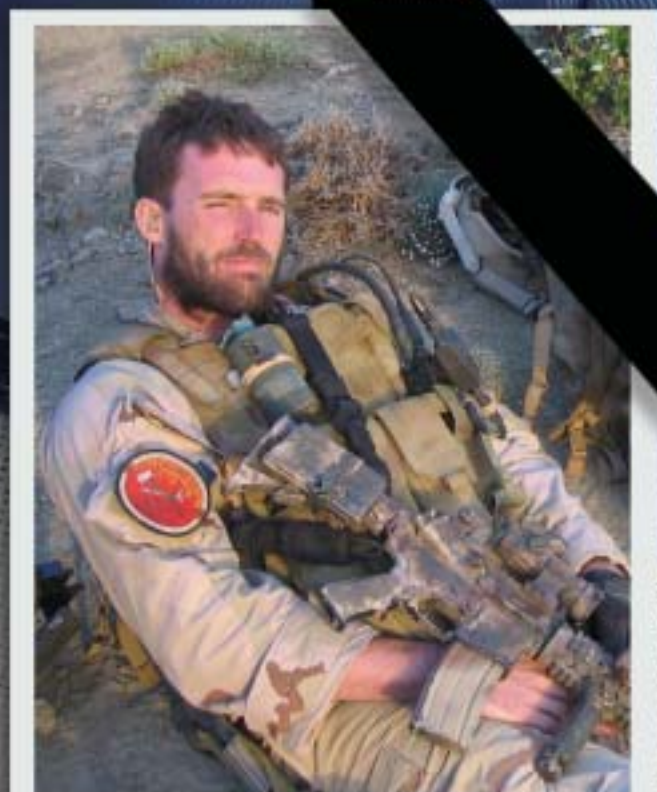




TIP OF THE SPEAR



Lt. Michael P. Murphy, USN



Conspicuous Gallantry

Murphy earns Medal of Honor

Page 22

Tip of the Spear

Adm. Eric Olson
Commander, USSOCOM

CSM Thomas Smith
Command Sergeant Major

Col. Hans Bush
Public Affairs Director

Mike Bottoms
Managing Editor

Tech. Sgt. Victoria Meyer
NCOIC, Command Information

Master Sgt. Laura LeBeau
Staff Writer

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Lawn
Staff Writer

Master Sgt. Timmy Carlin
Staff Photographer

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Front cover: SEAL Lt. Michael P. Murphy was killed by enemy forces during a reconnaissance mission on June 28, 2005. While leading a four-man team tasked with finding a key Taliban leader in the mountainous terrain near Asadabad, Afghanistan, the team came under fire from a much larger enemy force with superior tactical position. Murphy knowingly left his position of cover to get a clear signal for his radio to communicate with his headquarters and was mortally wounded while exposing himself to enemy fire. President George W. Bush presented the medal to Murphy's parents, Daniel and Maureen Murphy, at the White House Oct. 22.

Highlights



**SOC PAC's exercise
Fortune Maker ... page 4**



**AFSOC welcomes new
commander ... page 28**



**D-Cell puts the "D" in
deployment ... page 36**

Departments

Global War on Terrorism

Defeating terrorism through diversity ... page 6

Sniper in Rawah, Iraq ... page 8

ANSF push out Taliban in Helmand ... page 10

SOF reopen school ... page 11

Special Features

MK 13/16/17 assault rifles ... page 12

Biometrics: Combat enabler ... page 14

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

3rd SFG valorous awards ... page 18

7th SFG Soldiers recognized ... page 19

10th SFG Soldiers receive Silver Star ... Page 20

Historic D Company reactivated ... page 21

Naval Special Warfare Command

SEAL/SWCC Center change of command ... page 24

Enlisted SEALs become officers ... page 25

SWCCs respond to mayday call ... page 26

NSW parachute requalifications ... page 27

Air Force Special Operations Command

Wooley makes final approach ... page 29

AFSOC "portraits of courage" ... page 30

Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command

MARSOC gets amphibious ... page 32

SOF Marines conquer skies ... page 33

MSOAG marks 2-year anniversary ... page 34

New optics keep eyes on target ... page 35

Headquarters

SOF Memorial rededicated ... page 38

Sovereign Challenge ... page 40

Care Coalition Liaisons ... page 41

Operation One Voice ... page 42

JSOU offers interagency courses ... page 44

SOF history: PSYOP in OIF ... page 45

Fallen heroes ... page 46

Exercise Fortune Maker 2007

*SOCPAC Forces exercise
rapid deployment and
distributed command
and control operations*



A Naval Special Warfare watercraft and Special Operations servicemembers land in the ocean after being released from a C-130 during a Maritime Craft Air Delivery System drop. Members of Special Operations Command, Pacific and their component commands conducted the MCADS drop during exercise "Fortune Maker 07." Fortune Maker is a joint exercise designed to sharpen the skills of the individual units that make up a Joint Task Force, when called upon by U.S. Pacific Command. SOCPAC Photo.

By SOCPAC Public Affairs

Members from Special Operations Command-Pacific and its component units recently participated in a two-week exercise in Guam to hone their readiness capability as the Pacific region's Special Operations Joint Task Force 510. The exercise, "Fortune Maker 2007," highlighted SOF's ability to respond quickly to contingencies with robust communications, decentralized leadership and conducted indirect operations through host nation forces.

"The exercise was designed to bring JTF-510 together on short notice to test our capability to rapidly deploy and respond to crisis situations," said Maj. Gen. Salvatore Cambria, SOCPAC commander. "Our Forces performed extremely well, and are now better trained and more capable to serve U.S. Pacific Command."

The exercise consisted of command post and field training events with notional host nation forces. U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force Special Operations Forces performed operational missions in support of the exercise. The majority of SOCPAC Forces operated on Guam, with some forces in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and others in surrounding waters. SOCPAC Forces were involved in

coordinating efforts with notional host nation forces and Embassy personnel to exercise the processes and requirements of ensuring their missions are closely coordinated.

This exercise was a joint Special Operations effort. The Air Force and Navy SOF conducted a successful Maritime Craft Aerial Delivery System drop operation. Navy SEALs were airdropped from an MC-130 aircraft into the ocean. They boarded their vessels and were underway in less than 10 minutes after their watercraft entered the water. Additionally, Army SOF interacted closely with Guam National Guard and local police portraying notional host nation forces through cultural exchange and various combined training events. They conducted combined missions to locate notional terrorists on nearby islands.

SOCPAC demonstrated the ability to integrate seamlessly with conventional forces and distribute command and control. The SOCPAC deputy commander led a small cell afloat on the USS Harpers Ferry. The USS Harpers Ferry is part of the Navy's forward deployed amphibious force serving under the commander of Task Force 76, which is headquartered in Okinawa, Japan.

SOCPAC forces operate as PACOM's rapidly deployable Special Operations joint task force. SOCPAC deploys throughout the Pacific region supporting joint combined exchange training, operational deployments, fostering interoperability with host nation partners and facilitating strategic and operational objectives.



Winning through diversity, tolerance

Iraqi Operator Training Course molds elite warfighters, celebrates 10th class graduation

By Master Sgt. Melissa Phillips
CJSOTF-AP Public Affairs

For one Iraqi general, the key to building a united, non-sectarian Army lies in fostering a mindset of religious and cultural tolerance among his soldiers.

However, Brig. Gen. Fadhil Jameel Jameel Barwari, Iraqi Special Operations Forces commander, is the first to proclaim he doesn't extend that same courtesy to the criminal terrorists trying to rip apart his beloved country. He's intolerant of their actions.

After spending most of his life fighting Saddam's Baathist regime, the Kurdish officer has vowed to lead his blended crew of more than 3,000 Sunni, Shi'a, Kurdish and Christian soldiers to root out terrorists and insurgents wherever they may lurk.

During the Operator Training Course graduation in October, Barwari addressed the 36 students in the 10th graduating class by charging them with their future duties, "You are now equipped to fight terrorists, killers and outlaws," he said.

OTC is a prestigious 90-day school located in Baghdad. Modeled off a U.S. Army Special Forces course, it teaches elite NCOs and officers advanced combat training to mitigate and stop terrorism.

During the course, students learn first aid procedures, close-quarters battle, urban combat, basic survival skills and how to conduct vehicle operations. The students also are required to take classes in the law of land warfare, ethics and morals, mission planning, weapons familiarization, leadership development and detainee handling prior to graduating.

ICTF Soldiers are premier fighting force of Iraqi army

It's a tough school. In this class session, more than 1,200 soldiers initially enrolled, but only 36 completed all of the training and graduated, earning the right to be members of the elite force.

When the soldiers graduate from OTC, they are



Students from the Iraqi Operator Training Course prepare to board an Iraqi Mi-17 helicopter to practice combat entry and exit procedures in Baghdad. The 10th class of students graduated the course Oct. 2 after completing the prestigious 90-day school, which is modeled after a U.S. Army Special Forces course and teaches elite Soldiers advanced combat training to mitigate and stop terrorism. Photo by Sgt. Tasha Woodson.

funneled into the Iraqi Counterterrorism Force. Those who don't complete the course are assigned to one of the three other battalions within the ISOF.

"The ICTF is this country's premier counterterrorism force," said a U.S. Army major assigned to the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Arabian Peninsula, Balad Air Base, Iraq. As the senior advisor to the ISOF in the field, he and his men use their countless years of experience and expertise to advise and support the ISOF brigade.

"The ICTF deploy throughout Iraq and are tasked to complete high-profile missions," the major said.

ICTF soldiers are called in for tough tasks such as hostage rescue and specific task-oriented missions assigned by the Ministry of Defense. As specialists in the art of warfare, they use everything in their arsenal to track and stop terrorists and insurgents throughout the country.

Impartiality is prerequisite to stop terrorism

Impartiality is another core competency bred into the new ICTF members.

"These soldiers protect our country from terrorists

whether they are al-Qaida or Shi'a extremists," Bawari said.

Although diversity, tolerance and impartiality are prerequisites to membership in the ICTF, old habits often are hard to dissolve – at least at first.

A 27-year-old Sunni private from Baghdad who enlisted in the program admits he still had an unconscious habit of stereotyping other sects.

The war has created an environment where neighboring sects, once living in relative peace, are now often wary of each other.

"This course and unit is open-minded," the private said. "It has given me a different point of view."

When soldiers face off against the barrel of an enemy's gun together, units often find it's a great equalizer resolving racial and religious barriers.

"You have to look at the person," the private said. "Before I attended the course, I didn't completely understand that."

Bawari believes it's this bond that creates a successful fighting force.

"We make our recruits feel welcome regardless of their religious background," he said.

Give me liberty or give me death...

Embracing this diversity is something Bawari partially credits to the influence of his U.S. counterparts.

Some of the other branches of the Iraqi military and security forces retained the training their U.S. advisors provided them, but they haven't always adopted a non-sectarian mindset.

Consequently, it's the general's opinion those units may be making it harder on themselves to make progress in their provinces.

"We tell our soldiers it's about being a good soldier, and their tribe or sect doesn't matter in making them a good soldier," the general said. "We let them know that with the ICTF, they fight for Iraq."

Dedicated cadre instills teamwork

There is team of people dedicated to making that happen. Bawari and his staff and more than a dozen Iraqi instructors and U.S. advisors accomplish this through a variety of methods.

For five months, the recruits are isolated. They have no social interaction with family or friends. However, the isolation cements the bonding process and ferrets out soldiers who lack commitment.

The course is physically grueling. Students miss sleep, and they are placed in realistic, stressful scenarios daily to test their physical and mental

endurance. Only the truly fit survive.

"They are sacrificing a lot to be here," the general said. "As a father, it is rewarding to watch these young Iraqi men graduate from a course that will help make Iraq better."

The course is designed to challenge and exhaust recruits to give them a taste for their mission ahead. It is necessary in order to prepare them for what they will face once they leave the complex's guarded gates.

Risking life and limb to make dreams come true

Murder and mayhem await them.

The soldiers and their families are hunted down for supporting the country they love. Terrorists target them with improvised explosive devices and explosively formed projectiles. On every operation, they're faced with guns, suicide vests or booby-trapped devices strapped to people, vehicles, children and animals.

Day in and day out, the soldiers risk their lives so one day they can give the gift of freedom – from hatred and oppression – to their children.

"I came into the military because I want to protect my country," said a 25-year-old Shi'a lieutenant.

Bawari said he believes the country is now starting to reap the benefits of his soldiers' arduous progress.

"When we clean up citizens' towns and areas from terrorists and criminal activities, they feel safer," the general said. "It is a good feeling when they realize what we are doing for the country."

Learning together, fighting together

The general said he's happy he's not alone in the global quest to eradicate terrorism.

"I will never forget the American and Coalition men and women ... who provided the first stepping stones for us to make our country better," the general said. "We are family. We go out on missions together. We fight together."

Throughout history, one of the first steps to breaking the bonds of tyranny and oppression has been education.

The OTC classroom is a prime example of that theory. The hands-on class serves as a think tank and refinement process to mold future warfighters and leaders who are intolerant of terrorism and who put their lives on the line to protect their nation from criminal opportunists.

When asked why he is willing to take such a risk, the general simply answered, "If I do not do it, who will?"

RAWAH, IRAQ

**A SEAL aims an
MK 12 sniper rifle
during training.**

Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Eli Medellin.



ANSF push Taliban out of Northern Helmand Province

By CJSOTF - A Public Affairs

Afghan National Security Forces, advised by U.S. Special Operations Forces, continued to push back Taliban insurgents from Now Zad, Helmand Province Dec. 5.

The combined force was conducting a reconnaissance patrol in Now Zad when Taliban insurgents attempted to ambush the patrol from established fighting positions. The enemy fired on the ANSF using small arms, rocket and mortar fire. The ANSF immediately returned small arms and machine gun fire, putting the enemy on the defensive.

As the battle escalated, the enemy moved to secondary positions in an attempt to flank friendly forces. ANSF identified the new enemy fighting positions and engaged with small arms, machine gun fire and precision air strikes.

Overwhelmed by the ANSF's superior firepower, the insurgents attempted to hide among the civilian population by moving into their homes.

"The enemy attempted to take advantage of the historic Afghan hospitality by using civilian homes as fighting positions," the ANSF commander explained. "Fortunately, the local nationals recognized that the Taliban were abusing their hospitality and wanted no part of it."

The Afghan civilians prevented them from using the compounds and its inhabitants as human shields. Recognizing their imminent defeat, the enemy executed a disorderly retreat. The ANSF continued to clear the village to ensure that no insurgents remained.

"The ANSF and the citizens of Now Zad both demonstrated their resolve to eliminate the Taliban menace in N. Helmand Province," said Maj. Chris Belcher, Combined Joint Task Force-82 spokesman. "Continued collaboration like we saw today is the key to bringing peace and stability to this country."

A combined force of Afghan National Security Forces and U.S. Special Operations Forces conducts a reconnaissance patrol in the northern Helmand Province, Afghanistan. This operation was conducted to disrupt Taliban activity in Helmand Province and surrounding areas. Photo by CJSOTF-A.

Tip of the Spear



Outside view of a new school opened by Afghan National Security Forces and Coalition forces in the Khas village, Oruzgan province, Afghanistan. The combined forces opened the school after the Taliban closed all of the district schools and killed teachers and students. ANSF and Coalition Forces hired three teachers to teach reading, writing and arithmetic in Arabic. CJSOTF-AP photo.

Afghan National Security Forces, Coalition forces reopen school

By CJSOTF - A Public Affairs

Afghan National Security Forces and Coalition forces reopened a school in Khas Oruzgan district, Oruzgan province, in late October.

“We are committed to opening new schools and repairing all of the destruction caused by the Taliban,” said an Afghan National Army soldier.

The journey to open the school started last spring after the Taliban came through the district, forced all of the schools to close and killed several teachers and students. Soon after securing the area, the combined forces were on a reconnaissance patrol when a 12-year-old boy approached the patrol.

“The boy just rushed up to the convoy and asked to be arrested,” a Coalition forces soldier said. “This took us back at first. He said he needed help, but he couldn’t talk unless he was arrested because the Taliban would kill him.”

The boy presented a petition to open the schools in the Khas Oruzgan district. He secretly went around the village and had more than 70 children sign the petition to open

the schools.

Shortly after, ANSF and the Coalition opened a school in the Khas village. More than 225 students began attending classes. Three local teachers were hired to teach reading, writing and arithmetic in Arabic. The local ANA commander taught the religion classes.

“The students loved to learn, and the effects could be seen throughout the village,” the soldier said.

The summer came, and like before, the Taliban terrorized all of the students out of school.

“We had to protect the teachers on the base because the Taliban were attempting to kill them,” the soldier said. “The Taliban continuously attempts to destroy all progress.”

After ANSF and Coalition forces secured the Khas Oruzgan district, the combined forces reopened the school and have a plan to open the remaining schools in the district.

“This is another heartless attempt by the Taliban to impede progress,” said Maj. Chris Belcher, Combined Joint Task Force-82 spokesman. “It is undeniable, these terrorists don’t support the future of the Afghan children.”

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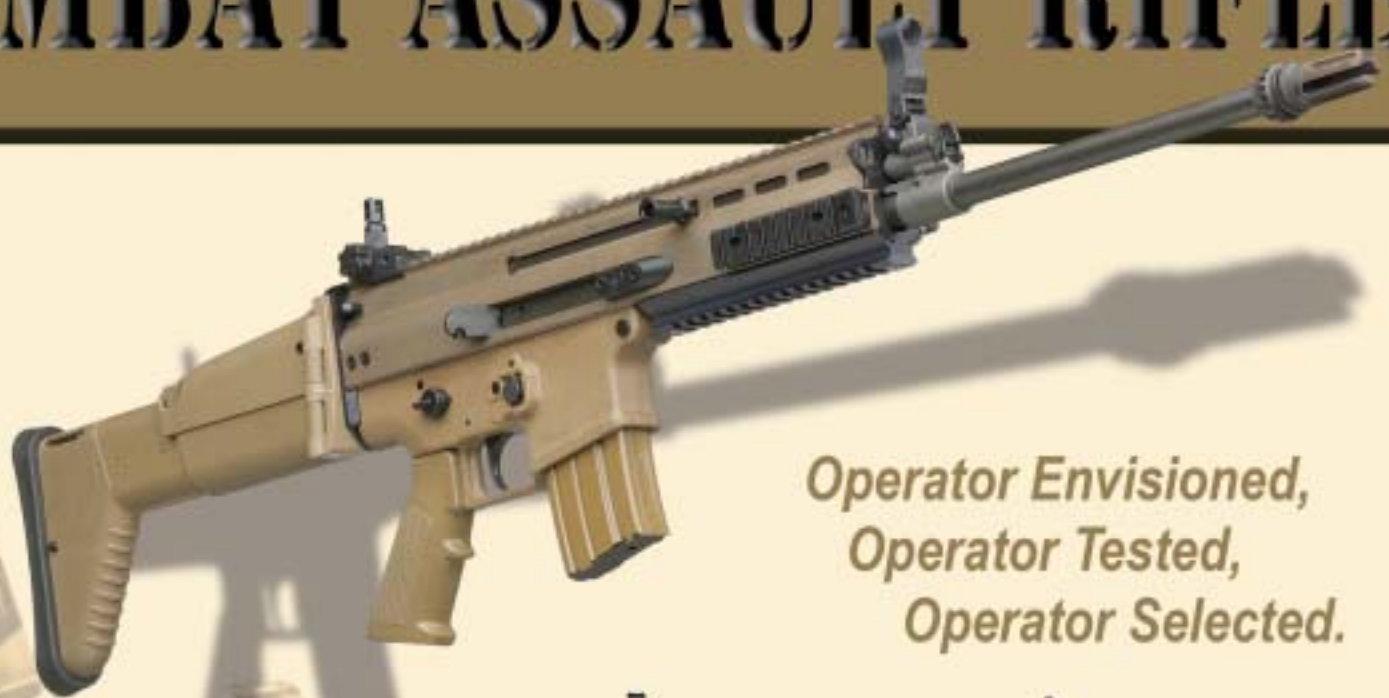


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MK 16 (LB)



MK 13 mounted to MK 16



Magazine



MK 16 (S)



BIOMETRICS

USSOCOM built a capability in the fall of 2006 to leverage biometrics as a combat enabler.



BIOMETRICS

USSOCOM Tiger Team studies battlefield biometrics technology

*By Maj. Charles Seifert and Craig Archer
USSOCOM Antiterrorism/Force Protection
Officers*

BOOM! A breaching charge explodes, Special Operations Forces enter the enemy's domain. Bullets, dust, and noise. Voices are heard shouting commands in the darkness of the night; the enemy has been overcome by SOF and Coalition forces.

Unfortunately, the targeted individual of this operation is not there. Some combatants have been killed in action. Ten living individuals remain. They are confused, scared and don't reply or answer questions. SOF only has space on the helicopter for five people. Who should be detained? Who should be left behind?

The team leader quickly directs sensitive site exploitation to commence. The intelligence sergeant collects biometrics on the living and dead. Seven minutes later the SOCOM Interagency Task Force Biometric Portal returns a response indicating one of the captured individuals is on the Terrorist Watch List. This individual is the leader of a kidnapping and execution cell with ties to al-Qaida in Iraq. He and four other High Value Individuals are removed from the target. Mission accomplished, on a day where it was better to be lucky than good. Was it really luck, or the result of superior leadership, training and equipment?

USSOCOM built a capability in fall 2006 to leverage biometrics as a combat enabler. Under the guidance of J-24 and the SOCOM Interagency Task Force, a biometrics architecture was built to meet SOF's requirement for a rapid hostile force positive identification and hold/release decision data. This task required providing an architecture, match reporting, dossier building, fielding of biometric collection kits, a "so what" with an identification match report on objective, and a SOF

biometrics training program. J-24 faced a tremendous task when they were asked to document these requirements. J-24 put together a team of Operators from the components and staff in SOCOM to work the issue. They put their thoughts and requirements into the Special Operations Identity Dominance and Capabilities Development Document. The result is as follows:

As of Oct. 30, 2007, the SOF Biometrics Portal has received 10,339 records and matched 1,729 individuals. This represents a 16 percent match rate. The Portal has been utilized to match individuals from OEF, OIF, CENTCOM, SOUTHCOM, EUCOM, and NORTHCOM. It has provided worldwide personal identification capability in times as fast as 7 minutes and 19 seconds. SOF Operators have captured 92 High Intelligence Value

personnel and 17 National Ground Intelligence Center Watch List enemy combatants utilizing the SOF Biometric Portal.

In order to continue improving this effort, a Tiger Team from Special Operations Command's Antiterrorism and Force Protection Branch and the SOCOM Interagency Task Force, traveled to Afghanistan and Iraq this fall. The mission was to assess the use of biometrics and non-lethal weapons by SOF. The team, led by Col. Paul Burke, included Maj. Rich Munsey, Maj. Tom Follmer, Lt. Cmdr. Dan O'Shea, Master Sgt. John Nettles, and Craig Archer.

According to the DOD Biometrics Fusion Center, biometrics are measurable, physiological and/or behavioral characteristics that can be used to verify the identity of an individual. Currently these include fingerprints, iris scans, facial photos, and DNA samples. Future potential biometrics may include palm prints, voice, gait, heart rhythm and even body odor.



Device shown is a small, handheld computer made by OQO. It is a commercial, off-the-shelf computer provided to communicate with the ODA terminals. Photo by Maj. Thomas Follmer.

Special Operations Forces and conventional forces use a variety of biometric tools to gather information on captured insurgents. These tools are also used to validate the identity of local nationals seeking employment or training and to authorize or deny access to U.S. bases or installations. Most tools used by SOF revolve around matching of fingerprints. All SOF records transmitted over the SOCOM Biometrics Portal are stored and matched against the Automated Biometric Information System at the Biometrics Fusion Center and simultaneously matched against the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System at the FBI. Records are then matched against the National Counterterrorism Center and NGIC Watch List and returned to the operator who submitted the file. This all happens in a matter of minutes, ensuring the operator on



Chief Warrant Officer Christopher Conn, 7th Special Forces Group, explains how the BGAN system can be used to transmit biometric data through the SOCOM OPE Biometrics Portal. Photo by Maj. Thomas Follmer.

the ground has identity dominance to assist his decision making process.

The Tiger Team assessed how SOF and conventional forces are using biometric information on the battlefield, focusing primarily on determining the capabilities required to improve the system. They traveled first to Qatar to brief Maj. Gen. John Mullholland, Commander of Special Operations Command-Central. The Tiger Team then continued to Bagram, Afghanistan, to meet with members of Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan. While in Afghanistan, the team conducted and observed live testing of the SOF Biometrics Architecture using the Broadband Global Area Network System. This system, commonly referred

to as “SIPR in a Ruck” increased upload speed of biometric data and provided fast replies to submissions for operators on target.

The team also met with operational detachments, Operational Detachment Bravos and the CJSOTF to discuss equipment and architecture issues important to the Special Forces Soldiers on the ground. Craig Archer, SOCOM Biometrics expert, was able to solve many of the equipment, software and interagency issues experienced on the ground. Soldiers clearly identified the need for Field Support Representatives and training enhancements that will be incorporated in Prepermission Training and other institutional training events.

In a parallel effort that may meet these needs, SOCOM established a Biometrics Analysis and Coordination Cell. This cell, activated in October, supports operators on the ground and staffs with advanced analysis seven days a week. They are fielded on a test basis for 120 days to develop Human Terrain Mapping, Link Analysis, Rapid Biometric Identification Analysis Report dissemination and any other analysis needs to support SOF missions with the “so what” after positive identification of individuals on the battlefield.

The Tiger team identified command emphasis as the key to biometric success. Leadership at the command level in both CJSOTFs stressed the importance of biometric collection. Some required reporting on a daily basis through the SITREP. This emphasis on the tracking and leveraging of biometrics collected against detainees led to an effective tool to energize identity documentation and tracking. Success and failure of this program clearly rests on the commander and his staff.

The teams also met with Col. Samuel Dudkiewicz, Combined Joint Task Force-82 biometrics manager, to discuss the practical application and integration of biometrics equipment and software in the biometrics community. The Tiger Team also met with Combined Explosives Exploitation Cell teams and the FBI in both Kandahar and Bagram. CEXE teams are staffed to process latent prints on IEDs, however, the current level of staffing limits their ability to fully support biometric prosecution of data associated with other terrorist activities.

Due to this gap in exploitation requirements CJSOTF-A has built a Sensitive Site Exploitation Cell in Kandahar. The SSE cell is integrating with interagency partners to develop an internal capability to process biometrics, latent prints, physical evidence, digital media exploitation, explosive residue testing, chemical analysis and other technical skill sets. The cell is staffed with an Air Force scientist and augmented by various disciplines

(biologist, forensics, etc) pertinent to SSE collection, with the primary support afforded by the Chemical Detachment personnel of the Group Support Company. The SSE Cell is a hybrid organization formed through interagency collaboration and is another example of the need to process information to obtain identity dominance on the battlefield. Lessons learned from this cell were brought to SOCOM J-24 and submitted to the SOID requirements manager.

In Iraq, the team discussed biometrics with Tovo, commander of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force in Iraq. Col. Tovo's command emphasis has been critical to the success of biometric use by SOF. As a result, forces in Iraq are not only gathering more data, but this data is identifying known insurgents and terrorists. Eleven NCTC/NGIC Watch List "TIER I" terrorists were identified and captured by SOF during this last rotation in Iraq through the use of biometrics. Many of the successes in Iraq have included the capture of insurgents attempting to receive SOF training disguised as Iraqi soldiers. The Biometric Portal has proved to be a successful force protection weapon providing identity dominance in the Global War on Terrorism.

The team also met with the program manager-forward for biometrics, Col. Jacaruso, and MNCI biometrics lead, Lt. Cmdr. Jon Lazar. The team solved some outstanding issues regarding data sharing and system cross-talk between SOF and conventional forces. The BAT system has been provided all of SOF's biometric records for inclusion in their local databases.

While there are still issues and problems to overcome, there is a concerted effort among the various commands and agencies to resolve the problems. Multiple biometric collection tools are currently being used in theater by different agencies and international organizations. The Tiger Team's observations of these systems reinforced the need for SOCOM to match all records against the DOD recognized national database directed for biometric storage at the BFC. Currently, SOCOM is the only DOD entity to check all records against the department's ABIS and FBI databases. This synergy allows our operators to match against the combined knowledge of the interagency versus a local isolated database.

The SOCOM team returned with over 30 lessons learned and inroads to collection sources not previously available to SOF. These lessons and improvements recommended by operators and staff are currently being disseminated across the command. Some have already been implemented (i.e. BACC), while others will take longer to enact. SOF Operators on the ground familiar with the program are convinced of the validity and utility of battlefield biometrics. A 10th SFG (A) Soldier commented, "I believe SOCOM should send a biometrics team twice a year," while discussing lessons learned and experiences from the Soldiers' perspective on biometric operations. The challenge now is to maintain the momentum, spread the word, solve the inevitable equipment and software issues and build upon the successes already realized.

Col. Paul Burke and Maj. Thomas Follmer contributed to this article.



SOCOM Biometrics Tiger Team members (left to right) Maj. Rich Munsey, Mr. Craig Archer, Col. Paul Burke, Master Sgt. John Nettles, Maj. Tom Follmer, Lt. Cmdr. Dan O'Shea at Camp Victory, Iraq. Photo by Maj. Thomas Follmer.

3rd Special Forces Group Soldiers recognized for valor in Afghanistan

By Sgt. 1st Class Jason Baker
USASOC Public Affairs



Thirty-nine members of the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) received awards during a ceremony held on Meadows Field Oct. 4 for their valorous actions during their last

deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"This is more than a great day for the 3rd Special Forces Group and our families; this is a remarkable day," said Col. Christopher Haas, commander, 3rd SFG, during his closing remarks. "I would even characterize it for the 3rd Special Forces Group as a historic day."

During the ceremony, six Silver Stars, eight Purple Hearts, 15 Bronze Stars and 23 Army Commendation Medals for valor were awarded. In an interview, Haas said the amount of awards presented during the ceremony correlated to the increase in enemy activity experienced during the deployment compared with the Group's previous deployments.

As the citations were read, it gave account to an emboldened enemy force in Afghanistan that has increased its size and sophistication of attacks against U.S., Afghan and Coalition forces. The theme that rang more clearly with each citation was that of the grit and valor of the American Green Beret to succeed against overwhelming odds.

Each Green Beret stepped forward as his Silver Star citation was read before the formation and audience of hundreds of friends, families and other Soldiers.

For one Silver Star recipient, it is the recognition, more than the award itself that is most gratifying and humbling.

"The individual who wrote the award and suggested that it is what I deserve. That is what means a lot to me," said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Julian, Company B, 1st Battalion, 3rd SFG. "Ninety percent of the time it is someone who has more experience than you, and you look up to them. It means a lot to have someone you look up to say, 'what you did was outstanding and you deserve this award.' That is what I appreciate the most."

Though the awards are given to individuals, the recipients viewed the recognition as larger than themselves.



Six Soldiers from the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) receive the Silver Star Oct. 4, for their valiant actions in Afghanistan. Each Soldier was honored during a Valor awards ceremony at Meadows Plaza, Fort Bragg, N.C. Photo by Mark Abueg.

"I went over with a great team, and we all did what we had to do," said Silver Star recipient Master Sgt. Haldon Huber, Company B, 1st Battalion, 3rd SFG. "Each and every one of them deserve this moment."

Huber, who also received two Bronze Stars with "V" device, was credited in his citation with moving his vehicle forward under the intense fire of an ambush to draw the enemies' fire away from members of his patrol who were pinned down. Once the fire became too intense, he exited the vehicle so he could return fire with a 60 mm mortar to allow the rest of the patrol to withdraw and consolidate. With the group reorganized, he then went to assist in evacuating and providing aid to the casualties. As the patrol made its way back to the firebase, Huber returned fire and covered the trail of the patrol for over six kilometers.

During the closing remarks, Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, commander, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, gave credit to all of the Soldiers gathered on the field.

"We gave some awards to some very distinguished individuals," said Wagner. "But from my perspective, there is not a person on this field who isn't a hero, a hero of our nation. Each one of you represents the very best of America."

Currently the majority of 3rd SFG is being deployed to Afghanistan for their sixth rotation in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Valor Awards presented to 7th Special Forces Group Soldiers

By USASFC Public Affairs Office



Three Soldiers from 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) were awarded the Silver Star, and three others were awarded the Bronze Star Medal with

“V” device, in a valor ceremony held at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command headquarters Nov. 15.

The following Soldiers received the Silver Star:

Capt. Sheffield Ford III, native of Dixon, Calif.

Master Sgt. Thomas D. Maholic (posthumous award), native of Bradford, Pa.

Retired Staff Sgt. Matthew Binney, native of Payson, Ariz.

The following Soldiers received the Bronze Star Medal with “V” device:

Sgt. 1st Class Ebbon Brown, native of Annapolis, Md.

Staff Sgt. Charles Lyles, native of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Staff Sgt. Michael Sanabria, native of Cleburne, Texas.

Maholic, who was mortally wounded during combat, was represented by his wife, Wendy, and son, Andrew, in the ceremony.

“The events that took place are what history is made of and what you would see on television,” said Maj. Gen. Thomas Csrnko, commander of U.S. Army Special Forces Command. “Regardless of this, each one of these men would simply say that they were doing their job and taking care of their fellow teammates.”

These awards were presented to the six servicemembers for their actions in a mission named Operation Kaika, June 23-24, 2006, in Afghanistan. This operation was designed to capture or kill Taliban leadership in the Panjawi District in the southern part of the country.

Operational Delta Alpha 765 and supporting elements



Valorous awardees and Special Operations leaders during a ceremony to honor their bravery during Operation Enduring Freedom on Nov. 15, 2007. Photo by Sgt. Keith Henning.



fought alongside 48 Afghan National Army soldiers in a 17-hour firefight that claimed the lives of two American Soldiers, three interpreters and an estimated 125 insurgent fighters, including two enemy field commanders.

“Each team member played an integral part in the success of our mission and our very survival,” said Ford. “There were times when we were surrounded on all four sides, but we never gave up and we never backed down. These men who fought alongside me are the ones who really deserve recognition today.”

Silver and Bronze Star Medals for valor have long been used to recognize Soldiers who show exceptional bravery and proficiency on the battlefield. The Silver Star is the fourth highest overall award that can be given in the military, and the third highest for valor. The Bronze Star Medal, when awarded with the “V” device, is the fourth highest combat award.

The 15 U.S. servicemembers who participated in Operation Kaika received four Silver Stars, seven Bronze Star Medals with “V” Device, three Army Commendation Medals with “V” Device and three Purple Hearts.

10th Special Forces Group Soldiers awarded the Silver Star

USASOC News Service



Two Soldiers from the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) were awarded the Silver Star in a ceremony held at Fort Carson, Colo., Nov. 28.

Chief Warrant Officer Nathan Buelow, native of Dubuque, Iowa, and Staff Sgt. Brent Baldwin, native of Jonesville, Mich., were awarded Silver Stars for their valor by Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, Commander of U.S. Army Special Operations Command, during a ceremony at Butts Army Airfield.

Buelow was presented the award for actions against intense direct small arms and rocket propelled grenade fire in Baghdad, Iraq, July 9, 2006, during an attack from numerous insurgents. He led Operational Delta Alpha 065 and 44 Iraqi Special Operations Forces during a raid that left one ISOF Soldier critically wounded and more than a dozen insurgents killed. Buelow further showed extraordinary courage and competence while maneuvering his entire convoy through a 360-degree ambush upon leaving the objective.

Baldwin, who left the military in 2005, was presented the award for actions against enemy forces in Baqubah, Iraq, April 9, 2004, where he demonstrated an extraordinary degree of heroism under fire by rallying ODA 062 in repelling a superior battalion-sized enemy force. Under intense enemy fire and in total disregard for his personal safety, Baldwin saved the life of a wounded American Soldier and went on to lead his team to block the escape of more than 350 rioting Iraqi prisoners.

Wagner praised the two recipients for their actions and leadership in combat. He further commended the Soldiers of 10th SFG(A) for their continued sacrifices and duties in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

The Silver Star is awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Armed Forces, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. Only seven Silver Star's have been awarded to 10th SF Group (A) Soldiers since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Silver Star is the fourth highest overall award that



Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, Commander of U.S. Army Special Operations Command, pins a Silver Star medal on Chief Warrant Officer Nathan Buelow, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne). Photo by Sgt. Tasha Woodson.

can be given in the military and the third highest for valor. The required gallantry, while of a lesser degree than that required for the Distinguished Service Cross, must nevertheless have been performed with marked distinction.

In interviews following the ceremony, both Soldiers passionately believe they are not the heroes; the Soldiers they serve with are the heroes.



Lt. Gen. Robert Wagner, Commander of U.S. Army Special Operations Command, presents a plaque to Staff Sgt. Brent Baldwin, 10th Special Forces Group (A) during his Silver Star ceremony, with Maj. Gen. Thomas Csrnko, commander of U.S. Army Special Forces Command, and Baldwin's family on hand. Photo by Kyrie Richert.



Henry "Zeke" Zyrkowski (center) and Lt. Col. Michael Kurilla, the 2nd Ranger Battalion commander, uncased Company D, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment's guidon for the first time since World War II at Fort Lewis, Wa. Nov. 21. Zyrkowski served as a mortar man with the unit during World War II. Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Kosterman.

Historic Dog Company reactivated

By Staff Sgt. Andrew Kosterman
1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) Public Affairs

When Henry "Zeke" Zyrkowski joined the 2nd Rangers in France 63 years ago, it had been five days since they had completed one of the greatest and most daring assaults in the history of warfare at Pointe du Hoc.

The unit that then-Pfc. Zyrkowski joined was Company D, or Dog Company, and it later would go on to further distinguish itself in Huertgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge. Shortly after the conclusion of World War II, Dog Company was inactivated and its history lived on only through the veterans who served in its ranks.

On Nov. 21, a new page in that history was written at the Fort Lewis Evergreen Theater with the reactivation of the company that helped coin the Ranger motto, "Rangers lead the way."

"This is truly great," said Zyrkowski of the activation of his former unit. "I'm proud to see Dog Company back in action."

Zyrkowski, a former mortar man, was on hand to uncased the unit's guidon with Lt. Col. Michael Kurilla, the 2nd Ranger Battalion commander.

Kurilla said he was honored to have Zyrkowski participate in the ceremony.

"Our founding fathers' spirits from World War II live in the Rangers of today," Kurilla said. "They carry with them the spirit of our World War II Rangers who led the way up the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc and the same spirit that defended Castle Hill against several German divisions."

Maj. Jonathan Chung, the new commander of Company D, said he looks forward to adding to the lineage of the Rangers and his new unit.

"I'm truly honored to be a part of this elite organization, especially during this historical occasion," said Chung.

Chung added that it is "special to take command of a Ranger company that was last activated in World War II."

The addition of this company to the Ranger ranks "increases the flexibility on today's battlefield," said Company D's 1st Sgt. Reese Teakell.

While the battlefields of World War II are different from those of today, the spirit of the Rangers lives on.

"The guys I served with were really good men," said Zyrkowski. "Today's Rangers are just as great, even better."



Navy SEAL Remembered at... Medal of Honor Ceremony

Bush presents Medal of Honor to parents of Navy SEAL



President George W. Bush stands beside Daniel and Maureen Murphy, the parents of Navy SEAL Lt. Michael Murphy, before presenting them with their son's Medal of Honor at the White House, Oct. 22. Lt. Murphy was killed during a reconnaissance mission near Asadabad, Afghanistan, while exposing himself to enemy fire in order to call in support after his four-man team came under attack by enemy forces June 28, 2005. Murphy is the first servicemember to receive the medal for actions during Operation Enduring Freedom and the first Navy recipient of the medal since Vietnam. Photo by Chief Petty Officer James Pinsky.

By John Kruzel
American Forces Press Service

In a White House ceremony Oct. 22, President Bush posthumously presented the Medal of Honor earned by Lt. Michael Murphy, the Navy SEAL who sacrificed his life in an attempt to save fellow SEALs during a battle with Taliban fighters in Afghanistan.

Murphy's parents, Maureen and Dan Murphy, accepted the military's highest decoration on behalf of their son. Murphy is the first Medal of Honor awarded for service in Operation Enduring Freedom

in Afghanistan.

"Today we add Lieutenant Michael Murphy's name to the list of recipients who have made the ultimate sacrifice," Bush said. "By presenting Michael Murphy's family with the Medal of Honor that he earned, a grateful nation remembers the courage of this proud Navy SEAL."

On June 28, 2005, as Murphy led a four-man SEAL team in search of a key terrorist commander, the unit came under attack by more than 50 Taliban fighters. Murphy is credited with risking his own life to save the lives of his teammates, according to a summary of action published by the Navy.

Despite intense combat around him, Murphy already wounded in the firefight, moved into the open where he could gain a better transmission signal and request

backup from headquarters. At one point, Murphy was shot in the back, causing him to drop the transmitter. The lieutenant picked it back up, completed the call and continued firing at the enemies as they closed in.

By the time the two-hour gunfight had concluded, Murphy and two other SEALs had been killed. An estimated 35 Taliban died in the fighting.

As a somber postscript to Murphy's bravery, the helicopter he requested crashed after being struck by a rocket-propelled grenade, killing everyone on board. In total, 19 Americans died in what Bush

referred to as “the deadliest for Navy Special Warfare Forces since World War II.”

The president characterized Murphy as a born Navy SEAL.

“SEALs get their name from operating by sea, air and land, and, even as a toddler, Michael could find his way through any obstacle,” Bush said. “When he was just 18 months old, he darted across a neighbor’s yard and dove into the swimming pool. By the time his frantic parents reached him, Michael had swum to the other side with a big smile on his face.”

In addition to his physical strength, Bush said Murphy’s strong moral character also was apparent at an early age.

“One day in school, he got into a scuffle sticking up for a student with a disability. It’s the only time his parents ever got a phone call from the principal, and they couldn’t have been prouder,” Bush said. “Michael’s passion for helping others led him to become a caring brother, a tutor, a lifeguard and eventually a member of the United States armed forces.”

The president welcomed Murphy’s parents and brother, John, who hail from Patchogue, N.Y., to the White House’s East Room, noting that Murphy’s decision to join the U.S. military was not easily accepted by his family. “As a Purple Heart recipient during Vietnam, Michael’s father understood the sacrifices that accompany a life of service. He also understood that his son was prepared to make these sacrifices,” Bush added.



SEAL Lt. Michael Murphy, from Patchogue, N.Y. Murphy was killed by enemy forces during a reconnaissance mission, Operation Red Wing, June 28, 2005, while leading a four-man team tasked with finding a key Taliban leader in the mountainous terrain near Asadabad, Afghanistan. The team came under fire from a much larger enemy force with superior tactical position. Murphy knowingly left his position of cover to get a clear signal in order to communicate with his headquarters and was mortally wounded while exposing himself to enemy fire. While being shot, Murphy provided his unit’s location and requested immediate support for his element. He returned to his cover position to continue the fight until finally succumbing to his wounds. Courtesy photo.

Murphy is remembered by fellow SEALs as a wisecracking friend who went by “Mikey” or “Murph,” a patriot who wore a New York City firehouse patch on his uniform in honor of the heroes of 9/11, Bush said.



SEALs operating in Afghanistan. From left to right, Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Axelson, Senior Chief Petty Officer Daniel Healy, Petty Officer 2nd Class James Suh, Petty Officer 2nd Class Marcus Luttrell; Petty Officer 2nd Class Eric Patton, and Lt. Michael Murphy. With the exception of Luttrell, all were killed June 28, 2005, by enemy forces while supporting Operation Red Wing. Courtesy photo.

“And they remember an officer who respected their opinions and led them with an understated yet unmistakable sense of command. Together, Michael and his fellow SEALs deployed multiple times around the world in the war against the extremists and radicals,” Bush said. “And while their missions were often carried out in secrecy, their love of country and devotion to each other was always clear.”

Murphy is one of three to receive the Medal of Honor posthumously in action during the Global War on Terrorism.



Carlson takes helm of Center for SEAL and SWCC

*By Seaman Michelle Kapica
Naval Special Warfare Command
Public Affairs*

Capt. Thomas Carlson relieved Capt. Larry Lasky as Commander, Center for SEAL and SWCC, during a change of command ceremony at Naval Special Warfare Command, Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, Calif., Nov. 7.

Lasky was the first commanding officer at the Center, which has been in operation for the past two years. The Center for SEAL and SWCC provides rating development and education for the Special Operations ratings.

Under Lasky's leadership, the Center created the newly-established SEAL and SWCC ratings to define the role, mission and area of responsibility of SEAL and SWCC Operators. In addition, the Center affected how the Navy selects chief petty officers in the SEAL and SWCC ratings. Lasky also approved a new distance learning program that helps SEAL and SWCC Operators earn their advanced degrees.

During the ceremony, Lasky presented a handheld personal digital assistant, known as a Knowledge Based Academic Resource, to an enlisted SEAL. The KBAR stores information that can be used for college courses, professional development and studying for advancement. The Center plans to distribute close to 900 KBARs to help SEAL and SWCC Operators study for their upcoming advancement exams.

Lasky is scheduled to retire aboard the USS Midway Museum in San Diego Feb. 1, after 25 years of service.

"He's centered on the mission; that's basically his focus," said Lasky's wife, Stacy. "I'm very proud of him."

Carlson said it is a distinct honor to follow Lasky as commanding officer of the Center.

"I've always been very fortunate in my career to follow in the footsteps of some of our great leaders, and



Capt. Larry Lasky listens as Capt. Thomas Carlson reads his orders while Deputy Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, Rear Adm. Garry Bonelli looks on. Carlson assumed command of Naval Special Warfare's Center for SEAL and SWCC during a change of command ceremony at Naval Special Warfare Command headquarters, Nov. 7. Photo by Seaman Michelle Kapica.

I find myself there again," he said.

Carlson has served 23 years in the Navy, most recently as the commanding officer of Naval Special Warfare Group Three. He said he looks forward to continuing the development of the new SEAL and SWCC ratings.

"Together, we're going to continue the vital work that the Center for SEAL and SWCC is doing for the entire Naval Special Warfare community at large," he said. "This command will ensure the most valuable asset, our people, have the tools and opportunity to fully achieve their career and personal potential, and that directly translates into combat readiness."

Carlson's wife, Linda, and his parents attended the ceremony and said they are very proud of his accomplishments.

"I think he's perfect for this role," said Linda. "I think he really believes in the troops and the future. He loves to mentor. This is the perfect job for him."

Enlisted SEALs join the officer ranks

By Seaman Michelle Kapica
Naval Special Warfare Command Public Affairs

Two enlisted Navy SEALs were commissioned as chief warrant officers during a combined ceremony at Naval Special Warfare Command Oct. 5.

SEAL Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator Timothy King and SEAL Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator Brian Glenn were commissioned by Lt. Cmdr. John Willink.

King, who has already served 22 years active duty, said he is looking forward to bringing more innovation to the SEAL community as a chief warrant officer.

"My experience will help my leadership to continue the war on terrorism," said King. "I have an increase in responsibility, and I know that I definitely need to turn it up a notch with the increased authority. I'm excited to get started on this new chapter in my career."

The SEAL Ethos is a code of loyalty to country, team and teammate. The trident is a symbol of honor and heritage that SEALs proudly wear on their uniform. Becoming a Navy SEAL means accepting the responsibility of protecting the American people and their way of life. King and Glenn both accepted the challenge and stepped up to lead from the front as officers.

A role model to other enlisted Sailors, King offered some advice for other SEALs striving to become officers.

"Know the SEAL Ethos and live by it. Earn your trident every day and always be looking, every day, to what you can contribute to the team and the mission," he said.

King was joined by his wife, and two children, who pinned on his new set of shoulder boards and cover bearing the rank of chief warrant officer.

"I'm extremely proud of his accomplishments," said his wife. "I feel that this will start a new chapter in his life as a Navy man. We are honored to serve our country in another way. Our whole family is just so pleased that he has had such a wonderful experience with his career, and he continues to love his job," she said.

Glenn has served 17 years active duty and plans to continue his service to 30 years, he said.

"I've been interested in doing it (becoming an officer) since I became a chief back in '99," said Glenn. "I bring my technical expertise and good leadership."

Glenn said he knows his new rank, in some respect, will mean a more administrative role within the SEAL community and is excited to help younger SEALs perform in the field.

To other Sailors interested in a commission, Glenn said, "Just keep it up and work hard."

Glenn's wife, had the honor of pinning on Glenn's new chief warrant officer shoulder boards and replacing his cover.

"I'm very proud of him," she said. "It will mean more responsibility, and it's a larger opportunity to serve our country. I'm very happy to stand by his side."

As part of the ceremony, two enlisted SEALs took the honor of rendering the first salute to the newly commissioned officers.



SEAL Senior Chief Petty Officer Timothy King has his Chief Warrant Officer shoulder boards put on by his family in a commissioning ceremony held at Naval Special Warfare Command. Chief Warrant Officer King was enlisted for 22 years before receiving his commission. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Erika Jones.



SEAL Senior Chief Petty Officer Brian Glenn has his Chief Warrant Officer shoulder boards put on by his wife in a commissioning ceremony held at Naval Special Warfare Command. Chief Warrant Officer Glenn was enlisted for 17 years before receiving his commission. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Biller.



The SEALION II (SEAL Insertion Observation Neutralization) glides across the water. The crew aboard the small craft was able to assist a distressed boater off the Georgia coast Sept. 28. Courtesy photo.

SWCCs respond to mayday call

*By Seaman Robyn Gerstenslager
NSW Group Four Public Affairs*

Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen assigned to Special Boat Team 20 in Little Creek, Va., responded to a mayday call Sept. 28 as they returned from Key West, Fla. The SWCCs were operating small boats off the coast of Key West on a training mission.

At approximately 1 p.m., 35 miles east of St. Catherine's Sound, Ga., Special Boat Operator Chief Michael Mackeown, the officer-in-charge aboard the small craft they had been training on, the SEALION II (SEAL Insertion Observation Neutralization), heard repeated calls from a civilian boat attempting to contact the U.S. Coast Guard on marine-band radio.

When the civilian caller made contact with the Coast Guard, he put in a mayday call. Mackeown immediately contacted the civilian crew himself and notified them that he was within two miles of their location and asked if he could offer any assistance. Within 10 minutes the crew reached the distressed boaters and launched a Zodiac, a 14-foot inflatable boat, with two SWCC emergency medical technicians on board.

Once they boarded the boat, which had been chartered for a day of fishing, the EMTs found a man lying face down in the back of the boat.

"He was not seizing," said Mackeown, "but he was still unconscious."

A family friend informed the EMTs of the man's

history of seizures.

Special Boat Operator 1st Class Anthony Williamson, the chief engineer and an EMT, reverted back to his CPR training once he reached the scene.

"I was ready to do CPR if he was down," said Williamson. "You don't panic, be calm, you follow your procedures."

The EMTs brought the man onto the Navy vessel to recover and to transport him to the nearest Coast Guard station on Tybee Island, Ga. He regained consciousness as he was being moved.

Williamson and the crew gave the man water and a cool place to rest as they asked him basic questions to make sure his neurological system was functioning normally, as they did not know how long he had been unconscious.

Upon nearing the station, a Coast Guard patrol boat took the man to shore where the local emergency response team's ambulance was waiting.

Mackeown was pleased with how smoothly his crew handled the situation; within a little more than an hour of the first mayday call, the man was on shore and on his way to a local hospital.

"[The crew] performed outstandingly," said Mackeown. "Everyone worked together and did the job; everyone stayed calm and did what was needed."

The man was taken to Memorial Health University Center in Savannah, Ga., where he was treated and released.

NSW Sailors Complete Parachute Jump Requalifications

*By Seaman Robyn Gerstenslager
NSW Group Four Public Affairs*

Approximately 15 Sailors from Naval Special Warfare Group 4 and Special Boat Team 20 leapt from an airplane soaring at nearly 13,000 feet to maintain their free-fall parachute jump qualifications.

The Sailors, stationed at Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Va., traveled to the Suffolk Executive Airport to complete their jump qualifications.

To earn the esteemed free-fall jump qualification, Sailors must first complete Army Airborne School in Fort Benning, Ga., where they learn the proper procedures for exiting an airplane using a static-line deployed parachute.

For those Sailors who don't get enough of an adrenaline rush from static-line jumps, the Navy offers free-fall parachute jump school. The free-fall school, in Yuma, Ariz., takes parachute jumping to the next level; students step out of a plane and literally free-fall for approximately 9,000 feet, averaging 1,000 feet every six seconds.

In the military, static-line parachuting is typically used to insert a large number of forces into a secure area. Free-fall parachuting is employed for inserting a small number of forces, undetected, behind enemy lines.

Shane Hollar, a military static-line and free-fall jumpmaster and the air operations trainer for SBT-20, has 350 static-line jumps under his belt and nearly 4,000 free-fall exits. Hollar said he would rather free-fall from a plane than use a static-line deployed parachute.

"It's just a lot more fun; you have more maneuverability," said Hollar. "With static-line (parachutes), you pretty much drift at the mercy of the wind and have limited forward drive."

A person using a free-fall parachute will coast to the ground at nearly 20 mph, and static-line parachutes typically drift at 8 mph said Hollar. The rectangular shape of a military free-fall parachute allows the jumper to more easily change directions. A jumper using a static-line parachute, which is circular, will rotate more and has less directional control.

Free-fall jumpers typically jump in groups, so precise



A Sailor from Naval Special Warfare Group 4, based at Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Va., collapses his parachute after completing a safe landing in the drop zone at Suffolk Executive Airport. Sailors from NSWG-4 and Special Boat Team 20 conducted military free-fall jumps to maintain their qualifications and jump proficiency. Photo by Seaman Robyn Gerstenslager.

control is essential for safety.

Parachute Rigger 1st Class Peter Nusz, the leading petty officer of SBT-20 Air Operations, completed his 192nd jump Nov. 7. Nusz said participating in jumps as a team will better prepare the Sailors assigned to a special boat team for actual missions.

"I'm sure everybody walked away with a little bit more knowledge about how to jump with a group and land with a group," said Nusz. "That's why we train like we do: leave as a group, land as a group and go finish the mission."

Hollar, who was a member of the Golden Knights, the Army's parachute team, gets a great deal of satisfaction from conducting and participating in training missions with SBT-20.

"That's what I'm here for: to train these guys at every level and to make them better jumpers," said Hollar. "I get to watch them grow into what I think is the top 15 percent in the Navy."

NSWG-4 and SBT-20 conduct jump requalifications for Sailors assigned to each command approximately every six months.

AFSOC welcomes new commander

*By 1st Lt. Amy Cooper
AFSOC Public Affairs*



Lt. Gen. Donnie Wurster

Air Force Special Operations Command ushered in a new commander Nov. 27 in Freedom Hangar at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Lt. Gen. Donnie Wurster assumed command of AFSOC from Lt. Gen. Mike

Wooley during a ceremony presided over by Gen. Duncan McNabb, Air Force vice chief of staff.

"It's with the deepest respect and great admiration that I stand here today," McNabb said. "I stand on hallowed ground at Hurlburt Field. The legend of the Air Commandos and your remarkable accomplishments are legendary."

When he received the command guidon from McNabb, Wurster became the first AFSOC vice commander to move directly into the commander's seat. He is also the first helicopter pilot to be promoted to lieutenant general.

Addressing the crowd, Wurster assured Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, that AFSOC will uphold its tradition of excellence.

"Where you tell us to go, we will go," Wurster said. "What you tell us to do, we will do. We are your air component."

The new commander then implored AFSOC Airmen to perform as they have been trained.

"For every Air Commando, you know there may very well be a day when you will be thrust into history," he said. "Whatever your specialty...each of you has an important role to play. In an Air Force that is half the size it was when I joined, there is no extra."

The change of command also marked the end of a 35-year career for Wooley, who received the Distinguished Service Medal during the ceremony.

"I look at today as a celebration, a victory in a sense," Wooley said. "One that I can call 'mission complete.'"

Before giving his final salute to the Air Commandos gathered in the hangar, the outgoing commander offered his thanks to the men and women of AFSOC.

"There is no higher honor for an Air Force officer than to command," Wooley said. "I've said it before - this is the best three-star job in the Air Force."

Wooley will retire Jan. 1.



Lt. Gen. Donnie Wurster (right) accepts command of Air Force Special Operations Command from Gen. Duncan McNabb (left), Air Force vice chief of staff, as Chief Master Sgt. Michael Gilbert (center), AFSOC command chief, looks on during the AFSOC change of command ceremony Nov. 27 at Hurlburt Field, Fla. Wurster, whose previous assignment was AFSOC vice commander, also made history that day becoming the first Air Force helicopter pilot promoted to lieutenant general. Photo by Senior Airman Ali Flisek.

Wooley makes his final approach

*By 1st Lt. Amy Cooper
AFSOC Public Affairs*



Lt. Gen. Mike Wooley

A flying career spanning 35 years made its final approach Nov. 15 when Lt. Gen. Mike Wooley, former commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, landed at Hurlburt Field, Fla., following his finis, or final, flight.

Wooley took off from Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., in an AC-130H gunship and landed approximately 3 ½ hours later at Hurlburt Field, on what was his last flight before his change of command and retirement.

After taxiing off the runway, the aircraft rolled under a water arch provided by the 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron fire and emergency services flight before coming to a stop in front of base operations.

The general's wife, Kathy, and his four-year-old grandson, Jackson LeBleu, doused him with a fire hose

as he debarked the aircraft. Others sprayed him with water-filled fire extinguishers and traditional celebratory champagne.

For one of the bubbly-wielding greeters, spraying a three-star general with champagne wasn't on his to-do list that morning.

"I thought they were playing around with me," said Airman Richard Schwachenwald, 16th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, about being selected for the duty. "It was pretty cool that I was chosen."

Schwachenwald has only been stationed at Hurlburt Field for 2 ½ weeks. Not to mention, the one-striper had never even seen a three-star general before.

"It's definitely something I'll remember," he said.

People from across the base were on the flightline to greet the commander and offer him congratulations.

"He is a magnificent leader who is very passionate about his commitment to the military," said Tracy Norrad, the general's secretary. "He always has his finger on the pulse."

Wooley relinquished command of AFSOC to Lt. Gen. Donnie Wurster Nov. 27 in Freedom Hangar. He will retire Jan. 1.



Lt. Gen. Mike Wooley, former commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, is sprayed down by his wife, Kathy, and by his secretary, Tracy Norrad, following his finis, or final flight, Nov. 15, on the Hurlburt Field flightline. Wooley relinquished command of AFSOC to Lt. Gen. Donnie Wurster Nov. 27. Photo by Senior Airman Stephanie Jacobs.

AFSOC Airmen portraits



By Aaron Schoenfeld
AFSOC Public Affairs

Four AFSOC airmen are among 13 heroes from around the Air Force featured in the new volume of "Portraits in Courage."

Staff Sgt. Eric Ezell, 20th Special Operations aerial gunner; Capt. John Groves, 20th Special Operations Squadron pilot; Staff Sgt. Kenneth Webb, 15th Special Operations Squadron loadmaster and Master Sgt. Mike West, 720th Operational Support Squadron superintendent of weapons and tactics, all represent Air Force Special



Master Sgt. Mike West

Operations Command in the second volume of vignettes.

Each vignette highlights America's Airmen and their distinguished service and actions that have significant scope and impact on the Air Force mission. The vignettes of the four AFSOC Airmen are ones that encompass just that.

West, a combat controller with

experience in close air support and joint terminal attack control, is credited with actions taken as part of a Special Forces team operating in Afghanistan in 2006.

As a Coalition team near West's unit moved toward a strategically important position, they came under heavy fire by enemy forces and lost radio communications. West took control of the situation by identifying the friendly forces and calling in close air support to assist the team. He directed several types of aircraft, including bombers, fighters and a Predator UAV to eliminate the enemy threat and allow the Coalition forces to safely seize their target location.

Following the fight for the mountain, a week-long

battle ensued where West and his teammates coordinated multinational aircraft in the area, allowing critical supply drops and medical evacuations, as well as calling in 130 close air support missions and killing an estimated 750 enemy combatants.

"I'm honored to be in the book," said West. "But I won't take the credit. I was on

the mountain with another combat controller and a Special Forces team, who all ensured we could complete the mission."

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley commissioned the book to make sure Airmen like West get the credit they deserve. He wanted to create a reminder of the courage and sacrifice American Airmen experience every day.

"This program is a big deal because it allows me to highlight the honor, valor, devotion and selfless sacrifice of America's Airmen," said Moseley about the project.

The book is published biannually, with nominations going to Air Force leadership throughout the major commands. There are several levels of approval for Airmen to make the book.

The other AFSOC Airmen included in the second

"This program is a big deal because it allows me to highlight the honor, valor, devotion and selfless sacrifice of America's Airmen."
— Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley

Warrior Spirit



Staff Sgt. Eric Ezell

was shot in the head by an accidental discharge of a weapon inside the helicopter. He maintained his crew position and alerted his crewmembers of his injury.

After fighting to remain conscious throughout the evacuation flight, Ezell walked off the helicopter under his own power. The book further describes the determination shown by Ezell during his recovery process.



Capt. John Groves

volume also demonstrated the warrior spirit found throughout the command.

Ezell was on his sixth deployment to Iraq and providing cover for an unsecured landing zone during a mission to capture or kill a high-value target. In the midst of the firefight that broke out during their approach, Ezell

was shot in the head by an accidental discharge of a weapon inside the helicopter. He maintained his crew position and alerted his crewmembers of his injury.

Two more AFSOC Airmen are included in the book for displaying valiant acts of courage in the face of danger.

As the commander of the second aircraft in a two-ship formation, Groves watched the MH-53 PAVE LOW in front of him go

down after being hit by enemy fire. The enemy then engaged Groves' aircraft as he made several attempts to rescue the crew of the downed helicopter.

Groves performed evasive maneuvers and steered away from the threat by flying as low as 80 feet among power lines and buildings to avoid further detection.

The captain landed in an extremely hostile area with zero illumination and sent his crew with several Special Forces passengers to rescue the downed personnel. Using additional defensive maneuvers, he was able to depart and avoid the enemy fire to save the lives of nine fellow servicemembers.

In another in-flight emergency situation, Webb was returning from a resupply mission in Iraq when the cargo compartment of his C-130 burst into flames. Flying at 20,000 feet with 30 passengers on board, Webb responded quickly to ensure the safety of those around him.

Taking action to revive an unconscious passenger by providing rescue breathing, replacing a failed oxygen mask with his own and reviving a second unconscious passenger, Webb successfully handled a potentially catastrophic situation.

Despite the book's descriptions that highlight the bravery of these four Airmen, West insists nothing can be done alone.

"We all work side by side and can't get anything done without each other. Everyone should be in the book," said West. "These are just individual commitments to a group effort."



Staff Sgt. Kenneth Webb

Special Ops Marines get amphibious

By Lance Cpl. Stephen Benson
MARSOC Public Affairs

Beneath the surface of the murky water, amidst the mud and weeds, Marines and Sailors from U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command's 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion and Marine Special Operations School conducted dive operations at Mile Hammock Bay, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Navy divers from 2d MSOB and 2d Marine Division's 2d Reconnaissance Battalion led the training, which included underwater navigation between points marked by buoys. While navigating buoy to buoy under water, the divers were only allowed to surface for emergencies or if prompted to do so by the experienced Navy divers who patrolled the surface of the dive site in a Zodiac boat.

According to Senior Chief Petty Officer James Costin, a Master Diver with 2d MSOB, there are many technical and tactical elements to remember when diving, and this exercise was designed to keep the divers' skills sharp.

"A skill set not practiced is a skill set lost. It's as simple as that," said Costin. "They need to remember how to do dive operations smoothly and efficiently so their mission is the primary thought in their heads."

Divers used a closed-circuit oxygen rebreather, an underwater breathing apparatus that allows the diver to conduct covert and tactical dive insertions.

"You can travel under water with no bubbles on the surface so the diver can go undetected swimming through a waterway," said Costin. "They can use [closed-circuit rebreather] when they need to infiltrate an area, accomplish their objective and extract covertly, probably during a cycle of darkness."

The divers conducted the underwater navigation course in two- or three-man buddy teams.

"We preach the buddy system all the time," said Costin. "One of the most important things to remember about diving is there are no individuals. You always dive with a buddy."

While submerged, the divers utilized underwater communications techniques. According to Petty Officer 1st Class Chuck TenBroeck, a Navy diver with 2d Recon Battalion, most underwater communication involves hand signals, although in low-visibility conditions, tugs on the line attached between buddy divers or squeezes on an arm or leg are used to communicate.

According to TenBroeck, each buddy team has a designated navigator who utilizes a tactical board, a plastic device equipped with a compass and a timer. The navigator directs the team's movement and keeps track of time so they can estimate when they are near their mark. The dive buddies



Marines from U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command's 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion and Marine Special Operations School, step off the dock into the murky depths of Mile Hammock Bay, Camp Lejeune, N.C. Navy divers with 2d MSOB and 2d Marine Division's 2d Reconnaissance Battalion led the training to help maintain the divers' underwater navigation skills. Photo by Lance Cpl. Stephen Benson.

swim and stay alert for debris and various obstacles in their path.

Divers check the condition of their fellow divers and their diver equipment frequently during a dive. Use of oxygen rebreathers below the surface in low-visibility can result in accidents and injuries if safety isn't a primary concern for everyone involved in the training or operation.

TenBroeck, who was in charge of the dive exercise, briefed the divers on safety issues at various stages of training and checked equipment on each diver before giving them the go-ahead to enter the water. He was pleased with how the Marines performed.

"All the divers were excited about the exercise," said TenBroeck. "This was good work between the Sailors at the dive locker and the MARSOC Marines."

As with most specialized training, TenBroeck noted the importance of a consistent effort required to maintain diving skills.

"These exercises keep Marines proficient in navigation skills for clandestine, amphibious operations," explained TenBroeck. "We hope to keep these dive operations a monthly training event at 2d MSOB."

MARSOC Marines conquer the skies

By Lance Cpl. Stephen Benson
MARSOC Public Affairs

On an expanse of dry and barren land with rolling hills and winding dirt roads known as Basilone Drop Zone, 15 Marines with 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, gathered to fall, float and fly through the air as they recently conducted paraloft operations at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Marines conducted multiple jumps using different techniques at various heights to hone their parachute insertion skills.

"The object of these exercises is to maintain proficiency with this skill set," said Master Sgt. Deryck Dervin, operations chief, Company C, 1st MSOB, and the primary jump master for the exercise.

Marines began the exercise with static-line jumps with the jumpers using SF-10 parachutes that deploy immediately after exiting the UH-1N Helicopter. The helicopter ascended to 2,500 feet at which point the jump master gave Marines the order to exit. Marines then directed their descent to a large orange "T" marked on the ground.

After several static-line jumps, the Marines moved on to free-fall jumps. This time, the helicopter flew to 10,000 feet, and when Marines were given the order to jump, they fell several thousand feet before deploying their parachutes.

The Multi-Mission parachute used in free-fall jumps are rectangular shaped and allow the Marines more control over where they land.

According to Dervin, 1st MSOB Marines try to work paraloft training into their schedule at least once every month. The skill adds another dimension to their combat effectiveness and builds further versatility into Marine Special Operations Companies that deploy in support of missions directed by U.S. Special Operations Command.

"This is a perishable skill, so it's a great opportunity for us to train - especially with the operational tempo at 1st MSOB," said Dervin.

According to Dervin, the jumpers performed well and he was pleased his Marines were able to take full advantage of the training.

A 1st MSOB gunnery sergeant descended swiftly from the sky, touched his feet to the ground, and as his parachute drifted softly to the dirt, he declared, "I love this job!"



Marines from U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command's 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion, discuss their imminent jump 2,500 feet above Basilone Drop Zone, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Marines conducted static-line and free-fall jumps during the day and night in order to hone their parachute insertion skills. Photo by Lance Cpl. Stephen Benson.

MSOAG hits two-year mark

By MARSOC Public Affairs

U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command's Marine Special Operations Advisor Group observed its two-year anniversary at Camp Lejeune, N.C., Oct. 19. Marines, Sailors, family and friends attended a ceremony in which the National Defense Service and Global War on Terrorism Streamers were affixed to the unit colors, and the unit celebrated a historic and productive two years.

"MSOAG began with a few Marines sitting around a table with a concept," explained Col. Michael Peznola, commanding officer, MSOAG.

Two years ago, MSOAG included approximately 70 deployable personnel and about six teams. Company A was established in March 2006 and was the first of two MSOAG companies. Company B came one year later and already had three operational teams when it formally stood up. Now, MSOAG has more than 132 deployable Marines and Sailors and nearly 20 Special Operations teams formed to conduct missions directed by U.S. Special Operations Command.

During MSOAG's two-year existence, its teams successfully completed 18 deployments to more than nine different countries in support of foreign internal defense missions.

"Although we train foreign militaries and help expand their capabilities, our long-term goal is to provide a better relationship with each country," said 1st Sgt. Robert Pullen, MSOAG's acting sergeant major.

By training foreign militaries and building relationships, MSOAG builds confidence within the host nations.

"Building confidence will build hope for these countries," explained Peznola. "With hope, more schools will be built and the host nations will grow stronger and then, hopefully, they will turn away from any extremists who enter their country."

MSOAG teams work to tailor their skill sets toward their assigned countries or regions and become very familiar with local cultures and language. The Marines and Sailors are expected to be knowledgeable in a wide range



Col. Michael Peznola, commanding officer, Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, talks about the past, present and future of MSOAG during the Group's two-year anniversary ceremony at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Courtesy photo.

of military and infantry tactics. Because of this, the advisors train hard to enhance, expand their abilities and build well-rounded teams of advisors.

Pullen believes MSOAG is an important addition to the Special Operations community and is one of the leading units in the Global War on Terrorism.

"First and foremost, we are Marines," explained Pullen. "As Marines, we are used to moving at a quick pace, so we have adapted well to being a special operating force."

MSOAG has moved with a measured sense of urgency over the past two years and will not slow down any time soon. As it grows beyond its roots as the Foreign Military Training Unit, MSOAG will continue to enhance and develop its capabilities in order to win wars before they ever begin.

New optics keep eyes on target

*By Lance Cpl. Stephen Benson
MARSOC Public Affairs*

As the Marine rifleman waits patiently for the enemy to show himself from behind cover, he needs the tools and skills to quickly observe and engage the enemy in various environments and conditions. That is why Marines from Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, conducted familiarization training with new, state-of-the-art optical equipment at the base stables and Range L-5 at Camp Lejeune.

A field and training team from U.S. Special Operations Command taught Marines how to use the equipment with hands-on training in the classroom and on the firing range.

One of the key advances in the new optics is the ability to change out scopes without requiring adjustments to the sights.

“All the old optics equipment used to have different adjustments for windage and elevation, and they’re not only becoming better able to engage the enemy quicker because of the observation, but it keeps the same windage and elevation adjustments,” said Gunnery Sgt. Troy Schielein, Force Modernization Training Chief with MSOAG. “We used to have to carry ‘cheat cards’ in our pockets to know our adjustments.”

By simply mounting a night vision attachment in line with the day scope, Marines can transition seamlessly from day to night combat. This maintains their efficiency and

further ensures equipment maintenance doesn’t deter from the mission.

The new optics, designed for use on the M4A1 assault rifle, include a night vision device, a laser device that emits visible or infrared lasers for targeting, a day scope used for long-range and close-quarters battle, a reflex sight used for CQB, and a thermal sight that can be either hand-held or mounted and is used for heat-sensitive imaging.

“It’s all to maximize the effectiveness of the warfighter,” said Jim Sheehan, a senior trainer with the SOCOM field and training team. “It gives them more abilities and more options.”

Sheehan, a former U.S. Army Special Forces member, said the equipment is designed to be smaller and lighter than the old equipment.

“The new optics offer whole new observation techniques on the battlefield, whether it is close-quarters or long-range battle environments,” said Schielein. “They allow you to get the weapon on target in both environments.”

Schielein said the introduction of this new equipment to MARSOC helps standardize equipment throughout SOCOM’s component commands and modernizes MARSOC warriors to better fight the Global War on Terrorism.

“We need to focus on the fact that we’re all infantrymen,” said Schielein. “Any tool that can offer a better advantage on the battlefield is good for the infantrymen of Special Operations.”



A Marine from Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, sights in on the silhouette target at Range L-5 to get his battle sight adjustments. A field and training team from U.S. Special Operations Command taught Marines how to use new optical equipment and conducted hands-on training in the classroom and on the firing range at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Photo by Lance Cpl. Stephen Benson.



puts the 'D' in deployment

By Master Sgt. Laura LeBeau
USSOCOM Public Affairs

Food, shelter, water. These are the most basic needs of survival. Satisfying these needs, and others, is what the men and women of U.S. Special Operations Command's Deployment Cell bring to the fight in the Global War on Terrorism.

Formerly a part of the Air Force element of U.S. Readiness Command, D-Cell was re-designated in 1987 under USSOCOM to support Joint Special Operations Task Forces. Its mission is to rapidly deploy assigned forces, materiel and equipment worldwide, to provide bare-base support to SOCOM's JSOTFs, and to respond to national missions, regional contingencies and Joint Readiness exercises.

"We bring billeting, tents, dining facilities, shower capability, low voltage power production, electrical distribution and air conditioning," said Chief Master Sgt. John Hoffman, superintendent of D-Cell. Hoffman has 24 years in the military as a civil engineer and has been with D-Cell for 18 months. With close to 50 authorized Air Force personnel, Hoffman says, D-Cell resembles a "small mission support group."

The range of experience

and expertise D-Cell provides is a result of a mix of Air Force Specialty Codes: Logistics and Transportation, including Supply and Vehicle Maintenance; Security Forces, including armorers; Services; Personnel; and Engineering, which includes Structures, Electrical, Power Production and Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration.

D-Cell personnel often cross-train in AFSCs different than their primary, assisting in other areas whenever they can.

Staff Sgt. Samuel Matthews, an engineer with D-Cell since 2003, said, "It's more like an 'AFSC D-Cell' because we all do other jobs—tents, floors, showers—everything from the ground up. Through time, you get it."

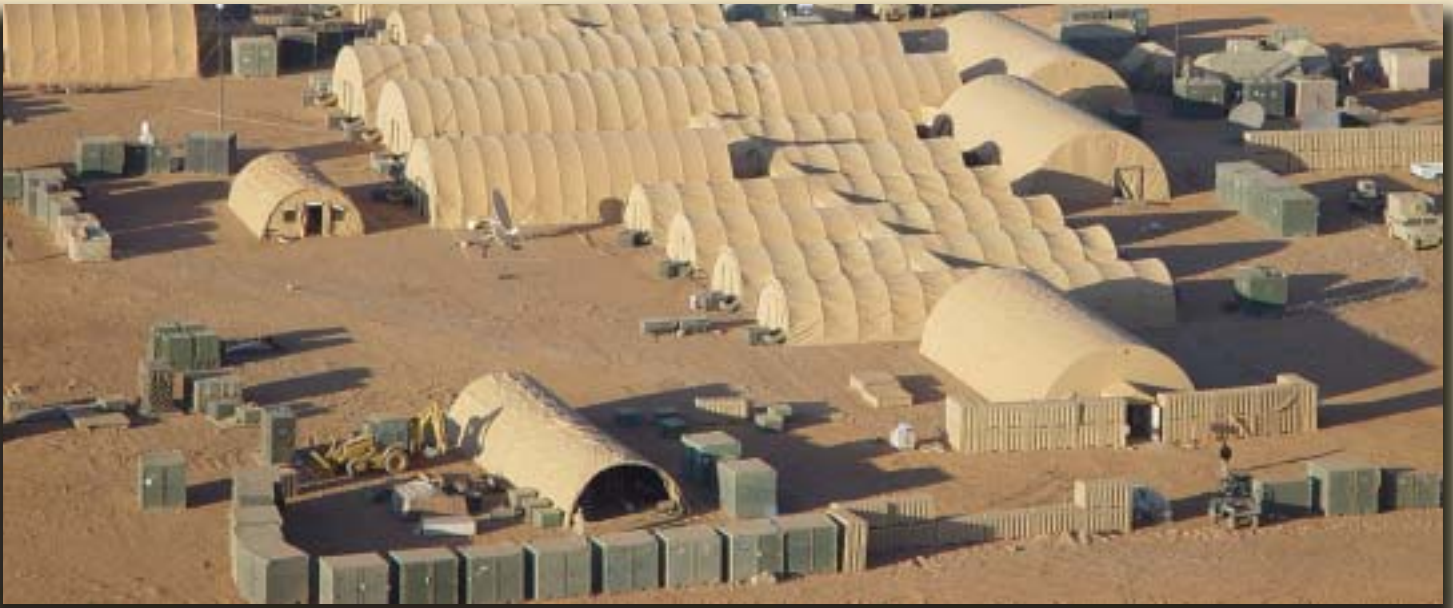
Bridging the gap for logistic support to the JSOTF until conventional support forces are in place and operational, D-Cell deploys by the most rapid means available to the site, establishes a layout of the site and begins construction of the JSOTF base. It is capable of providing 24-hour operations and can conduct limited split operations at a 1,000-man initial staging base and a 500-man forward staging base concurrently.

"We go out, do the mission and come home and prep for the next mission," said Staff Sgt. Carlos Espada, a member of the Transportation flight responsible for loading and balancing the cargo on the aircraft prior to transport. Espada joined D-Cell in 2005 and has deployed several times to Iraq and Afghanistan. Although he's attended the Load Planners and Hazardous Materials courses, he says "the rest is OJT, or, feet to the fire."

An obvious sense of teamwork and pride among the members of D-Cell is reflected in their perspectives on the mission and the bonds of friendship they share with each other.

"We're directly affecting the Operators on the ground, and we get D-Cell team members pose in front of their warehouse at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. D-Cell recently received their third Joint Meritorious Unit Award recognizing their service supporting Joint Special Operations Command. Courtesy photo.





A Joint Operations Center, Command and Control module constructed by D-Cell at a FOB in SW Asia. Courtesy photo.

to see how important the mission is,” said Staff Sgt. John Hitchens, a member of the Services flight. “Everybody’s willing to go. We help each other out. Whatever it takes to get the job done,” he said. “It’s extremely satisfying.”

In a ceremony held last month at SOCOM, Lt. Col. Ron Haynes, Chief, Logistics Plans and Operations Division at Joint Special Operations Command, presented the Joint Meritorious Unit Award to the members of D-Cell. The award recognizes D-Cell members for their service from Oct. 4, 2001, through Dec. 31, 2004, in supporting JSOC during Operation Enduring Freedom. This is D-Cell’s third JMUA since realigning under SOCOM in 1987 to support JSOTFs.

“Within three weeks of 9/11, D-Cell was directly involved with Special Operations Forces engaging the enemy. There are acts of compassion and dedication in what they do,” said Haynes. Those acts of compassion go a long way in supporting the Forces on the ground.

“We’re very proud of the capability and flexibility we provide our customers,” said Lt. Col. Mark Hancock, commander of D-Cell, as he accepted the JMUA streamer from Haynes. “D-Cell has a reputation of outstanding support to people in the field. It may seem minor for us to put up tents, showers and environmental control units, but if we can make it more comfortable for the people doing the fighting, it means a lot to them,” Hancock said.



SSgt John Watson, a D-Cell's vehicle maintenance craftsman places a roof arch for a 32' x 20' Alaskan shelter. The tent was used for billeting Joint Special Operations Task Forces at a forward deployed location in South America. Courtesy photo.



SSgt John Hitchens, a services craftsman doing kitchen patrol at Avon Park Fla. D-Cell services provided field feeding to support Joint Readiness Exercise Jaded Thunder. Courtesy photo.

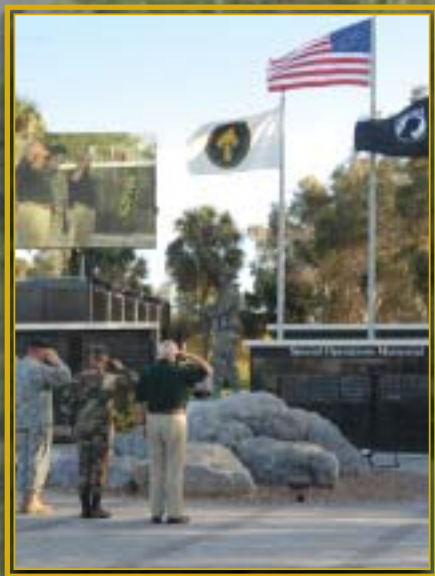


TSgt Andrew Lape, a security forces technician connects a field deployable environmental control unit (air conditioner/heater) to an Alaskan shelter at a forward deployed location in Iraq. Courtesy photo.



SSgt Johnny Carter, a power production craftsman adjusts the voltage on a commercial generator at a forward staging base in South America. Courtesy photo.

A Solemn Rededication



(Main photo) An aerial view of the newly redesigned SOF Memorial. (Top left) Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander USSOCOM, USSOCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Smith, Geoff Barker and Peter Kreuziger salute during the wreath laying part of the rededication ceremony held Dec. 5 at USSOCOM headquarters, MacDill Air Force, Fla. (Top right) SOF Statue representing land, sea and air capabilities.

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Victoria Meyer

Past and present leaders as well as members of the Special Operations community gathered Dec. 5 to rededicate the Special Operations Memorial at MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Fla.

The newly redesigned memorial replaced the one completed in 1999. The original memorial took four years to design and was the first joint Special Operations memorial. It was built under direction of the Special Operations Memorial Foundation. Eight years after the original memorial was dedicated, the foundation knew a change and more space was needed. The events of 9/11 caused the number of special operators killed in action to increase significantly and the memorial walls were filling up like never before.

The new design, in the shape of the Special Operations Command spear, has the space to display several times the number of plaques as the original memorial. Currently, there are 1,264 engravings on the walls. They include the names of more than 1,000 fallen U.S. SOF members, fallen allied SOF, SOF organizations, friends of SOF, civilians and contributors.

"This is a solemn place. It's impossible to be here without sensing the sacrifice of those whose names are permanently etched in honor on these walls," Admiral Eric T. Olson, USSOCOM commander, said during his

remarks at the ceremony. "I am proud to be associated with such patriots, and I consider it both a privilege and a duty to contribute in some way to preserving their heritage."

The most prominent feature of the original memorial, the warrior statue, was never moved during the construction. It remains the focal point of the current memorial and represents Special Operations Forces of the land, sea and air displayed by elements of the uniform depicting pieces from all the services.

The current design also provides an area for gatherings and ceremonies.

During the ceremony, retired Maj. Gen. James McCombs, U.S. Special Operations Memorial Foundation chairman, thanked many for their contributions to the memorial but ended with the motivation behind the creation of the memorial. "Last, but most important, we'd like to thank the Special Operators around the world for what they do every day in keeping America safe. We, our board, the designers, the builders, the donors, all hope this memorial can serve as a small token of our appreciation for the many sacrifices you and your families have made on our behalf," he said.

The ceremony finished with a music video tribute by recording artist Tim McGraw "If You're Reading This" and Taps.



Attendees socialize after the SOF Memorial rededication ceremony held Dec. 5 at USSOCOM headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Sovereign Challenge '07 brings nations, strategic interests together

By Master Sgt. Laura LeBeau
USSOCOM Public Affairs

More than a hundred foreign participants from 66 countries came together recently as U.S. Special Operations Command hosted Sovereign Challenge '07 at MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Fla.

Sovereign Challenge is a collaborative USSOCOM and U.S. Strategic Command international strategic communication engagement project. Its focus is on independent nations and how terrorism, in its myriad forms, threatens their sovereignty.

"This conference is a place for the international community to come in and run the conference. We sit back, take notes and listen," said Maj. Gen. David Scott, deputy director of SOCOM's Center for Special Operations, during his opening remarks at the conference.

During the four-day event, senior military officers and diplomats from around the world engage in dialogue to pursue common interests in developing programs to recognize terrorism as a global threat requiring a global response. It's not a U.S. dominated conference, nor one of defending U.S. policy. Rather, Sovereign Challenge recognizes the defense of a self-ruling nation cannot, and should not, be dictated by the United States or other countries, but must arise from a particular country's perception of the threat to its culture and its national identity.

Ideas and information are shared through several breakout groups of about 20 foreign officers and several U.S. officers. Through mutual dialogue, participants from different countries discuss issues of protecting and defending their own independence.

"Even the small countries have a voice," said Stan Schrager, USSOCOM's public diplomacy advisor and Sovereign Challenge coordinator. "That's important because they have the same dreams and hopes as everyone else. Everyone agrees terrorism is a threat to their own interest."

Speakers at this year's conference included Rohan Gunaratna, head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research in Singapore, who offered his perspectives on "The Changing Face of Terrorism."

"Terrorism is not just a tactic, it's a strategy in and of itself and reflects the idea of the global threat we face today," Gunaratna said. He stresses the need for "strategy



Rohan Gunaratna, head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research in Singapore, offered his perspectives on "The Changing Face of Terrorism" during Sovereign Challenge '07, held at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Photo by Mike Bottoms.

counterterrorism," with intelligence as the key. "Militaries must change," he said. "Millions of dollars are being spent on weapons and tools for a war that will not come. You can't fight terrorism without good intelligence."

Other speakers presented a variety of perspectives on topics such as suicide bombing, al-Qaida, jihad and Eastern and Western perspectives. Schrager said the speakers at the conference may not necessarily support U.S. policy, but, "the sharing of ideas is good."

Sovereign Challenge evolved from a collective response to a SOCOM-hosted conference of more than 80 military attaches from more than 50 countries held in October 2005. The 19-page report following the conference revealed two concerns: respect and sovereignty. Since then, the annual conference has continued to grow, with this year's number of participants being the largest. To foster ongoing discussions outside of the conferences, a Web site was created, www.sovereignchallenge.org, to offer a forum for interested nations to explore together the effects of the global threat of terrorism.

"The issue of protecting sovereignty represents, in some ways, a new international norm for the war on terrorism," said Schrager. "Terrorism threatens a broad, extensive network of nations. It's a global problem that won't be solved by military alone, and it takes all elements of national power to defeat terrorism.

"We're not entirely altruistic," he continued. "We have a strategic interest. Our security depends on sovereignty of all."

SOF liaisons caring for the wounded

By Tech. Sgt. Victoria Meyer
USSOCOM Public Affairs

Grief, career, stress, marriage and family counselor, trip planner, driver, personal assistant, greeter.

This is not a typical duty description for a military person, however, two Special Forces NCOs at Walter Reed Army Medical Center have to be all of the above plus some.

Sgt. Maj. Daniel Thompson and Sgt. 1st Class Marty Thompson have the enormous responsibility of assisting the wounded or injured Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines from the Special Operations community and their families with any needs they may have after getting hurt on or off the battlefield.

The Thompsons are the U.S. Special Operations Command Care Coalition casualty assistance liaisons and they help all seriously injured Special Operations Forces, active duty, guard, reserve and their families.

“Our main mission is to take care of the [SOF wounded warrior’s] needs. It could be as simple as getting them to the store or more complicated issues such as working their orders,” Sgt. 1st Class Thompson explained.

In February 2007 they became a part of the USSOCOM Care Coalition in an effort to provide support to all special operations casualties and establish continuity in the position. The coalition was stood up in August 2005 and their mission is to provide Special Operations Warriors and their families a model advocacy program in order to enhance their quality of life and strengthen Special Operations readiness.

The Thompsons are constantly on the move; visiting with SOF patients, getting family members from the airport to the bedside, making phone calls to support organizations, working with the Veterans Affairs, tracking and reporting the progress of each patient to USSOCOM and home units, and overcoming any roadblocks patients might come across in their care.

“It is a constant game of logistical chess,” Sgt. Maj. Thompson said with half a grin.

A large part of their job is to help wounded SOF servicemembers receive as many benefits as available. It can be very confusing to a recently-hospitalized SOF warrior to know what is out there to help him and his family, and rules are continuously changing.

There are several benefits from governmental and non-governmental organizations authorized for servicemembers injured in battle such as Combat-Related Injury Rehabilitation Pay, Combat Zone Tax Exclusion, Traumatic Serviceman Group Life Insurance payments, grants and gifts from various civilian organizations, housing and travel allowances for family members and so on. The liaisons help

sort through all of the potential benefits and work with the Care Coalition office to get them exactly what they need.

“We try to put some common sense into the process,” Sgt. Maj. Thompson said.

Not only do they focus on acquiring available benefits, rehabilitation is a priority especially if the servicemember wants to return to active duty.

“More than 90 percent of wounded SOF return to active duty,” Sgt. Maj. Thompson said. “And we have 27 of the Department of Defense’s 68 amputees who have returned to active duty.

It’s not about statistics to them, it is all about the people they deal with on a daily basis — like “Anitra and Mike” who came to Walter Reed in September.

When Anitra found out her Special Forces husband had been wounded, there was nothing that could stop her from getting to him. She and her best friend, whose husband had also been wounded in the same battle, flew out to Maryland the next day. They were going to find a way to get to Walter Reed Army Medical Center to be by their husbands. “They (the Thompsons) did everything for us,” Anitra said.

The Thompsons arranged a place for them to stay that was close to the hospital, a vehicle for them to use, and met the ladies to speak with them to prepare them to see their wounded husbands. In the days and weeks after, the Thompsons worked closely with Mike and Anitra on any issues they ran into.

This is what they do on a daily basis. With only two people and a lot of commitment, they make a difficult situation a little easier in the lives of many SOF warriors.



Sgt. 1st Class Marty Thompson (left) and Sgt. Maj. Daniel Thompson (far right) are pictured with a SOF wounded warrior. They have the enormous responsibility of assisting the wounded or injured Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines from the Special Operations community and their families with any needs they may have after getting hurt on or off the battlefield. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Victoria Meyer.

Operation One Voice runner

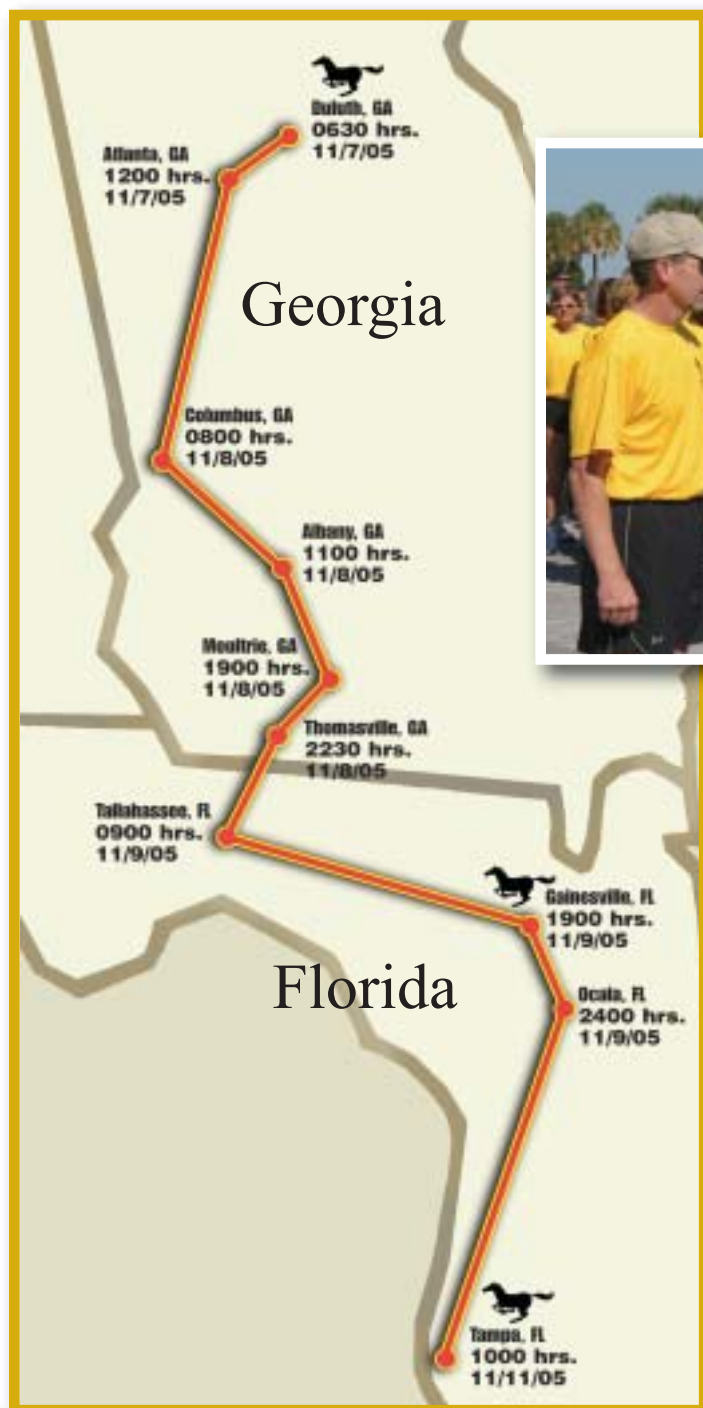
By Mike Bottoms
USSOCOM Public Affairs

More than 600 miles is a monumental distance to cover for any runner, but don't tell that to a blind paratrooper, an amputee Ranger and a widow leading a group that ran from

Duluth, Ga., to the SOF Memorial at USSOCOM headquarters, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

The 22-member team was running and biking with one goal in mind: to bring attention to the sacrifices Special Operations Forces and their families make on a daily basis.

The honorary team captains were Lt. Ivan Castro, a blind paratrooper from the 82nd Airborne with 17 years of Special Forces experience, Sgt. Joe Kapaczewski, an amputee from the 75th Ranger regiment and Jenn McCollum, widow of Capt. Daniel McCollum.



From left to right, Lt. Bill Stevens, Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander of USSOCOM, USSOCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Smith, Lt. Ivan Castro, Jenn McCollum and Sgt. Joe Kapaczewski lay a wreath during a Veterans Day ceremony held at USSOCOM's SOF Memorial, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Lawn.

Lt. Bill Stevens, a retired firefighter and Duluth police officer, said he started Operation One Voice on a dare from a friend after he said he wanted to do something to honor the troops. Since military training, especially training for Special Operations, can be so grueling, he wanted to pick a challenge SOF would respect.

The team left from Duluth and ran and biked around the clock until they reached MacDill, 625 miles away. The distance was covered relay style, with runners



Lt. Bill Stevens

rs makes third annual trek



Seated from left to right, Lt. Gen. Frank Kearney, deputy commander of USSOCOM, Lt. Ivan Castro, Sgt. Joe Kapaczewski and Jenn McCollum at the closing ceremony of Operation One Voice 2007 held at Busch Gardens, Tampa, Fla. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Lawn.

running for an hour, then recovering on the bus for a few hours, then back out again.

McCollum's husband, Capt. Daniel McCollum, was killed almost six years ago in the war, when she was pregnant with their first baby – a son, now 5, named after his father.

As for what her husband would think of her joining this effort. "He would be so proud of me. I was not a runner before he died. But since then I've run the Marine Corps marathon and now this. This is me paying it forward for all the support given to me in the early days after my husband died."

Castro, who was blinded in 2006 while in Baghdad, said, "Although I'm blind and I can't see it, I can feel the effort everyone is putting forth for this." He continues to undergo surgeries for his injuries and remains on active duty. He runs strapped arm and arm with a partner.

Kapaczewski, who lost his right leg while serving in the Army in Northern Iraq, was the third leader of the pack.

The group culminated the nearly one-week run by participating in a wreath laying ceremony at the SOF Memorial on Nov. 9. The next day, the group ran to Busch Gardens in Tampa, Fla., where they celebrated the money raised by Operation One Voice to benefit Special Operations

Forces and their families.

"Our goal is to honor every American, especially those at the tip of the spear," said Stevens. Stevens also said Operation One Voice has raised nearly \$100,000 this year for scholarships and nearly \$250,000 in the past 2 1/2 years. The money has been given to SOF families based on their levels of need.

Disclaimer: Publication of the name "Operation One Voice" does not constitute official DoD or USSOCOM endorsement.



Finish line for Operation One Voice at Busch Gardens, Tampa, Fla. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Lawn.

JSOU offers interagency courses

By Homer Harkins
Joint Special Operations University

In early 2003, the Secretary of Defense designated the U.S. Special Operations Command the supported command for the Global War on Terrorism. In response, USSOCOM rapidly rebalanced its organizational structure and developed a comprehensive plan to address terrorism on a global scale. Success would depend upon close working relationships with partners in the interagency arena who possess their own unique authorities and capabilities.

In order to develop the needed relationships, USSOCOM launched various initiatives. Periodic synchronization conferences are now being held at USSOCOM headquarters. Exercises designed to better integrate relevant interagency planning and communications are being executed. Interagency presence in HQ USSOCOM has increased dramatically, and USSOCOM intends to position scores of officers within other agencies. Additionally, USSOCOM directed the Joint Special Operations University to develop a full program of instruction designed to support all aspects of its critically-important interagency partnership plan.

This interagency education program began in March 2006 when the first SOF-Interagency Collaboration Course was presented on MacDill, Air Force Base. This week-long course focuses on operational-level activities that require significant SOF-interagency interaction and support SOF efforts to synchronize the Global War on Terrorism. The course helps prepare mid-career national security professionals from relevant government agencies to collaborate successfully in the complex interagency environment related to the GWOT.

Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander of USSOCOM, directed the establishment on the USSOCOM Interagency Education Program in fiscal year 2008 and directed that it include the following educational activities:

Combating Terrorism Executive Interagency Seminar:

In close coordination with HQ USSOCOM, JSOU will present a series of seminars designed to bring together senior leaders from key agencies related to the GWOT. These seminars will facilitate ongoing discussion on issues critically important to success in this long struggle. Subjects will include planning and policy, intelligence fusion, shaping the strategic and operational environment of the GWOT, improving interagency collaboration, interagency professional development challenges, and relevant legal and resourcing issues.

The first CbTEIS was held at the ANSER Conference

Center in Arlington, Va., Sep. 13 – 14. Twenty-six executive-level personnel representing 14 federal government agencies attended. An additional 17 senior ranking speakers, panelists, and moderators supported the seminar.

Terrorist Response Senior Seminar: This three-day seminar will be held quarterly and have a targeted audience of national security professionals for the FSO-3 / GS-15 / O-6 level. This is not a new course. More than 20 years, it has provided an excellent forum for educating senior military and interagency leadership on counterterrorism crisis response. However, much has changed in that time. TRSS will be revised accordingly during fiscal year 08 to ensure its maximum relevancy to the USSOCOM mission to plan and synchronize operations against terrorist networks.

SOF-Interagency Collaboration Course: This course has been a great success. JSOU will continue to improve this excellent interagency education forum for mid-career national security professionals.

Special Operations Support Team Orientation

Course: As part of the USSOCOM interagency partnership plan, over 100 officers from

USSOCOM will be positioned with

approximately 30 organizations principally in the Washington, D.C., arena. It is paramount

that these officers understand how to perform their duties as effectively as possible. The SOST

Orientation Course will serve as a two-day educational experience for incoming SOSTs

designed to complete their educational, training and administrative preparation.

SOF Orientation for Interagency Partners: It is essential to success in GWOT that our interagency team members understand SOF organizations, capabilities and force employment. JSOU will provide seminars as required for interagency personnel supporting SOF to introduce them to SOF and provide them the basic understanding needed to maximize interoperability. This orientation effort will be flexible and include USSOCOM component orientation visits for executive national security professionals.

Recognizing the importance of having a knowledgeable and experienced professional with many years of experience working in the interagency arena, JSOU will add to its faculty an acknowledged senior-level interagency expert as a full-time fellow. This will expand JSOU Senior Fellows beyond the current three traditional focus areas of ground, air and maritime. The Interagency Senior Fellow will spearhead JSOU's knowledge creation and academic research on the interagency process. This fellow will be available to lecture across the JSOU curriculum and serve as a mentor in the various interagency courses and seminars.



PSYOP crucial to OIF success

*By Master Sgt. Al Garver
USSOCOM History Office*

On March 17, 2003, President George W. Bush spoke directly to the people of Iraq. “Many Iraqis can hear me tonight in a translated radio broadcast, and I have a message for them. If we must begin a military campaign, it will be directed against the lawless men who rule your country and not against you,” he said. Those radio broadcasts throughout Iraq were made possible by the technology and manpower of Special Operations Forces Psychological Operations, and the same type of messages had already been conveyed for three months.

Although Operation Iraqi Freedom officially began on March 19, 2003, PSYOP flights and relay towers began broadcasting radio messages to Iraqis on Dec. 13, 2002. Four days later leaflet drops began, with statements like: “If war comes, do not fight for a dying regime that is not worth your own life.” From that point forward, PSYOP demonstrated an incredible range of operational abilities and became a mainstay in Iraq.

One example of an early PSYOP success in Iraq happened when a Marine task force found itself involved in a large urban battle, complicated by crowds of rioting Iraqi civilians. Intelligence officers determined a radio station was airing a Jihad message inciting locals. Commanders requested the frequency be jammed by an EC-130J Commando Solo aircraft in the vicinity. Instead of static, the Marines continued to hear the Arabic broadcast, but noticed the crowds dissipating. The Commando Solo aircraft had replaced the broadcast with a message instructing civilians to return to their homes. Since the citizens thought it was their government telling them to do so, they obeyed, averting civilian casualties during the continued fighting.

Tactical PSYOP Teams also routinely performed loudspeaker missions on the ground, such as alerting the populace of Coalition intentions, broadcasting public service announcements and emitting high-tech sound effects. During a combat engagement in April 2003, enemy snipers were controlling the rooftops of a town, so a Tactical Psyop Team with three vehicles drove through and played “helicopter



U.S. Army Soldiers with Detachment 1080, 318th Psychological Operations Company, distribute "Baghdad Now" in the East Rashid region of Baghdad, Iraq, July 11, 2007. The periodical, which is put together by the 318th Psyop Co., has articles that discuss news informing the public on global news as well as local issues. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class David Quillen.

music,” broadcasting the sounds of multiple choppers. The enemy thought a mass American force was coming in, so they hastily vacated the town, which was then taken without firing a shot.

By December 2003, PSYOP had produced and distributed more than 25 million pieces of printed literature including leaflets instructing citizens to report Fedayeen loyalists; handbills to turn in man-portable air-defense systems; reward posters for Saddam Hussein; and coloring books for Iraqi children. They replaced radio and TV broadcasts throughout Iraq with 24-hour programming until the civilian free press could get up and running.

PSYOP teams continue to serve in Iraq, but now much of their work is humanitarian in nature, informing the public of medical clinic hours, curfew changes or newly opened schools. After five years of ongoing operations, their technology has advanced to include monitoring TV and radio stations to listen for anti-Coalition propaganda, which they counter with correct information, and they produce ongoing news and information programs now delivered to the newer mediums of the Internet and satellite TV.

Perhaps the most important fact is that PSYOP forces operate from the premise of telling the truth, as stated in their unofficial creed: “I am the broadcast of reason over the radio, television and loudspeaker. I am the light of truth in print media, leaflet, newspaper, handbill or poster. I am the force multiplier that helps win my country’s wars.” Whether they are supporting initial combat operations or long-term civil affairs, the contributions of SOF PSYOP on the Global War on Terrorism is undeniable.

**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
MAJ Jeffrey Calero
CPO Mark Carter
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
SSG Joseph Curreri
MSG Jefferson Davis
SSG Edwin Dazachacon
SSG Michael Dickinson
SFC Trevor Diesing
PO2 Danny Dietz
CPL Benjamin Dillon

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
SGT Steven Ganczewski
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
SSG Patrick Kutschbach
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 Longworth
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
SFC Justin Monschke
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 Philip Svitak
SSG Paul Sweeney
MAJ Paul Syverson
SSG Ayman Taha
PO1 David Tapper
CPT Michael Tarlavsky
PO1 Jeffrey Taylor
SFC John Taylor
SSgt John Teal
PFC Kristofer Thomas
SFC Michael Thomas
CPT Benjamin Tiffner
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 October Tip of the Spear**



An MH-53J flies into the sunset at Hurlburt Field, Fla. The MH-53s are scheduled to be retired from the Air Force Special Operations Command's inventory by the close of fiscal year 2008. Photo by Mike Bottoms.