



Battery puts steel on target with lessons

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

Battles are fought and won on many fronts. This is a lesson that the Soldiers of Battery B, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment have found out.

Instead of lobbing howitzer shells they are firing words and education. They have found that the Salerno English School, which opened in mid-February, is right on target.

“Education is the founda-

tion and the highway to the future,” said Staff Sgt. Terrell Williams. “Without a good solid foundation you can’t get to the future, and that is what we are trying to do here.”

To start that journey to the future, you have to take the first step. For Williams and Cpt. Kenneth Cosgriff, battery executive officer, that was getting students for the school.

“We went to all the villages around Salerno and talked with the village elders,” Cosgriff said. “We told them about the school and for each of them to choose four kids from their village and bring them to Salerno. The first day we went to the gate there were 200 kids out there.”

The vil-



Sgt. Johnnie Stephenson and Eddie say good-bye to the students as they leave the Salerno English school.

lage elders thought an extra child or four would not be a problem. But the number of kids was based on the two teachers that had been hired to teach the classes.

In the village of Khabozi, located a kilometer from FOB Salerno, elder Noor Gani put the names of the 50 children that live there into a pot and drew out the four lucky boys that attend the English school.

“They are really happy and really enjoy coming to the base to learn,” Gani said. “It is important for them to learn English so that they will be able to talk to you in the future.”

Before the future could begin each student underwent a medical examination. According to Cosgriff

around a dozen kids were turned away due to coming up positive for tuberculosis. He said that we did not want to put the Soldiers who were helping at the school at risk.

After the tests and the selection by the elders, 67 students make the journey to Salerno three times a week to learn or improve their English.

“The kids are doing great,” said Cosgriff. “They all know their ABCs and most can read.”

The learning is not just for the Afghan children, the Soldiers are also learning some Pashto, the native language for this area of the country.

“Everyday they give me a list of words and we go over

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One of 67 Afghan boys reads from his school book at the Salerno English School.

The World

Bush, Kerry Presidential Matchup a Tie

President Bush and John Kerry remain tied in a head-to-head presidential matchup, according to a new Fox News poll released Friday, and a bare majority believe Bush will win in November.

The national poll of registered voters finds the race is still neck-and-neck, with 43 percent of voters preferring Bush and 42 percent Kerry, if the election were held today. Little change is seen when Ralph Nader is included, as he receives 2 percent, Bush 42 percent and Kerry 40 percent. The race has been deadlocked — within one or two percentage points — for about two months.

Tudor Bottleneck to be Fixed

ANCHORAGE - Mayor Mark Begich introduced a plan to relieve congestion at the city's worst traffic bottleneck. He wants to shift the intersection of Lake Otis Parkway and Tudor Road eastward and build four new turn lanes at a cost of about \$12 million. The redesigned intersection, coupled with an extension of Bragaw Street to Abbott Look, should relieve congestion in the area by 60 percent.

Postal Worker Auctions Deliveries

BERLIN - A German postal worker admitted to putting packages up for auction over the Internet after a search of his apartment turned up a hoard of missing deliveries, police said Thursday.

The 37-year-old letter carrier, whose identity wasn't released, started siphoning off packages and offering their contents on online auction site eBay last summer, police said. In all, more than 100 went missing, and police estimated the total value at \$23,700.

A musician whose clarinet mouthpiece went missing in the mail blew the whistle. After the package failed to arrive, he found an identical item on eBay — offered by the postman, from the western town of Gelsenkirchen. He bought it, but also informed police.

Police found the missing mouthpiece at the apartment of the postman's girlfriend and then searched his own apartment — turning up piles of missing packages. The man confessed to stealing the mail and was released after questioning, police said.

FOB faces

What are you going to remember most about the Afghan people?



I will remember that the people always wanted to drink tea with us.
Pfc. WoonJin Jun
Company C



Their will to go on in spite of their lack of resources and their living conditions.
Sgt. Shamell Peterkin
Battery B, 377th PFAR



Most are very hospitable and appreciative.
Staff Sgt. Alesia Rice
325th Forward Surgical Team



Their ability to continue to strive for political and economic growth despite overwhelming obstacles.
1st Lt. Caleb Lewis
Forward Support Company



Army scientists, engineers develop liquid body armor

By Tonya Johnson

Army Research Laboratory PAO
ABERDEEN PROVING
GROUND, Md. — Liquid armor for Kevlar vests is one of the newest technologies being developed at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory to save Soldiers' lives.

This type of body armor is light and flexible, which allows soldiers to be more mobile and won't hinder an individual from running or aiming his or her weapon.

The key component of liquid armor is a shear thickening fluid. STF is composed of hard particles suspended in a liquid. The liquid, polyethylene glycol, is non-toxic, and can withstand a wide range of temperatures. Hard, nano-particles of silica are the other components of

STF. This combination of flowable and hard components results in a material with unusual properties.

"During normal handling, the STF is very deformable and

flows like a liquid. However, once a bullet or frag hits the vest, it transitions to a rigid material, which prevents the projectile from penetrating the Soldier's body," said Dr. Eric Wetzel, a mechanical engineer from the Weapons and Materials Research Directorate who heads the project team.

To make liquid armor, STF is soaked into all layers of the Kevlar vest. The Kevlar fabric holds the STF in place, and also helps to stop the bullet. The saturated fabric can be soaked, draped, and sewn just like any other fabric.

Wetzel and his team have been working on this technology with Dr. Norman J. Wagner and his students from the University of Delaware for three years.

"The goal of the technology is to create a new material that is low cost and lightweight which offers equivalent or superior ballistic properties as compared to current Kevlar fabric, but has more flexibility and less thickness," said Wetzel. "This technology has a lot of potential."

Liquid armor is still undergoing laboratory tests, but Wetzel is enthusiastic about other applications that the technology might be applied to.

"The sky's the limit," said Wetzel.



Kevlar fabric with shear thickening fluid, after impact by a fragment simulating projectile it transitions to a rigid material.

"We would first like to put this material in a soldier's sleeves and pants, areas that aren't protected by ballistic vests but need to remain flexible. We could also use this material for bomb blankets, to cover suspicious packages or unexploded ordnance. Liquid armor could even be applied to jump boots, so that they would stiffen during impact to support Soldiers' ankles."

In addition to saving Soldiers' lives, Wetzel said liquid armor in Kevlar vests could help those who work in law enforcement.

"Prison guards and police officers could also benefit from this technology," said Wetzel. "Liquid armor is much more stab resistant than conventional body armor. This capability is especially important for prison guards, who are most often attacked with handmade sharp weapons."

For their work on liquid armor, Wetzel and his team were awarded the 2002 Paul A. Siple Award, the Army's highest award for scientific achievement, at the Army Science Conference.

'Liquid armor could even be applied to jump boots, so that they would stiffen during impact to support Soldiers' ankles.'

Dr. Eric Wetzel

School: Cont. from page 1

them,” said Sgt. Johnnie Stephenson. The list is in three parts, English, Pashto and then phonetically. Stephenson not only goes over these words with the kids, but also fills in for the teacher and quizzes the students on spelling of words.

While the students are on their break between lessons, the Soldiers use this time to bridge the gap between our two cultures. While the students are eating their snack, the Soldiers talk with them, bring out their remote control car or break out Eddie – a puppet that Stephenson bought specifically for the class.

“I thought he would be a good way to get the interest of the kids,” said Stephenson, who had never used a puppet before, but has now mastered the basics. “They love Eddie, if I don’t bring him to class they get mad.”

Eddie, who is named after Eddie

Murphy because of his character in the movie Shrek, is a donkey in Arab attire and sunglasses.

Not all the learning is taught by the teachers. While the children are in their classes, the village elders who accompany the students to Salerno gather in the shade of a tent and chat about what is going on in their villages and in the area.

“Besides wanting to teach the local children English, we also wanted to get a picture of what is going on in the villages around our base,” said Cosgriff. “And this provides it.”



One of the school's two teachers goes over the day's words.

working at the school has helped give him a new perspective on what we have in the United States.

“I just felt a need to give something back for all that I have gotten,” Williams said. “Not everyday can we fight hand-to-hand on the battlefield, but this school gives us a new way to make an impact with the Afghan people and on the War on Terrorism.”

Williams said that



ABOVE: Spc. Scott Kiddy entertains the students during a break in lessons with his remote control car. LEFT: A student takes his turn at subject-verb agreement.



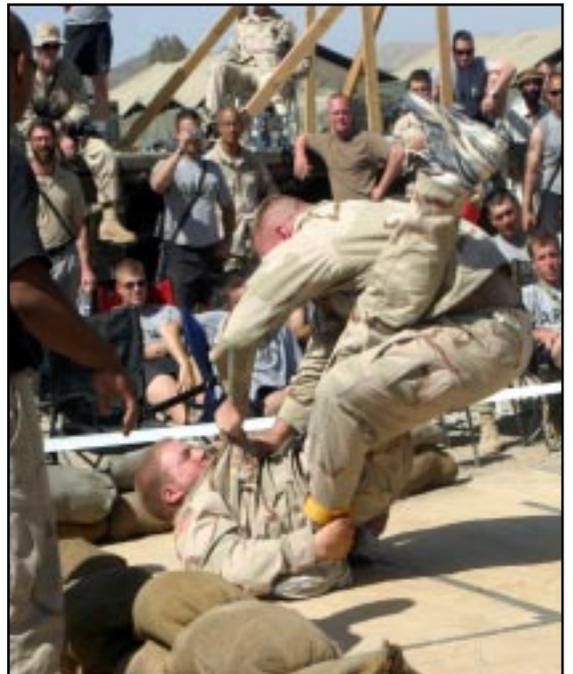
Combative fighting



Thirty-two FOB Salerno Soldiers and Marines took to the mat April 17 for a Combative Fighting Tournament. The contestants sparred off in four weight classes. Honors went to: light weight Spc. Jonathan Jansen, Co. C; middle weight Staff Sgt. Robert Mustoe, Co. B; light heavy weight Spc. David Barber, Co. C; and heavy weight Spc. Alex Rudisky, HQ Co. ABOVE LEFT: Sgt. Edgar Colon, Co. B, prepares to body slam Maj. Ray Mederos, Marine 773 HMLA.

ABOVE RIGHT: Sgt. Robert Gill, Bat. B, 377th PFAR, is declared the winner by Cpt. Jason Good after a match. BELOW RIGHT: Sgt. Kent Newland, Co. A, holds onto Spc. David McGuire, HQ Co., to wind up on top. BELOW LEFT: Mederos earns four points for a rear mount on Colon. LEFT: Good and Sgt. Ken Pajinag, Co. C, stop combatives, 1st Lt. Graig Cooper, HQ Co., and Gil as they carry their battle to the edge of the platform.

**PHOTOS BY
STAFF SGT.
JEFF TROTH**



Qatar gives troops respite from Afghan

Story and Photos by
Spc. Michael Hale

Forward Support Company

If you ask me to describe my trip to Qatar in seven words or less, I'd say: "I can't, I had too much fun!"

It's wasn't "mandatory fun" (if you don't know what that is, you haven't been in the Army long enough), but it was fun, and it should be mandatory.

Why? To get away from these rocks, go to lots of sand and spend a whole lot of money. Well, at least that's what "They" say. (By the way, if you find "They" please send him to our CP, because my chain of command and I want to talk to him about some of the rumors he's been spreading.)

Anyway, it doesn't take a whole lot of money in Qatar. I only took \$100 with me. No, you don't *have* to pay to get offpost - there's a family sponsorship setup which will take you sightseeing in town for free.

No, you don't have to worry about paying for your food - they have a world class DFAC there. So, I don't know what the horror story is all about! I spent \$80 while I was

in Qatar, and that included about \$35 for two trips.

Now, on Camp Al Saliyah - the base you actually lodge at, they have a Burger King that I never went to because I made the mistake of having lunch at the DFAC on my first day. DFAC's burgers are whopper sized, with grilled buns. They'll throw your choice of bacon, mushrooms, onions and/or cheese on it.

There is also a self-serve sandwich bar that offers a wide variety. Two parlor-style ice cream bars were flanked by at least 10 televisions receiving different satellite fed channels from around the world.

The DFAC also has awesome omelets and does very good on the dinner side too. Did Burger King have a chance?

Trip one was to the Mall in Doha. A powerful, grand masterpiece of modern building: spacious, clean, brightly lit, well appointed, it was also very American and very expensive (this is probably where "They" spent money).

Plenty of restaurants, some entertainment, and a small waterfall. It was easily the second largest mall I had been to.

McDonald's, Subway, Pizza Hut - all of that

was there, along with a lot of trendy fashion shops and a hybrid Super Wal-mart/Safeway wanna-be.

I'm told that there were more "local" style shops at the lowest level (it has 4 occupied levels and the 5th isn't open yet). But the prices I saw were much higher than what's at home, and the "local goods" I'm sure we can buy here at Hajji-Mart for better prices.

There is a Chili's and other sights in Doha, but that was another trip (that I didn't go on) - but my companions said it was enjoyable.

OK, so I didn't spend a lot of money. What did I spend? Time away from here! Weaponless, dutyless, and in civilian clothing!

Camp Al-Saliyah had two places to use phones and high-speed internet, and it was great to be able to use them as often as I wanted, as long as wanted.

I had a lot of time to think about all the things we'd done out here - but I didn't use it for that. Sleeping on an actual mattress took a little getting used to, but I spent so much time going to the PX and surfing the net that I didn't get to use them much.

The most memorable portion of my trip? There's a little place in the



Spc. Michael Hale takes time to during his R&R for conversation and coffee at The Coffee Cafe.



Coffee and conversation aren't the only things to do while at The Coffee Cafe. Muffins and cakes are a sweet reminder of home.

See QATAR page 7

Rank for their job

Two Geronimos were recently promoted to the rank for the position they have held since deploying to Afghanistan six months ago. RIGHT: Cpt. Jin Park, commander Forward Support Company, was promoted by Lt. Col. Harry C. Glenn, III, and 1st Lt. Caleb Lewis, FSC executive officer. BELOW: Detachment D First Sergeant Mark Imler has his E-7 rank cut off by First Sgt. Kerry Guthrie, Company C. BELOW RIGHT: Newly arrived First Sgt. Ernest Bowen, Company A, receives his diamond from Glenn and Command Sgt. Maj. David Turnbull.



Qatar: Cont. from page 6

Doha Mall 4th level called “The Coffee Cottage” with an ambiance that was in stark but quiet contrast to the spacious multi-level shopping plaza it was in.

I was served by a very professional team, and the cappuccino, latte and dessert was fantastic. So, instead of wandering around, I peacefully sat there for an hour or so reading and chatting from time to time with the staff.

The part that was most exciting? Living in a Toyota Landcruiser commercial. There were at least 8 of them, all very new, nice and clean. For my second paid trip, the locals took us for a ride on what is called “The Desert Safari”, which is misleading because you only see a few camels.

We rode up and down dunes - those guys had mad skills - driving



Task Force Soldiers prepare for a Desert Safari, one of the tours available on R&R.

sideways on inclines, gliding down 60 degree slopes, spraying sand and making cuts that few could do. One member of our group asked, “You ever roll one?” Our driver, with a toothy grin and heavy accent answered, “Three times, once with my brother.”

We ended the trip at a real beach, watching the sun go down over the hills, and eating some kebabs prepared by a cater.

Well we made it back, and things were hectic at Bagram, so it’s good to be back “home” for a couple more months (home is where I keep my coffee grinder, and it’s in Salerno).

After a few refreshing days in Qatar, finishing my time here in Salerno will be a breeze. I’m back, alert, and ready to roll!

NOTE: As of April 23 over 275 Geronimos have participated in the R&R pass program to Qatar.



ASK MSG NORDSTROM

If you have a question for MSG Nordstrom, drop it off at the ALOC.

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
Why won't the Air Force land during the summer time? I want my mail.
Yours Truly, Mail-less in Salerno

Dear Nobody Likes You,
Good question. For some reason they all seem to find reasons not to come here. Guess they are scared to get stuck here overnight, they don't want to. And it isn't just the mail, for those of you that have been wondering about the PX, a new shipment was purchased at BAF almost three weeks ago, and it is still "awaiting transport." Maybe I can get some of my old Pony Express pardos to give them a hand.
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
Who is better at combatives -- the S3 shop or the prophet team?
Respectively, Scuffed up on the Mat

Dear Missing the Obvious,
Obviously the S3 shop. Those stories of the female prophet beating my guys are greatly exaggerated. SPC Henry only lost a couple of times.
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
I was wondering if our current water problem might be solved if KBR quit using so much water to boil our steaks and tried grilling them instead. Is that an option?
Signed, Starving for a Super Supper

Dear Super Spoiled,
Leave the cooks alone. You could be eating MREs three times a day. Think positive, someday your baby teeth will fall out and you'll grow permanent ones, which making eating much, much easier.
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
I was at officer PT and was disappointed that the S1 and AS3 didn't get into a fight. What happened to the good old fashioned scrapes they were getting into?
Signed, Fight Club Groupie

Dear LT,
After the S1 tapped out from a submission hold by the CSM, he figured he better leave the AS3 alone. I'm just amazed that the officers not only do PT, but they know how to spell it.
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
I've noticed the long lines at the DFAC lately, and I heard that the population on the FOB is going to double, how long are the lines going to be then?
Signed, Waiting Patiently

Dear WP,
Be glad you have a DFAC and it is not three MREs a day. I guess you wouldn't be a soldier if you weren't griping about something. Just wait, in a few more months you can be standing in the lunch line at the Richardson BK.
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
Why don't all the tents have AC? It's HOT!!!
Signed, Still Sweaty in my Sleep

OK, Girlyboy,
Enough. As soon as they get all the equipment in; KBR will get your AC set up. I will make sure that your name is at the bottom of the list. Til then, go volunteer for OP on one of the mountains, you will be plenty cool up there.
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
What is up with all these reporters o? Everytime I go out on mission or round a tent there is someone there with a camera.
Respectfully, Camera Shy

Dear SFC Dryer,
OK, I know you don't like cameras, but this way your wife and the rest of your family get to find out what "the elite 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment" (to quote one reporter) is up to over here. They know where the story is, it is where ever you put a Geronimo, and currently that is here on the border. Plus, if I had a face like yours, I wouldn't want it photographed either.
MSGN

E	T	O	V	O	T	T	H	G	I	R	S	O	E	S
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OEF

How many of the following things that Operation Enduring Freedom has brought to the Afghan people can you locate in the puzzle?

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| DEMOCRACY | RIGHT TO VOTE |
| EMPLOYMENT | SCHOOLS |
| FOOD | SECURITY |
| FREE PRESS | STABILITY |
| FREEDOM | TRACTORS |
| GENERATORS | TRASH TRUCKS |
| MEDICAL | VETERINARIAN |
| PEACE | WATER |
| POLICE | WELLS |