 Osprey, AC-130U Spooky and MC-130W Combat Spear aircraft on static display from the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt.

The Osprey proved to be particularly popular, flying reporters around the Tampa area to demonstrate the tilt-rotor versatility of AFSOC’s newest and most transformational aircraft.

While every passenger got to experience the CV-22’s impressive takeoff performance and speed, a lucky few skipped the landing — by tandem-jumping at 5,000 feet from the Osprey’s back ramp firmly strapped to an Army Golden Knights jumper.

Melissa Bunting, an executive producer with Tampa radio station 103.5 FM, was one of those who took the fast way down.

“This was my first jump. (My show host) called me one afternoon and said, ‘Wanna jump out of a plane next week at MacDill?’ How could I say no to this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?” she said.

She said she was a bit apprehensive about jumping out of an aircraft.

“I am not going to lie — I was scared to death, but it turned into one of the best experiences of my life,”



**Andy Serrano and members of the U.S. Special Operations Command parachute team leap from the back of the CV-22 Osprey during the Special Operations Forces Week April 23-27 at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. It was the 20th anniversary celebration of USSOCOM. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Timmy Carlin.**

Bunting said. “Jumping out of the Osprey and feeling that feeling of flying was so incredible, and it’s hard to put into words what the experience is like. You have to actually do it.”

But did the experience hook her on skydiving?

“I would definitely do it again, although nothing will top jumping with the Golden Knights and out of the Osprey,” she said.

Special Operators, too, were impressed with the Osprey’s ability to hover like a helicopter and fly like a fixed-wing airplane.

“I have been on every helicopter in the inventory,” said one Army Ranger. “This is the best ride I’ve ever had.”

Lt. Gen. Michael Wooley highlighted the role of the Air Commandos in the Global War on Terrorism.

“One of the great things that happened in Tampa was the focus on people. SOF Week is a great opportunity to showcase the capabilities and professionalism of all of America’s SOF warriors,” the general said. “Our Special Operators are at the tip of the spear, taking the fight to terrorists and their supporters every day and night,” he said.

“AFSOC Air Commandos are in the air and on the ground all around the world, making sure America’s enemies are looking over their shoulders and constantly wondering, ‘Am I next?’”



# Pilot soars to new heights on the ground with Naval Special Warfare

*By Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Biller  
Naval Special Warfare Public Affairs*

For the past five months, Lt. Brandon Scott, an instructor pilot with Strike Fighter Squadron 122, has been filling a different role. Scott is another one of many Individual Augmentees who are helping Naval Special Warfare Operators in Iraq.

Currently, more than 20 percent of the personnel supporting NSW operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are IAs, most of whom are drawn from other parts of the Navy and the Navy Reserve Force.

Scott is the forward air controller and air officer for his SEAL Task Unit.

"I plan, schedule and control all types of air support for the Task Unit, to include both logistical passenger movements and combat support," he said.

Scott has coordinated more than 225 close air support sorties in support of SEAL operations and has scheduled and tracked more than 250 passenger movements in and out of the Iraqi theater of operations.

"Having an air officer that is Joint Terminal Attack Controller qualified has been a force multiplier," said Scott's Task Unit commander. "His qualifications as a pilot and ability to call for fires has increased our ability to find, fix and destroy Anti-Iraqi Forces."

The TU has about a dozen IAs working in fields ranging from medical, law enforcement and physical security, Seabees and intelligence, the commander said.

"(IAs have) enhanced both readiness and increased our capabilities," he added.

This is Scott's first time as an IA. He said he did it because he felt he had something to contribute to the NSW mission. His determination and volunteer spirit did not come without sacrifice. Limited creature comforts, family separation and a sometimes hostile work environment are just a few of the adjustments he's had to make.

The sacrifices are not without payoff. His family supports him in everything he's doing and he's been able



***Lt. Brandon Scott, an instructor pilot with Strike Fighter Squadron 122, is serving in Iraq as an Individual Augmentee for Naval Special Warfare. Scott is the forward air controller and air officer for his Task Unit, coordinating close air support missions and passenger movements. U.S. Navy Photo.***

to stay in good contact with them throughout the deployment. Scott has enjoyed the experience. He says the time he's spent here and the things he's learned will make him a better-rounded pilot.

"Given the chance, I'd do it again. I definitely think this experience will help me provide better air support for NSW and ground elements in the future, from the cockpit," he said. "I will be better able to identify with their specific needs and find more effective ways to employ my aircraft."

The TU commander stated his IAs have done an exceptional job and is thankful for Sailors like Scott -- the best and brightest from their fields, who come into harm's way to do the tough jobs.

# NSW JAG receives Bronze Star Medal

*By Petty Officer 3rd Class Christopher Menzie  
Naval Special Warfare Public Affairs*

A legal professional working for Naval Special Warfare (NSW) was presented with the Bronze Star Medal during a ceremony May 4 at the command headquarters in Coronado, Calif.

Lt. Angela Rongotes, who served as a Judge Advocate General (JAG) for Navy SEALs in Iraq from October 2005 to April 2006, was awarded the medal for her role in providing stability in a hostile environment.

"The award speaks about her going above and beyond the call of duty in a combat zone," said Lt. Cmdr. Van Wennen, a task unit commander in charge of Rongotes for much of her deployment. "She really set a new standard for JAGs over there."

While working in and around Baghdad, Rongotes trained Navy SEALs on rules of engagement, law of armed conflict, and detainee evidence handling.

"She would ensure that our own forces were trained properly and ensured that our troops were very aware of the rules before they would go out on missions," Wennen said. "She also made sure we handled evidence properly and did that in a professional way so the evidence would stand up in Iraqi courts."

Rongotes also instructed hundreds of Iraqi Army soldiers who worked in coalition with American Forces during missions.

"Everything she was teaching our guys about the law of war, she would teach that through an interpreter to Iraqis as well," Wennen said.

"When our guys, along with Iraqi forces, would hit a target, they would come back with a detainee and get him ready to go to court," Rongotes said. "Whoever detained him would have to write a statement used to convict or at least keep these guys detained for up to 18 months."

To understand what the courts needed to convict detainees, Rongotes took frequent trips to the courts in Baghdad, where she made observations and talked to lawyers.

Rongotes said, "Our forces can go catch the bad guys, but if we can't keep them locked up, then what's the point of kicking down doors and snatching them?"

She would wear body armor daily while traveling to Baghdad to protect herself from possible attack at any moment.

"You could take off the body armor in the courthouse, but I preferred to leave it on," Rongotes said. "Everyone had weapons in there. Plus, people were always

threatening the judges."

As her experience increased, Rongotes accepted a case against an accused sniper whose case file was stagnant and poorly constructed. She built a strong case against him that led to his ultimate conviction.

Rongotes' work resulted in increased conviction rates for detainees captured by SEAL and Iraqi forces. Her leadership also helped Iraqis to gradually assume more control over their legal system.

"She just went above and beyond by reaching out and doing what needs to be done, which is develop the Iraqis," Wennen said. "In her particular case, the judicial system in Iraq is still very much in its infancy, and her efforts really go a long way."

"If you didn't have the Iraqi court system and the Americans mentoring it and helping it along, you would have a system of repeated catch-and-release," Rongotes said. "By training the Iraqis to look beyond just busting down doors and taking bad guys off the streets, there lies a benefit to the situation. You can show Iraqi soldiers a way they can protect their family even if it doesn't require a gun. All it requires is a pen, some paper clips and a few statements to possibly motivate them to go out and catch the bad guys."



***Lt. Angela Rongotes receives a Bronze Star Medal for her work in Iraq from Oct. 2005 to April 2006. Rongotes trained U.S. and Iraqi forces in legal matters such as rules of engagement and law of armed conflict. Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Christopher Menzie.***



# MARSOC 'Ironman' goes the distance to honor fallen and injured Marines

By Lance Cpl. Joseph R. Stahlman  
MARSOC Public Affairs

People swim, cycle and run for a variety of reasons: for fun, fitness or competition. Capt. Andrew Christian, a Marine assigned to U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, does all three honoring the memory of fellow warriors killed and injured in the Global War on Terrorism and to raise money to help support their families.

While deployed to Iraq in 2006 as a member of a Military Transition Team, Christian was authorized two weeks of leave to return to the United States and run the San Diego Rock 'n' Roll Marathon in June of that year. He completed the 26.2-mile run while carrying a 3-by-5 foot American flag and crossed the finish line in 3:23.

The flag Christian carried was in the back of a HMMWV in Iraq on Feb. 20, 2006, when one of his teammates, Staff Sgt. Jay Collado, was killed while en route to train soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 8th Iraqi Division.

Collado died from injuries sustained during an insurgent attack by an improvised explosive device. Two other members of the team, 1st Lt. Justin Waldeck and Staff Sgt. Chris Claude, were severely wounded.

Following the attack, Christian and his team discussed ways to honor their fallen and injured comrades deciding to raise scholarship money for Collado's 6-year-old daughter.

"We gained a lot of funds simply by word of mouth," said Christian, the branch head for 1st Special Missions Training Branch, Marine Special Operations School, MARSOC.

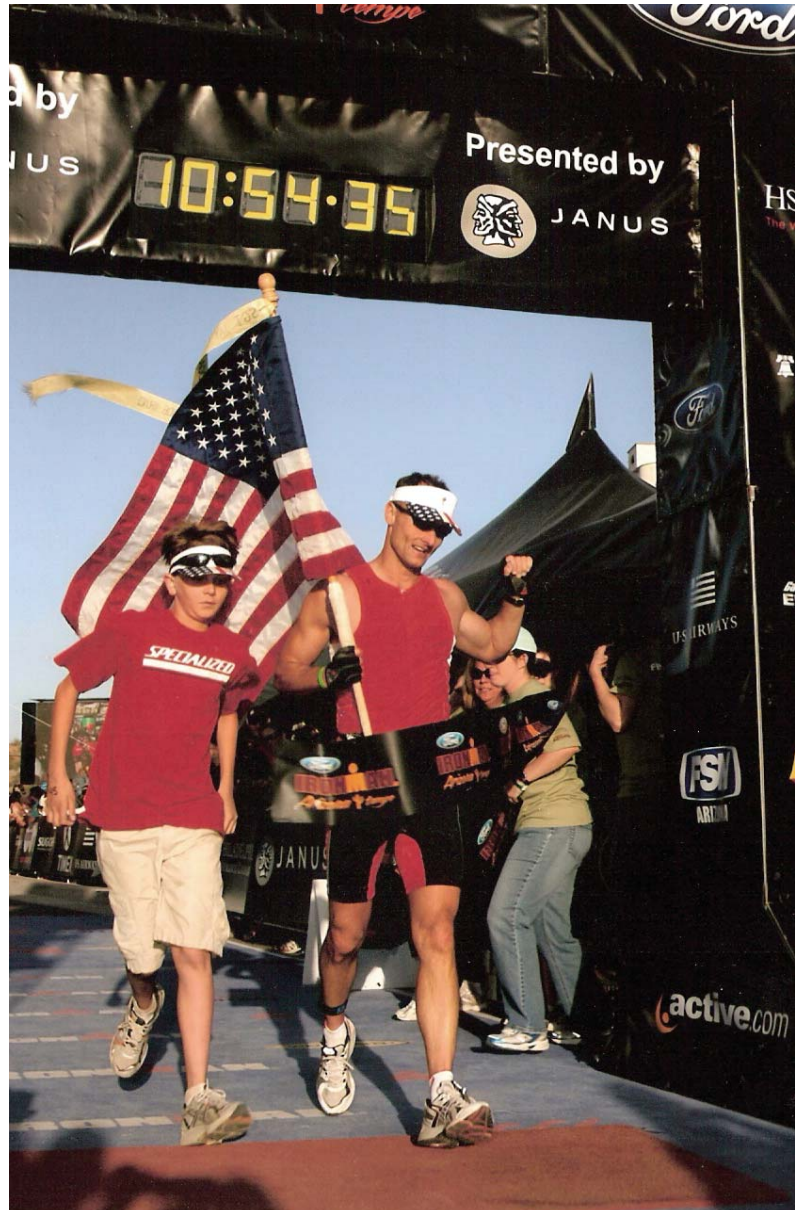
But to really get the word out, they had to advertise and find great Americans and corporations willing to donate to their cause.

Friends, family members and other supporters of America's troops donated thousands of dollars when they learned of Christian's commitment to carry the U.S. Colors during a marathon – and of his reasons for doing so.

"Carrying the flag is a way for me to honor Staff Sgt. Collado and show all Americans our true heroes are

making the ultimate sacrifice every day in Iraq and Afghanistan," Christian said.

True to the amphibious tradition of the Marine



**Capt. Andrew Christian, Branch Head for U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, 1st Special Missions Training Branch, is joined by his son as he completes the 2007 Ironman Arizona triathlon in Tempe, Ariz., April 15. Christian carried an American flag through the heat and gusting Arizona wind for 26.2 miles during the marathon portion of the triathlon as part of an effort raising more than \$80,000 for the families of fallen Marines and Marines recovering from combat injuries. Christian finished the Ironman 185th out of 2,066 entries. Courtesy photo.**

Corps, the four-time marathon runner would not be satisfied until he attacked his objective from the sea: He set his sights on the Ironman Arizona triathlon in Tempe, Ariz., and committed to carrying his U.S. flag through the harsh desert heat and 30 mph winds for a marathon's distance once again – but this time after swimming 2.4 miles to shore and completing a 112-mile bicycle ride.

Christian contacted a company that agreed to sponsor his cause to raise money, both for the daughter of his fallen teammate and for the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund. The sponsor then asked three-time Ironman World Champion, Peter Reid, to be Christian's coach to prepare him for the competition.

With the memory of Collado's death and his wounded teammates' lengthy rehabilitation process on his mind to motivate him, Christian began a rigorous four-month training plan including training with some of the top professional athletes in the Southern California area.

Triathletes must find ways to stay motivated throughout the months of extreme physical training required to complete an Ironman race. Christian found all the motivation he needed by thinking of his fellow Marines.

To prepare, Christian often spent six or more hours per day bike riding and running, but he said there is no easy way to carry a flag. He carried the Colors on several runs early on in his training, but quickly realized the weight of the flag would cause him to suffer no matter what he did and instead he focused his efforts on getting into top physical shape.

"An Ironman requires you to train at odd hours to get in your mileage. I spent a great deal of time swimming, riding and running between (3-7 a.m.)," Christian said. "Training like this is time consuming and forces you to develop a strict time-management schedule.

"In four short months, Reid took me from 177 pounds to 160 pounds and put me in the best shape of my life," Christian said. "Without the support of Reid, I wouldn't have been able to accomplish what I did."

When race day finally arrived, Marines from Christian's unit were on hand to show their support.

"It was truly an honor and a privilege to watch Christian carry the American flag during the race," said

Master Sgt. Charles Padilla, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of 1st SMTB, MSOS, MARSOC. "To be there and watch him on the course, you get a good appreciation of what he accomplished and what type of man he is."

While carrying the flag during the marathon portion of the triathlon, Christian received support from his fellow runners and spectators alike.

"I received comments like, 'Go USA' and, 'We support the Marines,'" Christian said. "I had several people stop, salute the flag and yell, 'Semper Fi!' as I ran by."

Throughout the race, the crowd's cheers motivated him, and though the weight of the flag bore down on his arms and shoulders, Christian never gave up.

"The thought of not finishing didn't cross my mind," said the husband of 17 years and father of one. "I knew carrying the flag would make me suffer, but when you think about a wounded Marine's situation, your pain subsides very quickly."

Christian neared exhaustion as he entered the last 50 meters of the race and was joined by his 13-year-old son who came to his father's side to run the final stretch beside him.

"This is something my son will remember for the rest of his life. It was really special having him there at the finish line," said Christian. "Training for this made me sacrifice a lot of time with my family, but they understood it was for a great cause."

Christian crossed the finish line after 10 hours and 54 minutes of non-stop physical exertion with the American flag held high in remembrance of America's fallen and in support of their families and surviving wounded warriors.

Christian finished 185th of the 2,066 entries.

"The memory of my fallen teammates gave me the motivation to finish strong," Christian said.

"Christian is a natural leader and an exceptional role model, not just as a Marine, but in his personal and family life," said Lt. Col. Anthony Herlihy, officer in charge, 1st SMTB, MSOS, MARSOC. "He upholds the highest standards for himself and inspires others to excel."

Together, Christian and his team of fellow Marines have raised more than \$30,000 for Collado's daughter and \$50,000 for the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund.







# USSOCOM hosts, honors SOF Medal of Honor recipients

## Center for Special Operations dedicated Medal of Honor Hall

*By Mike Bottoms*  
*USSOCOM Public Affairs*

The men and women of USSOCOM were privileged to walk among nine American heroes recently during the command's Medal of Honor ceremony and dedication of Medal of Honor Hall.

A two-day celebration honoring all Special Operations Forces Medal of Honor recipients and the men and women whose names are inscribed on the SOF Memorial wall began with a wreath laying ceremony on a bright, glorious day at USSOCOM's SOF Memorial, April 24, 2007.

Attending the ceremony were nine SOF Medal of Honor recipients. Retired Sgt. Maj. Jon Cavaiani, retired Maj. Drew Dix, retired Col. Roger Donlon, retired Col. Bernard Fisher, retired Col. James Fleming, retired Col. Joe Jackson, retired Lt. Thomas Norris, retired Lt. Col. Ronald Ray, and retired Lt. Michael Thornton wore their Medal of Honor during the ceremony.

"Heroes are people of courage prepared to sacrifice everything in the defense of their nation. Heroes inspire us, they motivate us to act when we are tired, hungry and scared, and they lead us forward in those crucial moments before the final outcome is determined," said Gen. Doug Brown, USSOCOM commander, during the Medal of Honor ceremony. "Common to each of the Medal of Honor recipients are the words on their citations that read 'for conspicuous gallantry and action at risk of life and beyond the call of duty'.....the Medal of Honor recipients here today lead from the front with their presence and by honoring the men and women inscribed on the wall of our memorial."

Following his speech, Brown, Fleming and USSOCOM Command Sgt. Maj Thomas Smith laid a wreath honoring all members whose names are etched into the SOF Memorial.

Continuing the observance the next day, the Center for Special Operations was renamed Medal of Honor Hall.

"It is really humbling to share the stage with these American heroes, and quite frankly it is an honor to be up here with them," Brown said. "You'll remember about two and a half years ago Congressman Bill Young and I turned a spade of dirt, and now we have this beautiful building because of the great work done by him, and I want to personally thank him and the great Congress that supports us so well."

Brown went on to explain the important mission that



*The marker depicting USSOCOM Medal of Honor Hall is unveiled by two USSOCOM servicemembers on April 25, 2007. Standing from left to right is USSOCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Smith, Medal of Honor Recipient Michael Thornton, USSOCOM Commander Gen. Doug Brown and Medal of Honor Recipient Roger Donlon. Photo by Mike Bottoms.*

goes on inside the Center for Special Operations and the significance of renaming it the Medal of Honor Hall.

"This building is the center of excellence and it synchronizes the Global War on Terrorism for the Department of Defense," Brown said. "Buildings are much more than bricks and mortar, they are about people, and we are here today to honor the Medal of Honor heroes by renaming this building Medal of Honor Hall."

Following the ceremony several of the Medal of Honor recipients reflected on what the medal means to them.

"We are really just common, everyday people...we just got put into a unique time and a unique place where an event occurred," said Norris, whose exploits in the rescue of a pilot in Vietnam were made famous in the movie *Bat 21*. "We just did what we were trained to do and thought nothing more."

Heroic acts worthy of the Medal of Honor often go unwitnessed; a fact not lost on one Medal of Honor recipient.

"There are several men who deserve the Medal of Honor, but didn't receive the medal because there were no witnesses and we know that," said Dix. "I wear the medal on behalf of those men."

Another Medal of Honor recipient says the wearing of the medal really pays homage to all the men and women who have sacrificed their lives in the defense of the country.

"The medal I wear so proudly around my neck doesn't belong to Mike Thornton, and I don't think I deserve the medal because I was doing what I was trained to do," said Thornton. "This medal belongs to the one million, eight hundred and some fifty thousand who have given their lives for the freedom we enjoy today and to the men and women who are serving today."

# SOF Medal of Honor recipients at Medal of Honor Hall dedication



*Photos by Tech. Sgt. Timmy Carlin*



*Jon Cavaiani*



*Drew Dix*



*Roger Donlon*



*Bernard Fisher*



*James Fleming*



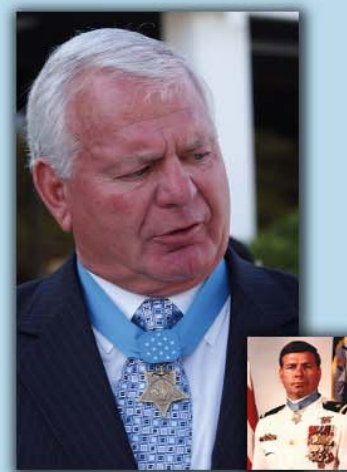
*Joe Jackson*



*Thomas Norris*



*Ronald Ray*



*Michael Thornton*



# Armed Forces Foundation awards USSOCOM Care Coalition “Organization of the Year”

*By Mike Bottoms*  
*USSOCOM Public Affairs*

The Special Operations community will never abandon their wounded warriors.

Validating this loyal ethos is U.S. Special Operations Command's Care Coalition selection as Organization of the Year by the Armed Forces Foundation who recognized the Coalition's model advocacy program aiding wounded Special Operations Forces warriors.

The Armed Forces Foundation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support all service casualties and their families around the world. Its support includes lodging, financial support to victim's families, morale events such as dinners, sports, and musical outings, and travel for families. Last year the foundation provided more than \$200,000 in support to SOF warriors and families.

Jim Lorraine, director, USSOCOM Care Coalition, accepted the award in Washington, D.C., at the Armed Forces Foundation dinner.

“The award validates the USSOCOM Care Coalition on a number of levels. It recognizes the importance of taking care of SOF warriors who are protecting us around the world. It recognizes the great work our staff and Special Operations liaisons do every day for these great warriors,” said Lorraine. “And the award recognizes the vision of advocating for all casualties and their families for life. It is also an honor to receive the award from an organization that helps us meet the needs of so many of our casualties.”

The Care Coalition accomplishes this through advocacy for health benefits, personnel issues, pay and entitlements. The Care Coalition helps keep the wounded warriors and their families aware of benefits and applicable benevolent organizations. Additionally, the organization provides assistance negotiating the medical board process and transition assistance to civilian employment. The Care Coalition also works with government organizations such as the Department of Defense, Services, military health care, and the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure the needs of casualties and families are supported by those charged to provide services for them. Importantly, when a need does not fit into a government program, the Care Coalition looks to non-government organizations with missions or charters that align with the need of the wounded service member and his or her family.

One recent example of the Care Coalition helping a



**Jim Lorraine, Care Coalition director, far right, accepts the Organization of the Year award, sponsored by the Armed Forces Foundation from Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter at the foundation's award banquet in Washington D.C. Holding the award are Sgt. 1st Class Marty Thompson and Sgt. Maj. Dan Thompson. Photo by Cpl Earnest Barnes.**

wounded SOF warrior is the case of retired Sgt. Maj. Colin Rich who was on routine patrol along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border when he was shot in the head by an enemy sniper.

“It was like flicking off a light switch,” Rich said. “I was blind.”

Army medics patched him up on the battlefield, and the doctors at Walter Reed Army Medical Center did all they could. There are flickers of peripheral vision, but for the most part Rich's world is dark, and he was medically retired.

“Initially I was only given 80 percent disability, but with the help and tenacity of the Care Coalition my disability was upgraded to 100 percent,” said Rich. “The Coalition also partnered me with Paws for Patriots who gave me my guide dog, Indi.”

Southeastern Guide Dogs offers the Paws for Patriots Program for veterans who have been blinded during their service in Iraq and Afghanistan. The organization is one of many organizations the Care Coalition draws upon to improve the quality of life of the wounded SOF warrior.

“We take our mission very seriously and we work hard to provide wounded Special Operations warriors and their families a quality of life, and we also strive to strengthen Special Operations readiness,” Lorraine said.

The AFF said in a statement they “believe that what Gen. Brown (USSOCOM Commander) has done to set this program up and what the USSOCOM Care Coalition has done with it are extraordinary.”

# SOF role in Operation Joint Guardian

*By Tech. Sgt. Angela Vazquez  
USSOCOM History Office*

After Operation Allied Force, the NATO response that ended Serbia's repression of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo in 1999, an estimated 800,000 Serbian refugees returned to their homes from neighboring Albania and Macedonia. On June 9, the alliance and Yugoslavia signed a Military Technical Agreement—a phased withdrawal of all Yugoslavian forces coinciding with the deployment of a NATO-led stabilizing force. In Operation Joint Guardian, NATO and United Nation forces, known as Kosovo Force (KFOR), entered Kosovo to establish security to enforce the peace agreement and to maintain public order for the returning refugees.

By June 15, Special Operations Forces had entered the American sector in Kosovo to assess conditions for conventional forces. Applying techniques proven in Bosnia-Herzegovina to Kosovo, SOF soon became KFOR's source for "ground truth" in Kosovo's volatile environment. Special Forces teams patrolled the American sector independently and served as the U.S. liaison element to Polish and Russian units. Additionally, a SF Operational Detachment-Alpha conducted the first combined operations with the Russians since World War II as they sought to quash nightly attacks by militants. A SOF Soldier who was fluent in Russian helped the Russian forces plan and execute two large search and raid operations in which they confiscated caches of enemy weapons. These raids were the largest combined U.S.-Russian operations since World War II.

PSYOP personnel worked to stabilize the situation in Kosovo by distributing native-language leaflets that promoted mine awareness and acceptance of the rule of law. Special Forces Soldiers also monitored the Serb military's withdrawal from the province and assessed the flow of refugees returning to their homeland. Civil Affairs Soldiers, previously engaged in supporting Operation Shining Hope, moved forward to assist in rebuilding Kosovo's infrastructure. One of their first actions was to help establish a civil-military coordination committee, a step toward returning Kosovo to civilian control. CA



*An Operational Detachment Alpha Team inspects a gorge in Kosovo, June 1999, during Operation Joint Guardian. Courtesy photo.*

Soldiers soon improved conditions throughout the province, as they helped organize the importance of heating fuel, repairs to electric grids and water systems, the activation of a civilian-run radio station in the capital city of Pristina, and the reopening of schools. They also coordinated the activities of a number of nongovernmental organizations and helped a U.N.-sponsored International Police Task Force begin work in Kosovo.

Special Forces liaison teams, including those attached to a Polish battalion and a Russian brigade, initiated street patrols throughout their areas of operations. To counter ethnic violence, these patrols arranged meetings between local Albanians and Serbs, sought out illegal weapons caches, and assisted war crimes investigators in locating massacre sites. The teams' eyewitness reports gave the Joint Guardian leadership a clear understanding of local conditions.

In another application of SOF's unique capabilities, a Special Forces detachment, skilled in Arabic culture and language, deployed to Kosovo to serve as a liaison coordination element between KFOR and units from the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Jordan. In September 1999, SOF integrated these forces into the Kosovo area of operations, further strengthening the KFOR coalition.



# **Special Operators v**

## **serving in Operations Enduring**

### **in the Global War on Terrorism**

SGT Dustin Adkins  
SSG Leroy Alexander  
SGT Thomas Allison  
CPL William Amundson  
SPC Marc Anderson  
MSG Joseph Andres, Jr.  
1Lt Tamara Archuleta  
Capt Derek Argel  
PO2 Matthew Axelson  
CSM Edward Barnhill  
SSG Ricardo Barraza  
SFC William Bennett  
CPL Mark Bibby  
SGT Jay Blessing  
CPO Matthew Bourgeois  
Capt Todd Bracy  
SGT Dale Brehm  
SFC William Brown  
LTC Charles Buehring  
SPC Charles Bush, Jr.  
SSG Eric Caban  
CPT Paul Cassidy  
SFC Victor Cervantes  
CPT Jeremy Chandler  
TSgt John Chapman  
SFC Nathan Chapman  
SSG Kyu Hyuk Chay  
CPL Andrew Chris  
1SG Christopher Coffin  
CPL Matthew Commons  
SGM Bradley Conner  
SGT Timothy Conneway  
TSgt Sean Corlew  
SFC Lance Cornett  
SFC Daniel Crabtree  
SSgt Casey Crate  
Capt James Cronin  
SGT Bradley Crose  
SrA Jason Cunningham

MSG Jefferson Davis  
SSG Edwin Dazachacon  
SSG Michael Dickinson  
SFC Trevor Diesing  
PO2 Danny Dietz  
SSG Carlos Dominguez  
SSG James Dorrity  
Maj William Downs  
CW2 Scott Dyer  
SPC Jonn Edmunds  
CPT Daniel Eggers  
CW2 Jody Egnor  
MSG Emigdio Elizarraras  
SGT Christopher Erberich  
SSG Christopher Falkel  
MAJ Curtis Feistner  
MSG Richard Ferguson  
MSG George Fernandez  
MAJ Gregory Fester  
SCPO Theodore Fitzhenry  
CPO Jacques Fontan  
SGT Jeremy Foshee  
SSG Gregory Frampton  
SSgt Jacob Frazier  
CPT Brian Freeman  
SPC Bryan Freeman  
Capt Jeremy Fresques  
SSG Kerry Frith  
PFC Nichole Frye  
SPC Ryan Garbs  
PFC Damien Garza  
CW3 Thomas Gibbons  
SSG Shamus Goare  
SFC Chad Gonsalves  
CW3 Corey Goodnature  
SSG Robert Goodwin  
SPC Brandon Gordon  
CMSgt Lawrence Gray  
SGT Michael Hall

SSG Gary Harper Jr.  
CW2 Stanley Harriman  
SCPO Daniel Healy  
PFC John Henderson  
TSgt James Henry  
SFC Richard Herrema  
SPC Julie Hickey  
SSgt Jason Hicks  
CPL Benjamin Hoeffner  
LTC Daniel Holland  
SSG Aaron Holleyman  
MSG Kelly Hornbeck  
MSG Robert Horrigan  
SFC Merideth Howard  
SFC Mark Jackson  
SGT Kip Jacoby  
SPC Joseph Jeffries  
MSG Ivica Jerak  
MAJ Alan Johnson  
SSG Allen Johnson  
PFC Dillon Jutras  
MSgt William Kerwood  
SSG Matthew Kimmell  
SPC Adam Kinser  
SSG Daniel Kisling  
SPC Adam Knox  
SFC Obediah Kolath  
Capt Surrender Kothakota  
Lt Cmdr Erik Kristensen  
SFC Mitchell Lane  
SFC Steven Langmack  
TSgt Glenn Lastes  
PO2 Marc Lee  
SSG Nino Livaudais  
SPC Ryan Long  
SSG Christian Longworth  
PO1 Jeffery Lucas  
2nd Lt Scott Lundell  
CPL George Lutz II

# **who lost their lives**

## **g Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and**

### **ism will never be forgotten**



CPT Shane Mahaffee  
MSG Thomas Maholic  
MSgt Michael Maltz  
SFC Curtis Mancini  
SSG Paul Mardis  
CW3 Hershel McCants Jr.  
MSgt William McDaniel  
SFC Robert McGee  
Lt Michael McGreevy, Jr.  
SFC Michael McNulty  
SGT Rhonald Meeks  
1SG Tobias Meister  
Sgt Marco Miller  
SFC Robert Mogensen  
PO2 Michael Monsoor  
SGT Alberto Montrond  
SSG Orlando Morales  
MSG Kevin Morehead  
SFC Lawrence Morrison  
SPC Scott Mullen  
SFC Pedro Munoz  
SFC Marcus Muralles  
Lt. Michael Murphy  
SSG Clinton Newman  
SFC Tung Mahn Nguyen  
SFC James Ochsner  
SSG Tony Olaes  
SGT Michael O'Neill  
CW3 Mark O'Steen  
PO1 Brian Ouellette  
SSG Michael Owen  
CPT Bartt Owens  
1st Lt Ray Owens Jr.  
SGT Timothy Padgett  
SGT Jason Palmerton  
PO2 Eric Patton  
SSG Robert Paul  
SSG Ronald Paulsen  
SSgt Patrick Pentico

SFC Daniel Petithory  
LTC Mark Phelan  
SSG Christopher Piper  
SrA Jason Plite  
Maj Steven Plumhoff  
MSG James Ponder  
CW2 Bruce Price  
SSG Brian Prosser  
CW3 John Quinlan  
SGT Regina Reali  
SGT James Regan  
MAJ Stephen Reich  
PO1 Thomas Retzer  
SSgt Juan Ridout  
CPT Russell Rippetoe  
PO1 Neal Roberts  
CPT Charles Robinson  
SFC Christopher Robinson  
SFC Daniel Romero  
SFC Michael Russell  
SSG Bruce Rushforth  
1SG Carlos Saenz  
A1C Jesse Samek  
CPL Jonathan Santos  
SSgt Scott Sather  
CW4 Chris Scherkenbach  
PO2 Joseph Schwedler  
SGT Danton Seitsinger  
SrA Adam Servais  
CPL Timothy Shea  
LTC Anthony Sherman  
SSgt Anissa Shero  
LTC Albert Smart  
MAJ Charles Soltes  
SFC Christopher Speer  
SGM Michael Stack  
PFC Nathan Stahl  
Lt Col John Stein  
SPC Kristofor Stonesifer

PO2 James Suh  
PO2 Eric Sutton  
SGT Philip Svitak  
SSG Paul Sweeney  
MAJ Paul Syverson  
SSG Ayman Taha  
PO1 David Tapper  
CPT Michael Tarlavsky  
PO1 Jeffrey Taylor  
SFC John Taylor  
SSgt John Teal  
PFC Kristofer Thomas  
SFC Michael Thomas  
CPL Patrick Tillman  
MAJ Jeffrey Toczylowski  
SPC Teodoro Torres  
SFC Peter Tycz  
SSG Nathan Vacho  
SSG Gene Vance  
SGT Thomas Vandling, Jr.  
SPC Travis Vaughn  
SFC Brett Walden  
SSgt Thomas Walkup, Jr.  
TSgt Howard Walters  
CWO 5 Jamie Weeks  
SSG Joshua Whitaker  
SGT Adam Wilkinson  
SGT Cheyenne Willey  
Capt Gil Williamson  
SGT Daniel Winegeart  
SGT Roy Wood  
MAJ Matthew Worrell  
SGT Jeremy Wright  
CW4 Michael Wright  
MSG Anthony Yost  
SFC Mickey Zaun



A full-page photograph of a man in military camouflage gear running through a desert. He is wearing a tan camouflage uniform, a black tactical vest, and sunglasses. He has a determined expression with his mouth open as if shouting. He is carrying an M4-style rifle in his right hand. The background is a vast, arid desert landscape with mountains in the distance under a clear sky.

# SEAL Training!

**A SEAL trains for real world desert operations.**

**Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Eric Logsdon.**