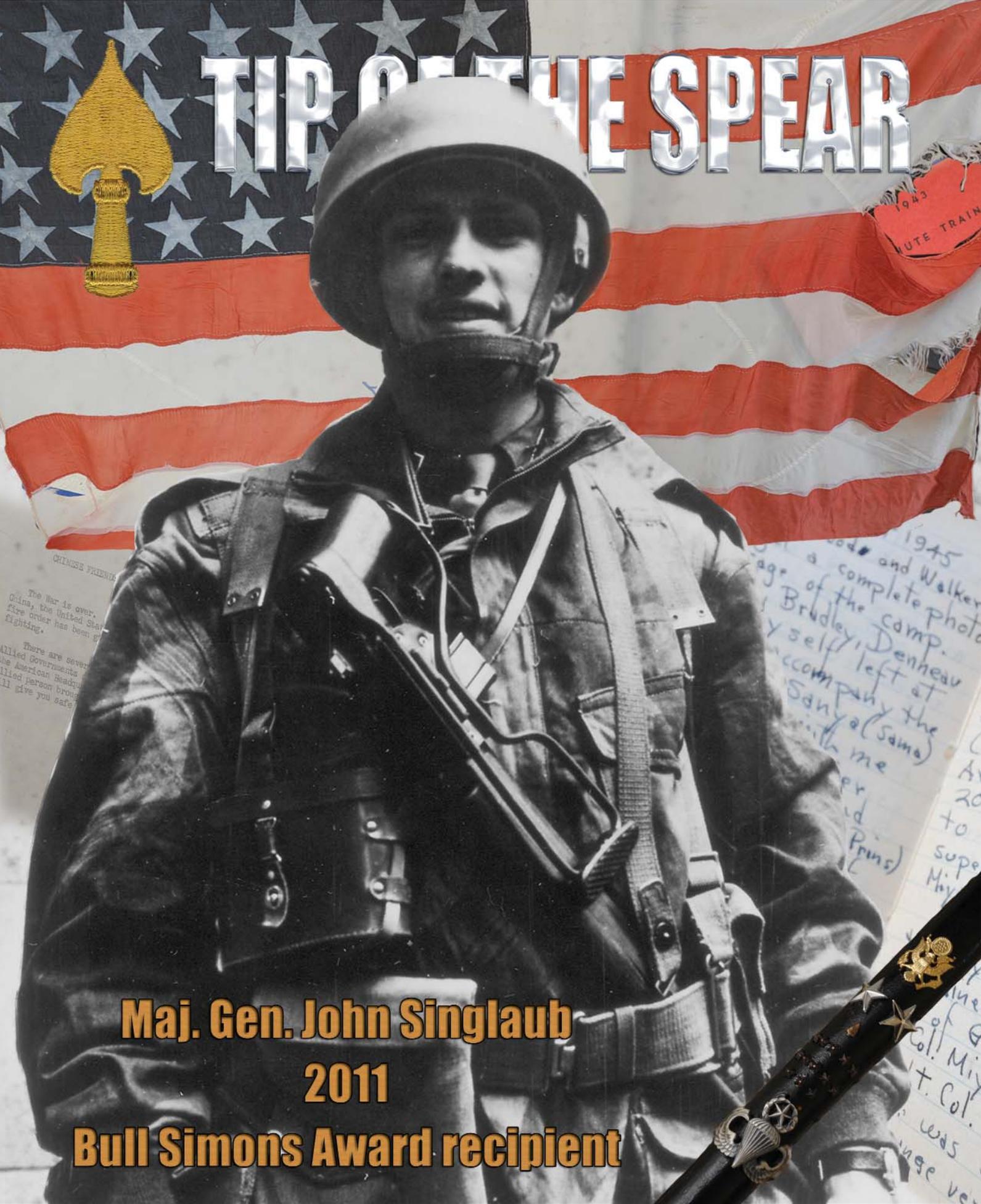


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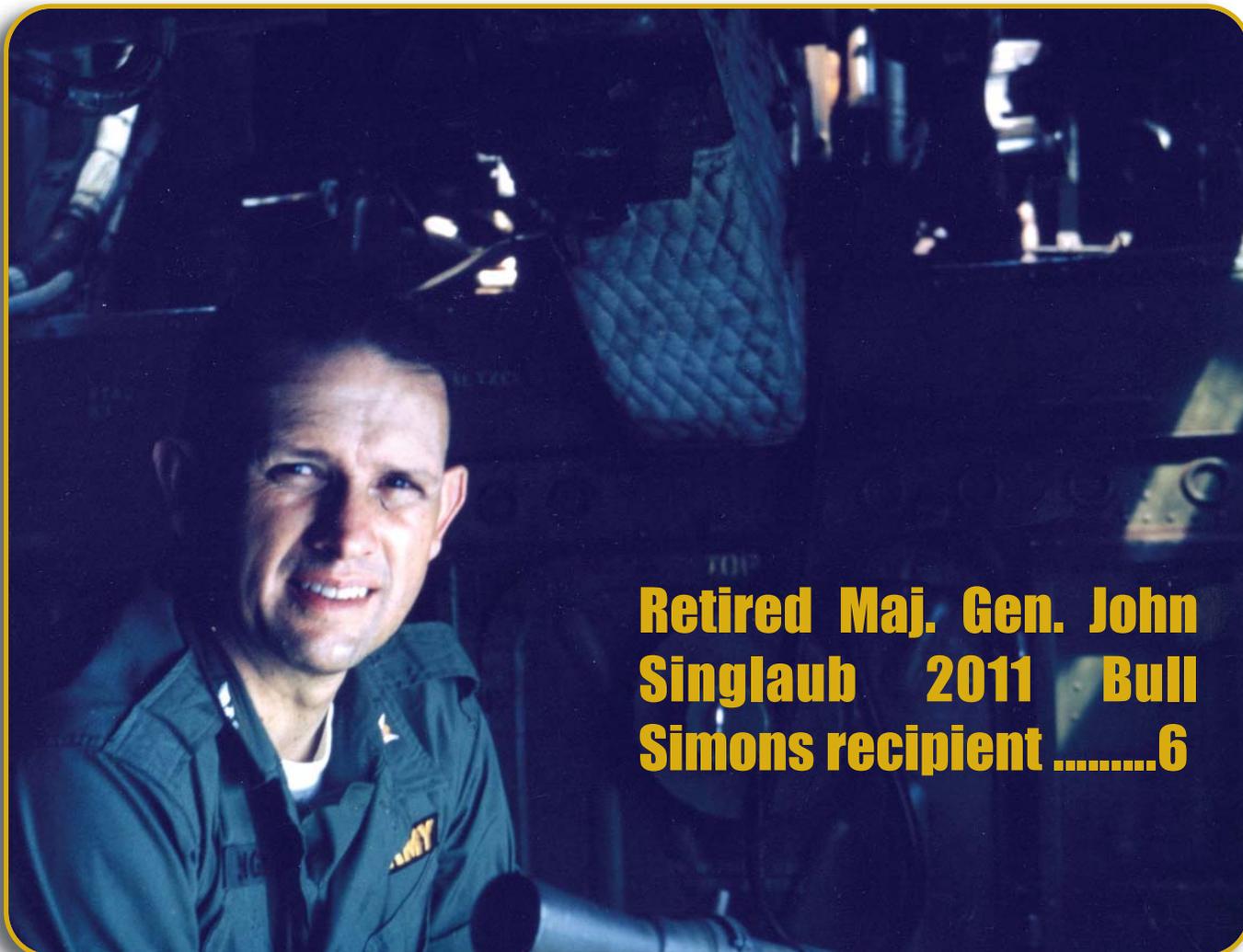
Maj. Gen. John Singlaub

2011

Bull Simons Award recipient



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



Retired Maj. Gen. John Singlaub 2011 Bull Simons recipient6

Tip of the Spear



Thomas Jefferson
Award Winner

Adm. Eric T. Olson
Commander, USSOCOM

CSM Thomas Smith
Command Sergeant Major

Col. Tim Nye
Public Affairs Director

Tech. Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter, Jr.
NCOIC, Command Information

Mike Bottoms
Managing Editor

Tech. Sgt. Heather Kelly
Staff Writer

Best magazine format in DoD 2007 and 2008

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(Cover) Retired Army Maj. Gen. John "Jumping Jack" Singlaub received U.S. Special Operations Command's highest honor when he was awarded the 2011 Bull Simons Award in Tampa, Fla., May 18. This lifetime achievement award, named for Army Col. Arthur "Bull" Simons, honors the spirit, values, and skills of the unconventional warrior. The cover captures Singlaub when he was a lieutenant in World War II. Surrounding Singlaub is the flag Allied prisoners of war made for him upon their liberation, his original parachute log from 1943, his handwritten journal from Hainan Island, China, and the walking cane he uses today. Photo illustration by Mike Bottoms.

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SOF AROUND THE WORLD - AFGHANISTAN
COMBINED JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE – AFGHANISTAN

Members of a flag detail from Naval Special Warfare Squadron 10 raise the national ensign during a flag raising ceremony April 8 at Camp Ripley, the headquarters for Special Operations Task Force SouthEast in Afghanistan. The ceremony commemorated Naval Special Warfare taking command of a new Special Operations task force in Afghanistan. Photo by Pfc. Matthew Minkema.

Naval Special Warfare breaks the Navy Jack over Afghanistan

**By Petty Officer 2nd Class Trevor Andersen
CJSOTF-A Public Affairs**

The sun shines brightly on an early April morning over the headquarters of Special Operations Task Force South East in Afghanistan.

U.S. and Afghan forces stand in formation, eyes squinting against the sun to see the tops of the enormous flagpoles.

“Command Master Chief,” orders the commander, “Break the first Navy Jack over Special Operations Task Force SouthEast.”

“Aye, aye, Sir.”

The Master Chief pulls the line at the base of the rightmost flag pole and at the top, where there had been only a bundle of cloth before, unfurls a familiar flag. Thirteen stripes, a rattlesnake and a warning: “Don’t tread on me,” the Navy Jack.

The ceremony was a brief interlude in the busy schedules of the Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, and Afghan security forces to commemorate Naval Special Warfare taking command of a Special Operations task force.

“We stand on the brink of history,” said Cmdr. J. R. Anderson, the commanding officer of Naval Special Warfare Squadron 10. “This deployment marks the first time that Naval Special Warfare has taken command of a special operations task force within the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan claimancy.”

Naval Special Warfare has a history of excellence in overseas contingency operations, in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world.

Before assuming command of Special Operations Task Force SouthEast, Naval Special Warfare stood up a security detail for the top tier of the Iraqi national leadership and augmented the Joint Task Force in Iraq for nearly 4 years. Anderson also mentioned the work of Naval Special Warfare elements operating in Afghanistan since 2001.

“This first Naval Special Warfare squadron



The U.S. Navy Jack flies at full mast overlooking the SOTF-SE headquarters in Afghanistan. Courtesy photo.

deployment is an enduring commitment to Afghanistan and begins the next chapter in our storied legacy. Be proud of what you’re doing, for SEAL Team 10, for Naval Special Warfare, our Navy, and our nation,” said Anderson.

The ceremonial breaking of the Navy Jack signified not just the presence of Naval Special Warfare in Afghanistan, but also the enduring values of those who fly it and wear it on their uniform.

“Since the days of the revolution the Navy Jack has stood for American people uniting together to fight for a fledgling nation,” said Anderson. “Today, as we break the Navy Jack over the Special Operations Task Force SouthEast headquarters with our Afghan partners, it is in the spirit of working side-by-side with the people of Afghanistan as they fight for their own nation.”

With the Navy Jack flying proudly beside the American and Afghan flags, Anderson brought the ceremony to a close. “We are entering a decisive phase of this war. This is our time. Victory through valor,” he said.

“We stand on the brink of history. This deployment marks the first time that Naval Special Warfare has taken command of a special operations task force within the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan claimancy.”

— Cmdr. J. R. Anderson

Maj. Gen. John “Jumping Jack” Singlaub receives the 2011 Bull Simons Award

By Mike Bottoms
USSOCOM Public Affairs



Lt. John Singlaub improving his motorcycle driving skills during World War II. Courtesy photo.

Retired Army Maj. Gen. John “Jumping Jack” Singlaub received U.S. Special Operations Command’s highest honor when he was awarded the 2011 Bull Simons Award in Tampa, Fla., May 18. This lifetime achievement award, named for Army Col. Arthur “Bull” Simons, honors the spirit, values, and skills of the unconventional warrior.

His extensive career in special operations spanned more than four decades beginning

with his service with Wild Bill Donovan’s Office of Strategic Services famed Jedburgh operations of World War II, the

Korean conflict of the 1950s to his days in Vietnam with Military Assistance

Command, Vietnam – Studies and Observations Group. Singlaub fought behind enemy lines in Europe and Asia, conducted CIA operations in Manchuria, led

troops in Korea and oversaw clandestine operation along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Vietnam. His extensive experience in unconventional warfare and ability to lead men in combat were instrumental in his selection for this award.

“He embodies the creation of American intelligence and Special Operations,” said Charles Pinck, Office of Strategic Services Society president. “I don’t think there is anybody alive today who has greater knowledge of the Special Operations Forces community starting in World

War II all the way to the present. He was there every step of the way. The depth of his knowledge and

“Go to the sound of the cannons, solve the problem on the battlefield, don’t worry about your career, it will take care of itself if you survive. A random round would come in and kill somebody here, within sight, and you wonder how come? Why am I saved? The answer was you have an important job in the future.”

— Maj. Gen. John Singlaub



experience is unmatched.”

Singlaub began his Special Operations career with the Jedburghs, where he parachuted into Nazi occupied France. He performed classic behind-enemy-lines operations helping organize the resistance against the Germans as part of three-man team code named James.

“The Jedburghs were Special Operations commandos, and these were operatives who were parachuted into occupied France to help organize and supply resistance elements behind enemy lines. They fought covert warfare operations against the Germans, they fought counterintelligence operations,” said Douglas Waller, author of *“Wild Bill Donovan.”*

Summing up his success in those days, Singlaub said, “go to the sound of the cannons, solve the problem on the battlefield, don’t worry about your career; it will take care of itself if you survive. A random round would come in and kill somebody here, within sight, and you wonder how come? Why am I saved? The answer was you have an important job in the future.”

Singlaub saw significant action until the European campaign of World War II was over. He then volunteered for duty to liberate Allied prisoners of war in China. The mission was called Operation Pigeon. (See story on page 12)

During that time, the Americans were concerned that the Japanese would murder prisoners of war, so “Mercy Missions” were launched. On one such mercy mission, Singlaub commanded a five man team and parachuted onto Hainan Island, China, right next to an entire Japanese regiment. The war was over, but Singlaub and his team were not sure if the Japanese regiment knew the war was over.

“I didn’t know what to expect--I don’t think anybody else did either. You would just have to play it by ear,” said John Bradley, a Marine lieutenant who participated in the Pigeon mission. “From day one until we got the prisoners on the train and headed south, things got

ironed out and things got done, and it was Jack who was doing it.”

Through guile and nerve, Singlaub managed to

convince the Japanese to give up the prisoners and surrender.

“He parachuted without any weapons and convinced the Japanese to release over four hundred prisoners of war,” said Pinck. “The courage to undertake that mission is amazing if you give it any analytical thought at all.”

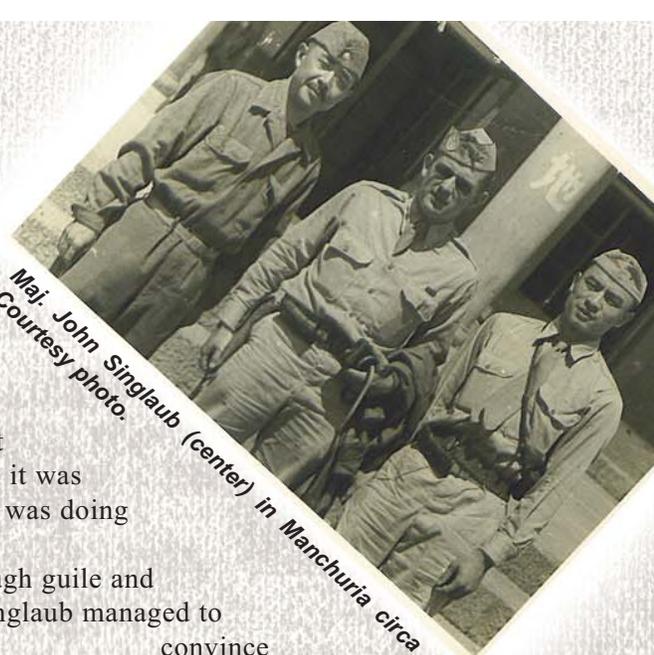
The war in Korea broke out in 1950, and Singlaub was battalion commander there. He received a Silver Star for his actions commanding troops at Outpost Harry. Outpost Harry was a remote Korean War station located on a tiny hilltop in what was commonly referred to as the “Iron Triangle” on the Korean Peninsula.

The next significant action in Singlaub’s Special Operations career is when he took command of MACV-SOG in Vietnam. Singlaub initially resisted taking another

Special Operations Assignment because he wanted to take a conventional command.

“General Johnson [then Chief of Staff of the Army] said, ‘I’ve looked over your records, and I think you’re the best qualified for SOG, and do you have any questions,’” said Singlaub. “I said ‘No sir,

Maj. John Singlaub (center) in Manchuria circa 1948.
Courtesy photo.



Lt. John Singlaub in flight dress before a parachute jump in World War II. Courtesy photo.





Maj. John Singlaub (left) at Outpost Harry, Korea, 1953. Courtesy photo.

[laughing] I will now get excited about my new assignment.”

Singlaub managed the unconventional operations there from 1966 to 1968. He was also the first person to test the Fulton Recovery Rig. He was a full colonel at the time.

Singlaub is much respected within the Special Operations community, and his legacy still endures today.

“Once you are in his presence, you know you’re in a presence of a leader,” said Lt. Gen. John H. Mulholland, commander, U.S. Army Special Operations Command.

“The current generation of Special Operators know who General Jack Singlaub is and what he represents.

“His driving focus is what is good for the force; what do we need to do; how do we take care of the men and women who serve this great country in Special Operations, and those are the traits we hope to live up to that he so embodied.”

Singlaub summed up his philosophy by highlighting the need for integrity and

selfless service to the country.

“The most important quality you have and will need in this Army is something you brought with you. We can’t teach you integrity. That’s the most important quality,” said Singlaub. “I get great pleasure out of doing something that hasn’t been done that needs to be done and benefits the country.”



Col. John Singlaub is lifted by the Fulton Recovery Rig in Long Thanh, Vietnam, 1967. He was the first person in Southeast Asia to be lifted by the rig. Courtesy photo.

History of the Bull Simons Award

*Story and photo by Mike Bottoms
USSOCOM Public Affairs*

USSOCOM presented its highest honor, the Bull Simons Award, to retired Maj. Gen. John Singlaub May 18. The Bull Simons Award was first awarded in 1990 and has since then become an annual tradition. The award recognizes recipients who embody “the true spirit, values, and skills of a Special Operations warrior,” and Col. Arthur “Bull” Simons, after whom the award is named, is the epitome of these attributes.

A career Soldier, Simons led special operations in World War II and Vietnam. Born in New York City in 1918, Simons graduated from the University of Missouri in 1941 with a degree in journalism and served in the Pacific theater in World War II. He rose to company commander in the 6th Ranger Battalion and participated in several amphibious landings in the Philippines. On one noteworthy occasion, he and his men scaled a steep oceanside cliff under cover of darkness and overwhelmed a garrison of Japanese soldiers at the Suluan lighthouse.

Simons left the Army after World War II but returned to duty in 1951. He completed the Special Forces Officers Qualification Course in 1958 and took command of a detachment in the 77th SF Group (Airborne). From 1961 to 1962, as head of the White Star Mobile Training Team, he served as the senior military advisor to the Royal Lao Army. His familiarity with the region would prove useful a few years later.

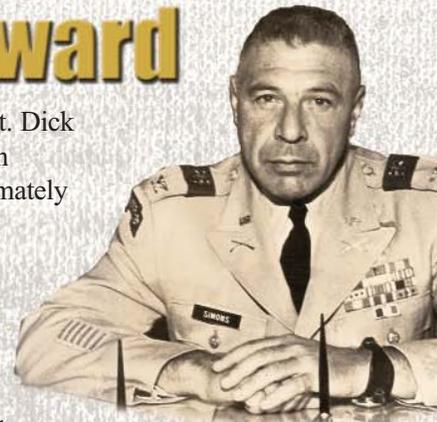
In 1965, Simons returned to Southeast Asia as a member of Military Assistance Command Vietnam’s Studies and Observations Group. Serving under then Col. Donald Blackburn, Simons commanded OP-35, one of three operational directorates within SOG. For approximately two years, he led OP-35 on an interdiction campaign against the North Vietnamese Army along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos and Cambodia. OP-35 interdicted the trail by inserting “hatchet” teams and reconnaissance teams. The hatchet teams, composed of Nung or Montagnard tribesmen led by a Special Forces noncommissioned officer, conducted hit-and-run raids against NVA units. The recon teams ran long range patrols scouting the trail but also “snatched” prisoners when the opportunity arose.

Simons left Vietnam in 1966, but he returned four years later as the Deputy Commander of Joint Contingency Task Group Ivory Coast — the Son Tay Raiders. The task force, commanded by Air Force Brig. Gen. Leroy Manor, was formed in the spring of 1970 after American intelligence had identified Son Tay Prison, near Hanoi, as a prisoner of war detention camp. After six months of planning and rehearsals, the task force deployed to Thailand Nov. 18.

Two nights later, the task force flew into North Vietnam.

The assault group, led by Capt. Dick Meadows, landed in the prison compound and killed approximately 50 NVA guards, but found the compound to be otherwise abandoned. Meanwhile, Simons had landed with the support group in an adjacent school compound, which was teeming with Russian and Chinese soldiers. Simons and his team killed or repelled hundreds of these soldiers, eliminating the principal threat to the assault group. The raiders executed the entire operation in 28 minutes, successfully faced an enemy force of approximately 350 men, and left with only two injuries. Although the raid at Son Tay failed to accomplish its principal objective, it sent a clear message to North Vietnam, and the treatment of American prisoners improved somewhat thereafter. Simons retired from the Army in 1971, but he was to conduct one more special mission. In 1979, Mr. H. Ross Perot asked Simons to rescue two of his employees; the Iranian revolutionary regime was holding them in a Tehran prison and was demanding a \$13 million ransom. In April of that year, Simons led a civilian rescue party into Iran and safely extracted the American hostages. Just one month later, Simons suffered a massive heart attack and died.

The previous award recipients are: Mr. H. Ross Perot, Army Gen. Edward “Shy” Meyer, The Honorable John Marsh Jr., Army Col. Aaron Bank, Army Lt. Gen. Samuel Wilson, Air Force Lt. Gen. Leroy Manor, the Honorable Sam Nunn, the Honorable William Cohen, Army Gen. James Lindsay, Air Force Maj. Gen. John Alison, Army Col. Charlie Beckwith, Air Force Brig. Gen. Harry “Heinie” Aderholdt, Army Command Sgt. Maj. Ernest Tabata, Army Maj. Gen. Richard Scholtes, Army Maj. Richard “Dick” Meadows, Air Force Col. John Carney, Caesar Civitella, Army Col. Chuck Fry and Army Maj. Gen. Eldon Bargewell.



Navy Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command presents retired Army Maj. Gen. John K. Singlaub the Bull Simons Award for his lifetime Special Operations achievements May 18 in Tampa, Fla.

“Paratroop Major pulled his rank on armed but befuddled Japanese” *

By Tom Neven
USSOCOM History Office

Maj. John Singlaub on Hainan Island, China, Aug. 27, 1945. Singlaub led the Office of Strategic Services rescue team to liberate the Australian, Dutch, and Indian soldiers being held there. Courtesy photo.



Dawn, Aug. 27, 1945. Nine men rode in the back of a rattling, drafty C-47 transport from Kunming, China, toward Hainan, an island in the South China Sea and home to a large contingent of battle-ready Japanese troops and a camp holding approximately 400 Allied prisoners of war. The eight Americans and one Chinese officer had no idea if the Japanese had received word of the Emperor's announcement that the war was over or even that they would heed it. Only the day before, they'd shot at an American reconnaissance plane.

Maj. Jack Singlaub, the mission's commander, was tasked with seizing the POW camp before the Japanese could execute the Australian, Dutch, and Indian soldiers being held there. (Singlaub was technically a captain but was given the temporary rank of major because the Japanese gave greater deference to field-grade officers than company-grade.) Already Allied intelligence was reporting that atrocities were being committed at other camps throughout Asia. The undertaking had been hastily arranged, one of eight mercy missions bearing the names of birds such as Magpie, Sparrow, and Quail. Singlaub's was Mission Pigeon. They would parachute in with tons of medical and nutritional supplies for the prisoners; for several of the men, this would be their first parachute jump—after only a quick, one-day training session at Kunming.

Singlaub was uniquely qualified to lead this assignment. A veteran member of the Office of Strategic Services Jedburghs, he'd spent several months behind enemy lines in France, working with the French Resistance to interdict and harass German troops during the Normandy invasion. For him, it was just another mission operating with a small unit with an uncertain outcome.

After the five-hour flight at wave-top level, the C-47 pilot approached the island and climbed abruptly. The plan was to jump low—only about 800 feet—but Singlaub, first out the door, hit the gravel very hard only moments after his chute canopy broke his initial fall. He guessed they'd jumped from only 500 or 600 feet. The others were shook up, but other than a split chin and a minor concussion, they'd suffered no major casualties.

Now came the real test. As the men of Mission Pigeon consolidated the supplies that had been parachuted after them, they saw two trucks full of Japanese troops barreling toward them across the dusty field. In the other direction, Chinese civilians moved toward them at a trot. Singlaub had deliberately come lightly armed since the war was technically over. They would be no match for the heavily armed Japanese or, for that matter, any armed Chinese guerrillas or bandits

determined to seize their supplies.

The Japanese piled off the trucks and formed a skirmish line with fixed bayonets. Singlaub told his men to take it easy. "Keep your hands off your weapons," he told them. He told his translator, Lt. Ralph Yempuku, to get ready to translate.

The Japanese, led by a lieutenant with a samurai sword, advanced toward them. Singlaub gave the officer what he hoped was an aloof, scornful stare and then turned on his heel, his back to the advancing bayonets. The Japanese officer shouted something.

"He wants to know who we are," Yempuku translated.

Still facing away, Singlaub shouted, "Stop right there!"

Yempuku translated. Singlaub found out later that Yempuku had helpfully added, "The major commands ...!"

The Japanese officer again screamed his question.

Again, Singlaub shouted his command, and Yempuku matched his tone. "The major commands ...!" He told the Japanese officer to have his troops turn around and form a protective arc between the Chinese civilians and the parachuted supplies.

For a few moments, there was a tense standoff under the glaring sun. Finally, the officer growled an order to his men. They turned away, now facing the Chinese civilians, who were edging closer. Singlaub now turned to face the officer. Glaring at him, Singlaub said, "We are here to help the Allied prisoners. The war is over."

He ordered the Japanese to load the parachuted supplies into their trucks. The Japanese officer, in a softer but still angry tone, asked for Singlaub's authority.

Singlaub turned again to face away and said in his best haughty tone, "I'll discuss this with your commanding officer." Sweat poured down him, and his heart pounded in his chest. Yempuku again translated with suitable invective. After a moment's hesitation, the Japanese officer had his men begin loading the supplies. After a tense and nervy standoff, Singlaub had won the encounter.

**The title to this article matches the headline of the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal's report of the incident, published Sept. 16, 1945, which praised Singlaub for using "sheer bluff" and courage to overcome a Japanese garrison of 1,800 men who believed the war was still on.*



AIRBORNE

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



LANCE,
WE MISS
YOU!
YOUR FAMILY

USASOC pays tribute to fallen SOF members

*By Sgt. Marcus Butler
USASOC Public Affairs*

The United States Army Special Operations Command paid tribute to fallen comrades killed in combat during the past year with a somber ceremony at Meadows Memorial Plaza, Fort Bragg, N.C., May 26.

The ceremony was the culmination of a full day all-star treatment for the families of 30 Army Special Operation Soldiers killed during combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Lt. Gen. John F. Mulholland Jr., commanding general, USASOC, addressed an audience of more than 500 fellow Soldiers, family members, friends and special guests.

“We are here to honor a select few men who made the choice to honor a different path,” Mulholland said. “Their sacrifice is something that we will never forget.”

Approximately 250 family members of the fallen warriors traveled from across the country to participate in the ceremony held on the Meadows Memorial Plaza. Following the unveiling of the personalized nameplates, family members, servicemembers and friends celebrated the lives and military service of their loved ones as they approached the wall to place roses at its base and touch the engraved legacy of courage and selfless sacrifice of their Soldier.

“The families are important we can never fully feel that exceptional loss they have endured,” Mulholland said. “However, we have a sense of it through the comradeship that was forged as only Soldiers can.”

Among the distinguished guests in attendance were former presidential candidate and staunch supporter of Special Forces, H. Ross Perot Jr.; famed actor and patron of military families, Gary Sinise, and a host of active and retired flag officers and local dignitaries.

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 the present.

At the end of the ceremony, the families and friends of the fallen Soldiers moved back toward the wall to preserve this moment in time by capturing the impression of the respective loved one’s nameplate with rubbings.

Mulholland concluded his remarks by restating the importance of this ceremony and the honor in



The United States Army Special Operations Command paid tribute to fallen comrades killed in combat during the past year with a ceremony at the Fallen Special Operations Soldiers Memorial Wall, Fort Bragg, N.C., on May 26. Gold Star families of 30 Army Special Operations Soldiers killed during combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan placed roses near the nameplate of their loved ones. Photo by Trish Harris.

remembering our fallen Soldiers. “Greater love has no one than this than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends,” said Mulholland.

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

Operation Enduring Freedom: Sgt. Nicholas A. Robertson, Sgt. Nicholas A. Casey, Capt. Ronald G. Luce, Sgt. 1st Class William B. Woods, Jr., Sgt. 1st Class David J. Hartman, Sgt. Joel D. Clarkson, Cpl. Michael D. Jankiewicz, Sgt. Ronald A. Kubik, Sgt. Jason A. Santora, Master Sgt. Mark W. Coleman, Capt. Kyle A. Comfort, Sgt. Jonathan K. Peney, Sgt. Andrew J. Creighton, Spc. Joseph W. Dimock II, Sgt. Anibal Santiago, Sgt. Justin B. Allen, Capt. Jason E. Holbrook, Staff Sgt. Kyle R. Warren, Master Sgt. Jared N. Van Aalst, Sgt. Andrew C. Nicol, Spc. Bradley D. Rappuhn, Sgt. Matin A. Lugo, Spc. Christopher S. Wright, Sgt. 1st Class Ronald A. Grider, Sgt. 1st Class Calvin B. Harrison, Sgt. 1st Class Lance H. Vogeler, Staff Sgt. Kevin Pape and Sgt. 1st Class Dae Han Park.

Operation Iraqi Freedom: Cpl. Ryan C. McGhee and Staff Sgt. James R. Patton.



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



Double amputee happy to fill NCO leader role

*Story and photo by Vince Little
The Bayonet*

Sgt. 1st Class Ray Castillo is again flourishing as a senior noncommissioned officer at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., but that almost didn't seem possible two years ago.

That's when his 10th combat deployment with the 75th Ranger Regiment resulted in a life-changing event on a dusty battlefield of northern Iraq. Today, he's an above the knees double amputee and set to graduate next week from Fort Benning's seven-week Maneuver Senior Leaders Course.

"Just because I lost my limbs doesn't mean I can't give my experience and my knowledge to other guys, (but) I understood eventually I was going to be behind a desk," said Castillo, 30, of San Antonio, now an operations sergeant with 2nd Battalion. "There's nothing I could've done about that. I still wanted to be in the military, I still wanted to contribute."

The incident occurred Feb. 9, 2009, near Mosul. Castillo was a platoon sergeant with the regiment's 2nd Battalion with the unit in pursuit of a high-value target. The Soldiers had dismounted and were approaching the objective on foot when they got ambushed.

A command-detonated improvised explosive device hit Castillo.

"It was real quick," he recalled. "(The enemy) hid it really well in the ground. I got to that location, and it just went off ... I blacked out for a short period of time, but I remember the explosion going off and flying through the air."

Covered in blood, Castillo went into shock. A platoon medic treated him at the scene and he got evacuated within a half-hour. On the ride to the hospital, he slipped in and out of consciousness.

"I was in so much pain," he said. "I told my medic, 'Hey, you need to give me something. I don't care if you punch me in the face or whatever, but I'm in so much



Sgt. 1st Class Ray Castillo lost both legs after an ambush in Iraq two years ago while on his 10th combat deployment.

pain."

Castillo had multiple lacerations, including to his liver, spleen, intestines and right kidney. A lung was punctured in three different areas.

After the blast, when he was dragged to a stretcher, Castillo remembered looking down and seeing his right leg severed at the ankle. He figured he might lose part of one leg, but woke up from an induced coma about a month later at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., to find both gone. The infections had spread too quickly, doctors told him.

“I wasn’t expecting to see 70 percent of my legs gone,” he said. “Because of the infection, they had to keep cutting off more and more and more, because of all that bad stuff they have in the dirt over in Iraq.”

He’s undergone dozens of procedures, and not just to the legs. Doctors also removed shrapnel from his abdomen area.

“I lost count. ... I had so many I was sick of surgery,” he said. “I still have a lot of shrapnel in me. Every once in a while, I’ll get a scratch here or there ’cause it’s trying to come out. It’s all over the place.”

There’s a little ball of metal floating around a finger in his left hand. Castillo said X-rays at the dentist reveal more pieces in his head.

Castillo spent almost two months at Walter Reed and actually re-enlisted there in March 2009 from a hospital bed, surrounded by most of his family. He’d planned to do that in Iraq before getting wounded.

“I would say it’s more frustrating than difficult,” he said of his lengthy recovery. “There’s a lot of frustration that goes with having some type of new life. Everyone has a goal in life, and then when something happens, it can change ... You can still stay on certain career paths and other paths you want to do in your life. It can be difficult doing those things, but it’s more frustrating. There are simple things that you have to try to overcome and adapt to.”

After being transferred to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, for rehab, Castillo said he encountered other Soldiers in worse predicaments.

“Looking at them being able to do certain things, it gives you strength,” he said. “I remember seeing a woman in San Antonio — she had both arms gone. She was an (explosive ordnance disposal) Soldier missing both arms up high. The wounds were so high up her shoulders that she couldn’t have a prosthetic arm.

“Seeing someone like that reminds you, ‘Hey, you shouldn’t be complaining about certain things.’ ... You don’t want to have someone always helping you out, because they’re not always gonna be there. In Texas, they

taught you how to do stuff on your own. I had to figure a lot of things out and learn how to overcome those little obstacles and hurdles.”

Castillo was fitted with prosthetics in May 2009. That November, his formal therapy ended and he left Fort Sam Houston the following January. He returned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord but had to clear a medical evaluation board just to stay in the Army — his paperwork was approved four months later.

“My focus was just to get back to my unit,” he said. “I worked really hard every day as much as I could because that was my main focus — recovery and getting better so I could get back to my unit and continue working.”

Maneuver Center of Excellence and Fort Benning Command Sgt. Maj. Chris Hardy was the 75th Ranger Regiment’s command sergeant major when Castillo got wounded in Iraq.

“His personal courage and commitment is truly an inspiration to us all,” Hardy said. “He epitomizes the warrior ethos — I will never quit, I will never accept defeat. He symbolizes the strength of the American Soldier and I feel privileged to know him.”

Castillo said he’s driven to stay in and wants to reach the 20-year mark in his Army career. He’d like to become an instructor after his time with the Ranger Regiment ends.

The sergeant first class did a tandem jump at the Ranger Rendezvous in August 2009, only months after the ambush, and plans to return again this year. Calling the regiment a “brotherhood,” Castillo said he knows some of the other Rangers better than his own family, and vice versa, after all they’ve experienced together in war.

The learning process also hasn’t ended in his own recovery. Just walking downstairs, along a sidewalk or grass, and downhill can be challenging.

“Even when it snowed in Washington state, just going through the snow and it being slippery, I don’t feel where I step until I put my weight on it,” he said. “I drive, too, and that’s a learning curve ... My endurance and balance are getting much better. Being able to do random chores around the house or just doing stuff at work is getting better. It’s gotten easier, with time.”

“I worked really hard every day as much as I could because that was my main focus — recovery and getting better so I could get back to my unit and continue working.”

— Sgt. 1st Class Ray Castillo



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

CA illustrator wins Military Graphic Artist of the Year

By USASOC Public Affairs

Sgt. Kimberly Blackmon, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion illustrator, Fort Bragg, N.C., was recently recognized as one of the Defense Department's best artists in an awards ceremony at the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Md., on May 13.

Blackmon won in the fine arts category of the DINFOS-sponsored Military Graphic Artist of the Year contest with her acrylic painting of a soldier helping a Middle Eastern child try on different pairs of sneakers, while other children wait patiently in line.

Blackmon chose an old photo of a former sergeant at her battalion given to her shortly after arriving at the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion in 2007 as the basis for her winning entry. Battalion Soldiers learned of her talent with the paintbrush and provided her with photos to turn into paintings

"I tried to show how Civil Affairs Soldiers like to take the time to really connect with the local people," Blackmon said. "Part of judging was story telling. I tried to show that in my painting."

Blackmon said she has always been interested in painting. "I started painting as soon as I could pick up a paintbrush," she said. She studied painting in high school and at a community college in Watertown, N.Y., before joining the Army as an illustrator for more job security.

Blackmon said her training as an artist helps her as a digital illustrator. "You can usually tell when an illustration is done by hand and then moved over to the



Sgt. Kimberly Blackmon displays her winning fine arts entry for the Department of Defense 2010 Military Graphic Artist of the Year awards. Photo by Leslie Ozawa.

graphics side," she said. "Traditional painting helps you see what looks better, more natural, how color is used in the space provided."

"We are very proud of the recognition that Sergeant Blackmon has received for her painting. She is extremely talented and has the innate ability to bring a picture to life," said Maj. Nathan Reynolds, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion executive officer.

Sixty awardees representing all four service branches were recognized during the annual DINFOS awards ceremony. The awards programs date back to 1960 for military photojournalists and to 1968 for the Thomas Jefferson Awards for print and broadcast journalists.

'Freedom Award' to resilient Ranger

By Army News Service

"No Greater Sacrifice" Freedom Awards were presented May 24 to the former U.S. commander in Iraq and a Ranger who lost his leg from an injury there, but returned to combat duty.

Sgt. 1st Class Joseph R. Kapaczewski, who just returned from Afghanistan, and Gen. Raymond T. Odierno were named recipients of the award. The Freedom Award is bestowed annually on those who "epitomize selfless service to the nation and represent the very best of our men and women in uniform," according to NGS founders, Kirk Rostran and Pete Bilden.

The two Soldiers were honored during a gala event in Washington, D.C., by donors to the NGS Foundation, which provides college scholarships to the children of those servicemembers who have fallen in combat. The organization has raised some \$3 million to that end, and provided full academic scholarships to 19 children and spouses of fallen servicemembers.

Kapaczewski, now part of the 75th Ranger Regiment, was injured in combat in 2005 in Iraq. The six-vehicle convoy Kapaczewski rode in was ambushed, and a grenade fell through the gunner's hatch of his Stryker. Three Rangers were injured by the grenade, including Kapaczewski.

"Throughout the firefight, he did all he could to remove his troops from danger, to remove those that were fallen, putting himself last, and only attending to his own wounds after he was sure all his comrades were accounted for and safe," said Sen. Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut, who presented the awards.

Kapaczewski went through 40 surgeries to repair his body. Through it all, he was determined to continue to be a Soldier, even though his doctors told him he might never walk again.

"To Sergeant Kapaczewski that was not a statement of resignation, but a statement of challenge that called him to yet another battle to prove that those doctors were wrong," Lieberman said. Comparing Kapaczewski to other wounded Soldiers he's met, the senator said, "They want to get back to their unit, they want to get back to the fight. They want to get back in service to our country."

Kapaczewski now continues to serve as an Army Ranger. He recently returned from his ninth rotation in theater, having supported both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, who currently serves as commander of the United States Joint Forces Command, was also named recipient of the NGS Freedom Award. Until September, he served as commander of U.S. Forces-Iraq.

"Odierno had the ability to inspire not only our troops, but the Iraqi people at a time when many people thought the cause was lost," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, who spoke about the general before he received the award. Graham, an Air Force Reserve judge advocate, had served under Odierno.

While not in Washington for the event, Gen. David Petraeus, commander, International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces Afghanistan, spoke to the crowd via prerecorded message.

"The strength of spirit and character that Sergeant Kapaczewski has shown in overcoming his injuries, and in returning to full duty with the Ranger regiment, and in leading his men in combat with such distinction is an inspiration to all of us in uniform," Petraeus said. "I consider it the greatest of privileges to have served in the same combat zone with you."



Col. David Sutherland and Sen. Joseph Lieberman present Sgt. Joe Kapaczewski (center) with the "No Greater Sacrifice" Freedom Award May 24.



NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND



Photo Illustration by Petty Officer 2nd Class Jay Chu

USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112)

Navy Christens Guided-Missile Destroyer Michael Murphy

*By Petty Officer 2nd Class Dominique M. Lasco
NSW Public Affairs*

The Navy christened its newest guided-missile destroyer, Pre-commissioning Unit Michael Murphy (DDG 112), during a morning ceremony at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine, May 7.

The new destroyer honors Medal of Honor recipient Lt. (SEAL) Michael P. Murphy and was christened on what would have been his 35th birthday.

“It is my sincere belief that this ship will build on the momentum gained by our Special Operations Forces in

the fight against extremism and sail the seas in a world made more peaceful by sustained American vigilance, power and dignity,” said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead. “This ship will carry Michael’s legacy and values to Sailors several decades from now and to a new generation of Americans. For that I am proud to wear this uniform.”

Maureen Murphy, sponsor of the ship named for her late son, had the honor of breaking a bottle of champagne across the ship’s bow, formally christening the ship in accordance with Navy tradition.

“I am so proud and it is truly an honor,” said Murphy.

“For people to come out and remember Mike and to celebrate this ship; it means a lot and it means that they still remember the sacrifice he made for this country.”

On June 28, 2005, Murphy was leading a four-man team tasked with finding a key Taliban leader in the mountainous terrain near Asadabad, Afghanistan, when they came under fire from a much larger enemy force with superior tactical position. Mortally wounded while exposing himself to enemy fire, Murphy knowingly left his position of cover to get a clear signal in order to communicate with his headquarters. While being shot at repeatedly, Murphy calmly provided his unit’s location and requested immediate support for his element. He returned to his cover position to continue the fight until finally succumbing to his wounds.

Navy Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command; Rear Adm. Garry Bonelli, Naval Special Warfare Command deputy commander, and family members of the Navy SEALs who lost their lives

alongside Murphy were also in attendance.

Designated DDG 112, Michael Murphy, the 62nd Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, will be able to conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence and crisis management to sea control and power projection. Michael Murphy will be capable of fighting air, surface and subsurface battles simultaneously and will contain a myriad of offensive and defensive weapons designed to support maritime warfare in keeping with CNO's "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower."

Cmdr. Thomas E. Shultz, a native of El Cajon, Calif., is the prospective commanding officer of the ship and will lead the crew of 279 officers and enlisted personnel. The 9,200-ton Michael Murphy is being built by General Dynamics Bath Iron Works. The ship is 509 feet in length, has a waterline beam of 59 feet, and a navigational draft of 31 feet. Four gas turbine engines will power the ship to speeds in excess of 30 knots.

“I am so proud and it is truly an honor. For people to come out and remember Mike and to celebrate this ship; it means a lot and it means that they still remember the sacrifice he made for this country.”

— *Maureen Murphy*



Maureen Murphy, mother of Lt. Michael Murphy (SEAL) and ship's sponsor, breaks a bottle of champagne across the bow of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer Michael Murphy (DDG 112) during the ship's christening ceremony at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine. Murphy was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during Operation Red Wings in Afghanistan in June 2005. He was the first Sailor awarded the Medal of Honor since the Vietnam War. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Dominique M. Lasco.



NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND

SEALs honor fallen

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Jacob L. Dillon
Naval Special Warfare Group 2 Public Affairs

An East Coast based SEAL team held a building and memorial dedication at the SEAL team's newly constructed building aboard Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Va., May 25.

The building was dedicated in memory of Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) 2nd Class Joseph Clark Schwedler. During the dedication, the SEAL team honored 20 other fallen teammates who served with the command throughout its history, with the unveiling of a memorial wall in their memory.

Schwedler completed two combat tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and participated in more than 100 combat operations. He was mortally wounded during a combat operation April 6, 2007, while performing a building clearing with his teammates. Schwedler posthumously received the Bronze Star with Valor, the Purple Heart and the Combat Action Ribbon for his sacrifice.

"I think we all recognize that we are putting more than the Schwedler name on this structure," said Cmdr. Ryan Croley, commanding officer of the SEAL team. "We are setting the bar for what we expect from our operators, service members, officers and enlisted. Service with honor, bravery, valor and humility are evoked in naming the building after Clark; someone who completely exemplified the SEAL ethos and will inspire others to serve at the same level."

Capt. Timothy G. Szymanski, commander, Naval Special Warfare Group 2, attended the dedication and spoke about naval traditions and the significance of the dedication.

"Today's building dedication is shrouded in several naval traditions — part memorial, part christening and part commissioning," said Szymanski.

The memorial is to honor this team's fallen with a beautiful memorial. The christening is to bring the building to life in the spirit of SO2 Clark Schwedler. The commissioning is the breaking of the pennant completing the cycle of christening and launching to full status and service in the Navy, this SEAL team

building, as it takes place in America's historic naval heritage and maritime special operations."

Szymanski pointed out the relationship of the building dedication and Memorial Day holiday.

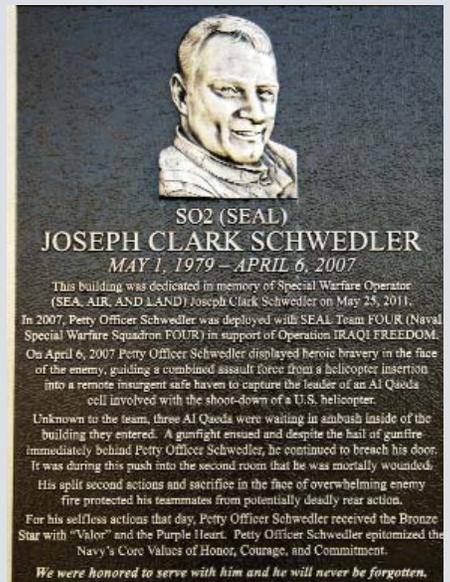
"We cannot overlook the proximity of this dedication and Memorial Day," said Szymanski. "Memorial Day is a time when we as a nation honor those who have sacrificed their lives for a common cause: America. In the spirit of Memorial Day, we do not mourn our fallen comrades, but rather we honor their memory and sacrifice to a cause greater than themselves, greater than ourselves."

Schwedler's sister, Kate Kokotovich, then expressed her family's gratitude to the members of the SEAL team.

"I just want to say thank you to the team for having us here today," said Kokotovich. "It's been great to see the building; it's beautiful and it's an honor to be chosen to honor Clark in this way. He would be extremely proud to be part of this building; I know he was so proud to be a part of what you guys are doing every day. It means a great deal to our family."

The dedication came to a close when Schwedler's mother, Susan Schwedler, broke a champagne bottle on the building and christened the building in honor of her fallen son.

"God bless our troops," she said as the bottle broke.



An east coast SEAL Team dedicated their team's facility in honor of Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) 2nd Class Joseph Clark Schwedler. Schwedler was killed in action April 6, 2007, while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star with Valor and Purple Heart. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Joshua T. Rodriguez.

Leap Frogs descend on Denver

*By Petty Officer 2nd Class (PJ) Michelle Turner
U.S. Navy Parachute Team Public Affairs*

The U.S. Navy parachute demonstration team, the Leap Frogs, made several performances during Denver Navy Week, May 6-7.

The Leap Frogs visited Standley Lake High School and Valor High School, and performed during the Cinco de Mayo Festival at Civic Center Park to showcase opportunities in the Navy and to show Americans the investment they have made in their Navy as a global force for good.

The jumpers, Navy SEALs and support personnel from Naval Special Warfare Command in Coronado, Calif., parachuted onto the athletics fields at both schools and were welcomed by a crowd of cheering of students and teachers.

“It was outstanding,” said Jeff Pearson, Standley Lake High School principal. “Any time high school kids get to see something that’s out of the ordinary it’s going to go home with them. For them to see something that they might want to do in the future that looks adventurous. It makes an impact on our kids.”

Special Warfare Operator 1st Class (SEAL) Justin Gonzales was the first team member to jump from the ramp of the Minnesota Air National Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft. He trailed blue smoke from a smoke grenade attached to his foot bracket to indicate the performance was about to begin. Moments later, when all the jumpers were in the air, they maneuvered their parachutes toward one another to create canopy formations. Some jumpers stacked their parachutes to form biplanes while others swirled colored smoke across the sky and flew different flags.

After the performances, the Leap Frogs invited students and spectators to watch them pack their parachutes. They even let some spectators actually help pack their parachutes, under a watchful eye, giving the public a chance to ask questions about life as a Navy SEAL.

Navy Recruiting District Denver is part of a nationwide recruiting team looking for the best and brightest candidates to serve in the U.S. Navy said Cmdr. Scott Hendrix, Navy Recruiting District Denver commanding officer.

“We’re in the heartland of America, and there are not a lot of Navy people around here,” said Hendrix. “Any time we can get Naval assets here it’s great because they [the public] get to see a little snapshot of the fleet.”

Taylor Goff, a senior at Valor High School, didn’t need any convincing and has already decided to dedicate his life to Naval service, he said.

“I’ve known I was going to do it [join the Navy] since I was 11 or 12,” said Goff. “This just solidified it again.”

The Leap Frogs are based in San Diego and perform aerial parachute demonstrations across America in support of Naval Special Warfare and Navy Recruiting.



Members assigned to the U.S. Navy parachute demonstration team, the Leap Frogs, perform a jump during the Cinco de Mayo Festival as part of Denver Navy Week. Denver Navy Week is one of 21 Navy Weeks planned across America for 2011 designed to showcase the investment Americans have made in their Navy as a global force for good and increase awareness in cities that do not have a significant Navy presence. Photo by James Woods.



Senior Airman Steven Nizbet looks for trapped survivors March 16, at Sendai Airport, Japan. Nizbet is a pararescueman assigned to the 320th Special Tactics Squadron. Photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse.

'Thank you' not necessary; U.S. forces honored to help Sendai

*Commentary by Col. Robert P. Toth
Joint Force Special Operations Component Commander*

I cannot put into words the carnage left behind by the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent 33-foot tsunami March 11, 2011. More than 300 miles of eastern coastline along Japan's main island of Honshu was destroyed. Some of the most graphic initial images were of Sendai Airport and its nearby cities of Natori and

Sendai. As shocking as it was to see videos of Sendai Airport and the surrounding towns being overrun by the tsunami, nothing could prepare us for the firsthand view of the area when we arrived at Sendai Airport March 16.

The images of an unusable airport covered with thousands of smashed vehicles, twisted aircraft, uprooted trees, shattered houses, water, sand, fish and seashells are recorded on film and in our memories. However, in stark contrast, today's image of Sendai Airport is one of hope

and recovery.

From the beginning, our vision was to coordinate with our Japanese counterparts to facilitate the reopening of Sendai Airport, which would enable delivery of humanitarian aid directly to the heart of the disaster area. On March 16, we achieved our vision as we landed the first fixed-wing aircraft on Sendai Airport's main runway.

Four days after that first MC-130 landed, our Japanese and American team cleared the entire runway, allowing C-17s to land. Together we established a hub and aid began to flow into the epicenter of the disaster. Little did I know, this would inspire the people of Miyagi Prefecture to view the opening of Sendai Airport as a symbol of hope. Prior to our arrival, the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, the Civil Aviation Bureau, and the Sendai Airport Authority believed Sendai's Airport would never open again.

The process of restoring Sendai Airport to pre-tsunami form required a great deal of cooperation between the Japanese government and Self-Defense Forces and the U.S. Air Force, Marines, Army, Navy and government agencies. A bilateral coordination board was established. Initially, the board developed a plan for Special Operations Forces Airmen to temporarily handle all airfield operations to allow delivery of aid while Japanese workers performed recovery operations. When units from the Army and Marines arrived on March 20, they were quickly integrated into this process. With additional help on hand, the bilateral coordination board developed a plan to transition all airport operations back to Japanese control based on key milestones.

We reached one of those key milestones April 1 when U.S. Air Force combat controllers transferred tower operations over to Japanese air traffic controllers at Sendai Airport. As I flew into Sendai Airport that day, I was thrilled to hear the voice of a Japanese controller in the Sendai tower, proudly clearing us to land.

In those short 21 days, U.S. Air Force combat controllers at Sendai Airport controlled over 250 aircraft from the Air Force, Marines, Army, Navy and Royal Australian Air Force participating in Operation Tomodachi. Those aircraft delivered more than 2.31

million pounds of humanitarian aid and more than 15,000 gallons of diesel and gasoline to fuel humanitarian convoys and recovery vehicles.

While U.S. forces worked around the clock to run airport operations and deliver aid, teams of Japanese workers at the airport worked furiously with heavy equipment to clean the airport and repair infrastructure.

As I approached Sendai Airport for the last time April 3, I could not believe I was looking at the same airport that was in utter ruin only 19 days ago. Even more unbelievable was what I saw on final approach to the runway. As we crossed the beach on a half-mile final to runway 27, I looked down and noticed the Japanese

word "Arigato" ("thank you") spelled out using 20- to 30-foot pine trees that were knocked down by the tsunami.

Our effort here on Honshu pales in comparison to the effort put forward by the people of Japan, and when we depart, their struggle will continue. They have put forth tremendous effort in the midst of struggling for survival and searching for those lost.

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Lt. Gen. Eiji Kimisuka, the commanding general of Joint Task Force Tohoku, visited Sendai Airport on April 5 and oversaw the final transfer of airport operations from U.S. military personnel to the airport authority. As Sendai Airport opened April 6, the airport returned to the state it was in the morning of March 11 — fully operated by the people of Japan.

All U.S. forces that participated in Operation Tomodachi at Sendai Airport are stationed in Japan on the islands of Honshu and Okinawa. I think I can speak for them when I say it was our honor to help the people of Japan: our hosts, friends and neighbors.

To the men and women of the U.S. Air Force's 353rd Special Operations Group, United States Marine Corps Task Force Fuji, Marine Logistics Regiment 35 and Army Logistics Task Force 35: I thank you for your hard work to help re-open Sendai Airport and restore hope to the people of Japan.

Saint Augustine once said, "We deserve no praise when we do things we ought to do and they are right."

To the people of Japan: A thank you is not necessary.

"We deserve no praise when we do things we ought to do and they are right."

— *Saint Augustine*



Japan's Foreign Minister honors Airmen's relief efforts

*By Tech. Sgt. Aaron Cram
353rd Special Operations Group*

Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs recognized Airmen from the 353rd Special Operations Group and other U.S. service members stationed on Okinawa for relief efforts following the Great East Earthquake of March 11, 2011, during a visit here May 28.

Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto presented a small plaque as a token of gratitude to Col. Robert Toth, the Joint Force Special Operations Component Commander and Commander, 353rd SOG during Operation Tomodachi relief efforts on behalf of the Japanese people during a small ceremony that took place during a meeting with Senior U.S. leadership on Okinawa.

"It was truly an honor to accept this plaque on behalf of the men and women of the 353rd SOG," Toth said. "From the start of our relief efforts on March 12, we worked side by side, around the clock with Japanese officials and other U.S. forces. Our focus was on aiding the Japanese people -- our hosts, neighbors and friends -- during their time of need. Although I have stated before that thanks are not necessary, we are deeply appreciative of the thanks we have received for our efforts during Operation Tomodachi, but none more than this from Minister Matsumoto. This token of gratitude is definitely one our group will cherish for a long time."

As Minister Matsumoto thanked U.S. senior leadership during his speech at a small ceremony, he said the Great East Earthquake created Japan's worst crisis since World War II and specifically mentioned how operations at Sendai Airport highlight the resilience of the Japanese people, symbolize Japan's recovery and further stated how the airport has become a showcase of the U.S./Japan alliance.

"Last week, China's Premier Wen Jiabao landed at



Takeaki Matsumoto, Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Col. Robert Toth, the 353rd Special Operations Group commander, pose for a photo after Minister Matsumoto presented a plaque during a small ceremony that took place May 28. Photo by Cpl. Patricia D. Lockhart.

Sendai Airport and was surprised that it was operational," Minister Matsumoto said. "I am not sure of his understanding of our cooperative efforts to clean up after the disaster, but it was a clear message to the world as to the strength of our alliance. The alliance is effective and the efforts of U.S. military in support of Operation Tomodachi strengthened the people to people bond between the citizens of Japan and the United States."

Airmen from the 353rd SOG worked closely with Japanese officials to open and manage airfield operations at the airport in support of international relief efforts March 16 through April 5. The Airport opened to commercial traffic April 13. During their operations at Sendai Airport, Airmen from the group provided air traffic control services for more than 250 relief aircraft from multiple nations; received 167 humanitarian cargo missions; processed 517 aid workers; received and off-loaded more than 2.5 million pounds of humanitarian relief supplies and more than 109,000 pounds of fuel.

Airmen from the 353rd SOG opened Matsushima Field, Sendai Airport and provided fuel to establish a Forward Area Refueling Point at Yamagata Airport. They also conducted surveys of Tohoku University Hospital and Hanamaki Airport. Pararesumen from the group's 320th Special Tactics Squadron flew countless Search and Rescue missions and aircrews from the 1st and 17th Special Operations Squadrons flew 161 relief sorties; delivered 878,000 pounds of relief supplies; transported 534 relief personnel and offloaded 185,000 pounds of fuel during Operation Tomodachi.

AFSOC announces passing of founding Air Commando

*By Capt. Kristen D. Duncan
AFSOC Public Affairs*

Retired Maj. Gen. John Alison, deputy commander for the 1st Air Commando Group, died early June 6. He was 98 years old and is survived by his wife Penni and sons David and John Alison III, and three grandchildren.

“It is with deep sadness and respect that we mark the passing of one of the Air Force’s first Air Commandos,” said Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Roy.

In 1943, Gen. Henry “Hap” Arnold, head of the Army Air Forces, hand-picked then Lt. Col. Alison and Col. Philip Cochran to lead the 1 ACG as deputy and commander. In that assignment, the team set the foundation for what would 50 years later become Air Force Special Operations Command.

Alison continued to mentor AFSOC’s Air Commandos well beyond his time in service. Even at age 95 he spoke to Airmen at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School here and continued to make appearances at significant Air Force and AFSOC events.

“General Alison was a gentleman first, and he forged the way for Air Commandos, past and present,” said Lt. Gen. Donald Wurster, AFSOC commander. “He left a lasting mark on our command and will be greatly missed.”

His dedication to the Air Force and Special Operations earned him several accolades. In 1994, he was inducted to the Air Commando Hall of Fame, and he was selected to speak for the Air Command and Staff College’s “Gathering of Eagles” in 1985, 2004 and 2009. Then in 2005, he was enshrined in the National Aviation Hall of Fame, and most recently was the first inductee into the U.S. Special Operations Command, Commando Hall of Honor, Oct. 27, 2010.

“General Alison was a superb Airman and an Air Force legend. As a highly decorated World War II combat ace, veteran of the Korean War, and father of Air Force Special Operations, General Alison paved the way for hundreds of thousands of warrior Airmen who followed in his footsteps,” Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley said.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz

recounted General Alison’s contributions to the Air Force and nation.

“While we mourn his passing, we can all take solace in the fact that his heroic service and sacrifice during the Second World War and afterward endures in today’s Special Operations Forces and the Air Force Association, which may well be his greatest legacy,” Schwartz said.

The 1 ACG consisted of bombers, gliders, transports, light planes, heavy planes and helicopters. The unit contained volunteers, which was to support and sustain the British commandos, or “Chindits,” by operating at primitive airfields in the China-Burma-India Theater. Alongside the “Chindits,” the 1 ACG executed Operation Thursday, conducting the first nighttime airfield seizure well behind enemy lines March 5, 1943.

Before helping to establish the 1 ACG, Alison was a decorated fighter pilot. He went on to become an ace with six confirmed aerial victories during World War II.



Historic photograph of Col. Philip Cochran and Lt. Col. John Alison, commander and deputy commander of the 1st Air Commando Group. Courtesy photo.



Raven Claw exercise forges future warrior-diplomats

*Story and photo by Rachel Arroyo
AFSOC Public Affairs*

Trainees faced decisions ranging from eating fish heads full of teeth to providing the host nation with night-vision goggles and satellite imagery.

Nineteen Airmen tested their powers of diplomatic negotiation and combat readiness in Raven Claw, a week-long exercise at Duke Field, Fla., devoted to preparing future combat aviation advisors for situations they may face downrange.

Raven Claw immerses trainees in a counterinsurgency scenario. The team is tasked to assist the “Palmetto Land” forces in enhancing the tactical employment of its aircraft, which the host nation will employ against a fledgling insurgency.

The exercise, conducted by the 371st Special Operations Combat Training Squadron, involved approximately 60 active role players on any given day.

The extensive manpower and planning dedicated to Raven Claw is essential to training select groups of combat aviation advisors who operate in some of the world’s harshest environments, said Vincent Milioti, director of field skills training for the 371st SOCTS.

“The SOF combat aviation advisor environment is one in which a country is teetering on full-out civil war or is in the midst of a full-blown counterinsurgency,” Milioti said. “We are politically, socially, culturally and language-capably trained to operate in the most complex asymmetrical warfare environments.”

Raven Claw creates these environments for students by drawing on the experience of active-duty and retired combat aviation advisors who craft scenarios based on real circumstances brought back from the field.

It is the culmination of phase one and two in a four-phase pipeline. Raven Claw marries academic groundwork laid in phase one with field skills garnered in phase two.

“Raven Claw is the capstone event for our CAA Mission Qualification Course,” said Lt. Col. John Trube, the commander of the 371st SOCTS. “Unlike any other

command in the Air Force, the Air Force Special Operations Command Training Center has the capability to deliver the SOF-peculiar training so vital to meeting AFSOC mission requirements.”

After 57 training days on topics such as defensive driving, land navigation, shooting, coalition support and counterinsurgency theory, trainees were dropped into Palmetto Land.

“We are watching you very closely because how you respond now is exactly how it is going to be downrange,” Milioti told the trainees.

From the moment they met with officials of the Palmetto Land government, students were challenged to navigate requests for night-vision goggles, satellite imagery and gunship support.

Cadre members assessed the team’s ability to constantly balance U.S. interests with those of the partner nation as they communicated their team mission and responded to initial equipment requests.

The team immediately faced the challenge of communicating a rank structure that has NCOs serving as leaders and subject-matter experts within the advisory group.

In some partner nations, the enlisted ranks are categorized as being uneducated, Milioti said.

Enlisted personnel training officers is a shock to systems in which enlisted ranks are not afforded the same level of professionalism as they are in the U.S., he said.

“How you address each other in front of the host nation is just as important as how you address the host nation officials,” Milioti said. “We show that professionalism in our interactions with one another.”

The presence of women on the team can also serve as an initial shock to some partner nations.

Capt. Jaime Crossler, who is one of six women to enter the combat aviation advisor pipeline since 2006, said she is not concerned by the fact that she may face gender inequality in the field.

“Our job is to show nations how to run a professional military,” she said. “We do it well, and we do it with

women.”

In the midst of teaching Palmetto Land forces how to best employ their MI-17 helicopters and DH-C6 Twin Otters, the team witnessed the bloody caning of a partner nation airman and had to determine whether the situation constituted a human rights violation.

They came under the microscope as international news media broadcasted live interviews with the team members and were on alert as captured insurgents were brought into the U.S. camp by partner-nation forces, creating a security threat.

Combat aviation advisors lay much of the groundwork for relationships with partner nation officials through social interaction that takes place outside of duty hours.

Toward the close of the exercise, trainees participated in a dinner with the host nation and were treated to a feast of boiled beef tripe, fish heads, chicken feet and a rice concoction mixed with beef blood and squid.

No matter how exotic, students are expected to eat the food served to avoid offending their hosts, said Rodney Rapp, the combat aviation advisor mission qualification course director for the 371st SOCTS.

“Their own kids may go without food, but you’re going to get the very best they have to offer,” Rapp said.

All of the trainees in the combat aviation advisor

pipeline are already leaders in their respective fields. To be selected for training, candidates must be instructors. Enlisted personnel must have a rank of staff sergeant or higher and have obtained their 7-level. The average combat aviation advisor is 34 years old.

Candidates must have the experience that allows them to critically compare the U.S. military with partner-nation forces and suggest means of improving efficiency, said Rodney Rapp, the mission qualification course director.

This perspective allows trainees to come up with tangible solutions to problems.

“If you’re going to build something, it needs to be viable,” Rapp said. “CAAs need to be able to accomplish something specific in a set amount of time.”

Following Raven Claw, trainees will enter the language phase of the pipeline before they head to the 6th Special Operations Squadron to shadow a senior advisor for about a year.

To Milioti, the time and money invested in each step of the pipeline, including Raven Claw, is well worth it.

“Where combat aviation advisors have the most utility is prior to open hostilities,” he said. “We can send in 15 CAAs to prevent sending 15,000 troops later. Those 15 SOF operators have the ability to influence and shape the environment in monumental ways.”



U.S. Air Force combat aviation advisor trainees and simulated partner nation forces guard the U.S. camp May 24, during exercise Raven Claw at Duke Field, Fla. Raven Claw is the capstone event for the Air Force Special Operations Training Center's Combat Aviation Advisor Mission Qualification Course.



MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



A simulated Improvised Explosive Device detonates during a Humvee convoy as part of Carrier Airwing Training conducted by the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center aboard Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev., April 5. During the exercise, Joint Terminal Attack Controllers with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command practiced their critical skills and renewed their currencies and qualifications.

MARSOC JTACs reinforce skills

*Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Kyle McNally
MARSOC Public Affairs*

The essence of a 14-man Marine Special Operations Team is its ability to function independently in austere environments, often far from friendly lines and support infrastructure. So perhaps one of the most critical assets for an MSOT is the Joint Terminal Attack Controller – a Marine who serves as the direct conduit between the team and vital air support.

At his core, a JTAC is an individual who is qualified and certified to direct the actions of combat aircraft engaged in close air support and other offensive air operations. On a Marine Special Operations Team, however, JTACs are not only experts in air to surface fires, they are also subject matter experts in every function of aviation support. Whether the mission

consists of Assault Support with helicopters from the Army, an aerial delivery of supplies from an Air Force C-130, or Electronic Attack from a Navy EA-6B, the Team JTAC is prepared to plan, brief and execute nearly any mission that involves aircraft.

“Special operations teams depend on air support, because they generally operate without a lot of friendly forces around,” said the officer in charge of the Firepower Control Platoon at U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command. “JTACs are counted upon to enhance a small team in any scenario, which is why they are a mission essential capability,” he said.

As testament to their versatility, 10 JTACs recently reinforced their CAS skills by taking part in a Carrier Airwing Training exercise conducted by the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center aboard Naval Air Station

Fallon, Nev.

“Whenever we get an opportunity to conduct training, we take it,” said the officer in charge.

The JTACs participated in two weeks of the month-long event, which is catered to Navy air wing units slated for deployment. While the Navy’s procedures for conducting CAS are set in doctrine, their techniques and procedures can be slightly different than Air Force or Marine strike platforms.

“This exercise gives our guys an opportunity to cover a variety of attack parameters,” said the MARSOC JTAC Evaluator. “We conduct operations with live ordnance, convoy operations, danger close operations - all that can be accomplished out here at Fallon.”

The JTACs took full advantage of the ranges at Fallon to perfect their skill sets. The JTACs practiced a multitude of combat scenarios, from directing aircraft that were escorting a ground convoy, to providing aircraft guidance on targets that they couldn’t physically see. All of the training was conducted under the watchful eye of instructors and evaluators.

“There’s a lot of information the JTACs have to consider,” said the JTAC-Evaluator. “They’ve got to know surface-to-air threats, tactics and ordnance. It’s a very perishable skill, so they have to stay on top of their game,” he said.

JTACs are required to conduct at least six controls every six months and complete an academic package over the course of a year in order to stay qualified. In addition, JTACs must successfully pass an intense evaluation every 18 months.

“That’s hard to do when you’re at the team or company level,” said a JTAC with the 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion. “There’s always so much other training going on. This exercise is great because it gets us caught up on our certifications.”

While the exercise was a great opportunity to reset the currency of the younger JTACs, it was also a great opportunity for the senior JTACs to pass along lessons learned from the battlefield. “Being a JTAC involves more than just, ‘Let’s talk to the jet and drop a bomb,’” said the officer in charge. “It’s more of a ‘How do I design my attack to mitigate any negative effects, while still achieving my commander’s intent.’”

These lessons learned were then integrated into scenarios that required the JTACs to essentially shoot,

move and communicate while maintaining positive control of the aircraft overhead. To make scenarios more complex, senior JTACs would often role-play supporting agencies like armed UASs or supporting artillery batteries. Those JTACs under evaluation soon realized that the key to success was to deconflict the routing of aircraft and integrate fires on the objective.

“We are very multi-faceted,” said the officer in charge. “We are all things fire, and all things air” – bringing “fire from the sky.”



A Joint Terminal Attack Controller with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command communicates with a Navy MH-60S helicopter during takeoff as part of Carrier Airwing Training conducted by the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center aboard Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev., April 5. During the exercise, MARSOC JTACs practiced their critical skills and renewed their currencies and qualifications.



3rd MSOB Marines conduct HAHO training

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Kyle McNally
MARSOC Public Affairs

Marines with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, pack up their parachutes after conducting a High Altitude, High Opening jump at dusk as part of a Double-Bag Static-Line parachute course in Wendover, Utah, April 9 - 21. The course was taught by personnel from the 2nd MSOB paraLoft and the Airborne Mobile Training Team, and is designed to give Marines a basic understanding of HAHO operations.





MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



A Marine with 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, gives a "thumbs up" to indicate his oxygen mask is working during a class for a Double-Bag Static-Line parachute course in Wendover, Utah.

Twelve Marines with 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command recently graduated a 12-day Double-Bag Static Line parachute course at Wendover, Utah.

After completing 13 jumps – 10 during the day, and three at night – they received their qualification in DBSL parachuting and earned their gold Navy/Marine Corps Parachutist Badge.

Using a "stair-step" approach, they began with several "slick" jumps in which they were equipped with only a parachute upon exiting the plane. Gradually they added more gear – a pack, then a rifle, until their final culminating jump where they leapt from about 5,500 feet above ground level carrying full combat equipment and oxygen, all under the cover of darkness. Although oxygen is not required for jumps under 13,000 feet AGL, the Marines used it for familiarization and training purposes.

The course was conducted by the 2nd MSOB paraloft and instructors from Marine Corps Training and Education Command's Airborne Mobile Training Team.

"We cater to units that need qualification in either DBSL, tandem equipment and personnel or high-glide parachuting," said the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of the AMTT. "We teach the courses and get Marines qualified on the equipment."

The graduates now have a basic understanding of High Altitude, High Opening parachuting, said the 2nd MSOB paraloft chief. With follow-on training, the Marines will eventually be able to drop far from their target and navigate under canopy to the objective, to avoid early detection, he said.

"This skill is another tool in the toolbox for a MARSOC critical skills operator," said the paraloft chief. "Just like fast-roping or rappelling, jumping is another means of mission-dependent insertion."



1) Marines with 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, check each others' gear before conducting a High Altitude, High Opening jump.

2) A jumpmaster with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, dives out of a plane during a Double-Bag Static-Line parachute course.

3) A Marine with 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, conducts a High Altitude, High Opening jump at dusk.



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - HEADQUARTERS

USSOCOM inducts second class into Commando Hall of Honor

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter, Jr.



Lt. Gen. Donald Wurster, AFSOC commander, accepts the induction of Brig. Gen. Harry C. Aderholt into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Aderholt commanded covert air operations in Korea, planned the covert air operations for the "Bay of Pigs" invasion and commanded the 1st Air Commando Wing in Vietnam.



Col. John Carney accepts his induction into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. "Coach" Carney was deeply involved the Iranian hostage rescue mission surveying the the desert airfield known as "Desert One." Carney also spearheaded the combat control team into the invasion of Grenada.



Col. Lance Kittleson, son of Command Sgt. Maj. Galen Kittleson, accepts his father's induction into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Sgt. Maj. Kittleson was a member of the Alamo Scouts during World War II and participated in the Son Tay raid in Vietnam earning him the nickname "POW Camp Raider."



Elizabeth Lemoyne, accepts her husband's, Rear Adm. Irve Lemoyne, induction into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Lemoyne started his career with UDT Twenty Two and commanded Naval Special Warfare units at every level. Lemoyne is considered the founding father of Naval Special Warfare Command.



Lt. Col. George O'Dell accepts his induction into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. O'Dell support to Special Operations spanned more than 27 years. He was a Force Reconnaissance Officer and a civilian with the Central Intelligence Agency where he led combat missions in Vietnam.



Capt. Norman Olson accepts his induction into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Capt. Olson commanded UDT 11 in Vietnam. He was the first Naval Special Warfare officer to command a major naval shore installation — Atlantic Fleet's Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Va.



Col Edward Jeffries, Marine Special Operations Regiment Commander, accepts the induction of Col. Peter Ortiz into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Ortiz a member of the Office of Strategic Services parachuted behind enemy lines into France aiding the resistance and rescued downed Royal Air Force pilots.



Rear Adm. Garry Bonelli, NSW deputy commander, accepts the induction of Master Chief Petty Officer James Parks into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Parks a pioneer of Swimmer Delivery Vehicle technologies was instrumental in developing equipment and tactics for the MK VII SDV and the Swimmer Support System.



Pauliina Laramee, representative of the Maj. Larry A. Thorne Memorial Foundation, accepts the induction of Maj. Larry Thorne into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Thorne served in the Finnish and German Army and American Special Forces. His career fighting communism under three flags makes him unique in SOF.



Chief Master Sgt. William Walter accepts his induction into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Walter, an aerial gunner, amassed more than 3,100 flying hours in a myriad of combat operations in El Salvador, Grenada, Panama, Kuwait, Bosnia and Somalia. He also deployed in Operation Eagle Claw, the rescue attempt of the Iranian hostages.



Sgt Maj. Billy Waugh accepts his induction into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Waugh has a lifetime of service in Special Operations. He conducted the first combat High Altitude, Low Opening jump in Vietnam in October 1970. His military career culminated in 1972 as the Command Sgt. Major of Task Force One Advisory Element.



William Lee Yarborough accepts his father's induction, William P. Yarborough, into the Commando Hall of Honor from Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander. Yarborough extraordinary Army Special Operations career spanned more than three decades. He designed the Parachutists Badge, the jump boot, paratrooper uniform and got the Green Beret approved.

U.S. Special Operations Command inducted 12 new members into its Commando Hall of Honor at a ceremony in the Davis Conference Center at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., May 16. The Commando Hall of

Honor is intended to honor and recognize accomplishments of individuals who distinguished themselves through their unique and prestigious contributions to the Special Operations community.



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - HEADQUARTERS



Dr. Kimberly RyAnne Noss gives a presentation in Tampa, Fla., during Special Operations Forces Week about the health care journey she and her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Scot Noss, have gone through since his traumatic brain injury in 2007. Dr. Noss was awarded the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal for her steadfast advocacy for wounded warrior health care.

Wounded warrior advocate recognized in medal ceremony

*Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Heather Kelly
USSOCOM Public Affairs*

The Outstanding Civilian Service Medal was recently awarded to Dr. Kimberly RyAnne Noss at a ceremony held during Special Operations Forces Week, May 18. The Alabama native and wife of Sgt. 1st Class Scot Noss was recognized for her dedication to Special Operations Forces, wounded warriors and their families.

“She has been an inspiration and beacon of hope to the spouses she mentors, their families and all of those she encounters,” said Navy Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command. “She has also led the way in researching alternative treatments for Traumatic Brain Injuries that will affect servicemembers with TBIs and their families for years to come.”

Dr. Noss was spurred to action in February 2007 after

her husband was severely injured in a MH-47 Chinook helicopter crash in Afghanistan. Sergeant Noss suffered a traumatic brain injury, leaving him minimally conscious and completely dependent on others for daily living activities.

Since that time, Dr. Noss became an advocate for her husband’s health care and rehabilitation, ensuring he and other severely injured warriors receive every chance to reach their maximum rehabilitation potential.

“I was pleasantly shocked during the surprise announcement of the outstanding civilian service award. I had no idea that I was receiving it,” said Dr. Noss. “I am very honored that the SOCOM community recognized me for my efforts advocating for my husband and severely wounded warriors.”

She acknowledged however that her motivation comes from her husband and other severely wounded

warriors because it is the right thing to do and not for the recognition.

“There is still so much that needs to be done for our severely wounded, injured and ill operators. I am very blessed that SOCOM has given me the platform and support needed to help fight for our wounded, injured and ill,” Dr. Noss said.

Her determination, intelligence, sense of humor, faith and fierce loyalty to her husband serves as an inspiration to all who meet her, said Mrs. Marilyn Olson, wife of Admiral Olson and wounded warrior advocate.

“I met RyAnne soon after my husband took command at SOCOM close to four years ago. We were visiting our SOF wounded at James A. Haley veteran’s hospital and Scot had recently been transferred there,” she said.

“What stood out most to me from the beginning was RyAnne’s selflessness. Her selflessness with regard to Scot goes without saying. What makes her even more extraordinary to me is that she is determined to make everything she has learned and fought for and every treatment that Scot has undergone, make a difference in another wounded warrior’s life,” said Mrs. Olson.

Since 2007, the Noss’ journey has taken them to three different hospitals in three different states, where Sgt. 1st Class Noss was enrolled in several experimental treatments for severe disorders of consciousness.

“When Scot was approved to receive some experimental treatment at the Kessler Institute in New Jersey, I went to visit them before they left,” recounted Mrs. Olson. “She let us know that even if Scot doesn’t improve from this treatment, the experiments will help those who come after him: ‘It’s Scot’s way of still serving,’ she said.”

While Dr. Noss has been an advocate for her husband and other severely wounded warriors, she has also helped raise the visibility of caregivers and the challenges they face.

“RyAnne was the first person to raise awareness of a mother who had lost her health care insurance because she had to quit her job to care for her wounded warrior son,” said Mrs. Olson. “The Department of Defense has stepped up to right this problem. I know she was definitely one catalyst for this change.”

Dr. Noss is currently working with the Veterans Affairs administration on the National Caregiver Conference, tentatively scheduled for the beginning of August. The event is slated to bring together caregivers from all eras,



Navy Adm. Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander, congratulates Dr. Kimberly RyAnne Noss as Mrs. Marilyn Olson applauds Noss after she received the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal for her advocacy of wounded warrior health care May 18.

including World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Desert Shield, Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

“I encourage my fellow caregivers to take a day at a time. Sometimes I would even have to take a breath at a time,” said Dr. Noss. “I surround myself with positive, uplifting family and friends that help navigate my journey. There will be days that you want to quit and days that you can’t even get out of bed, but take the needed time to focus and persevere on.”

After three years in hospitals, the Nosses recently settled into a completely handicap accessible home built by Homes for our Troops.

“Scot is doing amazing at home and we are truly blessed with wonderful advocates from the Care Coalition,” said Dr. Noss. “I honestly do not know what I would do without their dedication. The entire staff works endless hours for every Special Operations operator and I am proud to call them family,” she said.

While quick to praise others for their support and dedication, those close to Dr. Noss report that her contributions serve as their inspiration.

“Having had the opportunity to know RyAnne for an extended period has had a deep impact on me personally,” said Mrs. Olson. “I have had a glimpse of the tremendous, life-altering sacrifice we have asked of them and so many others. I know that I will be an advocate for our wounded and their caregivers for the rest of my life.”



CARLTON ALANZ (B) RALPH L. THOMPSON WESLEY B. HAYES ALAN C. BAYBORN LEO
IMC PVT USA 880125 IMC CPT USA 810130 IMC PVT USA 880927 IMC CPT USA 890112
VANCE RY WILLIAM C. HAYES ROBERT A. BRANNHALL KENNETH W. CAMPBELL CHRIS
880125 IMC SFC USA 830112 IMC SSG USA 841118 IMC SSG USA 890112
TERRY L. COLLIER
FRANK A. LINDLEY



**Army Sgt. 1st Class
Martin R. Apolinar
3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne)**



**Army Master Sgt.
Benjamin F. Bitner
3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne)**



**Army Sgt.
Aaron J. Blasjo
3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne)**



**Marine Sgt.
David P. Day
2d Marine Special Operations Battalion**



**Army Capt.
Joseph W. Schultz
3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne)**



**Marine Cpl.
William J. Voitowicz
2d Marine Special Operations Battalion**

Editor's note: Honored are Special Operations Forces who have lost their lives since April's Tip of the Spear.

Maj. Gen. John Singlaub walks with his parachute in hand after jumping with the U.S. Army Parachute Team in the early 1970s. Singlaub is the recipient of USSOCOM's 2011 Bull Simons Award. This lifetime achievement award, named for Army Col. Arthur "Bull" Simons, honors the spirit, values, and skills of the unconventional warrior. Courtesy photo.

