



## IED damages HMMWV, not mission

Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

The day's mission was supposed to be a simple one – deliver police uniforms to sub district commanders.

This is a mission which Battery B had done for the three days prior to heading out the gate June 9. But this mission would not be the same. As they traveled to make their first delivery of uniforms, one of their communication systems kept cutting out.

The convoy halted in an open area, where the threat level for an ambush would be low, and replaced the antenna.

Problem fixed, the convoy was ready to roll out when an explosion ripped through the silence of the Afghan valley.

Antitank mines exploded near a HMMWV sending dirt over 60 feet into the sky.

“I think the guy buried the mines too deep,” said Sgt. First Class Timothy Andrews. “The explosion can only push the dirt sideways so much then it all has to go up.”

The blast created a crater that was approximately five feet deep and seven to eight feet in circumference. The flying dirt ripped off part of the HMMWV's hood, and shattered the windows, but everything else was untouched, including the



As the IED's dirt cloud begins to settle on the two HMMWVs soldiers are already scanning the ridge lines for further possible threats.

tire which was on the edge of the crater.

“I was glad that I stayed in the vehicle to monitor the radios during the halt,” said Spc. David Larson, the driver of the damaged vehicle. “If I would have been pulling security I would have been next to the tire, where the crater is.”

The explosion not only had the U.S. Soldiers keeping an eye out for a possible attack, but the Afghan police from the village of Bak, located two kilometers away from the explosion were on the scene within minutes. The police officers quickly took up positions on the rugged hills east and west of the site.

“I was very impressed by how quickly the police re-

sponded,” Andrews said.

But the quickness of the local police and the Marine Cobra helicopters, which came from Salerno to give eyes in the sky, could not locate the person who triggered the improvised explosive device.

Also dispatched from the FOB was the task force scouts to give a maneuver element if there was any trouble ahead. While the Soldiers waited for the scouts to arrive, the convoy, to include the damaged vehicle went to Bak, and continued with their mission of distributing the uniforms to the police force.

See **UNIFORM** page 4



Sgt. First Class Timothy Andrews (right) and an interpreter, talk with Police Chief Gul Rahim about al-Qaeda in his area.

## The World

### U.S. kills more than 80 militants

In the bloodiest fighting this year, U.S. Marines killed more than 80 insurgents in a three-week offensive against a Taliban stronghold in the mountains of southern Afghanistan.

The U.S. military insisted the battle was a victory that will help secure fall elections — rather than a sign of the resilience of Taliban-led militants.

Two Marines were wounded in the fighting.

### Pakistan holds 10 al-Qaeda suspects

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan - Pakistani authorities have arrested 10 suspected al-Qaeda members, including a nephew of terrorism mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who has been in U.S. custody the past year. The men were arrested over the weekend in separate raids in the southern port city of Karachi, Interior Minister Faisal Saleh Hayat said.

Among them was Masrab Arochi, a nephew of Mohammed, the former al-Qaeda third-in-command who was captured in March 2003 in a city near the Pakistani capital. Arochi had a \$1 million bounty on his head, Hayat said, and is believed to have been behind several attacks in Pakistan.

### Pentagon wasted \$100 million on tickets

The Pentagon wasted \$100 million over six years on airline tickets, a report revealed on Wednesday.

The Pentagon's weak internal controls "led to millions of dollars wasted on airline tickets that were unused and not refunded, and millions more where DOD made payments to travelers for improper and potentially fraudulent claims," the report by the General Accounting Office said.

The GAO said the \$100 million estimate of waste on airline tickets from 1997-2002 was conservative.

It said limited data provided by the Defense Department showed it had bought about 58,000 tickets worth about \$21.1 million in 2001 and 2002 that were not used and not refunded as of October 2003.

Also, three airlines reported that the Department bought more than 81,000 tickets for more than \$62 million that were only partially used.

The GAO also said the Pentagon paid million of dollars in improper reimbursements for potentially fraudulent claims for airline tickets. Some Pentagon employees submitted multiple claims for tickets they did not purchase, with one traveler getting nearly \$10,000 for tickets he did not buy.

At least one case has been turned over for prosecution.

## FOB faces

### What is your favorite MRE?



*Beef stew, it tastes just like home made food, plus all of the side items are good.*

Spc. Brinson Richardson  
Company C



*Jambalaya, cause it almost reminds me of home.*

Cpt. James Reiss  
HML/A-773



*I take whatever MRE I want from any other soldier, because I can and then I tell them to rollout or get hurt? Hooah.*

Staff Sgt. John Nieves  
HQ Company, sapper platoon



*Chicken and noodles, taste good with cheese and I get a good snack.*

Spc. Mario Payne  
Company A, 528th Engineer Battalion



# New MRE drink pouches to be fielded

NATICK, Mass. — Pouches that can be resealed may soon change the way troops drink in the field.

Drink pouches developed at the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Mass., in partnership with packaging companies, allow warfighters to pour water into a package holding a powder mix, shake and consume the beverage from the opening. If they want to save some for a little later, the plastic zipper seal holds it in.

Often they didn't bother preparing a beverage in a separate container. Field data showed that about half of the Soldiers are not consuming the Meal, Ready-to-Eat or MRE beverage base mix because of the inconvenience of using and cleaning the canteen cup, said Lauren Milch, a physical scientist at Combat Feeding who managed package development. Pouring the mix into a canteen full of water is prohibited according to Army doctrine, so the packages are frequently thrown away unopened.

The 12-ounce beverage pouch is the first project of the Individual Combat Ration Team's Improved Packaging for Combat Rations program aimed at reducing packaging and increasing consumption, said Vicki Loveridge, a senior food technologist and project officer for improved packaging.

She said including a resealable plastic bag was a partial solution, but the drink pouch takes care of everything by replacing the current dry mix package with a disposable drinking vessel.

Originally intended to replace the MRE beverage base mix, the beverage pouches could be used for any of the military ration beverages or liquid foods, such as dairy shakes. For hot cappuccino or cocoa, the pouch was designed to fit into the flameless ration heater.

A rectangular drink pouch with a

plastic zipper was evaluated in 1991, but it was shelved because the cost was considered "extravagant" at 25 cents apiece, Loveridge said.

In the last three years researchers developed prototype pouches with a non-reclosable tear-off spout, reclosable sports-type pull cap and a twist-off cap that were studied along with the final package design.

"We wanted something reusable, and they didn't want or need (a pouch) to stand up, just a way to set it down," Loveridge said. "The extra expense of a stand-up pouch was unnecessary, and it's a harder pouch to keep from cracking."

In the first evaluation with a twist-off cap pouch in 2001, 91 percent of the troops consumed their beverages, but the twist-off cap was too bulky and expensive. The latest prototype has a tear-off portion just above a resealable interlocking plastic zipper on top and slight hourglass shape for easy holding.

"What's very different from what you see at the grocery store is the zipper with a multi-laminate foil and three-year shelf life requirement," Loveridge said. "It's difficult to incorporate a zipper without compromising the foil."

With four studies already showing substantial percentage increases in the number of troops using the beverage pouch, another field test is scheduled to determine how warfighter performance improves with increased hydration.

An order of 7,000 beverage pouches has been placed for two Combat Feeding developmental products, the Remote Unit Self Heated Meal and First Strike Ration, according to Loveridge. An electrolyte-based drink powder beverage pouch was approved for four varieties of the 2004 MRE menu and could be fielded as soon as September.

"The drink pouch is something they really need, and it's designed to add minimal cost," Milch said. "We hope it takes off in popularity like the mini bottles of Tabasco sauce and flameless ration heater."

## MRE CHANGES

### MRE XXIV 2004

#### IN:

Veggie griller w/ BBQ sauce  
Mexican macaroni & cheese  
Cajun rice with sausage  
Cheese spread with bacon  
Carrot cake  
Molasses cookie  
Toffee crunch cookie  
Kreamsicle cookie  
Dried cranberries  
Red hot cinnamon candies  
Peanut M&Ms®  
Refried beans

#### OUT:

Bean and rice burrito  
Turkey breast with potatoes  
Buttered noodles

### MRE XXV 2005

#### IN:

Penne w/ spicy tomato sauce  
Sloppy Joe filling  
Chicken fajita  
Cheese omelet w/ vegetables  
Tortillas  
Hash browns w/ bacon  
Smoke house almonds  
Ranger bar  
Cheese Nips  
Raisins (osmotically dried)  
White chocolate/raspberry cookie  
Scone, cinnamon  
Blueberry-cherry cobbler  
Carbohydrate Fortified Beverage  
Carbohydrate Electrolyte Beverage  
Hot Beverage Bag  
Jalapeno ketchup  
Steak sauce

#### OUT:

Pasta w/ vegetables in tomato sauce  
Thai chicken  
Country Captain chicken  
Beef teriyaki  
Beverage base



**ABOVE:** Ramos Torres, Co. A, goes up and back for a shot against Battery B's Robert Gill. **RIGHT:** Co. A's Richard Suchy looks for an opening against the tough defense of team Roll the Dice.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

## Salerno Sports

**BASKETBALL** Company A, 528th Engineer Battalion, won hoop honors at the basketball tournament held on Salerno May 30. Team members were, Eric Loche, Eric Downs, Marquis Williams, Arthur Lee and Derrick Fletcher.

Second place went to the team of HQ Co., TF 1-501st PIR; Duane Gwynn, Tchaka Cain, Leundrea Giles, Brian Cornelius and Henry Thomas.

**FOOTBALL** HQ Company, TF 1-501st Parachute Infantry Regiment took top honors in the flag football competition June 6. Co. A, 528th Engineer Battalion came in second.

## Uniform: Cont. from page 1

"We have many guys here and they all have different uniforms," said Gul Rahim, police commandant for the sub-district of Bak. "Now all our police will have the same uniform, people will know they are the police."

Rahim's men are just 80 out of the 950 police officers in the Khowst bowl that will get the new uniform, which consists of a cap, shirt, pants, boots, socks, belt and a Afghan Police crest.

Each of these men received a pistol belt, baton and handcuffs upon their graduation from the police academy in

Kabul.

According to Andrews, coalition forces are approaching the establishment of the Afghan police force in three areas: uniforms, training and equipment. Each of the 12 subdistricts that task force 1-501<sup>st</sup> PIR is responsible for has also received a Toyota hi-lux truck and a motorcycle.

"I make monthly visits to each of the subdistricts to see what their needs are," said Andrew. "And I meet with the district commander, Col. M o h a m m a d Zaman weekly."

One request Andrews received on this day from a police commandant was for cell phones so they could communicate between their headquarters and



U.S. Soldiers and Afghan police stand by the HMMWV damaged by the IED.

one of their checkpoints, which is out of range for the two-way radios they had been given by the task force. Andrews told him that radio repeaters were going to be put in so that the radios would not only reach to the checkpoint, but also back to the police district headquarters in Khowst.

"All these things help to legitimize the Afghan police force," said Andrews. "The uniforms make them more noticeable as well as increase their morale and their pride in what they are doing. This is better for them, and their country."



Spc. David Larson helps Afghan police carry uniforms into their compound, while other Battery B soldiers pull security.

# A final salute to my President

By TFA

*“Our time is now. If we carry the day and turn the tide, we can hope that as long as men speak of freedom and those who have protected it, they will remember us, and they will say, ‘Here were the brave and here their place of honor.’”*

President Ronald Reagan



On Friday, June 11, 2004, Ronald Wilson Reagan, America’s 40<sup>th</sup> President, was laid to rest. Following a State Funeral – the first in thirty years – President Reagan was flown back to Simi Valley, California, as the sun set on the western coast.

A man who believed that it was always morning in America, he left a legacy that deserves our remembrance and preservation.

For some of us in uniform Ronald Reagan was our first Commander-in-Chief; for others, like myself, he was the leader of our nation as we grew up in his America, believing that there was no greater service a citizen could provide than to be a part of the military.

I was in the third grade when I decided that I wanted to join the Army.

My mother made me watch 15 minutes of the news every morning before catching the bus for school. Almost every day, the President spoke to me through that TV in our basement.

I remember the day he was shot and being con-

fused that such a thing could happen in my country. When he healed and returned to duty, he instantly became a young boy’s hero – a man who even a bullet couldn’t stop.

As a young man, I learned a great deal from my President as he conducted the affairs for the mightiest nation on earth. Not only did I believe him that America was the last best hope for mankind and that our rendezvous with destiny would result in the World seeing us as a shining city upon a hill, but I also learned what true leadership and character looks like.

Ronald Reagan showed courage when our troops went into Grenada and during the bombing of the barracks in Beirut.

He showed conviction when he ordered the bombing of Libya in retaliation for terrorist attacks.

He showed compassion as a nation mourned the loss of the Challenger astronauts – an incident that impacted every school age child who had waited in anticipation for the first teacher in space.

He showed commitment as he challenged the Soviet leader to go to Berlin and tear down that wall.

As Margaret Thatcher, former British Prime Minister, said about him on Friday, “He knew his mind” and Ronald Reagan was not afraid to do what he knew was right and just, regardless of what others thought or what the consequences might be.

Without a doubt, one of President Reagan’s greatest qualities was his humor. He loved a good story and enjoyed laughing.

He was able to take the most tedious or challenging task and make it seem light because of the attitude that defined him and was reflected in his warm smile.

His optimism was contagious. His pride in our nation was addictive.

I remember watching him speak at a college campus where the students greeted him with chants of “USA, USA, USA.” Ronald Reagan believed in the American spirit and that we would always possess the capacity to meet any crisis with victory and success.

Furthermore, he inspired us to face life’s difficulties with not only determination but also a joyful heart.

I am grateful to my brother and his wife who stayed up all night driving and standing in line last week at the Reagan Library in Simi Valley to pass by “The Gipper” and salute him for me. I toured the library with them a couple years

ago and found it amazing to relive the history this man had both experienced and contributed.

Over the past week, thousands, in California and Washington, D.C., have passed by this great man’s coffin and paid their final respects. Although I wish I could have been in their ranks, I know that he’d be proud of us who remember him from here, thousands of miles from home, serving our country.

He always loved and respected those few who sacrifice so much for so many.

President Reagan will always be the standard that I compare against for all leaders that I serve under. His example is what ought to be expected of those who lead nations, military units, or any organization.

He never wore his title except to help those whom he loved most: America’s citizens. Ronald Reagan believed in our future, in our history, and in our purpose as a people and a nation.

He knew that our values and virtues were worth teaching to our children and, when challenged, worth sacrificing our lives in their defense.

I will not speak for you, but I pray that God will allow me to devote my life to ensuring that what President Ronald Reagan stood for will not soon be forgotten. Not on my watch.

Sir, I salute you and thank you for teaching me what it means to be an American.

# Task Force remembers Geronimo heros

Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

As the sun started to set, soldiers of Task Force 1-501st Parachute Infantry Regiment came together to remember those who saw their last sunset June 5, 1944.

“Sixty years ago on this very evening, and at about this time, young men, the very first paratroopers of 1st of the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, boarded aircraft in England enroute to the greatest endeavor in our Army’s history,” said Capt. Aram Donigian, the task force adjutant and narrator for the D-day Remembrance Ceremony. “Their courage, their spirit and their eventual victory, were not born in a day, but were tested and tried through months and years of preparation. They defined Geronimo and we remember them today.”

As night fell on June 6, 1944, the Geronimos had lost 127 of their buddies, another 86 would die of wounds received that day. A total of 240 died to secure a foot hold in Normandy, more than a third of all 501st Soldiers who died during World War II.

“On June 5, 1945, the paratroopers of the 501st part of 101st Airborne Division, the 82nd Airborne Division and the 1st British Airborne Division loaded C-47 transport planes and

jumped into the dark on a hot dropzone,” said Lt. Col. Harry C. Glenn, III, task force commander. “Much blood was shed on D-day and many lives were lost during the course of WWII, but total victory was achieved.”

Glenn told the paratroopers that the very deeds and sacrifices of those great Americans helped solidify and shape our nation. They helped to define what the Soldiers of today are fighting for.

“They laid the very foundation and expectation that Geronimos have upheld in Vietnam and Afghanistan,” Glenn said. “Today we also take a minute to honor each of you who serve our nation in a time of need.

“As President Bush said after 9-11, ‘We are fighting for the security of our people for the success of our ideas and for the stability in large parts of the world. Our cause is just, we will not tire, we will not falter, we will not fail.’”

He went on to tell the paratroopers that their predecessors had succeeded in all missions given to them despite huge adversity, and that the Geronimos in Afghanistan were following in those footsteps “accomplishing every mission to a standard others can only hope to achieve.”

Glenn said that the WWII vets, who are dying at a rate of 1,100 per day, have left behind a legacy and today’s Geronimos stand ready in the heartland of terrorism, adding new chapters to that legacy.

“You are the newest generation of American heroes, and it is my privilege to serve with each of you,” Glenn said.

The task force then took time to recognize their newest heroes. The combat infantryman badge and combat medical badge were presented to those Geronimos who were not present for the May 1 ceremony.

Five paratroopers were awarded their second CIB, 81 received their first CIB, and three medics pinned on CMBs. Two soldiers were also presented with Purple Hearts for injuries they sustained during the May 21 rocket attack.

The ceremony concluded with Command Sergeant

Major David Turnbull conducting roll call.

“Staff Sgt. Ralston.”

“Here Sergeant Major,” said the



ABOVE: Cpt. Steven Natole, HQ Co. commander, pins on Spc. Cyneathia Smith’s CMB. LEFT: Cpt. Liam Connor, Co. C executive officer, along with his company render a salute during taps.

Company A paratrooper.

“Spc. Loyd.”

“Here Sergeant Major,” said the  
Battery B Soldier.

“Spc. Patton.”

“Here Sergeant Major,” said the  
Company C Geronimo.

“Pfc. Lyons.”

“Pfc. Robert Lyons.”

“Pfc. Robert A. Lyons.”

Lyons was a paratrooper with Com-  
pany A who gave his life in Normandy  
June 6, 1944.



Staff Sgt. Eric  
Dooling and Sgt.  
Toby Key, along  
with the rest of the  
task force applaud  
those being  
honored.

Staff Sgt. Robert  
Mustoe pins the  
CIB on Pfc.  
Joshue Neri.  
1st Sgt. Mark  
Imler, Detachment  
D first sergeant,  
congratulates Pfc.  
Arron McMullen  
on his CIB.



## Why?

By First Sgt. Thomas S. Ballard

*What makes them do what they do, you ask?  
What makes them rise to the most unpleasant task?  
What makes them leave their families alone?  
What makes them want to right the world's wrongs?*

*What makes them face danger in faraway lands?  
What makes them go to battle  
and get blood on their hands?  
What makes them care for others,  
when they see not their own?  
What makes them spend holidays and birthdays alone?*

*What makes them earn less than blue-collar wages?  
What makes them quell foreign dictator's rages?  
Who are these people that live this strange life?  
Who trades in their comfort  
for a world full of strife?*

*Why they do it is simple  
and their names are well known  
They do it for their country,  
the young men and women are your own  
They have a sense of duty to protect  
both the free and oppressed  
They continue the fight  
until it is over, and do it without rest*

*Their faces show signs of fatigue and of wear  
Sometimes it is more  
than these young souls can bear  
However, forward they keep moving  
with the country's goal in sight  
Facing challenges every day,  
focused on winning with all their might*

*One day they will go home,  
but they do not know when  
This is the reality of existence for fighting men  
It is not a life for the weak or fainthearted  
Regardless of price, they must finish what is started*



## ASK MSG NORDSTROM

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

Dear MSG Nordstrom,  
Why would the Army extend us for a third time and not give us our 2-weeks of mid-tour leave?  
Signed, Needing a Break

Dear NAB,  
When I was in the Civil War we didn't get any leave and we sure didn't whine about staying anywhere. Just look at the perks: gravel roads and walkways, showers with warm water, AC units, KBR, etc. If you really need a break, do what I do and take a HONSA (Hour Of No Scheduled Activities). Amazing just how good it feels.  
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,  
I enjoy a cold milk at night before going to bed, however, KBR has stopped serving milk at dinner. Can you help? I'm not sleeping well.  
Signed, Tossing in my Sleep

Dear Weaned a Little Too Early,  
Open your MRE, break out your creamer packet, add a little water, and drink away. Sweet dreams, kid.  
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,  
Who was the genius that tried scheduling a dance competition for Salerno? Haven't they seen the male/female ratio?!  
Signed, Cha Cha Chachee

Dear CCC,  
You bring up a great point. Last time I checked we are in a combat zone and dancing the night away isn't one of the keys to victory. Maybe we're hoping we will win them over by showing off the skills of Miss Salerno – she is back from her R&R to Qatar!  
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,  
Is it true that there are more soldiers having ankle injuries now that we have a basketball court and that the medics have run out of crutches?  
Signed, The Gimp

Dear Gimpy,  
First of all, the only court I know about is the one they take you to when you run away in the face of enemy fire. Second, how can we be out of crutches when there are still trees with branches? Suck it up, Laker Boy!  
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,  
I heard someone had an "accident" in the Juneau shower. How could someone have such a lack of bodily control?  
Signed, Stinking in the Boys Room

Dear Potty School Dropout,  
Well, there are some folks that I wouldn't put it past but I honestly attribute it to the explosive intestinal problems that the medics have briefed about in their health threat briefs. I'll admit it keeps the line down for the showers. Just keep your flip flops on!  
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,  
Why does the FSC always have the best BBQs? Do they have a secret in?  
Signed, BBQ Groupie

Dear S3,  
Must be nice knowing when everyone is having their "company" BBQ. I think FSC has the best cookouts because Wardog 6 trades kim chi for extra steaks. Or, it could be due to the effectiveness of the so-called FSC live fires. I wondered what they were using for targets.  
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,  
I notice you've been stepping up your PT plan. Are you trying to get into the 300lbs (+) bench press club in the gym?  
Signed, Pumpin' You Up

Dear Arnold,  
Thanks for noticing. Despite being excessively overworked and under appreciated, I have been getting a few extra lifts in during the week – just want to show the AS3 and Battle Captains what a real stud looks like. Gotta keep the young men humble!  
MSGN

N	C	H	I	C	K	E	N	S	S	S	H	S	O	D
U	B	A	C	O	N	K	G	S	U	B	U	S	E	U
G	P	T	S	A	C	G	R	P	U	P	U	T	I	E
G	E	R	R	T	E	E	E	R	E	E	C	S	A	S
E	C	E	N	L	I	R	S	R	E	S	T	E	A	K
T	O	C	A	K	S	R	S	I	E	C	I	R	O	T
S	N	E	L	A	L	U	G	O	R	P	A	C	S	A
S	R	A	P	A	P	H	C	N	U	R	B	K	E	Y
T	A	P	S	P	E	M	E	A	T	L	O	A	F	N
S	E	G	E	P	E	V	T	A	U	T	K	A	E	A
R	O	R	S	P	A	G	H	E	T	T	I	K	S	C
C	S	S	L	S	C	K	A	S	I	S	C	H	C	L
I	P	E	E	O	D	A	L	A	S	I	L	A	O	P
B	R	N	E	K	C	I	H	C	H	E	C	B	R	I
C	R	A	B	L	E	G	S	C	Y	R	A	A	N	L

## DFAC

How many of the following foods can you find in the puzzle, which can also be found on the DFAC serving line?

BACON  
BRUNCH  
CHICKEN  
CHICKEN  
CHICKEN  
CORN  
CRABLEGS  
GRITS  
MEATLOAF

NUGGETS  
REAL EGGS  
RICE  
SALAD  
SOS  
SPAGHETTI  
STEAK  
SUPER SUPPER  
VEAL