SERPENT STAR

VOLUME I, ISSUE IV THE OFFICIAL NEWS PUBLICATION OF TASK FORCE 30TH MEDCOM SEPTEMBER 2009

HONORING THE FALLEN

ALSO INSIDE----------

AIR FORCE BIRTHDAY

TF 30TH MEDCOM G-1

NCO SPOTLIGHT

commander's CORNER

We have passed several significant milestones since the printing of the last Serpent Star. The Afghanistan national election was conducted with little interruption by the Taliban. The official results are not yet known, so we don't know if there will be a runoff election in the near future. It was still a great day to be in Afghanistan to appreciate the contribution made by the Afghan police and the Afghan Army with ISAF and US Forces in a support role to ensure election security for the millions who voted. The other milestone was our passing the 4-month deployed mark, so 1/3 done on the calendar. Our Headquarters Company is also deep into prime time Rest & Relaxation as Soldiers head home for a much deserved break. The R&R system doesn't appear to be working as previously advertised with a planned 21 day absence, including travel and the 15 days R&R. Seems like it's taking at least 3 days to get home/back so 22-25 days has been the norm. So if your spouse arrives home with a big smile but looking worse for the wear, it's probably because he/she has been travelling for the past 48-72 hours.

With Sergeant First Class Williams taking lead, Task Force 30th MEDCOM sponsored two highly successful events on Bagram to commemorate Women's Equality on August 26th. The first event was a multi-service panel discussion with our own Sergeant Major Taylor as a distinguished member. The second event was a great 5k race that was won by our own Sergeant First Class Zuch, who just joined us (no, we didn't fly him in just to win the race). Of course, we also celebrated Labor Day but without the traditional backyard BBQ and day off that mark the end of summer. I hope that the "back to school" process was not too difficult for all the children and single parents guarding the home front. With the end of summer, I suspect back home that the Christmas decorations and holiday specials will soon proliferate the shopping centers, much too early for all of us. Thanks again for all of you on the home front who have stepped up to the challenge of filling two or more roles while your Sailor, Soldier, Airman or Marine is deployed here.

Colonel Dennis D. Doyle

sergeant major's CORNER

Before you know it, your time in Afghanistan will come to pass and you will be telling stories about your experiences while here. For some of you, that experience may have been a positive moment in your life or possibly something you would just soon forget. I would suggest that while you're deployed you stay focused not only on your mission, but all those things that you are responsible for; as an example, your personal equipment. One thing you don't want to happen is make what could have been a good memory turn out to be a nightmare by losing equipment that you are responsible for.

Although I have a logistics background, I will try not to sound as if this is a supply class. If you didn't already know, all persons in the Army that are entrusted with property, which includes personal equipment, are responsible for its safeguard, care and custody regardless whether or not you are signed for the equipment. Commanders have a responsibility to ensure their equipment is properly cared and accounted for. This responsibility is also shared with supervisors and individuals. Do not let someone take equipment from your area of responsibility believing that it is not your concern. When equipment is missing, an investigation is initiated to determine the circumstances surrounding the loss. During the course of the investigation, if the evidence shows that you were either responsible for the loss or could have prevented the loss, you may be subject to financial liability.

If you are signed for property, then keep up with it and conduct proper and timely inventories. This includes your personal clothing and equipment that you received before and during deployment. Ensure your Soldiers are keeping up with their equipment. Supervisors should plan and inventory each of their Soldier's equipment at least once during their deployment and at a minimum prior to redeployment to ensure they still have all their required equipment. When conducting inventories on equipment, ensure you take it seriously and are not just going through the motions. Ensure all equipment sets are complete and report any discrepancies immediately. Remember: bad news doesn't get better with time.

In closing, we all need to be good stewards of property accountability and prevent equipment loss. A few things to remember: if you are not using your equipment, secure it; if you lose it, report it. If it's not yours, then don't take it. Watch out for your buddy, and they will watch out for you. Do not be the person that had to give back some of their well deserved deployment money because they didn't keep up with their equipment.

SGM Troy Miller

(From Left to Right) Captain Thomas Hardy, Task Force 30th MEDCOM HHC Commander, and First Sergeant Thomas Vatcher, HHC First Sergeant, smile as they promote then Private First Class Eric Jones to the rank of Specialist.

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(From Left to Right) Staff Sergeant Cynthia Watkins, the youngest Task Force 30th MEDCOM Air Force member, Colonel Dennis Doyle, Task Force 30th MEDCOM Commander, and Major Celso Salinas, the most senior Air Force member, cut the Air Force Birthday cake.

Off We Go

THE AIR FORCE'S 62ND BIRTHDAY

Did You Know?

Task Force 30th MEDCOM members became highly familiar with this e-mail subject. For the first half of September, Air Force Master Sergeant Denise Desuacido sent TF members Air Force history tidbits which asked the question, "Did you know...?"

"I felt that at TF 30th MEDCOM, which is primarily Army, it would be cool to tell our story," says Master Sergeant Desuacido. "When you know someone else's story, it's easier to relate to them."

One of the tidbits included a storyline on how the Air Force was created by the Army.

The history e-mails were part of a month-long celebration put on by TF 30th MEDCOM Air Force Members to celebrate the Air Force's 62nd Birthday.

The celebration was capped off with a Bagram-wide celebration on the flightline where various aircraft were open to all personnel and a birthday cake at the TF 30th MEDCOM Headquarters Conference Room, with Major Jason Buckner, flanked by his fellow Airmen, speaking about the Air Force History and reciting lyrics from his favorite song - the Air Force Song.

When asked on her feelings about the Birthday, Master Sergeant Desuacido responded with one word:

"Proud."

Story by Second Lieutenant Jules Chan

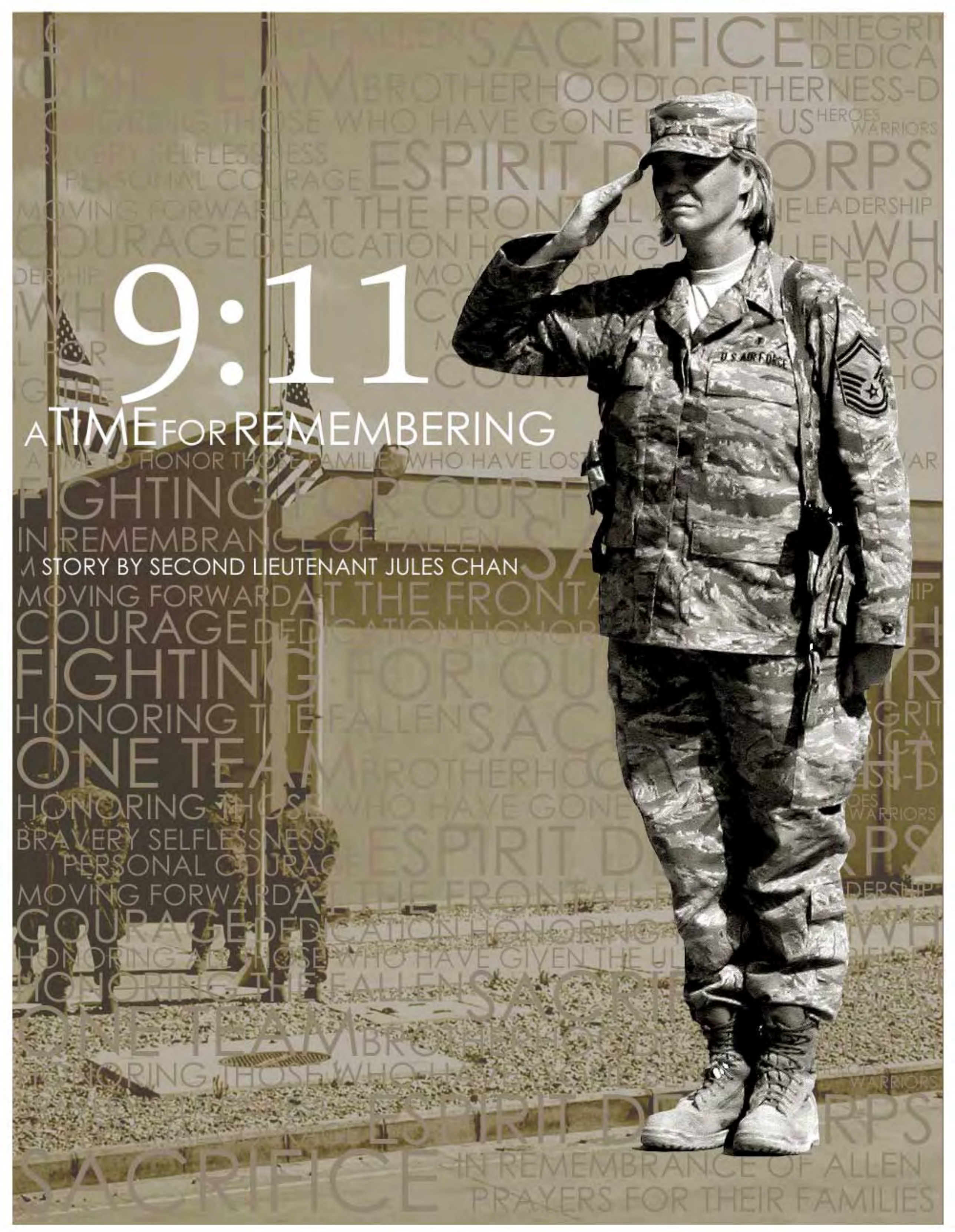
(From Left to Right) Master Sergeant Denise Desuacido, Major Jason Buckner, Major Celso Salinas, Staff Sergeant Cynthia Watkins, and Tech Sergeant Nakisha Mataia toast on the Air Force Birthday.

(Bottom) Specialist Brittany Macarthur, Sergeant Allison Bowen and Sergeant Davina Thomas smile after seeing an F-16 up close.

9:11

A TIME FOR REMEMBERING

STORY BY SECOND LIEUTENANT JULES CHAN



(From Left to Right) Senior Master Sergeant Julie Lyn, Tech Sergeant Eden Macinnes, Senior Airman Christopher Standage, Major Lydia Radford (Behind Standage), and Staff Sergeant Allison Jarrett fold flags in front of Craig Joint Theater Hospital.

With the red September sun glaring down on Craig Joint Theater Hospital, five Airmen stand guard in front of two flagpoles in near 100-degree heat. Slowly, two American flags are raised to half-mast, then to full-mast, then finally lowered completely to be folded. The entire process takes just over nine minutes.

Nine minutes, eleven seconds to be exact.

As the flags are folded and held to the chest, they are brought inside, only to have two new flags brought out and flown in the same fashion. This process was part of a day-long tribute condcuted by the Airmen of Craig Joint Theater Hospital on September 11th to commemorate the attacks that took place nine years ago.

REMEMBRANCE

Everyday, two special American flags are flown in front of Craig Hospital. These flags are requested by various Servicemembers from around the hospital and its underlying units. However, as September 11th approached, requests flooded in by the dozens.

"September 11th meant so many things to so many different people," says Senior Master Sergeant Julie Lyn, who coordinated the flag ceremonies. "I asked myself, 'why not try to accommodate all of the requests?'"

With the high number of flags planned on being flown for the ceremonies, Sergeant Lyn needed to have a detail run non-stop from seven o'clock in the morning to almost five o'clock in the afternoon. She would also need a large amount of volunteers. Though sounding like a near impossible feat, it was anything but

"We had over sixty people help...all volunteers," says Sergeant Lyn, proudly. "There was no hesitation at all."

Volunteers came in four-man details from various hospital sections. Led by Sergeant Lyn or Senior Airman Christopher Standage, another coordinator, the details braved the heat for over thirty separate ceremonies.

Flags raised, flags lowered...each staying on the pole for exactly nine minutes and eleven seconds. Over seventy flags were flown.

DEDICATION

"This is our small part of commemorating the events of 9/11," explains Sergeant Lyn, looking off as if recalling the memories of that day. "This serves as a reminder of why we are here and it honors those that continue to make sacrifices."

Each flag was requested by a different person, all with different meanings. Some dedicated the flags to fellow Servicemembers, others to fallen Servicemembers, others to their families. Major Lydia Radford, who was also on one the flag details, dedicated her flag to her son.

"I missed his first day of Kindergarten," she says, solemnly. "I wanted him to know why I was here instead of there."

Though the day was Friday – a busy workday on Bagram – traffic along the road next to the hospital stopped to watch the ceremonies and

(Continued on 575th ASMC Page, "Honoring...")

"I owed something for that day."

- SENIOR AIRMAN CHRISTOPHER STANDAGE

TF 30TH MEDCOM HHC UPDATE

As I sit here, legs burning from the Air Force Half Marathon this morning, I can't help but be proud of what the company has done in the last four months. In not even half a year, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 30th Medical Command has shaped and expanded a world-class military healthcare system in a combat zone the size of Texas.

In Bagram, the G3 and G6 have made the tactical operations center the nerve center for the command sending out orders and collecting information across the theater of operations. Use of the latest technology lets key leaders attend briefings from their laptop computer no matter where they are. Information is easily archived and retrieved on the command's MedShare server that has been heavily customized by Chief Quinones and Sergeant First Class Reisler.

Also in Bagram, the G4 and G8 have acquired, moved, and repaired hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of medical equipment. They also oversee military construction projects to include building new headquarters and warehouse facilities to improve command and control and give the warfighter better access to medical care and supplies.

G1, working from both Kabul and Bagram, has coordinated thousands of personnel actions and made sure our Soldiers are receiving quality evaluations and are rewarded for their combat duties. Lieutenant Colonel Owens, who delivered a plethora of awards from Kabul, was welcomed in Bagram a few days ago to cheers from the Command and the rest of the G1 shop.

Down in Kandahar, the small team of 30th Medical Command – South Soldiers has built not one, but two headquarters from the ground up. One of the feats was the physical construction of their own new building in which they are now operating. They also built up a battalion sized headquarters called the Navy Multifunctional Medical Unit (MMU) out of individual augmentees; Piecing together a command and staff that will soon take over for the Canadians.

While all this great work is being done, we also have a small staff of Soldiers that keep the company running. Sergeant McDannell and Specialist MacArthur just received a perfect score for mailroom operations. I think everyone in the company loves it when they get email telling them they've got real mail! Sergeant Bowen and Specialist Cowboy maintain enough supplies on hand (of what they can get in theater) to satisfy even the toughest customers. And of course, First Sergeant Vatcher never kicks anyone out of the blue lazy-boy if he or she needs a small break from the frantic pace of operations.

With all this success, you would think there would be quite a few celebrations. Well, there are and the biggest celebration for the MEDCOM yet is coming up on October 1st. We will celebrate the 76th anniversary of the 30th Medical Command with a rousing unit run with all our units on Bagram and a barbeque with games and contests at lunchtime.

Although we have a few more weeks until the six-month mark, I hope everyone can see that time is flying by and we will be home in no time.

Oh, and if you have a chance, congratulate Lieutenant Colonel Nunez. He is now the proud father of about a hundred Camel Spider babies!

Captain Thomas M. Hardy

militaryTRIVIA

1. What weapon was outlawed for being "Deathly and hateful to God..."?
2. On 8 August 1918, this 82d Division Soldier killed 28 Germans and captured 132. For his actions he received the Congressional Medal of Honor, and becomes a national hero. Who was he?
3. What was the name of the two "Iron Clad" war ships that battled each other on 9 March 1862?
4. What were the code names for the 5 Normandy beaches that were assaulted on D-Day 6 JUN 1944?
5. Which recent presidential candidate was a Lieutenant in the 10th Mountain Division?
6. The Battle of Sharpsburg (17 SEP 1862) is better known by what name?
7. What two US Warships were involved in the Gulf of Tonkin Incident, AUG 1964?
8. What was the name of the B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, 6 AUG 1945?
9. At which battle did the British General Cornwallis surrender to General Washington signaling the beginning of the end of the Revolutionary War?
10. Who is Fort Lewis, (near Tacoma, WA) named after?

(Answers on "Great Deals" page.)

Contributed by Lieutenant Colonel Francis Golden

goodbyes

Colonel Dennis Doyle, TF 30th MEDCOM Commander, jokes with Commander Lisa Braun (Left) and Senior Chief Marsha Burmeister as they are recognized for their efforts during their deployment. The MEDCOM held a small celebration for their farewell.

Soldiers inspect rubies and gems at the local bazaar.

Great Deals IN AFGHANISTAN

As you walk through the Bazaar

week after week seeing all the gems, carved wood boxes, fur coats, and carpets being sold, you might say to yourself, "there has to be some great deals out there!" But does it really pay off to spend your hard earned cash for these products you are buying "at the source"?

In most cases, no. Business in Afghanistan is not the same as business in the West. The rule is buyer beware. Ethics and honesty are not common in business transactions here. What the seller may represent as a hand-made Persian rug or real emerald jewelry is probably fake and worth at least 80% less than what the seller is asking.

But wait! There are at least a couple ways you can spend your money wisely: The Savings Deposit Program and tax-exempt deposits into the Thrift Savings Plan. Both are programs the government has set up for the military. Both can only be taken advantage of here in Afghanistan. Both are better than trying to resell the fake 30 carat emerald you bought from your friend Ali.

First of all, the Savings Deposit Program (SDP) is a win-win situation. Take the money you cannot spend here (like on food and gas and cigarettes you are quitting) and ask the finance Soldiers to put it in the SDP. When you redeploy, you will have 10% more money than you put in. You could make over $1000 if you contribute up to the limit of $10,000. And you won't have to spend that nice interest on cigarettes if you quit smoking! Score!

Another great opportunity is the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). This program is always available to you as a Service Member in combat or back home. However, there are two distinct advantages you have while deployed. Instead of being limited to $16,500, you can contribute up to $49,000! The other advantage is your deployed contributions are never taxed. So while your retired golfing buddies are worried about their tax-bracket, you will have more cash to spare.

Now.. if you still have some money left over after taking care of everything back home, setting up an emergency savings account, and maybe dabbling in the stock market after you read Graham, you might be interested in buying some of the previously mentioned Afghan goods. Here are some tips:

According to the Department of Commerce*, it costs about $37/m2 up to $100/m2 to make hand-made, wool carpets in Afghanistan. Chances are that what you are seeing are the leftovers from professional wholesalers, so estimate towards the $40/m2 range. When Hamid asks $1600 for that nice looking 6'x9' rug, you know it only cost $300-$600 to make. You probably shouldn't even look at Persian, Turkish, or Chinese rugs. Real Afghan rugs are made from wool and, in general, are red and black or a light mixture of colors called Chobi.

What about gems? Afghanistan IS famous and always was famous for its gemstones. One the most famous gemstones from antiquity, lapis lazuli, comes from Badakhshan just northeast of Bagram. There are many other gem sources in this area as well, but what you see on the table is low quality or even synthetic. Forget about rubies and emeralds. If you are still interested, look at tourmaline and aquamarine. Afghanistan is an excellent source of those gems, tourmaline can be found in almost any color, and synthetics don't exist for either. Expect to pay $15-$50 per carat for both depending on how clear and rich the colors are. The various lapis lazuli wares are also safe to haggle over.

With any luck, what you just read should save you a few dollars. Maybe take some of that cash and contribute to your favorite charity through the Combined Federal Campaign starting next month. In any case, if you have any questions about the government programs available to you or want to talk about oriental rugs, stop by HHC and we will get you on the right track.

**Mark T. McCord, "Investor Analysis of Afghanistan's Carpet Sector," U.S. Department of Commerce, http://www.trade.gov/afghanistan/.*

Contributed by Captain Thomas Hardy

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. The crossbow, by Pope Innocent II in 1139
2. Sergeant Alvin York
3. The USS Monitor, and the CSS Virginia. The CSS Virginia was a captured US warship formerly named the USS Merrimac.
4. Gold, Juno, Omaha, Sword, and Utah
5. Senator Robert "Bob" Dole.
6. The Battle of Antietam. The North typically named battles after nearby rivers and creeks, while the South after the closest village. Modern historians now agree to use the name given by the victors of the battle.
7. The USS Maddox and USS C. Turner Joy
8. The Enola Gay, named after Pilot's mother.
9. The Siege of Yorktown in SEP-OCT 1781.
10. Meriwether Lewis- (August 18, 1774–October 11, 1809) was an American explorer, soldier, and public administrator, best known for his role as the leader of the Lewis and Clark Expedition 1803-1806.

(From Left to Right) Sergeant Bennett Macarthur, Sergeant Davina Thomas, Personnel Specialist Third Class Martin Collins, Specialist Andrea Allen-Poole, and Master Sergeant Fernande Sampson take a break from a busy workday. Missing are Lieutenant Colonel Terry Owens, Captain Anita Britt, Sergeant Cecilia Coca, and Personnel Specialist Third Class Wendy Cassanova.

The G-1: THE STARS BEHIND THE SCENES

Operation Enduring Freedom is an ongoing mission;

it is alive. In its own way, it is an organism.

Task Force 30th Medical Command is encompassed of over 1100 soldiers, airmen, and sailors. Spread across Afghanistan, these Servicemembers hold various jobs in various units, from the MEDCOM to the smallest FST.

This is the cell.

How does the Task Force and its units get to theater with the proper personnel? How do units get the right skill sets to fit their operational needs? With the Task Force 30th MEDCOM General Staff-1 Section.

They are the nucleus.

BEHIND THE SCENES

"You can't do the mission if you don't have any personnel," Master Sergeant Fernande Sampson, the G-1, NCOIC, says matter-of-factly. "Sometimes, G-1 isn't noticed until someone is unaccounted for."

When it comes to personnel, the G-1 is, in fact, the end-all be-all. Being a MEDCOM-level section, the staff is accountable for all 1100-plus TF 30th MEDCOM personnel in theater. They must know where each person is at any given moment.

It's not unusual for a soldier to hear the G-1 hard at work as he walks into his office, nor is it unusual to hear them working at the same pace as he checks out for the day. Comprised mostly of 42As (Human Resources Specialists), the section is as hard-working as they get, sometimes working from six o'clock in the morning to well past ten o'clock at night.

"Human Resources Command and the Reserve Command are on the other side of the world," points out Captain Britt. "We have to stay very late just to be able to communicate with them."

The hours extend from end to end not only because of time differences, but because of a heavy workload. Unlike most sections, where the missions and tasks change when being deployed, the G-1 (unfortunately) carries the tasks from the rear with them.

The section also conducts promotion, evalutions and awards boards for both active and reserve soldiers in theater. In addition, when the TF 30th MEDCOM Commander has a question about administration or personnel, he goes right around the corner to the G-1 office.

"We act as an advisor for administration and personnel issues," says Master Sergeant Sampson.

The job is also learning experience.

Sergeant Bennett Macarthur, on his second deployment with the TF 30th MEDCOM, points out the extensive research involved with many administrative issues.

"A lot of hypothetical questions are asked, and it's our job to go and find the answers for these questions. Something as simple as answering a question about campaign streamer, for example, was far more complex than it seemed.

"There is an ENTIRE regulation about campaign streamers!" Sergeant Macarthur says, almost in disbelief. "I spent hours researching something as simple as that."

A FAMILY

A microcosm of the hundreds of personnel they care for, the section has members from all around the world. Homes for the section members include the U.S., Scotland, Jamaica, Dominica, El Salvador, and Haiti. Though their points of origin differ, their destination is the same.

"We may be from all around, but we have more similarities than you think," says Master Sergeant Sampson. "We are all hard-working, detail-oriented, and enthusiastic. We are committed to the MEDCOM's goals."

Sergeant Davina Thomas, who is on her second deployment with the 30th MEDCOM, says that the deployments have been a great learning experience for her.

"Operation Enduring Freedom is definitely Operation Iraqi Freedom; there are different roles and missions," she says. "It's been great working with a medical unit. I've learned a lot about the medical field. It's been a new experience."

Specialist Andrea Allen-Poole, who was only a Private when she first reported to the G-1, says that her experience was developmental to her as a soldier.

"I've a learned a lot," she says, reflecting on her time with the section. "I'm ready to go to the next level as an NCO: I am reenlisting. I've received great guidance from all ranks here. I've enjoyed every moment in G-1."

With a hard-working family intact, the MEDCOM stays breathing.

Story by Second Lieutenant Jules Chan

575TH AREA SUPPORT MEDICAL COMPANY ARRIVES

Captain Constantine Voyevidka calls his Company to attention during the Assumption of Authority Ceremony.

The 575th Medical Company (Area Support) held an Assumption of Authority ceremony

at Kandahar Army Airfield on the 19th of August. The 575th ASMC is based out of Fort Lewis and led by Captain Constantine Voyevidka and First Sergeant Mateo Alba. The company was deployed to Southern Afghanistan to provide area support Medical Care to US Forces in the region. The Company's primary mission is to provide care to KAF units without organic medical assets, but will also send medical assets forward to support combat operations. At the ceremony, Captain Voyevidka praised his Soldiers for their hard work during the company train-up and stated that he is fully confident in their ability to successfully perform their medical mission in RC-South.

August and September Promotions

Second Lieutenant Renata Kennison to First Lieutenant

Sergeant Neil Kimble to Staff Sergeant

Private First Class Benjamin Gart to Specialist

Private Second Class Stephen Pace to Private First Class

(HONORING, CONTINUED.)

to pay respects.

"I missed his first day of Kindergarten," she says, solemnly. "I wanted him to know why I was here instead of there."

Though the day was Friday – a busy workday on Bagram – traffic along the road next to the hospital stopped to watch the ceremonies and to pay respects.

"The entire base stopped," says Senior Airman Standage.

"People stopped, cars stopped...everything stopped."

As Tech Sergeant Eden Macinnes folded a flag during her detail's iteration at the flagpole, she looked out of the corner of her eye. There, standing with his hand on his heart, was a civilian, showing his respect.

"My eyes were tearing up," Sergeant Macinnes admits. "The feeling of September 11th was so memorable. I can never forget what happened that day."

MEMORIES

Twelve special flags were flown at the exact (local) times the four ill-fated planes crashed on September 11th. These special ceremonies kept details out even after the scorching sun had already retired for the day. However, airmen proudly stood their ground.

"September 11th was important to me," Senior Airman Christopher Standage explains. "I owed something for that day."

Sergeant Lyn, who was in Ramstein Air Base, Germany, watching the attacks in her commander's office during September 11th, still remembers the day as if it were just recently.

However, the most memorable thing that happened came the day after. Upon coming home from work, there in her kitchen lay flowers.

"I thought it was from my husband," recalls Sergeant Lyn. "But they were from my German neighbor. She knew we were American, and she just wanted to show her sympathies and that she was sorry."

THANKS

The ceremonies held by Craig Hospital were made successful by the willingness of Soldiers and Airmen alike to participate in the tribute. Senior Master Sergeant Lyn, Staff Sergeant Angelica Swann, and Senior Airman Standage all expressed their deepest thanks to the people who made the ceremonies possible.

"It wasn't just alone," Sergeant Lyn points out. "Everyone at Task Force Med-East made this work."

255TH PREVENTIVE MEDICINE MEDICAL DETACHMENT UPDATE

255th Medical Detachment has successfully

taken over the mission to provide Preventive Medicine support to Bagram and 26 outlying Forward Oberating Bases/Combat Outposts located in RC-East. Some of the unit's missions include conducting base camp assessments, sanitation/water quality inspections, environmental site assessments (air, water, soil), and field sanitation certification courses. The unit also works closely with coalition forces to ensure maximum force protections are achieved by providing expert preventive medicine consultations and recommendations.

Major Hee J. Kim
255th Medical Detachment Commander

(Top Picture) Sergeant First Class Castillo takes a soil sample.
(Bottom Picture) Specialist Clark traveling to outlying FOB via Blackhawk to conduct Preventive Medicine Base Camp Assessment.
(Below) 255th Medical Detachment.

Ruud

993RD MEDICAL DETACHMENT VETERINARY SERVICES

Hi, Everybody!

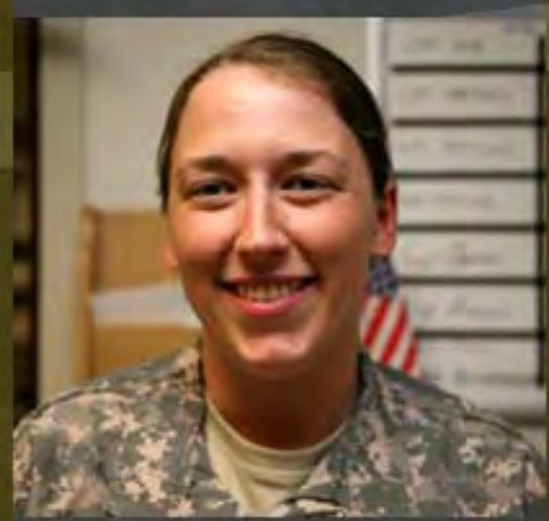
I hope all of you are enjoying the last few days of summer. My Army Reserve unit, the 993rd Medical Detachment (Veterinary Services) has had a busy summer in Afghanistan and the days are going by fast!

The pictures show a Military Working Dog that was treated at our Veterinary Hospital in Bagram a few weeks ago. "Ruud" (pronounced like the word rude) and his dog handler were injured by shrapnel from an (IED) Improvised Explosive Device while on a mission in Eastern Afghanistan. A Blackhawk (MEDEVAC) Medical Evacuation helicopter brought both quickly and safely to Bagram. Ruud, in the white dog kennel, and his dog handler on a stretcher, were met by the 993rd Bagram Veterinarian, Major Bukala, his vet assistant, Specialist Palko, as well as the human medical staff. Ruud had some lacerations and two shrapnel entry wounds. He was thoroughly examined, sedated, and taken to the human hospital for X-rays of his head and chest. Two shrapnel fragments were identified on the X-ray in the tissue on the right side of his nose. These pieces, fortunately, were small and did not require surgical removal. The wounds were disinfected, antibiotic and pain injections given, plus medications dispensed for several days to reduce pain and the chance of infection.

The picture shows "Ruud" and Major Bukala a few days later, with Ruud's wounds healing well. Ruud's dog handler, due to more serious injuries, had to be flown back to a US Hospital. Ruud will stay in Bagram and recuperate for a few weeks. He is trained to detect explosives and is very good at his job; he may (RTD) return to duty, before returning to the US in a few months to team up again with his dog handler, who, I am sure, misses him very much. Thank you for your support.

Until next month,

Lieutenant Colonel Georgette Goonan
993RD Medical Detachment



To celebrate the year of the NCO, the Serpent Star will highlight NCOs monthly. This month, we highlight Sergeant Rachelle Pasteris of the 255 Medical Detachment.

What is your hometown?
Pullman, Michigan

What is your age?
31

What is your MOS? 68S20, Preventive Medicine Specialist

What is your base unit? How long have you been with your unit, and what is your job there?
My base unit is 255th Medical Detachment, Fort Lewis, WA. I've been a part of my unit for two and half months now. As a Preventive Medicine Specialist, I am responsible for conducting either monthly or quarterly sanitation inspections in various areas. This includes all barber/beauty shops, gyms, base camp assessments and food sanitation.
Environmentally, I am responsible for conducting any entomology surveillance that is required. On a weekly basis, I am responsible for conducting Q/As for bottled water and air quality.
I also train and certify military in the Field Sanitation Team Course.

What is one example of esprit-de-corps or camaraderie that you have seen amongst your unit in OEF?
Playing team sports together such as basketball and volleyball. We also enjoy watching movies together as well.

What is the thing that you love most about your line of work?
Going out and meeting new people and then developing a rapport with them. Educating the personnel on base and providing public service to the community that supports the base.

To you, what does it mean to be an NCO?
Having a sense of duty and always taking care of Soldiers.

What are your future plans?
I will attend the SSG Board and become promotable. I will also start my Undergraduate Degree in Philosophy.

What is your hometown?
Bradenton, Florida

What is your age?
29

What is your MOS? 68S, Preventive Medicine

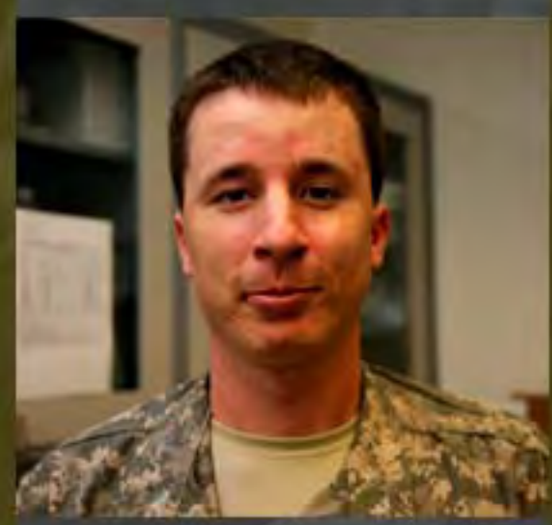
What is your base unit? How long have you been with your unit, and what is your job there?
255th Medical Detachment; I have been in the unit for two and a half months and I am currently holding a Team Leader position.

What is one example of esprit-de-corps or camaraderie that you have seen amongst your unit in OEF?
Our detachment news letter to our families letting them know what we have been doing over the last month.

What is the thing that you love most about your line of work?
I enjoy the change of scenery that comes from traveling to all the FOBs to do my job.

To you, what does it mean to be an NCO?
To me, being an NCO means that you voluntarily stepped up to meet the criteria required of being a leader of Soldiers.

What are your future plans?
I just want to make sure I get my team and myself back to the states safe and in one piece. Other than that I don't really have any plans.



To celebrate the year of the NCO, the Serpent Star will highlight NCOs monthly. This month, we highlight Sergeant Daniel Quartucci of the 255th Medical Detachment.

NCO SPOTLIGHT

THE NON-COMMISIONED OFFICER

SPOTLIGHT

IF YOU WOULD LIKE ONE YOUR NCOs IN THE "NCO SPOTLIGHT", PLEASE CONTACT THE SERPENT STAR. IT'S THE YEAR OF THE NCO. THEY ARE APPRECIATED!

759TH FORWARD SURGICAL TEAM UPDATE

Winning the Hearts and Minds

Since arrival in theater, the 759th has been supporting the mission of nation development by working with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, Civil Affairs Team, Embedded Training Team, and Operational Mentor and Liaison Team. In addition to our primary mission of providing health support to our coalition forces, we have been providing space-available health care to the local nationals and building the local national medical network.

759th FST (FOB Bostick)

A weekly local national medical radio segment is provided as a service to the communities located in northern Konar, eastern Nuristan, and northwest Pakistan. Local villagers submit questions of interest through letters to the manager. Letters are received from those who have poor access to health care facilities and especially from women and mothers.

(Top Picture, from Left to Right) Captain Kathleen Casper, Major Christopher Moon, Gullam Rahim (manager), Wahid Dudin (medical interpreter), and Staff Sergeant Kelly Rodriguez.

(Bottom Picture, from Left to Right) Major William Hunt and Captain Kathleen Casper provide dressing changes to a young boy.

759th FST (FOB Wright)

(Below Picture) Care is provided to an 8-year old local national girl requiring amputation after being struck by a motor vehicle. After multiple follow-up care treatments - including skin grafts - patient is now awaiting prosthesis from Jalabad arranged through the Red Cross.

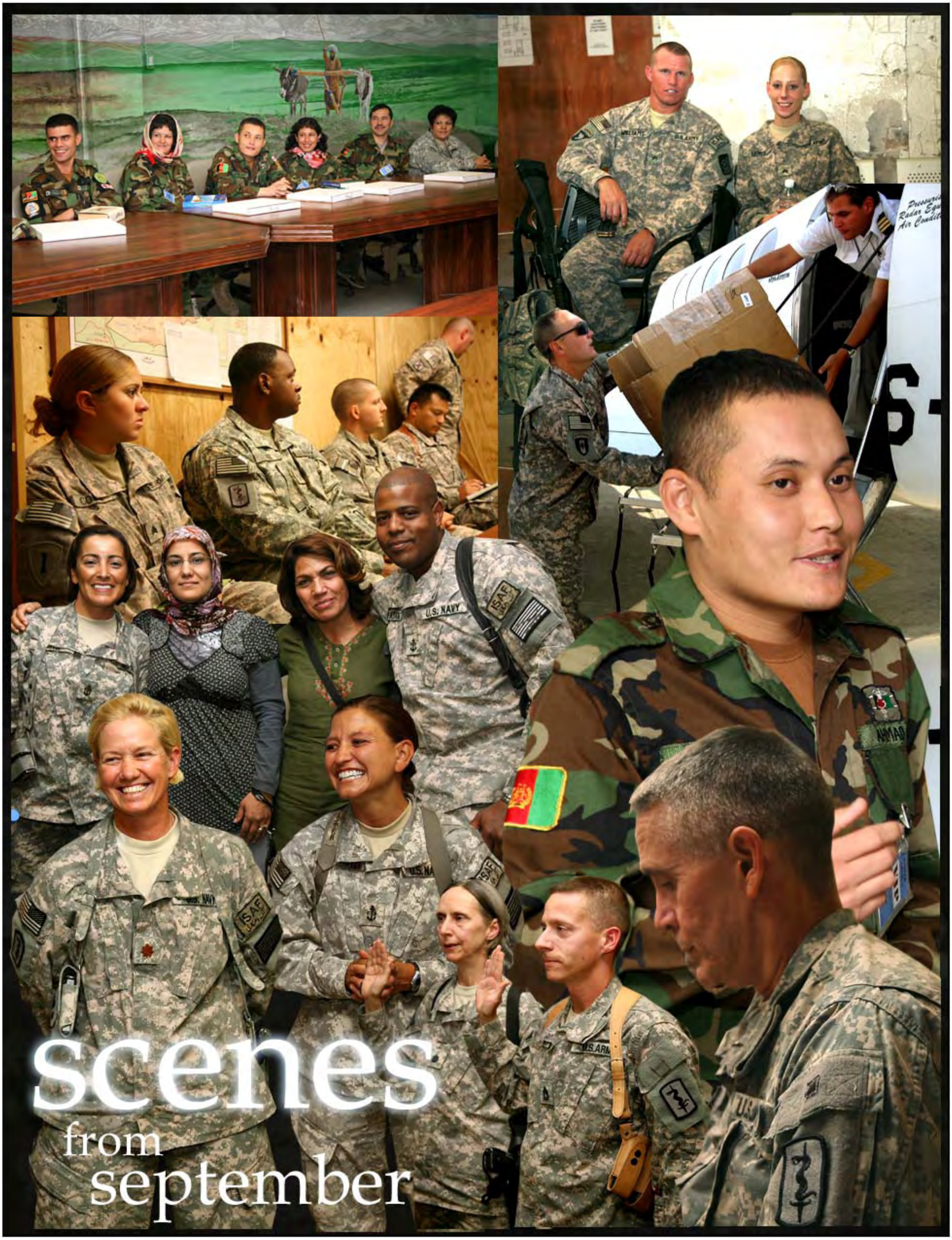
Major Christopher H. Moon
759th FST Commander

TO THE Sky

Captain John Lavoie, Sergeant David Leach, Sergeant Clifford Ferrell and Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) Contractor Don Moore worked together for hours on end setting up the 2.4-meter Joint Tele-Medicine Network VSAT together on the reinforced roof of the Medical Annex in Kandahar.

Every day, we continue "Moving Forward!"

Major Daniel D. Bridon
TF 30th MEDCOM G-6



scenes from september