



TIP OF THE SPEAR

Joint Ground Liaison Office links SOF combat team

Flintlock 2007: Building Trans-Sahara relationships
Philippines: A model for counterinsurgency
Gen. Wayne A. Downing buried at West Point

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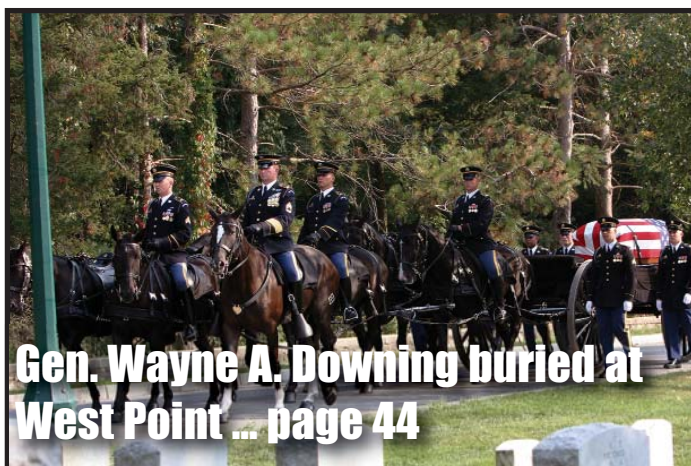
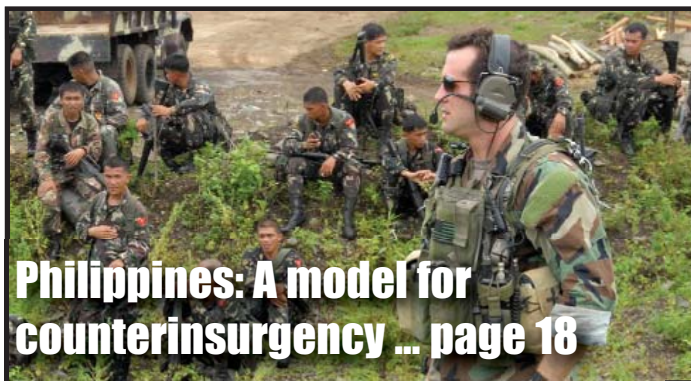
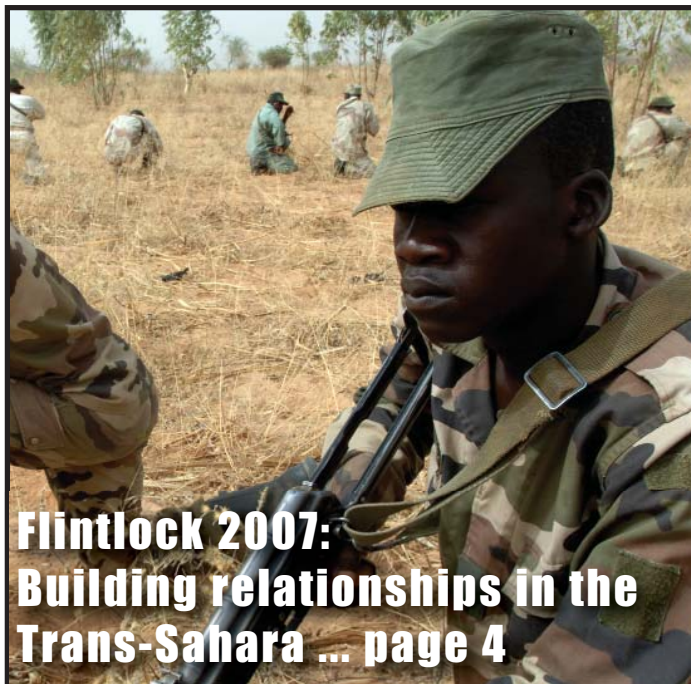
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Front cover: Special Forces Soldiers from 10th Special Forces Group prepare for a training exercise with zodiac boats in the Sound Drop Zone, Hurlburt Field, Fla. The 1st Special Operations Support Squadron's Joint Ground Liaison Office facilitated the training and conducts 20 training sessions a year for all components of Special Operations Forces. Photo by Chief Warrant Officer Todd Sowerby.

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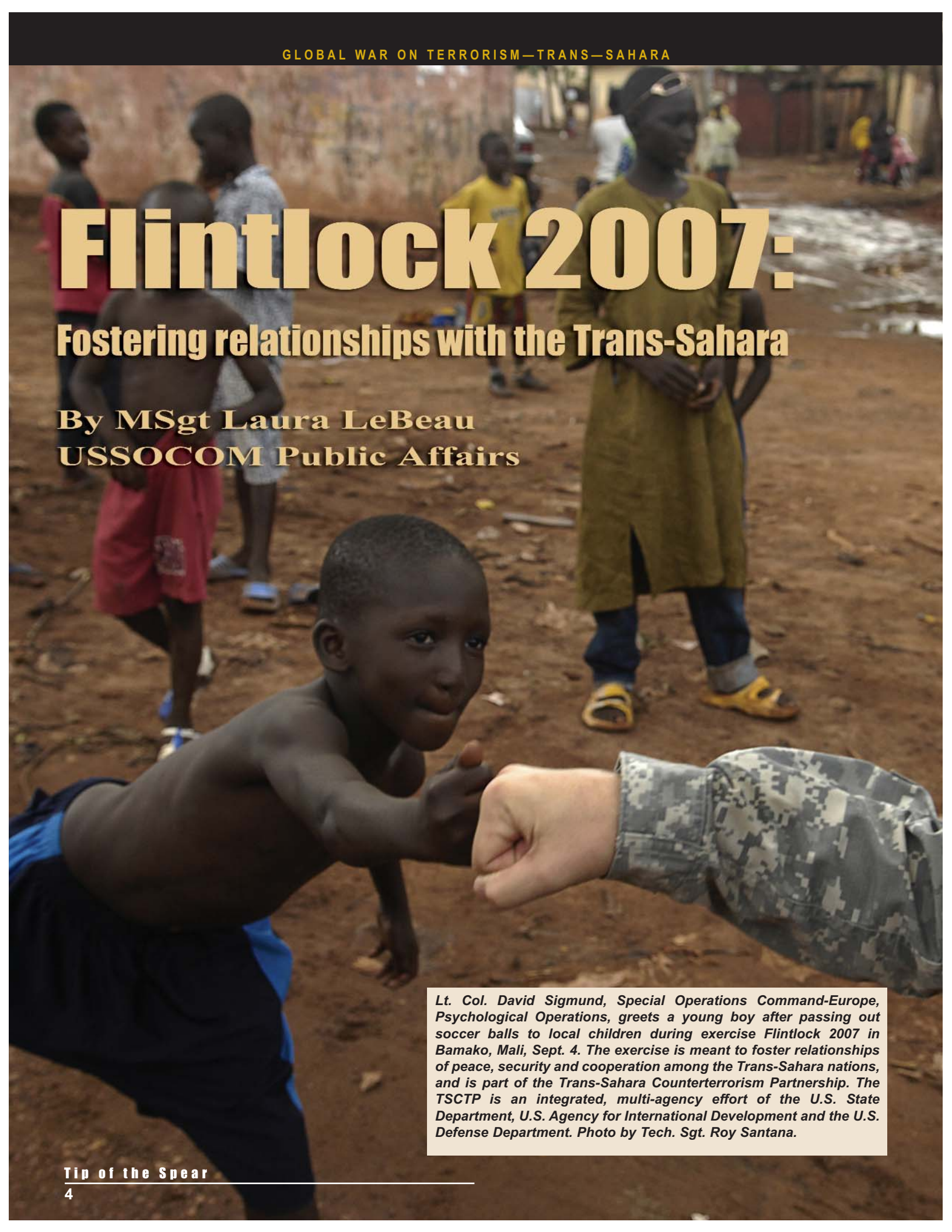
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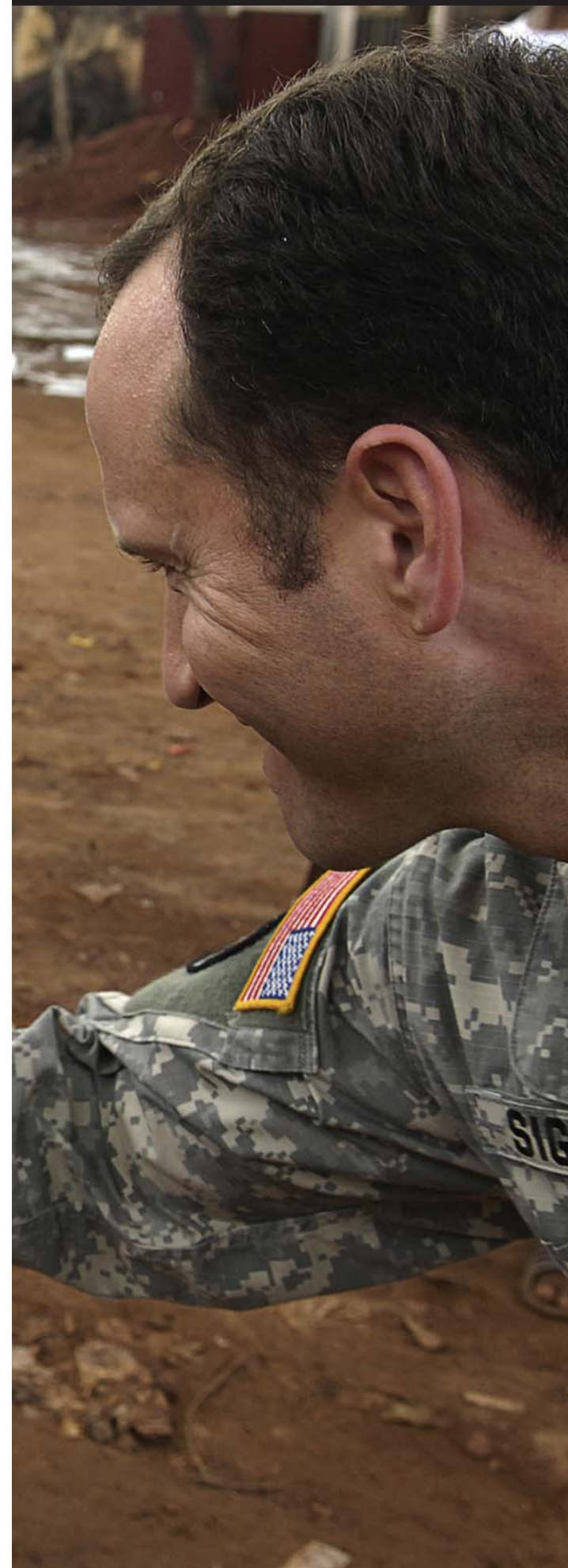
Flintlock 2007:

Fostering relationships with the Trans-Sahara

By MSgt Laura LeBeau
USSOCOM Public Affairs



Lt. Col. David Sigmund, Special Operations Command-Europe, Psychological Operations, greets a young boy after passing out soccer balls to local children during exercise Flintlock 2007 in Bamako, Mali, Sept. 4. The exercise is meant to foster relationships of peace, security and cooperation among the Trans-Sahara nations, and is part of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. The TSCTP is an integrated, multi-agency effort of the U.S. State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Defense Department. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Roy Santana.



Special Operations Command-Europe recently partnered with approximately 13 European and African nations in Flintlock 2007, a combined military exercise in and around Bamako, Mali, designed to foster relationships of peace, security and cooperation among the Trans-Sahara nations under the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership program (TSCTP).

Those nations participating with the United States, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and France in this year's exercise included Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Tunisia.

Training included the establishment of a Joint Special Operations Task Force and Multinational Coordination Center, baseline training and a regional counterterrorism command post exercise. The primary objective was strengthening the capacity of the participants to plan and execute collaborative command, control and communications systems in support of potential future humanitarian relief, peacekeeping, as well as counterterrorism operations.

During the exercise, SF and SOF provided medical, dental, and veterinary civic action programs to the local Mali population. The MEDCAPS resulted in the treatment of approximately 1,300 medical patients, 70 dental patients, 400 veterinary patients and 77 patients receiving adaptive eyewear. A U.S. and Mali Army parachute jump from an MC-130 from the 67th Special Operations Squadron, Royal Air Force Mildenhall, U.K., capped off the three-week exercise Sept. 8.

Flintlock 2007 represents America's strategic engagement and its counterterrorism efforts on the continent. The TSCTP initiative is an integrated, multi-agency effort of the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of Defense designed to help countries in the Sahara secure their territories against terrorists in the area. Recent attacks in the Sahara region have been linked to the extremist organization Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, formerly known by its French abbreviation GSPC. In January 2007, the group officially changed its name to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM.).

"The reason we are down there is to help the host nation deal with what we think is a threat — particularly the AQIM threat," said Rear Adm. William McRaven, commander of Special Operations Command-Europe. "What we're doing is building up the host nation's capacity and letting them deal with their own security problems. This is what's going to make them more stable. And I think it's a great long-term strategy that will apply in Africa and in many other areas of the world as well.

"This is all about getting ahead of the problem," McRaven said. "It's really about bringing stability to Africa. It's our long-term hope that by working with them we can create a more stable environment. And that means all sorts of things to the global community. It means less brain drain from Africa. It means less illegal migration. It means better general relationships with all the countries. Africa is a very vital part of the global community. We do not want to see Africa go the way of other countries where extremism is on the rise."



1. A 3rd Special Forces Group Soldier from Fort Bragg, N.C., helps inspect Malian army soldiers' weapons at their garrison in Tombouctou, Mali, Sept. 4. Photo by Master Sgt. Ken Bergmann.

2. Bamako police officers fire their AK-47s as part of Flintlock 2007 in Bamako, Mali, Aug. 22. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross.



3. U.S. and Mali Army parachutists jump from an MC-130 from the 67th Special Operations Squadron, Royal Air Force Mildenhall, U.K., to cap off Flintlock 2007 in Bamako, Mali, Sept. 8. Photo by Air Force Tech Sgt. Jeromy Cross.





5.

5. Col. Mark Rosengard, commander of Joint Special Task Force - Sahara, is interviewed by local media in Bamako, Mali, Sept. 2. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeromy Cross.

6. A Malian boy is shown the perfect way to brush his teeth during a Medical Civic Action Program Sept. 3 in Senkoro, Mali. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeromy Cross.



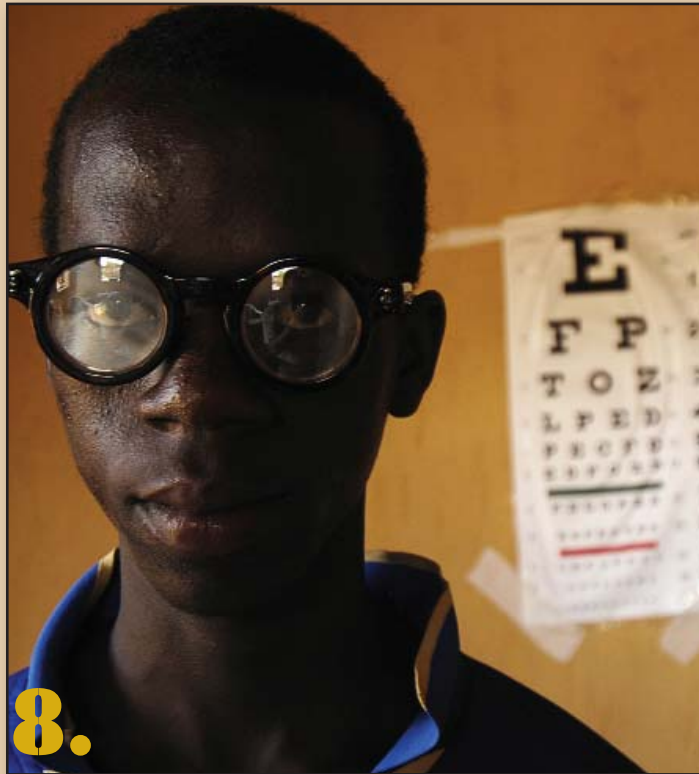
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7. A Joint Special Operations Task Force-Sahara medic checks for a throat infection on a young girl during a Medical Civic Action Program in Senkoro, Mali, Sept. 3, 2007. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Roy Santana.

8. A local boy wears his new glasses during a Medical Civic Action Program Sept. 3. in Senkoro, Mali. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeromy Cross.



8.

'Operation Iraqi Heart,' SOF, Civil Affairs rally to aid Al Anbar child

*By Senior Master Sgt. Charles Ramey
CJSOTF-AP Public Affairs*

Even though she's surrounded by war, Dalal is not much different than other children her age. She likes jump rope and Cinderella and enjoys reading and drawing. Her favorite classes are religion and language, and she recently completed second grade, earning perfect marks in all her studies. But, unlike many of her peers, the 8-year-old Iraqi has fought a life-threatening battle since birth against a condition known as Tetralogy of Fallot, a congenital heart disease causing decreased blood flow to the lungs and a mixing of blood from separate chambers of the heart. Left unattended, Dalal's prognosis could have been death by the time she reached puberty.

But thanks to the combined efforts of a U.S. Special Forces medic, a U.S. Army Civil Affairs NCO, medical professionals and humanitarian assistance organizations, Dalal received a new lease on life following a successful surgery in Amman, Jordan.

"The surgery went smoothly and took approximately three hours to complete," said pediatric cardiologist Dr. Khaled Salaymeh shortly after the operation. "We had to close a hole in one area of her heart and patch and enlarge another area. She was fully awake shortly after the surgery and doing excellent."

Dalal's journey to the operating room began in western Iraq several months ago.

"The previous (Special Forces) team here discovered her," said Army Staff Sgt. Joe Murtaugh, a U.S. Special Forces medical sergeant assigned to the Al Anbar Province.

"Her father had an electrocardiogram from when she was 3 years old diagnosing her with the condition. Since so much time had passed, they had him take her to where she could get another test, and the diagnosis came back the same."

While reviewing Dalal's medical records, Murtaugh found an e-mail address for the International Organization



Special Forces Medic Staff Sgt. Joe Murtaugh talks with Dalal, an Iraqi child from the Al Anbar Province, as she draws a picture. Murtaugh escorted the 8-year-old and her father to Baghdad so they could catch a free flight to Amman, Jordan, where Dalal received surgery to correct a life threatening congenital heart defect. SOF played a major role in arranging travel so Dalal and her father could make the trip to Jordan. Murtaugh assisted the family with passports and coordinated his efforts with a U.S. Army Civil Affairs noncommissioned officer who arranged for Dalal to have the lifesaving surgery at no cost. He also created a slide show to generate awareness about Dalal's plight and raised more than \$1,000 for Gift of Life International — one of three organizations splitting the cost of Dalal's surgery. Photo by Master Sgt. Melissa Phillips.

of Migration in Jordan and contacted it for assistance.

"They directed us to several contacts, but the most important was Marikay. She took care of all the logistical details in Jordan and even arranged for three organizations to cover the \$8,000 cost of Dalal's surgery."

Army Staff Sgt. Marikay Satryano, a Civil Affairs specialist assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Amman, has created a program that matches charities and corporations to individual Iraqi children's cases. Over the past two years, she has arranged for 61 children to receive lifesaving cardiac surgery either in Amman or the United States. In Dalal's case, she coordinated with the Environmental Chemical Corporation to arrange a free flight from Baghdad to Jordan. She also scheduled



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Marikay Satryano, a Civil Affairs specialist assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan, visits with Dalal. Satryano created a program that matches charities and corporations to individual Iraqi children's cases. Over the past two years, she has arranged for 61 children to receive lifesaving cardiac surgery either in Amman or the United States. In Dalal's case, she coordinated with the Environmental Chemical Corporation to arrange a free flight from Baghdad to Jordan. She also scheduled everything with the hospital in Amman and the free services of a Jordanian dentist who provided some necessary pre-operation dental care. Courtesy photo.

everything with the hospital in Amman and the free services of a Jordanian dentist who provided some necessary pre-operation dental care.

"Helping Dalal has been a group effort," Satryano said. "Three organizations, Gift of Life New Jersey, Gift of Life International and Our Children International USA, split the cost for Dalal's surgery. The International Organization of Migration Mission also assisted by covering room and board for Dalal's father during their stay Jordan."

U.S. Special Operations Forces played a major role in ensuring Dalal and her father could make the trip to Jordan.

"We assisted them in getting the new Iraqi G-Series Passports to travel out of the country," Murtaugh said. "Our Special Operations Task Unit coordinated a flight from their hometown to Al Asad, and we worked with the Combined Joint Special Operations Air Component to fly them from Al Asad to Baghdad. Another team member and I escorted the family to Baghdad, and we stayed with them until they departed to ensure there were no problems. Everyone was extremely helpful and provided us with excellent support throughout."

While Dalal and her father were waiting on passports to make the journey, Murtaugh regularly kept in contact with the family and put together a slide show to bring Dalal's plight to the attention of folks back home. Inspired by Murtaugh's dedication, friends, family and fellow servicemembers took the initiative to contact Gift of Life International to make a donation in her name. "They are still receiving donations, and at last count the total was

over \$1,000," Murtaugh said. "I am very happy we were able to assist Dalal. She's a sweetheart, and without our help I'm convinced her condition would be fatal."

"We appreciate that they (the Americans) care about us," Dalal's father (whose name was withheld to protect his identity) said through an interpreter. "I know you are here doing another job, and I am thankful for all you do. This is an unforgettable thing what you are doing for my family, and we cannot thank you enough for your help."

Now that Dalal starts the day with health and the promise of a future, she was asked what she wants to be when she grows up. Without skipping a beat, her brown eyes warmly envision her future: "A doctor! And I'd treat everyone for free."

"The child we can't help is the one we don't know about," Satryano said. "Typically, cases of humanitarian assistance go to the National Iraqi Assistance Center, which is staffed by Iraqi citizens and Coalition forces. Not all parents (such as in the case of Dalal) can easily gain access to Baghdad for such services, but there are many ways to still help them. It takes dedication, total teamwork, trust and faith, but together we can give more Iraqi children in need a chance at a healthy life."



Dalal takes the first healthy steps of her life as she prepares to depart a hospital in Amman, Jordan, July 27. Photo by Staff Sgt. Marikay Satryano.



Above and beyond

Iraqi Special Operations Forces, Iraqi Air Force team up to defeat insurgents

*By Spc. Joseph McAtee
CJSOTF-AP Public Affairs*

Iraq is a country at war, fighting for freedom, determined to defeat the insurgency. As the country continues to develop politically and progress militarily, relationships are being formed that will shape the future of its promising democracy.

In the first week of September, U.S. Special Forces Soldiers attached to the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Arabian Peninsula witnessed a prime example of these flourishing relationships in Baghdad.

Marking a first in the country's history, Iraqi Special Operations Forces and the Iraqi Air Force came together to train, establish a spirit of cooperation and prepare for future missions.

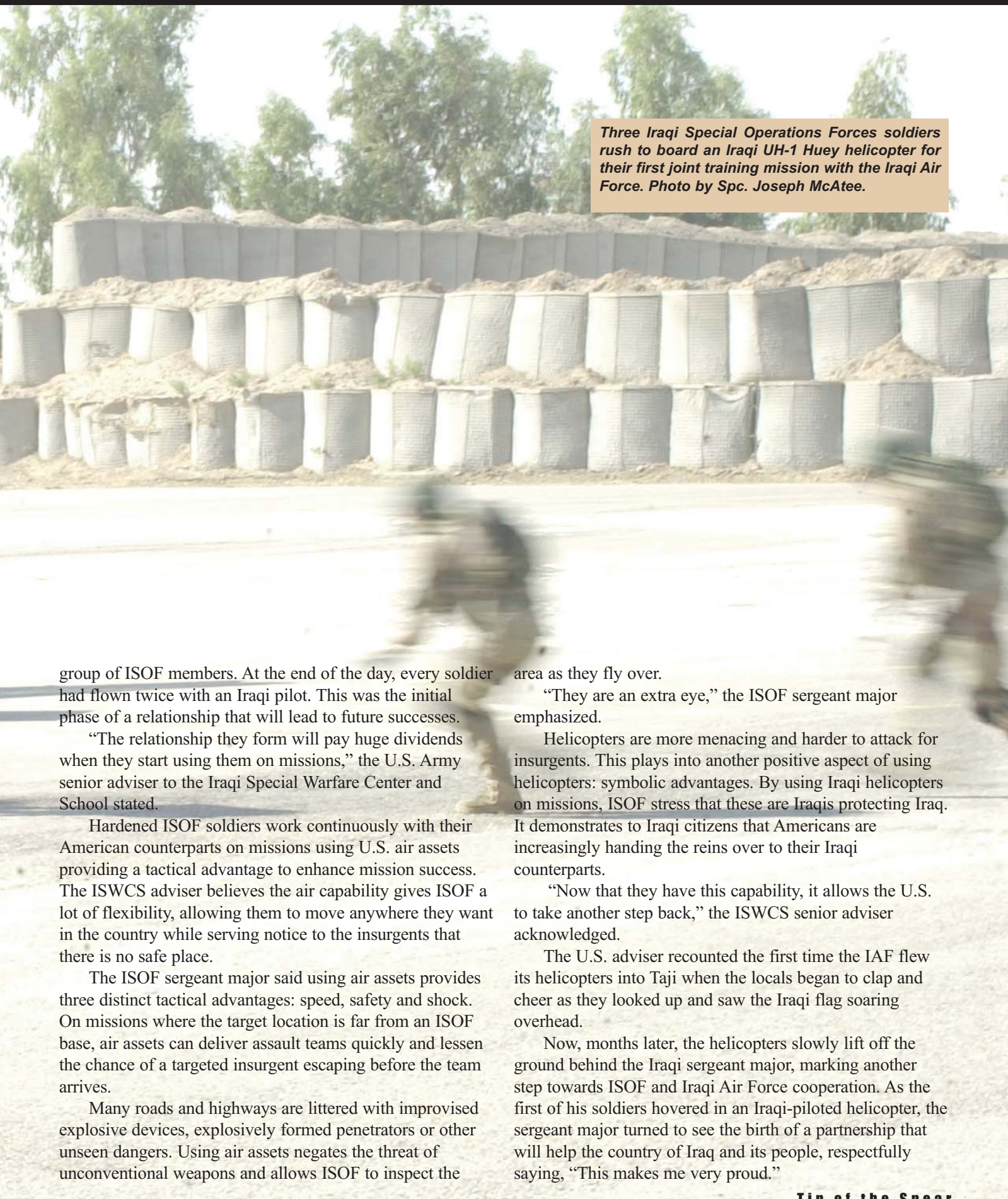
U.S. advisers are increasingly taking a back seat in these types of training sessions, but provide advice as needed. The

event was the genesis of a relationship that will help both Iraqi military services, and especially the people of Iraq, to achieve necessary improvements toward a safe and free Iraq.

The event occurred on an intensely hot summer afternoon when IAF UH-1 Huey helicopter aircrews, supervised by an IAF colonel, joined a company of ISOF members. All morning long, these seasoned ISOF members went through continuous drills to prepare for their final flights later in the day. Under the constant barking of an ISOF sergeant major and his cadre, the ISOF members went through a series of “dry-runs” to practice boarding and getting off Iraqi helicopters efficiently.

After each ISOF member had gone through several repetitions, the rotors began slicing the air, pitching up clouds of sand. Teams ran out to the helicopters in full gear, jumped aboard the aircraft and buckled into their seats. The helicopters slowly lifted off the ground and circled the compound before landing and preparing to accept another

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Three Iraqi Special Operations Forces soldiers rush to board an Iraqi UH-1 Huey helicopters for their first joint training mission with the Iraqi Air Force. Photo by Spc. Joseph McAtee.

group of ISOF members. At the end of the day, every soldier had flown twice with an Iraqi pilot. This was the initial phase of a relationship that will lead to future successes.

“The relationship they form will pay huge dividends when they start using them on missions,” the U.S. Army senior adviser to the Iraqi Special Warfare Center and School stated.

Hardened ISOF soldiers work continuously with their American counterparts on missions using U.S. air assets providing a tactical advantage to enhance mission success. The ISWCS adviser believes the air capability gives ISOF a lot of flexibility, allowing them to move anywhere they want in the country while serving notice to the insurgents that there is no safe place.

The ISOF sergeant major said using air assets provides three distinct tactical advantages: speed, safety and shock. On missions where the target location is far from an ISOF base, air assets can deliver assault teams quickly and lessen the chance of a targeted insurgent escaping before the team arrives.

Many roads and highways are littered with improvised explosive devices, explosively formed penetrators or other unseen dangers. Using air assets negates the threat of unconventional weapons and allows ISOF to inspect the

area as they fly over.

“They are an extra eye,” the ISOF sergeant major emphasized.

Helicopters are more menacing and harder to attack for insurgents. This plays into another positive aspect of using helicopters: symbolic advantages. By using Iraqi helicopters on missions, ISOF stress that these are Iraqis protecting Iraq. It demonstrates to Iraqi citizens that Americans are increasingly handing the reins over to their Iraqi counterparts.

“Now that they have this capability, it allows the U.S. to take another step back,” the ISWCS senior adviser acknowledged.

The U.S. adviser recounted the first time the IAF flew its helicopters into Taji when the locals began to clap and cheer as they looked up and saw the Iraqi flag soaring overhead.

Now, months later, the helicopters slowly lift off the ground behind the Iraqi sergeant major, marking another step towards ISOF and Iraqi Air Force cooperation. As the first of his soldiers hovered in an Iraqi-piloted helicopter, the sergeant major turned to see the birth of a partnership that will help the country of Iraq and its people, respectfully saying, “This makes me very proud.”

The background of the page features a silhouette of a soldier in the foreground, looking down. In the background, another soldier is visible, and the horizon shows a desert landscape under a warm, orange-hued sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

Gunfight ends with release of hostages

*By Tech. Sgt. Eric Grill
CJSOTF-AP Public Affairs*


After returning from a family member's funeral, four women and six small children were kidnapped by armed men wearing ski masks on a Baghdad street May 1. The kidnapping took place following the execution of their male family members.

While in captivity for more than a month, the women endured daily rapes and beatings and were constantly threatened with beheading, one of the

women later said in a statement given to U.S. Special Forces.

On June 1, their ordeal came to an end as Iraqi Security Forces and a U.S. Special Forces team freed the hostages during an air assault raid targeting an al-Qaida in Iraq kidnapping cell south of Balad.

The operation, called Operation Falkirk, was a combined operation conducted with U.S. Special Forces Soldiers and Iraqi Army Scouts to locate and detain suspected terrorists in Balad with ties to the kidnapping of two U.S. Soldiers taken captive



after their combat patrol was ambushed May 12.

The raid resulted in a sustained firefight that left one U.S. Special Forces Soldier wounded, two insurgents dead, and the primary target of the operation captured and seriously wounded.

“We’re always prepared for a gunfight,” a team sergeant stated. “Operation Falkirk turned out to be much more than we originally planned for, and handed out a challenge.”

During the operation, the Special Forces team and their Iraqi counterparts conducted the late-night air assault against three remote houses reportedly sheltering the terrorist group. Shortly after beginning the assault, the team came under heavy, small-arms fire from terrorists inside one of the houses. One Special Forces Soldier was hit and evacuated. Other members of the team immediately assaulted the house and overwhelmed the terrorists.

When the gunfire ended, two insurgents were dead, one of them in the stairwell leading to the roof where the women and children were discovered, the team sergeant said. At that time, the women and children were believed to be the family members of the insurgents, not victims of mental and physical abuse by their captors.

As the women and children were being escorted down from the roof, the sergeant said he noticed something didn’t seem right.

“(The women and children) had to step over one of the dead insurgents to go down,” he said. “There was no reaction by any of the women or the children as they moved past. Normally, the wife and children will collectively get hysterical over a dead family member, but not one word was uttered.”

The other insurgent was also in open view as they proceeded through the house. But again, the sergeant said, “the women and children gave no reaction.”

U.S. Special Forces team members began questioning some of the women, but soon received word that the house was wired with explosives. The team immediately evacuated everyone from the house. During the evacuation, the team received word that another terrorist had fled the area on foot during the initial assault. The fleeing insurgent had entered an adjacent canal and was hiding in thick reeds several hundred meters from the original objective.

Members of the Special Forces team, together with Iraqi soldiers, entered the canal in pursuit of the fleeing terrorist.

In chest-deep water, a Special Forces sergeant eventually located the hiding terrorist. The terrorist then lunged at the sergeant and was shot in the chest by an Iraqi Scout providing security for the sergeant. The assault force immediately pulled the individual from the water and rendered first aid, saving his life.

“As it turned out, the male hiding along the river bank was the main person we were after and the leader of the terrorist cell,” the team sergeant said.

When the assault force returned to the target house, they discovered the women and children had run away, said the team sergeant. It wasn’t known until the following morning, when local villagers thanked the team for freeing the captives, that the women and children had been held hostage for more than a month.

“Had the team known at the time they were victims, they would have gone out of their way to do more for them that night,” the sergeant emphasized.

Knowing the status of the victims now, he said, “It was no surprise then that the women fled the objective along with their children at first opportunity.”

Upon removing this specific terrorist cell from the area, the team began to receive numerous reports from local Iraqis detailing the extent of this group’s activities, the sergeant said. The group was active for more than two years and responsible for the murder of dozens of innocent Iraqis, including women, children and infants. They were also reportedly responsible for improvised explosive device activities and the murder and beheading of at least 20 Iraqi Police.

“Operation Falkirk was one of those operations that really tested us,” the sergeant stressed. “We fought our way in through heavy enemy gunfire and grenades. We saved the life of an operator in the gunfight, we chased down and captured the (primary target), and ultimately rescued 10 hostages.”

Although the original mission of Operation Falkirk had a considerably different objective, the Iraqi forces and the U.S. Special Forces team said they are proud of the mission they were a part of.

“We are just happy to know that we did things right that night by allowing families to reunite with their loved ones, saving the life of a teammate, and executing another well planned operation,” the sergeant stated with pride.

CJSOTF-A riggers

drop

more than a million pounds of supplies

from the skies

By Spc. Daniel Love
CJSOTF-A Public Affairs

In a war where speedily delivered supplies could mean the difference between success and failure, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan personnel have packed and loaded more than one million pounds of cargo during their first five months of deployment.

It took an enormous effort for the Bagram Air Field-based team to pack an unprecedented 648 bundles for 56 drops, but the Special Operations riggers remain prepared to deliver a wide variety of cargo to support Special Operations in the field at a moment's notice.

"We've taken and handled every mission they've thrown at us," said a Special Operations rigger sergeant. "If someone needed something and it was possible, we consistently delivered. It was hard though; it's all manual labor, and there were months we didn't see any days off or free time."

The riggers are detail oriented and have the numbers down. A rigger chief said the average pallet weighs around 1,600 pounds. The most his team had rigged for one drop was over 56,000 pounds of cargo during this rotation. At optimum speed, he added, his crew could package and load 20 bundles a day.

"After we rig the bundles, we load them onto a k-loader and get them on the plane," said a CJSOTF-A



(Above) A special operations rigger prepares cargo for an evening drop at Bagram Air Field June 14. Photo by Spc. David Gunn. (Main photo) Special Operations riggers check cargo to ensure safety and success standards are met at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Aug. 20. The riggers have packed over 1 million pounds of cargo for air drop operations since March.

rigger chief who oversees the rigger section at Bagram Air Field. "Then we conduct a joint air drop inspection with an Air Force representative for each load to ensure everything is in place and ready to drop; the same way a jumpmaster does for a paratrooper."

Many of the forward operating bases in Afghanistan are in remote locations and at very high elevations. Some have rudimentary or extremely dangerous roads, making convoy operations a difficult choice for logistical support.

The chief said the airborne packages support remote forward operating bases with anything they need to operate, as well as troops in the field.

"The biggest source of job satisfaction to me is knowing that our package helped our guys stay in the

fight," said the rigger sergeant. "It's all about taking care of our brothers out there. If we have time, we try and scrounge up snacks or treats they won't find in MREs."

The riggers' precision dropping skills also are used in humanitarian relief efforts. Civil Affairs relief packages often are packed and dropped to Civil Affairs teams in the field.

Though the feat of reaching a million pounds in a single rotation is unmatched by previous crews, the CJSOTF-A riggers say they haven't let the figure go to their heads.

"If we keep it up at this pace until the end, we may even reach 1.5 million," said the chief. "But who's counting?"

Afghan Commandos, with the help of Coalition forces, return to their base after a joint mission to arrest a weapons dealer in a village near Jalalabad, Afghanistan. Photo by Spc. David Gunn.



Afghan Commandos successful in first operation in Nangahar province

By CJTF-82 Public Affairs

The brand-new battalion of Afghan National Army Commandos, along with a contingent of Afghan National Police advised by Coalition forces, successfully conducted its first mission during a recent two-day operation 30 miles southwest of Jalalabad in the Sherzad District of Nangahar province.

The Commando-led force is credited with eliminating two weapons caches, seizing a large quantity of opium and capturing a known Taliban facilitator, along with two other

possible Taliban extremists, from three targeted compounds.

The planning and execution of the operation fell to the first unit of Commandos, an elite organization of Afghan soldiers that graduated from the three-month training program at a camp near Kabul. The Commando and ANP teams, acting on credible intelligence, moved to the objective by helicopters and ground vehicles.

The Commandos detained a key Taliban extremist facilitator identified as Haji Shir Khan, a known improvised explosive device maker responsible for numerous IED attacks on Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Coalition forces in the Nangahar province.

During the search of the three compounds, the combined force discovered 18 rocket-propelled grenade rounds, one anti-tank mine, 10 hand grenades, one 12-gauge shotgun, eight fully loaded AK-47 magazines and more than 80 kilograms of opium. All the items, except the shotgun and AK-47 magazines, were destroyed at the site.

"The Commandos represent a bright future for the Afghan National Security Forces, and it's no surprise after all of their training that they were successful in the mission," said Army Maj. Chris Belcher, a Combined Joint Task Force-82 spokesman. "The Commandos' aggressive attitude and enhanced skills allowed them to seize the initiative and work well with their partnered ANP and Coalition units throughout this two-day operation. Operations such as this one demonstrate that the ANP, and now the Commandos, are authority figures to the residents of Nangahar and can rapidly conduct synchronized missions against the enemies of peace and stability."

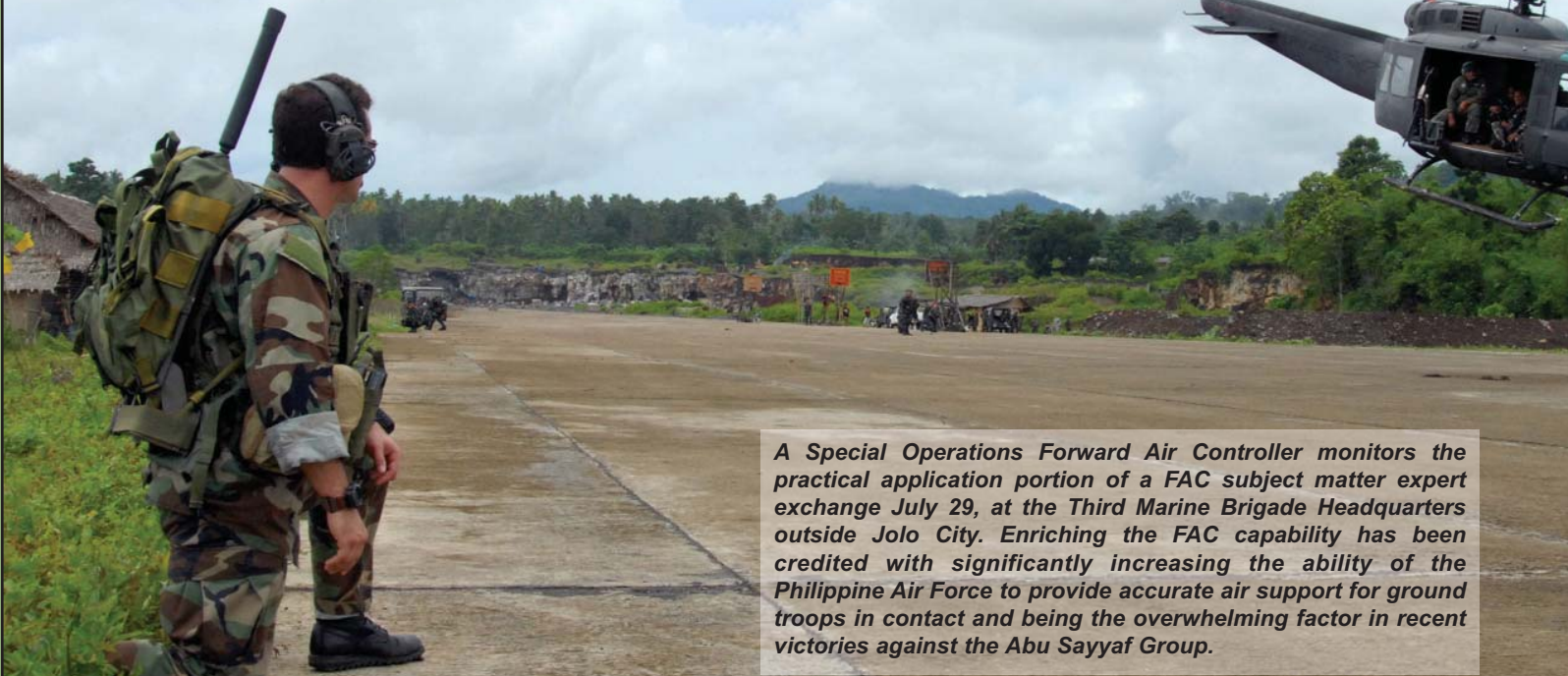


Afghan Commandos with the help of Special Operations Forces look for weapons and other items during a joint mission to arrest a weapons dealer in a village near Jalalabad, Afghanistan, Sept. 12. Photo by Spc. David Gunn.

JSOTF- Philippines: “A model for counterinsurgency”

Story and photos by Chief Petty Officer Gabe Puello and Sgt. Robert Smith

JSOTF-P Forward Public Affairs



A Special Operations Forward Air Controller monitors the practical application portion of a FAC subject matter expert exchange July 29, at the Third Marine Brigade Headquarters outside Jolo City. Enriching the FAC capability has been credited with significantly increasing the ability of the Philippine Air Force to provide accurate air support for ground troops in contact and being the overwhelming factor in recent victories against the Abu Sayyaf Group.

Liaison Coordination Elements of the Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines, along with their Armed Forces Philippines counterparts, are seeing some real counterinsurgency successes in the Global War on Terrorism through their carefully coordinated campaign of subject matter expert exchanges, civil affairs projects, psychological operations.

JSOTF-P has dispersed LCE teams in the joint operations area composed of Special Forces and Naval Special Warfare teams on many of the islands where there is significant terrorist activity, in order to conduct a wide array of civil and military assistance programs. Together with their AFP counterparts, LCEs have waged a successful counterinsurgency campaign against the Abu Sayyaf Group, originally founded in the early 1990s by Abdurajak Abubakar Janjalani and the Jemaah Islamiah. The ASG has provided some arduous challenges to the Philippine military. Significant victories have been won, not only for the Philippine government, but also for the United States.

At a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing in April this year, then Vice Adm. Eric Olson, deputy commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, said, “This is a train-

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and-assist mission in the Philippines that incorporates a number of other disciplines, like civil affairs and psychological operations activities.”

These successes are due, in large part, to the fact the AFP have been able to separate the population from the terrorist organizations throughout the region through civil-military projects that help improve lives. Engineering Civil Affairs units, in conjunction with Philippine contractors, built and contracted Jolo Island roads projects, water drilling sites, schools, Basilan Island wells, hospitals and a host of other projects totaling over \$6.5 million.

“The medical subject matter expert exchanges where our corpsmen have learned combat lifesaving techniques have significantly increased the survivability chances of battlefield casualties,” said Philippine Lt. Col. Nestor Herico, commanding officer, 5th Marine Battalion Landing Team. “Our corpsmen are better trained and better equipped to care for our wounded Marines during the ‘Golden Hour,’ saving lives.” Since 2002, LCE teams and AFP personnel have completed 165 Medical Civil Action Plans at a cost of \$676,000, treating over a quarter million patients.

“It’s these projects and military-civilian relationships



(Top) A Special Forces Soldier instructs Philippine Army Special Operations Group Soldiers on proper deployment of the M240G machine gun during a subject matter expert exchange near Bayug Mountain on Sulu Island. (Right) A Corpsman from U.S. Marine Special Operations Company "A" performs a dental procedure on a local resident under the supervision of a U.S. Air Force Special Operations Surgical Team doctor during a Medical Civil Action Program at Isabella City, Basilan Island. With a tremendous need for dental care and a lack of dentists on the island, the volunteers worked late into the day to ensure every citizen in need received dental care.



that help remove the conditions that foster terrorist activities,” said Col. David Maxwell, JSOTF-P commander. In addition to these projects, military and information operations have created a paradigm shift within the community, denying sanctuary for terrorist elements and leaders.

Fighting against the Abu Sayyaf (“Bearer of the Sword”) has resulted in the killings of hundreds of government soldiers these past years. Since last month, 57 soldiers have died and dozens more have been wounded in fighting with the Abu Sayyaf in Mindanao.

The coordinated PSYOP Rewards for Justice program paid out \$10 million to informants who provided information to the AFP on the whereabouts and activities of wanted terrorists. These tips resulted in military operations neutralizing ASG leaders Khadaffy Janjalani and Abu Solaiman. Janjalani was best known for masterminding the kidnapping and killing of international tourists, including Americans, from the island of Palawan in 2001. Tips also came in leading to the killing of “Black Killer” off the coast of Tawi Tawi by the Philippine 2nd Marine Battalion

Landing Team in 2006.

“We are living with the Philippine Army,” said Olson. “Our operations have a Philippine face on them. The people in the local areas are crediting the Philippine government for the goodness that is coming from the activity. We are assisting the Filipinos with medical programs and dental programs and veterinary programs and school building programs and those things.” Olson continued “So for us, it is a form of counterterrorism and irregular warfare. They see it largely as a humanitarian assistance mission, coordinated by their government. It is absolutely a model. It’s a model that doesn’t apply everywhere, but it’s a model that we ought to apply wherever we can.”

A U.S. Congressional research report this year said Philippine military commanders praised U.S. equipment, intelligence gathering and assistance in planning their operations.

Traditions continue as 75th Ranger Regiment changes command

*By Bonita Riddley and Carol Darby
USASOC Public Affairs*

In keeping with tradition, Ranger Rendezvous 2007 ushered in the regimental change of command for the 75th Ranger Regiment, at Fort Benning, Ga., Aug. 9.

Col. Richard Clarke continues the historical lineage of commanders as the 15th colonel of the Ranger Regiment after assuming command from Col. Paul LaCamera during a formal ceremony on York Field.

Overlooking a sea of tan berets, Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, U.S. Army Special Operations Command commanding general, presided over the ceremony.

“Some Americans may forget our nation is at war,” he said. “At war with the global enemy that threatens our very way of life. But nobody on this field ever forgets. America will always be the land of the free as it is the home of the brave, and you are the brave men who guarantee that freedom, the freedom of our good nation.”

In relinquishing command of the Rangers, his next assignment at Fort Bragg, N.C., LaCamera talked about the men he led who were not in attendance. Company B, 3rd Battalion and 2nd Battalion are currently deployed.

“I am an extremely fortunate leader and Ranger,” he said. “The men who stand before you on the field today have brothers who are fighting on another battlefield. They represent all that is good in America and our Army.”

LaCamera asked the audience to remember the 11 Rangers who died during his tenure as regimental commander. He added a special thought for retired Gen. Wayne Downing, the third colonel of the regiment, who died suddenly July 18.

“We honor General Downing’s service and character, his value and his lasting contribution,” said Wagner, who served with Downing during his Ranger days. “Each of you in formation honors him by your distinguished service.”

LaCamera explained the moments throughout the week’s activities and the many comments made by Ranger veterans and Rangers alike of deeds past and present.

“As I thought about what to say today, I thought that it really does not matter what I say today. What I said earlier is true; all the great words have been spoken throughout the week. What matters is deeds speak louder than words. In fact, I have been ‘writing this speech’ since I arrived at 3rd platoon, A Company, 1st Ranger Battalion a few years ago.



Col. Richard Clarke speaks after assuming command of the 75th Ranger Regiment during a change of command ceremony Aug. 9, 2007, on York Field, Fort Benning, Ga. Col. Paul LaCamera relinquished command to Clarke. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Baker.

“I have been extremely fortunate to be blessed with a lot of things,” LaCamera said. “I have met, been mentored and tormented, I have mentored and tormented, led and been led by some Ranger legends.”

Serving in multiple positions in 1st, 2nd and 3rd battalions of the Ranger Regiment before assuming command of the unit in 2005, LaCamera spoke to his Ranger family.

“Our first name – Ranger. You have to earn your first name. More importantly, you have to earn it every day thereafter,” he said. “To my Ranger family, there are no words to describe the pride, privilege and honor it has been serving with you.”

Before assuming command of the Ranger Regiment, Clarke commanded the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. His other assignments in the regiment include regimental training officer and commander of the Regimental Reconnaissance Detachment and company commander, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.

“First and most importantly, to the Rangers in the ranks, and those deployed,” Clarke said. “You have borne a tremendous burden since the onset of this war in 2001 and will continue to do so in the future. It is you who deserve the highest praise, even though you would never seek recognition. I pledge to you to do my utmost each and every day to uphold the prestige and honor of this Ranger Regiment.”

Ranger Rendezvous 2007

Staff Sgt. Jason B. Baker
USASOC Public Affairs

Amid a muggy, hazy Georgia summer afternoon, nearly 1,000 U.S. Army Rangers filled the sky over Fryar Drop Zone, Fort Benning, Ga., to commence the 75th Ranger Regiment's week-long gathering, Ranger Rendezvous 2007.

Every two years the entire regiment gathers at Fort Benning, to celebrate recent accomplishments, to socialize and compete with fellow Rangers, and to honor a rich history established by its many veterans. The week concluded with a change of command ceremony between outgoing commander Col. Paul LaCamera and a former 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment commander Col. Richard Clarke.

During the opening event, Rangers from 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, and 1st Battalion, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., combined their efforts into a mass tactical airborne operation involving a high altitude, low opening military freefall jump followed by several waves of C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster aircraft dropping hundreds of combat-equipped Rangers.

"You have got Rangers all over the country who are doing the exact same thing for God and country, who never see each other," said Ranger Rendezvous event organizer Maj. Rob Schultz, Headquarters, 75th Ranger Regiment. "When we go fight the war, we fight in small elements. It's a rare opportunity you get to see your brethren and take time to get to know one another and celebrate all you have done in the year."

Over the next few days, Rangers competed in a variety of events ranging from soccer and tug-of-war to rifle marksmanship and combatives. Many of the Rangers agreed they look forward to the week as a rare break from the heavy pace of training and deployments in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

I look forward to getting together with our sister battalions and playing games for fun," said Cpl. Paul Myers, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. "Even though we go all out, we still know we are all Rangers together and we're just playing sports. It's a big break from fighting the GWOT."

This year's event went without the participation of the Rangers from 2nd Battalion, based at Fort Lewis, Wash., who are currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As the 2nd Battalion conducts its mission overseas and mourns the recent loss of Cpl. Jason Kessler, the battalion continues to be remembered by their brothers-in-arms



An Army Ranger with the 75th Ranger Regiment moves to a chute turn-in point during a mass tactical airborne operation at Fryar Drop Zone, Fort Benning, Ga., for the opening event of Ranger Rendezvous 2007. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Baker.

during this week, as always, said 12-year member of the regiment Sgt. 1st Class Quint Pospisil, Company B, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.

"You're definitely thinking about what they're doing," he said. "A lot of guys would probably rather be over there than be back here in the States. You don't want to have half your organization one place while you are here, but we all do our rotations, so it's understandable (you will not always be together)."

Another highlight of the week was the induction of 17 former members into the Ranger Hall of Fame. The honor and celebration of the past is something many current Rangers look forward to during the week.

"You get to see some old timers, guys who have gotten out of the military, or gotten out of the Ranger battalion," said Pospisil. "It's nice to see guys who have crossed your path during your military career and who really made you the (noncommissioned officer) you are today."

Some of the younger Rangers saw this week as their opportunity to demonstrate how they are keeping the legacy of the past alive today. "I hope all the old Rangers and new Rangers to come are impressed with what we did today," said Myers. "I look forward to seeing where we came from and for them to see where we are going."

“Wildhorse” concludes wild ride

By *Kimberly Laudano*

*160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment
Public Affairs*

The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment turned another page in the unit’s history with the deactivation of “Wildhorse” E Company, 2nd Battalion.

Lt. Col. John Evans, Commander, 2nd Battalion, with the company’s command team, Maj. Kenneth Cole and 1st Sgt. Mark Baker, cased E Company’s colors for the last time during a ceremony July 31 at Fort Campbell, Ky.

“The passing and folding and unfurling of faded pieces of cloth has always stood as a symbol of our readiness and our willingness to defend,” Evans said. “Today, however, is not about the E Company emblazoned guidon you see before you; today is about people.”

He told the Soldiers, civilians and families in attendance the ceremony was to honor a unit whose “contribution to our nation and our mission is invaluable.”

The Wildhorse has a short but significant modern day history. It was reactivated at K-2 Airbase, Taegu, Republic of Korea, on May 15, 2001.

1st Sgt. G. Michael Dove, one of the original crew chiefs assigned to E Company and currently serving with the 2nd Battalion, said the company evolved from humble beginnings. At the time of activation, the company had a trailer for an office, a commander and a first sergeant. As Soldiers started getting orders to E Company, the company grew to six Chinook helicopters, 25 crew chiefs and about 20 pilots. When the company deployed to its duty station in Korea, it had grown to 100 Soldiers and 50 contractors accompanying the Chinooks overseas.

“It was like a mini-battalion in the company,” Dove said, explaining it was designed to be self-sufficient even at its size. “It had aviators and crew chiefs and the support personnel like maintenance, motorpool, logistics, aircraft life support equipment and a headquarters platoon.”

The Soldiers experienced growing pains like any new organization, but Dove said they really came together before that first deployment in 2002. It may have had something to do with their training together in a typhoon during a readiness exercise in Okinawa, or maybe it was the unity Soldiers experience before going to battle. But the Soldiers were ready.



E Company’s command team, Maj. Kenneth Cole and 1st Sgt. Mark Baker, cased E Company’s colors for the last time during a ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky., July 31, 2007. Photo by Ruth Farwell, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.

“In January 2002, we received word to deploy to the Philippines and we left on the 21st,” Dove recalls. “We self-deployed from Dageau to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. It was the longest over-water deployment in history.” The crews flew for 12 continuous hours.

According to the unit’s history, Soldiers from E Company spent eight months in the Philippines during that first deployment. During that time, 10 Warriors – eight Night Stalkers and two Air Force Airmen – made the ultimate sacrifice when their helicopter crashed during operations.

E Company went on to deploy multiple times in support of the Global War on Terrorism over the next five years, providing Special Operations aviation support in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

In light of changing battlefield and training requirements, E Company was relocated from Korea back to Fort Campbell during the beginning of the 160th's reorganization in 2006. Soldiers and equipment assigned to E Company have been relocated within the regiment to fulfill other critical positions in the 160th's future organizational structure.

"Today, the Wildhorse concludes its wild ride," said Cole. "The men standing before you today represent the very best of our nation and our regiment. I feel honored to have stood in your ranks."

Evans told the audience the folded guidon should be secured safely, but not too far from reach.

"We must remain ever mindful that when our nation is in need there will always be men like the men of E Company, 2nd Battalion, 160th. And I have no doubt that one day the Wildhorse will ride again."

"Wildhorse" Company History

With nicknames including "The Gunslingers" and "Pachyderms," E Company, 160th SOAR can trace its history back to Vietnam. Soldiers of this company flew numerous combat missions in Vietnam and for the Global War on Terrorism in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. They also pioneered modern nighttime aviation capabilities and techniques.

Established at Fort Benning, Ga., in 1966, the company later became part of the 159th Aviation Battalion assigned to the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky. In 1980, elements of the 159th were part of Task Force 160 – the origin of the 160th SOAR.

On Jan. 16, 1985, the first Special Operations Chinook company was formed with the activation of E Company, nicknamed "Darkhorse." The regiment continued to evolve and grow over the next five years. On June 28, 1990, E Company was deactivated as the 2nd Battalion, 160th SOAR was formed. The new Chinook battalion kept the company tradition alive by assuming the battalion nickname "Darkhorse."

Ten years later, with the rising need for Army Special Operations aviation support for U.S. Pacific Command, E Company was called back to work. Nicknamed "Wildhorse" and dedicated E Company, 160th SOAR, the company was organized as a small battalion and was equipped with the latest MH-47E Chinook helicopters. The Wildhorse Soldiers deployed to Osan Airbase, Republic of Korea, in 2001.

When the 160th reorganized to meet the growing demands for support to Special Operations Forces, it was determined that E Company would return to Fort Campbell under 2nd Battalion. The Wildhorse Soldiers and their equipment returned in late 2006. The Soldiers and aircraft assigned to the company will move to fill other critical roles in the 160th's new organization.

"Wildhorse" E Company Lineage

— Sep. 1, 1966: 200th Aviation Company, "The Gunslingers," activated at Fort Benning, Ga.

— March 1967: Redesignated as 200th Assault Support Helicopter Company, "Pachyderms," and was deployed to Vietnam.

— July 1, 1968: Reorganized to A Company, "Pachyderms," 159th Aviation Battalion, assigned to the 101st Airborne Division.

— March 1972: A Company, "Pachyderms," 159th Aviation Battalion, redeployed from Vietnam to Fort Campbell, Ky.

— April 1, 1982: Reorganized as A Company, "Pachyderms," 159th Aviation Battalion, Task Force 160, an element of the 101st Airborne Division.

— Jan. 16, 1985: Redesignated E Company, "Darkhorse," Task Force 160, an element of 101st Airborne Division.

— Oct. 16, 1986: Task Force 160 was redesignated as 160th Special Operations Aviation Group (SOAG), relieved from assignment to the 101st Airborne Division.

— May 16, 1990: SOAG was redesignated as 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR).

— June 28, 1990: E Company, "Darkhorse," was inactivated and the birth of 2nd Battalion, "Darkhorse," 160 SOAR (HHC, A, B, D Companies) occurred.

— June 29, 2000: E Company, "Wildhorse," was reactivated at Fort Campbell, Ky.

— Aug. 15, 2001: E Company, "Wildhorse," began operating at K-2 Airbase, Daegu, Republic of Korea.

— Nov. 18, 2006: E Company, "Wildhorse," redeploys to Fort Campbell, Ky., and redesignated E Company, 2nd Battalion, 160th SOAR.

— July 31, 2007: E Company, "Wildhorse," is deactivated at Fort Campbell, Ky.

Wildhorse Sacrifice

During the short "Wildhorse" history, eight Night Stalkers and two Air Force Special Operations Airmen made the ultimate sacrifice when their helicopter crashed Feb. 22, 2002, while deployed to the Philippines in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Maj. Curtis Feistner

Capt. Bartt Owens

Chief Warrant Officer Jody Egnor

Staff Sgt. James Dorrity

Staff Sgt. Kerry Frith

Staff Sgt. Bruce Rushforth Jr.

Sgt. Jeremy Foshee

Sgt. Thomas Allison

Air Force Master Sgt. William McDaniel II

Air Force Staff Sgt. Juan Ridout



JGLO

links the SOF combat team

By Mike Bottoms
USSOCOM Public Affairs

Unity is strength, and when there is teamwork wonderful things can be achieved.

The 1st Special Operations Support Squadron's Joint Ground Liaison Office provides the environment where SOF teams learn the value of teamwork.

Located at Hurlburt Field, Fla., JGLO's mission is to provide realistic, specialized training for Special Operations Forces simulating the combat environment and, most importantly, the opportunity to work with AC-130U gunships.

The unit, the only one of its kind, conducts 20 classes a year for Special Forces, SEALs and Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen, and Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command Marines who train with the Air Force Special Operations Command Special Tactics Airmen.

"JGLO has been operational for 20 years now, and we train teams from all over," said Army Chief Warrant Officer Todd Sowerby, JGLO detachment commander. "Our code name for the

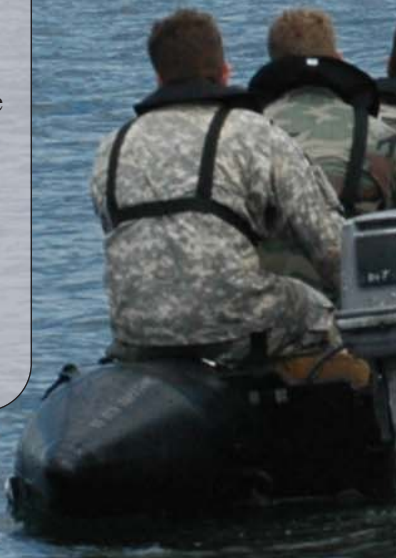
training is 'Have Ace,' for the original code name for the training of the Son Tay raid in Vietnam conducted by Special Forces legends (Col.) Bull Simons and (Maj.) Dick Meadows."

The JGLO office is a joint team consisting of four Special Forces Soldiers, one SEAL, one AC-130 sensor operator and one Marine gunnery sergeant on a rotational basis. Each member of the JGLO team has more than 20 years of service.

"It is important our office has representatives from each SOF element because that is how we fight in combat," Sowerby said. "Our newest addition is a Marine gunnery sergeant here from 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion temporarily who is facilitating upcoming training for a Marine Special Operations Company."

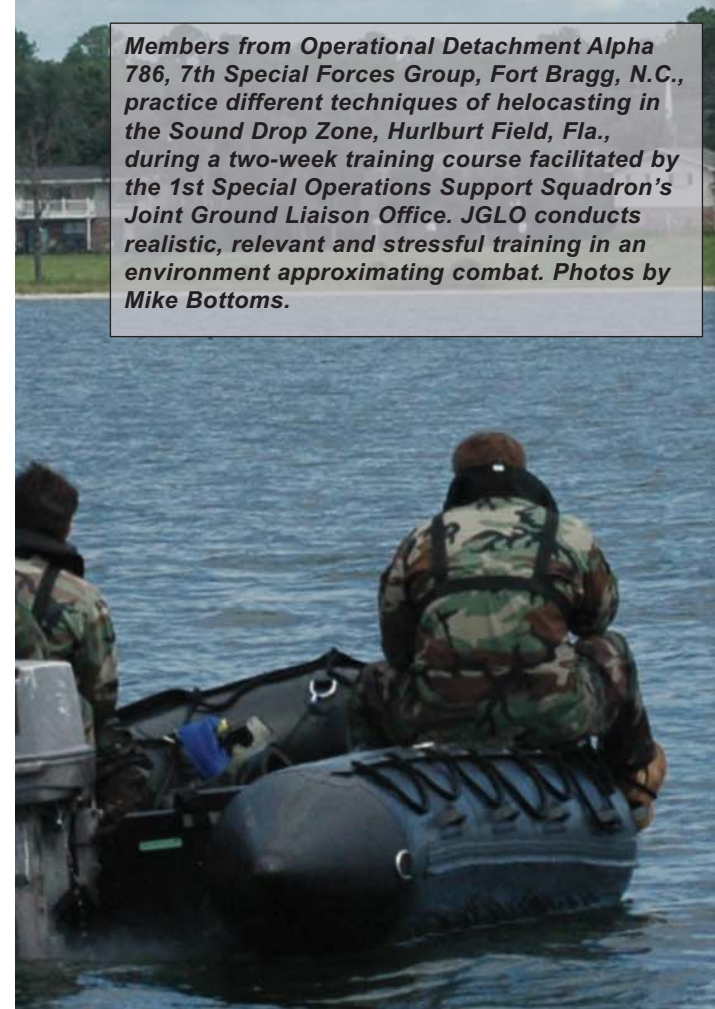
JGLO provides many different venues to conduct close quarters battle training, day and night mounted live-fire mobility operations, sniper operations up to 1,000 meters, rapid insertion with troops and equipment, night urban armed route escort, static line and high altitude low opening parachute operations and fire ranges

See JGLO, Page 26





Members from Operational Detachment Alpha 786, 7th Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, N.C., practice different techniques of helocasting in the Sound Drop Zone, Hurlburt Field, Fla., during a two-week training course facilitated by the 1st Special Operations Support Squadron's Joint Ground Liaison Office. JGLO conducts realistic, relevant and stressful training in an environment approximating combat. Photos by Mike Bottoms.





A truck at training range A-77, Hurlburt Field, Fla., shows the wear and tear from the fire power of an AC-130U gunship, "Spooky," called in by Special Operations Forces practicing coordination drills. Photo by Mike Bottoms.

JGLO continued from page 24

with 9 mm, 5.56 mm, 7.62 mm, .50 caliber and 40 mm grenade launcher.

"JGLO does a great job laying out the training and works very hard to make sure our training is realistic and combat focused," said the commander of Operational Detachment Alpha 786, 7th Special Forces Group. "There is a plethora of training opportunities here and plenty of room to maneuver."

"We really like coming to Hurlburt to train because we are away from home station and have no

distractions," said the ODA's operations sergeant. "We get to do flat range work, fast roping and water training, which are not something we do often."

Most importantly, the Soldiers, Sailors and Marines get experience working with the AC-130 and are prepared when they deploy. Most of the units who attend the course will deploy within 60-90 days of completion. For those units, the training is especially valuable.

"Many Special Operations Forces don't get to

CALLING IN HELP FROM AC-130U "SPOOKY"

Operational Detachment Alpha 786, 7th Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, N.C., conduct weapons training and practice calling in fire support from an AC-130U gunship, "Spooky," at training range A-15, Hurlburt Field, Fla. From left to right 1) An ODA team member fires his weapon. 2) ODA team members observe rounds striking a target. 3) An 105 mm round from an AC-130U explodes on a target. Photos by Mike Bottoms.



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Operational Detachment Alpha 786, 7th Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, N.C., practices close quarter battle drills at training area A-15, Hurlburt Field, Fla., during a two-week training course facilitated by the 1st Special Operations Support Squadron's Joint Ground Liaison Office. Photos by Mike Bottoms.



utilize the AC-130 until they arrive in theater. They don't know what it's like to work with the aircraft," Sowerby said. "Once we put them through the simulator training provided by the 19th Special Operations Squadron and then take them to the field to do live fire, then even the most junior guys can gain confidence knowing the gunships can escort them and

provide accurate ground fire."

The team sergeant from ODA 786 echoed Sowerby's sentiments.

"It is a little different communicating with rotary- and fixed-winged aircraft," the team sergeant said. "Training in the field with the AC-130 Gunship, using their lingo, gives us the confidence we can use them

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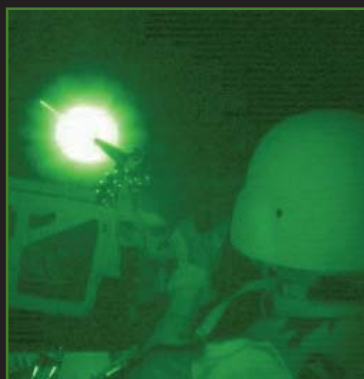
JOINT GROUND LIAISON NIGHT TRAINING

4) An ODA Team fast ropes from an MH-47 assigned to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment 5) An Operational Detachment Alpha Team member fires a .50 caliber machine gun. 6) SEALs come ashore ready to attack a target. Photos by Chief Warrant Officer Todd Sowerby.

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Special Forces Soldiers from 10th Special Forces Group off load from a training exercise with zodiac boats in the Sound Drop Zone facilitated by the 1st Special Operations Support Squadron's Joint Ground Liaison Office, Hurlburt Field, Fla. Photo by Chief Warrant Officer Todd Sowerby.

JGLO continued from page 27

for real in the sandbox.”

The unit also has begun incorporating Special Tactics Airmen at Hurlburt Field into the training. Recently, a combat controller trained with a visiting SEAL team.

“This type of “cross-pollination” between the different services helps to further the understanding of what each specialty brings to the fight,” Sowerby said.

While working with the AC-130 is the bread and butter of the program, the unit takes advantage of all the other training opportunities available with Air Force Special Operations Command aircraft.

Hurlburt’s proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and the Eglin Range complex also offers water and marksmanship training opportunities.

“The training is tailored to meet the needs of the Special Operations teams,” said Sgt. Maj. Victor Ayala, JGLO NCO-in-charge. “We can accommodate direct action to special reconnaissance training utilizing the air platforms here at Hurlburt to track targets in an urban or field environment.”

“Special Boat Teams like to come down here because there are no interruptions and they train continuously,” a JGLO team member and Senior Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) said. “We also have



SEAL teams jump into the Gulf of Mexico and take down targets on the beach.”

Even though the unit already trains more than 600 students a year, it is always looking to expand to train even more people.

“Recently we have had the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment here doing water work, practicing loading and unloading HUMVEEs, tactical insertions and fast roping,” Sowerby said. “We also have worked with the CV-22, fast roping and free-fall parachuting.”

Another unique aspect to the JGLO team is they are liaison officers to all the airframes located at

Hurlburt.

“We have a direct link to the airframes,” Sowerby said. “We have flown on missions and see how air integrates with the ground, and we pass that knowledge on to the training teams.”

According to Sowerby, the training provided by JGLO is very difficult to achieve for individual units because it is logistically challenging to combine SOF components into one exercise.

“Our goal is to link the joint combat team,” the Chief said. “That does not happen at home station and we bring everyone together in combat scenarios to learn how to bring lethal firepower to a target.”

A Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman sits for the cameras during a video shoot at the Salt River training range. A Hollywood production company descended on the range to film the SWCCs of Special Boat Team TWENTY TWO as they conducted live-fire training exercises. The video shoot was the first step of a massive undertaking to produce a video that will be part of Naval Special Warfare recruiting efforts. Photo by Seaman Robyn Gerstenslager.

Naval Special Warfare Recruiting

goes

Hollywood

***By Seaman Robyn Gerstenslager
Naval Special Warfare Group Four
Public Affairs***

A small army of producers, videographers, audio technicians, production assistants, agency representatives, photographers, and even a 1980s recreational vehicle descended on Fort Knox's, Ky., Salt River training range. They came to create a video to show the world the Navy's best kept secret --Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen.

Over the course of three days, the SWCCs of Special Boat Team 22 and Hollywood professionals battled temperatures of more than 100 degrees, oppressive humidity, ticks and giant horseflies to film what will become an invaluable tool for SWCC recruiting efforts.

Special warfare recruiting is a top priority of the Chief of Naval Operations. The commander of Navy Recruiting Command needed a recruiting video tailor-made for the SWCC community and turned to Detroit-based advertising agency Campbell-Ewald, which has been producing Navy recruiting materials since 2000. Campbell-Ewald agents hired Bandito Brothers, a production company based in Los Angeles, to film the SWCCs in action.

Filming began Aug. 23 in the midst of record-setting temperatures across the South. The mercury readings at Fort Knox were no exception. SBT-22 is based out of NASA's Stennis Space Center, in Mississippi, where smothering heat and humidity are common. For the California-based production crew and support staff, it was a new experience, almost like working in a sauna.

"The heat and humidity were a bit stifling, and [the heat] was compounded by the 40 pounds of body armor we wore while filming," said Peter Trucco, Bandito Brothers executive producer. "But, we wanted to put ourselves in the real environment and experience what the SWCCs have to go through on a daily basis. We only had to experience these conditions for three days; these guys deal with these conditions or worse every day."

On day one of filming, Bandito Brothers conducted on-camera interviews with several SWCCs. For the Sailors being interviewed, the tense moments in front of the camera could end in one of two ways – they could look like rock stars, or with a few stumbles, they could end up being the



A Special Warfare Combatant-craft crewman awaits the next question during an on-camera interview on board a Special Operations Craft-Riverine. A Hollywood production company was on location at the Salt River training range to film the SWCCs of Special Boat Team 22 in action as they undergo pre-deployment training. Photo by Seaman Robyn Gerstenslager.

butt of every joke for the next six months.

Special Boat Operator 1st Class Carlos Vargas had never been interviewed before, let alone with a camera lens focused squarely on his face, so he was a bit anxious. Scott Waugh, a Bandito Brothers director, did his best to calm Vargas and the other interviewees with his friendly demeanor and stories from his days as a Hollywood stuntman.

"I think it went pretty well, (Waugh) asked a lot of good questions," said Vargas. "He made it relaxing and as easy as possible."

Waugh has conducted countless interviews and knows putting the subject at ease makes for better answers.

"A few of (the SWCCs) even told me they weren't going to do good interviews, but once you mess around with them and play with them, they loosen up," said Waugh. "I thought the guys did fantastic; they gave really honest answers."

The producers were hoping to capture on film the

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Special Warfare Combatant-craft crewman from Special Boat Team 22 from Stennis, Miss., train on the Salt River, Fort Knox, Ky. SBT-22 employs the Special Operations Craft-Riverine, specifically designed for clandestine insertion and extraction of SEALs and other Special Operations Forces along shallow waterways and open water environments. Photo by Seaman Robyn Gerstenslager.

NSW continued from page 27

camaraderie and fellowship within the SWCC community. Trucco was most impressed with the brotherhood that exists among the Sailors of SBT-22 and was honored they gave him and his crew insight into the SWCC family.

"There cannot be a weak link in the SWCC boats, or it could have major repercussions on the whole craft," he said. "This condition forces all of the Sailors on board to be at the top of their game and to look out for each individual; it is a real buddy system."

To deliver a product adequately portraying a SWCC's talents, Bandito Brothers made sure they arrived in Kentucky prepared. Before leaving Los Angeles, Trucco and his crew sent 50 boxes filled with video cameras, microphones, cables, batteries and tripods to Kentucky.

Upon arrival, he met up with a company that provided lighting equipment and a 14-foot crane arm to be used with a gyro-stabilized camera head. The crane was secured to a SOC-R specifically designated as the "camera boat." The 16 mm camera attached to the crane allowed for a variety of high and low angle shots of the boats as they maneuvered up and down the river, sometimes at speeds greater than 35 knots.

Trucco admitted filming on the water was a bit of a challenge, but working with the SWCCs in their territory was essential to the video's ultimate success.

"The motion of the boat and countering that movement all the time makes it challenging to film," said Trucco. "We were excited by the challenge of filming in the real environment and respect the rigor and constraints these

men have to go through on a daily basis. For us it is only about getting a shot; for them the price is a bit higher; it is their lives on the line."

SWCCs from SBT-22 are eager to have a recruiting product specific to them showing how their mission compliments other special warfare units.

"Whenever anybody sees us or thinks of us the first thing that comes to mind is SEALs, and a lot of times we're misrepresented," said Special Boat Operator 2nd Class Jason Laska.

Laska hopes this video will open the eyes of potential enlistees to this demanding but rewarding job and help bring in the right candidates for the 26-week SWCC Basic Crewman Training course in Coronado, Calif.

Chief Special Boat Operator Rob McKay said the coverage is vital to the community because it will showcase the SWCC's capabilities.

"It lets people know who we are and what we are about," said McKay. "Hopefully (it) brings fresh faces...who want to do this job and be part of something special."

Special Boat Operator 1st Class Jeffrey Harris agreed this project is long overdue, although he sometimes enjoys being part of the "best kept secret in the USSOCOM."

"People are just now finding out what our capabilities are," said Harris. "Hopefully (this video) gives us the manning we need to push on."

In all, Bandito Brothers shot 11 hours of high definition digital video and film in three days of shooting. The first product is scheduled to be completed in October.

USSOCOM honors Navy SEALs

By Seaman Michelle Kapica

Naval Special Warfare Command Public Affairs

Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command presented two USSOCOM Medals approved by USSOCOM's former commander, Gen. Doug Brown, to former members of the Naval Special Warfare Command during a visit to Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, Calif.

In separate ceremonies, retired Rear Adm. Raymond Smith and retired Master Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) Richard Rogers received their medals for outstanding contributions to Special Operations.

The medal is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to the defense of the United States through Special Operations during either war or peacetime operations.

Smith served at many levels within the Naval Special Warfare community during his military career. He was assigned to Underwater Demolition Team 13, where he served as an ordnance officer, operations officer and platoon commander in Vietnam. He was the director of Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training from 1981 to 1983 and commanded SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team One from 1985 to 1987.

Upon selection to captain, Smith was appointed deputy commander and chief of staff, Naval Special Warfare Command. He deployed to the Arabian Gulf where he served as Naval Special Warfare Task Group Commander during Operation Earnest Will. Smith led SEALs in more than 200 operations of strategic significance during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Smith served as commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. In 1997, Smith became the USSOCOM deputy commander at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., until his retirement in 2001.

"There is no officer more deserving of this award," Olson said. "No officer who has served both the Naval Special Warfare community and the joint Special Operations community as Rear Admiral Ray Smith."

Smith, modest of his accomplishments, attributed much of his success to his colleagues and supporting community.

"The fact of the matter was the guys who went out on the operations; they're the guys who made me admiral," said Smith.

Rogers also has an extensive resume of military experience within the Naval Special Warfare community. He began his Navy career in 1972 and completed BUD/S training in 1973. He served as platoon point man and communicator at SEAL Team One in Coronado, as a BUD/S



Retired Rear Adm. Raymond Smith and retired Master Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) Richard Rogers received USSOCOM Medals at Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, Calif. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Biller.

instructor, as a platoon chief petty officer at SEAL Team Five and as boat crew leader at Naval Special Warfare Development Group.

After promotion to master chief petty officer in 1991, Rogers served as an operations chief and assistant current operations officer at NAVSPECWARDEVGRU; as command master chief of Naval Special Warfare Unit Eight in Panama; as the command master chief of Naval Special Warfare Group One; and as the first command master chief at Special Operations Command-Europe. Rogers served as USSOCOM's command master chief and senior enlisted advisor from 2000 to 2003.

In his 30-year Navy career, Rogers also held numerous leadership positions during Operations Just Cause and Allied Force.

Rogers retired from the Navy in 2003 and continues to work to improve the training and professional development of Naval Special Warfare personnel as a civilian at the Center for SEAL and Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman. He became the driving force in the development of the new SEAL and SWCC ratings for enlisted personnel.

Olson said he was impressed by Rogers' performance in the demanding roles of senior enlisted advisor and command master chief.

"Rick did more than meet the expectations. He excelled in all of them," said Olson.

Rogers accepted the USSOCOM Medal and praised the Special Warfare community for their hard work and commitment.

"You don't get one of these (medals) without a lot of help and a lot of good fortune," said Rogers. "It has been a privilege serving with the greatest Special Operations Forces, the greatest Naval Special Operations Force and the greatest Navy the world has ever known."



Sgt. Michael Lyborg, MSOAG's chief instructor for the Individual Skills section of Standards and Training, stands with retired Army Maj. Gen. Kenneth Leuer, and Army Ranger Training Brigade Commander, Col. Gregory Hager after receiving his diploma from the U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort Benning, Ga. Photo by Capt. Ted Bucierka.

MARSOC Marine takes top honors at Army Ranger School

*By Lance Cpl. Josephh Stahlman
MARSOC Public Affairs*

"Hey there, Army Ranger," one Marine hails another with a grin.

This is an uncommon greeting among Marines, but one Sgt. Michael Lyborg of Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, hears a lot lately.

Lyborg, MSOAG's chief instructor for the Individual Skills section of Standards and Training, recently graduated from the U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort

Benning, Ga., as the honor graduate of his class.

An infantryman by trade, Lyborg has spent countless hours in training, attended many military schools and deployed to the sands of the Middle East three times before being assigned to MARSOC.

"I've been instructing since I've been with MSOAG," said Lyborg, a native of Fairhope, Ala. "We revamped and rewrote the courses we teach to better support Special Operations Forces missions."

Lyborg and the other MSOAG instructors train future MSOAG Marines and Sailors in a six-month course to prepare them to succeed at one of the core MARSOC

tasks of Foreign Internal Defense missions. The students complete hundreds of hours of weapons, language and culture training and learn a variety of teaching techniques necessary to pass their skills on to militaries of friendly foreign nations.

Lyborg also teaches small-unit tactics, infantry fundamentals, light-infantry tactics, counterterrorism and close-quarters battle.

He attended Ranger school to better himself as a Marine and as an instructor.

“Lyborg has a tremendous amount of leadership ability,” explained Capt. Ted Bucierka, Lyborg’s officer-in-charge at the Individual Skills section of Standards and Training. “We had high expectations for him when he left for Ranger school.”

Lyborg was excited at the chance to tackle the mental and physical challenges awaiting him at Ranger school.

“I didn’t know what to expect,” explained Lyborg, who has been in the Corps for more than five years. “But being a Marine, I knew it was nothing I couldn’t handle.”

Starting with approximately 300 other Ranger candidates, Lyborg went through a rigorous 62-day training program that tested his abilities as a Marine.

“I wanted to gain as much knowledge and training as I could,” said Lyborg, who was the only Marine in his class. “I went to do my best, just like any Marine would.”

According to Lyborg, much of the school’s focus was on leadership, a subject for which his experience as an instructor of Special Operations Marines and Sailors prepared him.

“He is very proficient and professional as an instructor,” explained Bucierka. “We knew he could handle anything they put him through.”

The mission of the Army Ranger School is to conduct Ranger and reconnaissance and surveillance leader courses to further develop the combat arms-related functional skills of officer and enlisted volunteers who are eligible for assignment to units whose primary

mission is to engage in the close combat, direct fire battle.

The Ranger course consists of three phases. The first phase is conducted at Fort Benning, Ga., for 20 days; the second in the mountains of north Georgia for 21 days; and the final phase is conducted at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., for 18 days.

During the course, Lyborg went through various training exercises, ranging from airborne, air assault, mountain warfare, troop-leading procedures and a large amount of ground movement. Lyborg and the other students carried loads of up to 80 to 100 pounds during training.

“The hardest part I personally had to deal with was the ground movement and sleep deprivation. That, and you never know how good you are

doing,” said Lyborg. “After each phase, you might get dropped from the course, or you might stay. You never know.”

As Lyborg’s class graduation date grew near, less than half of the 300 candidates who began the course remained. A few days before graduating, Lyborg

was told he would be the honor graduate of his class. Lyborg said he was surprised to hear the news and believes Army Ranger School is what you make of it.

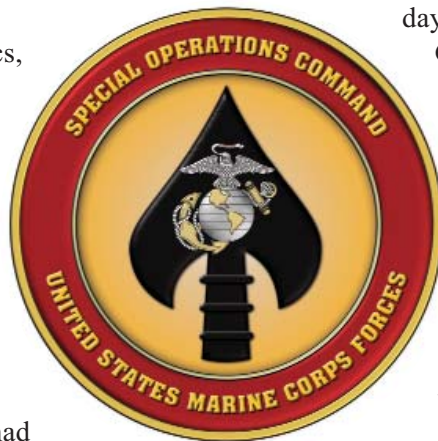
“You get out what you put into it,” he explained. “If you put in a lot of hard work and dedication, you can walk away as a stronger, well-rounded Marine.”

“This training was great for him,” explained Bucierka. “He has become even more proficient, and it has made him a better

instructor. We are glad to have Sergeant Lyborg here.”

“I brought a lot of knowledge back to share with students, as well as other instructors,” explained Lyborg. “I was glad to have gone and represented MARSOC.”

When Army Soldiers graduate from Ranger school, they gain the prestigious title of “Ranger,” but Lyborg, who says he is proud to have graduated Ranger school with such high honors, still prefers others refer to him simply as “Marine.”



“This training was great for him. He has become even more proficient, and it has made him a better instructor.”

*— Capt. Ted Bucierka,
Lyborg’s officer-in-charge*



Corpsmen go SOF

By *MARSOC Public Affairs*

The blazing hot sun bears down on you as you patrol, eyes peeled and alert for any sign of a threat. You glance around to check on the rest of your squad when suddenly the world explodes around you and you are knocked to the ground. While your Marines take cover and lay down suppressive fire, you struggle to orient yourself and realize you are injured. Shrapnel is lodged in your thigh.

Ears ringing, pulse pounding, you shout, “Corpsman up!” and raise your rifle to join the fight. Moments later, a corpsman runs across the street through a hail of bullets and kneels by your side. Without a word, he goes to work on your leg while you continue to look out for the enemy.

The corpsman stops the bleeding, secures your wound and taps your Kevlar to let you know you are good to go. Then, as quickly as he arrived, he disappears back into the chaos of combat to the next wounded Marine.

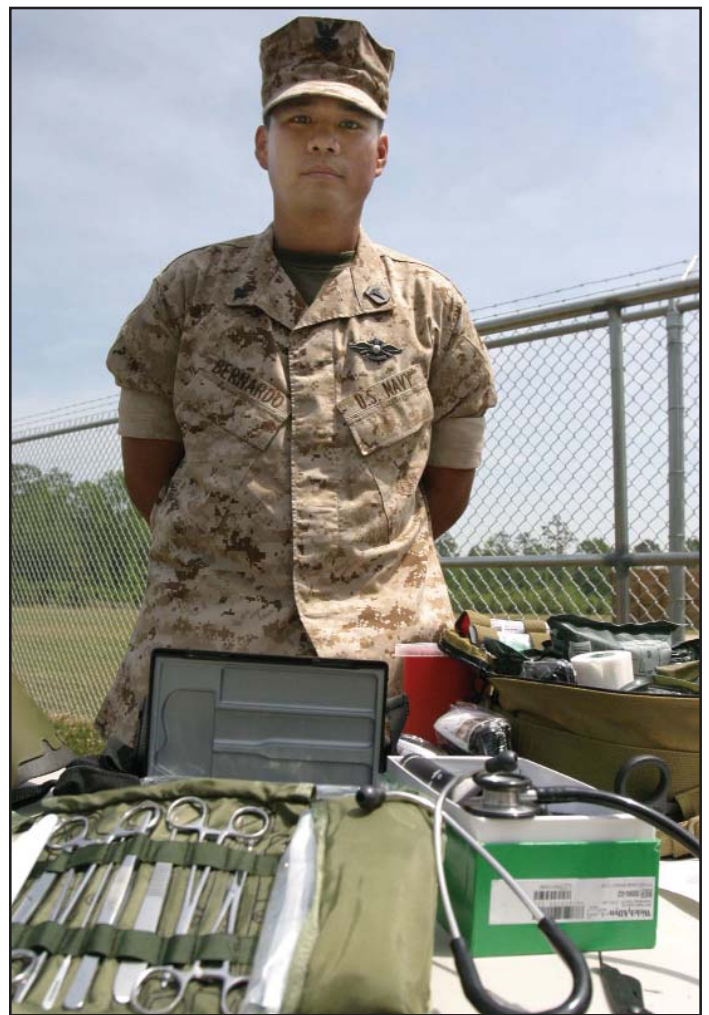
For more than 231 years, Marines and Sailors have shed blood, sweat and tears side by side through some of America’s greatest battles. They have worked, lived and sometimes died together throughout the Marine Corps’ noble history. This proud tradition lives on today as Sailors train and deploy alongside their Marine counterparts as vital members of the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command.

“Navy corpsmen are enlisted medical personnel who act as physician extenders and health care providers in all facets of the medical field,” said Master Chief William Cherry, MARSOC’s senior Navy enlisted advisor and designated command master chief. “They are most recognized as the combat lifesavers for Marines on the battlefield.”

MARSOC’s unique missions and high operations tempo require intense and exceptionally well-trained Navy corpsmen to ensure success.

MARSOC includes nine different types of Navy corpsmen: Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Independent Duty Corpsmen, Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Corpsmen, Surface Force IDC and Field Medical Service Technicians make up the majority of medical personnel. Dive Medical Technicians, Preventive Medicine Technicians, Physical Therapy Technicians, Psychiatry Technicians and Field Dental Service Technicians also make vital contributions to MARSOC’s success.

Petty Officer 1st Class Junne Bernardo, a Surface Force IDC with Team 3, Company A, Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, deploys as part of an 11-man



Petty Officer 1st Class Junne Bernardo, a Surface Force Independent Duty Corpsman with Company A, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command’s Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, stands before a selection of medical gear he uses when deployed. Bernardo deploys as part of an 11-man team to perform foreign internal defense missions in austere locations that are often far from medical facilities. MSOAG corpsmen take on the dual responsibility unique of both providing medical support and teaching medical aid to foreign military members while in a host nation. Photo by Lance Cpl. Josephh Stahlman.

team to perform foreign internal defense missions in austere locations often far from medical facilities.

The difference between an IDC and a regular corpsman is IDCs can perform their duties without direct supervision of a medical officer. The IDC also has privileged prescription-writing abilities and can order specialized medical services such as DNA testing, X-rays and other lab work.

“Being an IDC gives me less limitation as far as helping my Marines while in a foreign nation,” said Bernardo, a native of Queens, N.Y. “If the opportunity presents itself, I also can help the civilians of the host nation with medical issues.”

According to Bernardo, who has served with Marines for more than 11 years, in order to become a corpsman on a MSOAG team, a corpsman must be a graduate of the Field Medical Training Battalion and complete a year-long IDC school. Upon completion of the school and assignment to MARSOC, a corpsman must then complete MSOAG's six-month training pipeline. Within this period, the corpsman, along with his Marine counterparts, completes approximately 190 hours of language training, survival, evasion, resistance and escape school and other rigorous training programs.

"(Corpsmen) are not only there to provide medical support for our Marines, we must have the same capabilities as the Marines do to better train and understand the culture of the host nation we are in," explained Bernardo.

"Providing medical care to the indigenous population is a proven method of establishing strong relations with the host nation," explained Cherry.

Cherry believes corpsmen will be one of the strongest assets the MSOAG has in its capability package.

Along with MARSOC's ability to conduct FID missions, the Marine Special Operations Battalions have the ability to take the fight to the front lines of the GWOT, and corpsmen like Petty Officer 2nd Class Mateo Benavidez, a Special Amphibious Reconnaissance Corpsman with Company G, 2d MSOB, are with their Marine brothers every step of the way.

Being a SARC is something Benavidez, a native of Demopolis, Ala., is particularly proud of.

"All SARCs set and uphold very high standards for themselves and the Marines they work with," said Benavidez, who has been a SARC for almost four years. "Being a SARC is all will, drive and heart. It's one of the most rigorous things a corpsman can do."

According to Benavidez, the path to becoming a SARC includes completion of Field Medical Service School and an 18-month SARC training pipeline. Within this time, the trainee must complete a recon indoctrination program that includes a basic reconnaissance course, dive school, jump school, Special Operations medical command school and many other mentally and physically challenging training programs. The training does not stop for members of a Special Operations force, even after they become a SARC.

"(MSOBs) are on a continuous training program," explained Benavidez. "If we aren't deployed to the front

lines, we are back in garrison training and perfecting our skills."

When in garrison, sick and injured Marines go to battalion aid stations to see corpsmen like Hospitalman Keegan Byrnes, a Field Service Technician with the Marine Special Operations Support Group's battalion aid station.

"We need to keep our Marines healthy so they can have the ability to train and get ready for their next deployment," said Byrnes, a native of New Bedford, Mass.

To become a FST, Byrnes went to Field Medical Service school where he endured vigorous mental and physical training and learned a variety of military skills including weapon skills, land navigation and tactical medical procedures.

"A corpsman's job does not stop at simply medicine alone," said Byrnes. "We are there for Marines in any way they need. They often come to us for emotional support."

"At different times, respected corpsmen can be friends, marriage counselors, psychologists, social workers, sounding boards and confidants to their Marines," said Cherry, who has been a corpsman for 23 years. "A Marine once told me he actually fought harder during a firefight because he knew his 'doc' would be there for him if he was wounded."

Respected corpsmen are often referred to as "docs" and Bernardo takes pride in the nickname.

"There are corpsmen and then there are docs," exclaimed Bernardo. "Being called a doc is something to take pride in because, for someone to call you doc, you had to earn it."

Service as a corpsman is a gratifying job for Bernardo.

"We are the lifeline to the Corps," he said. "Marines' lives are often in our hands on the front line."

"You can read the history books. The word 'corpsman' speaks for itself," said Benavidez. "Corpsmen always have and always will be there for the Marine Corps."

"It gives you a lot of pride to be with Marines every day as a Sailor," said Byrnes. "We have a long history with the Marine Corps, so we have a lot to live up to."

"I am honored to have the privilege to serve in such a noble profession," Cherry said.

Whether helping to train foreign militaries with the MSOAG saving lives on the front lines with the MSOBs or helping sick and injured Marines in garrison at a battalion aid station, all MARSOC corpsmen do their part to ensure MARSOC Marines remain a healthy asset to the United States Special Operations Command.



U.S. Marine Corps and Navy Corpsmen badges. Photo by Lance Cpl. Josephh Stahlman.

Historic virtual *simulation* joint training

By Capt. Joseph Coslett
AFSOC Public Affairs

BOOM! An IED explodes next to a Marine convoy in a foreign country. The Marines dismount and secure the area and conduct a battle damage assessment. Calls for help are sent for eyes in the sky. On the other end of the call is an Air Force AC-130U crew miles away. Suddenly the crew spots a small enemy vehicle approaching for an ambush, and after a flurry of communications, the enemy vehicle is destroyed and the Marines are safe.

This scenario and others like it took place during the first joint virtual simulator exercise involving 4th Special Operations Squadron AC-130U crewmembers from Hurlburt Field, Fla.; Marines from Marine Air-Ground Task Force 29 Palms, Calif.; and Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command; and technicians and planners located in the 19th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field.


"The training involved is the first AC-130U gunship combat escort training conducted in two separate geographic locations," said Ken Taylor, Air Force Special Operations Command planner. "The value added of this training cannot be overstated. We are saving thousands of dollars, and we don't have any restrictions on combat scenarios. Finally we are not taking up a range time in Florida or California."

The logistics for a combat escort exercise between the Air Force and the Marines would have been massive, according to Taylor. The virtual simulator saved the trouble of shipping a Marine team to Florida or an AC-130 crew and maintenance package to California.

The benefits don't end there. When a virtual simulator training exercise doesn't go smoothly as planned, both sides debrief face-to-face, using video conferencing, passing critiques and advice. In a real scenario, the same face-to-face interaction will happen, but the crews leave at the end of the debrief without being able to put into practice lessons learned. However, in the virtual simulator, all forces were in place within 30 minutes to engage in a completely new exercise armed with the lessons learned.

As the new scenario drove on, the Marines encountered an ambush and encountered casualties. Immediately an unplanned casualty evacuation training scenario was added. Suddenly, a CH-46 helicopter flown by a MARSOC Marine flew in to rescue the casualties. The AC-130 flew overhead supplying cover and preventing the enemy from engaging the helicopter and the dismounted Marines securing the perimeter.

"In the simulator, the two separate locations talk in real time, and the technicians are able to change the scenario instantaneously if there is an added training benefit," said Capt. Buddy Lee, 19th SOS

A photograph of a person from behind, wearing a large headset, sitting in a simulator. The background shows a complex network of cables and equipment, typical of a flight simulator environment. The lighting is dim, with some blue and green highlights from the simulator's interface.

A U.S. Air Force 4th Special Operations Squadron AC-130U crew from Hurlburt Field, Fla., participates in the first joint virtual simulator training with the Marines from 29 Palms, Calif., and Marine Forces Special Operations Command. These two units were at their home station and trained in real time on convoy escort duty and actively engaged enemy targets in a mock foreign land. After 1.5 hours, both the Airmen and Marines debriefed, and started a new exercise, allowing both sides to perfect training techniques prior to deploying to fight the Global War on Terrorism. Photo by Capt. Joseph Coslett.

planner. "In a real scenario this would have to be planned prior to the mission starting. Another point to bring up is the realism of the simulator - the Marines under fire were yelling while making calls to the AC-130."

When the Marines reached the city to search for a high value target, they once again encountered ambushes, snipers and a realistic enemy. The Marines with stress in their voices called for fire as they gallantly engaged the enemy. The aircrew members provided close air support and put many rounds on the enemy, allowing the Marines to complete their mission.

As the final mission came to a wrap, a lot of training was completed on both sides. An aircrew obtained proficiency training of engaging the enemy, providing close air support for a convoy and performing casualty evacuation, all in an urban environment. The Marines got the same convoy training while engaging multiple targets. They saw the mission success, and they got the value of working with an AC-130 crew prior to deploying, and seeing the benefits of specialized airpower.

"It is good all around training. Skills are refreshed and it is next to the real thing, with the added benefit of being at home station," said a 4th SOS sensor operator.

Thirty minutes after mission completion, both sides were in their seats to debrief and to give advice on areas of improvement. They discussed

some of the fog and frictions of war and worked through them for the training opportunity the next day.

"I think the virtual simulator allowed us to work with dynamic flexibility to tailor the scenario not just to the Marines but to the many different forces we work with, whether it is the Army or Marines," explained the AC-130U mission commander, a 4th SOS pilot. "The added benefit is we can accomplish all the training, and maintenance is not a factor, and we have unlimited ammunition."

Following this scenario, both sides learned valuable lessons they will bring with them when they deploy. One Marine who just returned from a deployment in Iraq expressed the realism of the training.

"The training was very realistic and I thought we gained the benefit of the guy on the ground working with the crew on TTPs (tactics, techniques, and procedures)," said 1st Lt. Ted Driscoll, convoy commander. Following the scenario, "we could talk about capabilities and limitations."

Several key members made this historic event happen.

"This was an initiative of the Marines and AFSOC to make this happen without being told," said Bill Macak, Expeditionary Warfare Program Manager. This is a standing requirement of the Department of Defense to find the best ways to train jointly in the virtual realm.

193rd SOW awarded fourth Spaatz Trophy

*By Senior Airman Jennifer Klimowicz
193rd SOW Public Affairs*

Olympic great Jesse Owens knew a lot about overcoming obstacles in order to be the best. He once said, “We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort.”

For members of the 193rd Special Operations Wing, the gold medal moment for all their efforts came in the form of the Wing’s fourth Spaatz Trophy, awarded at the annual National Guard Association conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Named for Gen. Carl Spaatz, the first chief of staff of the Air Force, the prestigious Spaatz Trophy is awarded each year to the overall outstanding flying unit in the Air National Guard. Selection is based on overall combat readiness during the reporting year and the unit’s performance with respect to all other Air Guard flying units. Factors considered in the award include events of national and international significance, exercises and deployments, human resources, accident rate history, unit awards and community involvement.

“This highly coveted award is indicative of the incredible work done by the outstanding members of the 193rd,” said Colonel James Astor, operations group commander. “As a commander, it is my privilege to work with these members who are so richly deserving of this award.”

In addition to Brig. Gen. Eric Weller, commander of the 193rd, and Astor receiving the award, there were five enlisted members who joined them in representing the Wing. Staff Sgt. Mathew Verghese, loadmaster for the 193rd SOS, was one of them.

“There were many units there receiving all kinds of different awards and they all brought out their highest ranking officers to receive them,” said Verghese. “Only one other unit actually brought out enlisted. This is a



The 193rd Special Operations Wing operates EC-130J known as Commando Solo. Commando Solo conducts Information Operations, Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs broadcasts in AM, FM, HF, TV and military communications bands. The 193rd SOW recently won the Spaatz trophy for the fourth time as the Air National Guard’s outstanding flying unit. Courtesy photo.

statement to the enlisted ranks, as it shows we did our part in the unit to win the award. If nothing else, it was definitely a morale-building opportunity for the enlisted personnel to be recognized in that manner.”

The other four enlisted representatives were Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Rolain, 193rd Communications Squadron; Staff Sgt. Justin Livick, 271st Combat Communications Squadron; Senior Airman Chantiel Umberger, 193rd Medical Group; and Senior Airman Kevin Dalbey, 193rd Maintenance Squadron.

“The team mentality is one of the reasons we won,” explained Astor.

“Whenever the unit receives an award of this magnitude, whether at the NGAUS national conference or any other venue, the Wing endeavors to include a cross section of its personnel to participate in the receiving of the award,” said Astor.

“The Spaatz Trophy is given to the best unit in the ANG and the 193rd SOW has won this prestigious trophy more than any other Air National Guard unit in the nation,” said Col. Jerry Otterbein, wing vice commander. “It recognizes the dedication of our Airmen and their support to this wing’s mission. Throughout the constant deployments, inspections and the most recent conversion to the C-130J, the men and women of the 193rd SOW have proved over and over again they are truly the finest citizen-soldiers of our generation.”

New chapter for AFSOC begins: 27th SOW at Cannon activated

*By Airman Elliott Sprehe
27th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs*

A new chapter for Air Force Special Operations began as Col. Tim Leahy took command of the newly designated 27th Special Operations Wing during a unit redesignation and change of command ceremony at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., Oct. 1.

Moments earlier, Col. Scott West, commander of the 27th Fighter Wing, closed a chapter of the Air Force, albeit not permanently, when he handed the colors of the 27th FW to Lt. Gen. Norman Seip, 12th Air Force and Air Force Southern commander.

The colors of the 27th FW were then cased, formally inactivating the unit.

"I'm ready to give up the 27th FW and turn it over to a great organization, as (Cannon Airmen) stand ready to become proud members of the 27th SOW," said Seip, who praised West's time as the commander of the 27th FW.

West thanked his wife, Jane, for her support, and the men and women of the 27th Fighter Wing. He vouched for the character and quality of the Airmen who will remain at Cannon. His next assignment is at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

The outgoing commander and the 27th FW Airmen then received a final salute in the historic change of command.

Leahy, former vice commander of the 1st SOW at Hurlburt Field, Fla., accepted command of the new wing from Lt. Gen. Michael Wooley, commander, Air Force Special Operations Command.

Wooley spoke about standing up the 27th SOW, now one of two active duty Special Operations wings in the U.S. Air Force.

"We did it," said Wooley, as applause erupted from the crowd. "Our promise to you is that we will uphold the high standards the 27th FW has been so faithfully known for throughout its rich history."

Wooley then ceremoniously passed the guidon to Leahy, who accepted command and made his first address as the new commander of the Air Force's newest wing.

"I'd like to thank the men and women of AFSOC, Air Combat Command, and 12th AF who worked to make the transition of this base from one major command to another," said Leahy. "I assure you the 27th SOW, like the 27th FW before it, will be a good neighbor, and together we will make New Mexico an even better place to work and raise our families."

The first AFSOC aircraft to move to Cannon will be the 73rd Special Operations Squadron's MC-130W Combat Spear currently located at Hurlburt Field. The MC-130W conducts infiltration, exfiltration and resupply of Special Operations Forces and provides refueling capability for Special Operations vertical-lift assets like the CV-22 Osprey.

The total number of aircraft to be stationed at Cannon is expected to be around 100. The final active duty population at Cannon is expected to be between 4,400 to 5,600. It will take approximately three years to complete the build-up of the new Special Operations wing at Cannon.



Lt. Gen. Michael Wooley (left), commander of Air Force Special Operations Command, passes the guidon of the newly formed 27th Special Operations Wing to the new commander of the wing, Col. Tim Leahy. Photo by Airman 1st Class Evelyn Chavez.

JSOU installs first SES president

By Lt. Col. Sandra King
Joint Special Operations University



Dr. Brian A. Maher became the fourth president of the Joint Special Operations University in an official ceremony Aug. 16 at JSOU's home, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Adm. Eric Olson, commander of U.S. Special Operations

Command, officiated the ceremony, beginning with the appointment and induction of Maher into the Senior Executive Service. Maher is the first SES president.

Attendants at the ceremony included Lt. Gen. Michael Wooley, Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command; Dr. Kalev Sepp, Deputy, Assistant Secretary of Defense Special Operations Capabilities SOLIC; retired Army Lt. Gen. Michael Spigelmire; retired Air Force Lt. Gen. LeRoy Manor; retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Richard Comer; and representatives from AFSOC, SOCOM, Joint Forces Command and MARSOC.

Maher's presidency marks a significant change in JSOU leadership following USSOCOM's conversion of the billet from military to civilian. Previous JSOU presidents include Brig. Gen. Kenneth Bergquist, Maj. Gen. Paulette Risher and Maj. Gen. Steven Hashem.

Following retirement on July 1, 2000, from 30 years of active military duty as a command pilot with over 5,100 flying hours, Maher transferred to government civilian service, serving as the vice president of JSOU from 2000-2007 and playing a major role in defining JSOU's educational role for USSOCOM as well as interpreting the requirements to develop successful SOF and SOF enablers for strategic and operational leadership. In 2005, he completed his doctorate in education at the University of West Florida, specializing in distance learning applications.

Maher graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1970 with a bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering. He later earned a master's degree in business administration and subsequently attended the Air Force Institute of Technology, earning a Master of Science in aeronautical engineering.

Maher's academic assignments include faculty duty at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and commandant of the USAF Special Operations School.

As a life-long Special Operator, Maher held a variety of assignments at the joint and service Special Operations units. While on active duty, he served as an air operations staff officer to the then newly formed USSOCOM by participating in command-level planning for Operation Just Cause. Later, he commanded the Joint Special Operations Command's Air Component at Fort Bragg, N.C., where he participated in Operation Uphold Democracy, conducting SOF air operations.

To maintain his operational credentials during his academic career, Maher served in Operation Joint Forge as JSOTF Two commander, San Vito, Italy; twice deploying as director, Special Operations Liaison Element to Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia during Operations Desert Thunder and Desert Fox. More recently, he deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as the chief of staff for a Special Operations Joint Task Force.



Dr. Brian Maher's wife, Christine Marzo Maher, pins Maher's SES insignia at Maher's induction as president of Joint Special Operations University, Aug. 16, Hurlburt Field, Fla. Maher is the first SES level president of JSOU. AFSOC media center courtesy photo.

Somalia: Mogadishu street warfare

*By Cmdr. Linda Herlocker
USSOCOM History Office*

By 1992, warring Somali clans had torn the country apart, leaving its economy in shambles and the citizens in abject poverty. In August, the United Nations announced that one-quarter of Somalia's population — 1.5 million people — would die without a massive relief effort. The media's coverage of the devastation, complete with images of starving children, fueled the public outcry. As part of a U.N. effort, the United States stepped in with a massive military operation to get food and medical supplies to Somalia.

Beginning in August 1992, the United States led Joint Task Force Provide Relief, a multinational effort resulting in the airlift of 28,000 metric tons of emergency food supplies to Somali citizens. In December 1992, the U.N. expanded relief operations to ensure the relief supplies actually reached the starving people. Consequently, U.S. Central Command initiated Operation Restore Hope and secured Somalia's major air and sea ports and food distribution centers. SOF performed a variety of missions for both Provide Relief and Restore Hope, including area assessments in southern Somalia, hydrographic reconnaissance in and around Mogadishu, liaison coordination with U.N. sector commanders, civic action coordination and public information operations. Operation Restore Hope gave way to U.N. operations in Somalia in May 1993.

The U.N. then tried to maintain a state of peace by going after Gen. Mohamed Farah Aided, the leader of Mogadishu's dominant Habr Gedir clan who orchestrated numerous attacks on U.N. forces. On Aug. 22, the United States deployed Task Force Ranger — a Joint Special Operations Task Force — to seek out and capture Aided, now in hiding, and his followers.

By Oct. 1, Task Force Ranger had conducted six operations in Mogadishu. Although Aided remained at large, Task Force Ranger had limited his ability to maneuver and had captured some of his key lieutenants. On Oct. 3, the Task Force launched its seventh mission into Aided's stronghold to capture more of his key followers. Helicopters filled with assault forces flew from the Mogadishu airport and met up with ground forces in the neighborhood known as the Black Sea.

This would be unlike the previous six missions. The Somali fire was much greater than before. One Ranger fell from one of the helicopters while fastroping. Nonetheless, the assault team captured 24 Somalis. As the assault force loaded the detainees onto the convoy trucks, a rocket-propelled grenade downed an MH-60 Blackhawk helicopter

about three blocks away. Part of one six-man blocking element headed for the crash site. Another Blackhawk, carrying a 15-man combat search and rescue team, and an MH-6 assault helicopter also turned toward the scene. The MH-6 arrived first and successfully evacuated two wounded soldiers amid a hail of fire. The Rangers from the blocking element arrived, followed by the second Blackhawk. As the last of the CSAR team fastroped into position, the helicopter took an RPG round. The pilot managed to keep the chopper steady until the men safely reached ground, then coaxed the crippled helicopter back to the airfield.

Within an hour, a second Blackhawk was downed less than a mile from the first. The aircrew was severely injured. Two Special Forces snipers made their way to the crash site and pulled the pilot, Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant, from the helicopter. Once the Americans ran out of ammunition, the Somalis overran the site, killing all but Durant. The two snipers, Master Sgt. Gary Gordon and Sergeant 1st Class Randall Shughart, were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for their heroism that day.

Meanwhile, a ground convoy tried desperately to get to the first crash site. But in the narrow, twisting maze of Mogadishu streets, the convoy took intense fire and heavy casualties. Eventually, the crippled convoy had to return to the airfield. Other attempts to reach the crash site were likewise unsuccessful until reinforcements, consisting of Rangers, SEALs, 10th Mountain Division Soldiers, and Malaysian Armored Personnel Carriers, arrived in the early morning Oct 4.

After recovering the pilot's body, the force departed with the wounded in the APCs and the rest running alongside the vehicles (the so-called "Mogadishu Mile"). All reached safety. In less than 24 hours, 16 members of Task Force Ranger were killed and 83 wounded (the 10th Mountain Division suffered 22 wounded and two killed). The Somalis suffered more than 1,000 casualties.



Members from Task Force Ranger fight during the battle of Mogadishu, Somalia, Oct. 3, 1993. Courtesy photo.



The casket of retired Gen. Wayne A. Downing is set at the head of the Cadet Chapel at West Point, N.Y., during his internment ceremony Sept. 27, 2007. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jason Baker.

Downing buried at West Point

*By Sgt. 1st Class Jason Baker
USASOC Public Affairs*



West Point graduate and former commander of United States Special Operations Command, retired Army Gen. Wayne A. Downing was buried Sep. 27, on the grounds of the institution that set the foundation for his storied military career 45 years earlier.

Downing, who died July 18 at the age of 67 in his hometown Peoria, Ill., returned to the Academy for the final time. His internment was scheduled to coincide with his 45th class reunion.

Hundreds of family members, friends and colleagues including former USSOCOM commander, Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker and current USSOCOM commander, Adm. Eric T. Olson, gathered in the West Point Cadet Chapel to mourn their loss. Eulogies were given by fellow 1962 West Point

graduates AOL co-founder Jim Kimsey and roommate Jim Heldman, his daughter Elizabeth Downing Revell, and former NBC news anchor Tom Brokaw.

During the chapel service, Brokaw described the humble beginning of a fatherless young boy. His father, having been killed in the Battle of the Bulge, Downing was encouraged by his mother to visit a wounded veteran of the 101st Airborne Division. The relationship sparked the inspiration that led him to West Point.

“One day he came home and announced that he knew what he wanted to do with his life, which was to jump out of airplanes,” described Brokaw during his eulogy. “Seldom has a young man’s brash declaration been so famously fulfilled.”

His life would take him from a home of modest means raised by his widowed mother, Eileen Downing, to a decorated and distinguished 34-year military career in which he earned the rank of four-star general, received several awards for valor and led of the nation’s Special Operations Forces. As a civilian, he served in Washington, D.C., as the president’s National Director and Deputy National Security



Mourners for retired Gen. Wayne A. Downing follow a horse-drawn caisson escorted by Soldiers from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) during his internment ceremony at West Point, N.Y., Sept. 27, 2007. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jason Baker.

Advisor for Combating Terrorism.

His classmates described the mischievous and adventurous personality of a young Cadet Downing to which they attribute his success as a Special Operations Soldier.

“Wayne had his own agenda; he was his own man,” said Heldman. “I think that made him what he subsequently became, in the particular line of work being Special Operations. He was very comfortable finding rules that could be bent, ignored or broken. You may all be pleased to find out or learn that Wayne was never caught doing anything he should not have done and I think (that) said a lot about someone who sought and embraced danger and would do very well in his chosen line of work.”

In contrast, his daughter said, “Many of you knew Wayne Downing as a son, a friend, husband, cadet, Ranger, general, advisor, military analyst. Laura and I only knew him as a father, our dad, our daddy.”

She concluded her eulogy by tenderly describing a last request made by her father in a conversation just before his death.

“Dad ended our conversation with a request. He asked that I take the grandchildren to church more often, but he also asked that I strengthen my relationship with God,” she said. “This has been an easy request to honor.”

After the chapel service, Downing’s casket was led by Soldiers from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) and placed on a horse-drawn caisson. Hundreds

followed behind the funeral procession, led by a platoon of West Point cadets, an honor platoon from the 75th Ranger Regiment and the USMA Band, as it made the solemn march from the chapel to the West Point Cemetery.

At his graveside, Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, commander, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, described how Downing would go on to fulfill the words spoken during a graduation address by then U.S. President John F. Kennedy.

“We need to be prepared to fight a different war, new in intensity, ancient in origin. It requires a wholly different kind of force and a wholly different kind of military training,” said Wagner, quoting Kennedy.

“Those words could not have found a better heart or mind with which to grow than that of Wayne A. Downing,” said Wagner. “Wayne Downing led the way, setting those standards in the newly formed 1st Ranger Battalion, then in commanding the 2nd Battalion. He formed and commanded the 75th Ranger Regiment; he commanded JSOC (Joint Special Operations Command). He commanded the Army Special Operations Command and he commanded the United States Special Operations Command.

“Almost as if President Kennedy had given direct orders to Wayne Downing” continued Wagner. “General Downing had formed and built that whole different kind of force. He pioneered a whole different kind of training.”

The service ended with his wife, Kathryn Bickerman Downing, mother, Eileen, and two daughters being presented with U.S. flags in his honor by retired Gen. William Kernan.

SPECIAL OPERATORS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES
SERVING IN OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM AND
IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN

SGT Dustin Adkins
MAJ James Ahearn
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
SSG Jesse Clowers Jr.
1SG Christopher Coffin
CPL Matthew Commons
SGM Bradly 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
PO1 Steven Dougherty

Maj William Downs
TSgt Scott Duffman
CW2 Scott Dyer
SPC Jonn Edmunds
CPT Daniel Eggers
CW2 Jody Egnor
SFC Adrian Elizalde
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
CPL Jason Kessler
SFC Jeffrey Kettle
SSG Matthew Kimmell
SPC Adam Kinser
SSG Daniel Kisling
SGT Keith Kline
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
PO1 Jason Lewis
SPC George Libby
MSG Arthur Lilley
SSG Nino Livaudais
SPC Ryan Long
SSG Christian Longsworth
PO1 Jeffery Lucas
2nd Lt Scott Lundell
CPL George Lutz II
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
PO1 Robert McRill
SGT Rhonald Meeks
1SG Tobias Meister
PO2 Charles Milam
Sgt Marco Miller
SFC Sean Mitchell
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
SSG Robert Pirelli
SrA Jason Plite
Maj Steven Plumhoff
MSG James Ponder
CW2 Bruce Price
SSG Brian Prosser
CW3 John Quinlan
SGT Regina Real
SGT James Regan
MAJ Stephen Reich
PO1 Thomas Retzer
SSgt Juan Ridout
CPT Russell Rippetoe
PO1 Neal Roberts
CPT Charles Robinson
SFC Christopher Robinson
SSG Robb Roling
SFC Daniel Romero
SSG Bruce Rushforth
SFC Michael Russell
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 Phillip 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 Michael Tully
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
SFC Nathan Winder
SGT Daniel Winegeart
SGT Roy Wood
CPL Travis Woods
MAJ Matthew Worrell
SGT Jeremy Wright
CW4 Michael Wright
MSG Anthony Yost
SFC Mickey Zaun

**** Highlighted names are SOF who have lost their lives since the August Tip of the Spear**

A dramatic silhouette of a soldier in a combat helmet aiming a long-barreled rifle. The soldier is positioned in the foreground, with their form dark against a bright, orange-hued sunset sky. A large, glowing sun is visible in the background, partially obscured by the rifle's barrel. In the background, several strands of coiled barbed wire are visible, adding to the military setting. The overall mood is somber and focused.

A Special Forces Soldier prepares his MK 12 sniper rifle at sunset in Rawah, Iraq.

Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Eli Medellin.