



Combined Task Force Chesapeake

APRIL 2013

ISSUE 5

Female Engagement Team Making a Difference

By: SPC Kenith Walker



(Right to Left) SGT Gaskin, Linguist, SPC Wright, SGT Kovacevich, and SPC Nunez in front of the operations building

SPC Isis Nunez (Military Police), SGT Mary Kovacevich (Ammo Specialist), SPC Samantha Wright (Medic), and SGT Janae Gaskin came together with a common purpose. That purpose is to train, mentor, and assist female Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) officers as they prepare to serve alongside their male counterparts in providing safety and security for the local population of Kandahar City. The Female Engagement Team, commonly known at the 'FET' in military lexicon is comprised of Soldiers from the Ready First Brigade (First Brigade, First Armored Division, Fort Bliss, TX) and attached to Combined Task Force Chesapeake for the purpose of supporting AUP

professionalization. These soldiers are 'force multipliers' and bring many skills to the fight in support of our mission. First, in order to be considered FET, Soldiers must complete a training series highlighting police tactics, medical skills, and Basic Intel Gathering. In addition to their established curriculum, all FET candidates must attend the US Army Language School. Once Training has been completed, the FET candidates are awarded the special skilled identifier as a certified (G3F) Female Engagement Team.

These remarkable Soldiers have established themselves as elite coaches and trainers, supporting the female Afghan Police candidates as they complete a two week comprehensive training curriculum. Each block of instruction is challenging for the Afghan female candidates; however, their perseverance and courage seem to overcome the hurdles. The FET is also proficient in Pashto and Dari, which helps break down the language barrier and maximizes valuable training time. The training modules taught to the female Afghan candidates consist of Rule of Law, Escalation of Force, Weapons familiarization (AK47 and 9mm Smith & Wesson), Basic First Aid, Counter IED, Proper Search Procedures, Situational Awareness and Street level Engagement, detention of female inmates, and searching females at check points. Upon completion of training, all female Afghan police officers receive a certificate of completion and a first aid validation card.

The FET reports to the Combined Task Force Chesapeake Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) development officer, SFC Floyd Toomey who provides leadership, management, and planning support. There is no question, the FET will continue to succeed under this construct, and will have plenty of opportunities to excel in the future.



Haji Ustead and LTC Collins conduct a Key Leader Engagement regarding security in Kandahar City.



CHESAPEAKE 6

**LTC ANDREW W. COLLINS, 115th MP BN
BATTALION COMMANDER**

Soldiers, Families, and Friends,

As we forge into April, the tempo of operations is starting to gain momentum and will continue to increase over the next few months. I remain astounded at the professionalism demonstrated by the Soldiers of Combined Task Force Chesapeake.

The Soldiers continue to focus on security of Kandahar City, training the Afghan Uniformed Police, force protection, and retrograde. One area in the band of excellence is force protection – Leaders taking care of Soldiers, and Soldiers taking care of each other. They are given tough challenges, either pulling a 12 hour guard shift or reacting to an Improvised Explosive Device. No day is the same as the one before, and the tenacity of our NCO corps will, no doubt, ensure our success and safe return home.

I would like to take a moment to remember the fallen Soldiers from Task Force Falcon. They were responsible for ensuring units in our area of operations were aware of events occurring on the ground, provided medical evacuation, and air mobility. I also want to thank our Dark Knights for your expeditious response to those incidents. As we move forward, we must remember what we have accomplished and continue to take the fight to the enemy.

I want to personally thank all of the fantastic people and organizations that have sent letters and care packages to CTF Chesapeake. Your continued support has made an absolute impact on the morale of every Soldier. Thank You!

I look forward to reporting the great things Combined Task Force Chesapeake does over the next month. Maryland's Finest! Chesapeake 6 Out!



CHESAPEAKE 7

CSM KIMBERLY MENDEZ, 115th MP BN
BATTALION COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR



CSM Mendez with the Soldier of the Quarter, SPC Stephanie Newton, and 1SG McCall

mission requirements.

Representing CTF Chesapeake at the BDE NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Board will be:

CTF Chesapeake NCO of the Quarter

SGT Peter Bunting 139th MP Co FT. Stewart, GA

CTF Chesapeake Soldier of the Quarter

SPC Stephanie Newton 320th MP Co ST. Petersburg, FL

I continue to be impressed everyday with our Soldiers and NCOs. We wish SGT Bunting and SPC Newton the best as they prepare to compete at the Brigade level.

Congratulations to all the fine NCOs and Soldiers of CTF Chesapeake on your superb performance at the CTF Chesapeake NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Board. The competitors were tested on their military bearing, oral expression, uniform and appearance, and general military knowledge. Each company was represented by one NCO and one Soldier who was chosen at their company level board as the best. I am proud of all the competitors for their dedication to succeed and taking time to prepare in spite of the



Capitol 6

CPT MATTHEW R. STUHR, HHD115th MP BN
COMPANY COMMANDER



OF1 Elezovic and OF1 Romc highlighting mus-tache march.

Family, Friends, and Soldiers:

We've been at war in the middle east for over eleven years now, and as I sit back and reflect on the past decade plus, I've come to a few conclusions;

1. Many of your Soldiers joined the military as a result of the attacks on September 11th knowing they would be put in harms way, and I'm truly humbled to serve alongside such fine Americans willing to sacrifice for their country. I'm also extremely proud of our loved ones back home who have stood by their service members through multiple deployments, training exercises, and long weekends away from home. The majority of Americans haven't felt the burden of our country being at war through a sense of shared sacrifice like we did in

WWII, when people bought war bonds, paid more in taxes, worked in factories building tanks, and sacrificed creature comforts in support of our men and women on the front lines. Our families and friends know that sacrifice all too well, and for that I'm truly thankful.

2. The complexities of the war on terror cannot be measured in a quantifiable or meaningful way; however, Al Qaeda's capabilities have been severely diminished and the threat to our homeland has been reduced significantly. Fighting an insurgency is often a very confusing and uncertain operating environment, and our Soldiers offset those factors by their dynamic decision making, training, and leadership.
3. The face of the National Guard has changed from that of a strategic reserve designed to augment the active component, to a full blown operational reserve capable of deploying and executing our wartime mission with competency and professionalism. Your Soldiers prove this through their actions each day, whether it's standing in the guard tower for an 8 hour shift or the Protective Services Detail (PSD) going out on missions each day protecting and moving our Battalion Commander and Command Sergeant Major around the battle space so they can interface with their Afghan partners.
4. In the last several years, we've had the pleasure of operating alongside our partners from Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH)- undoubtedly one of the most enriching experiences of my life. Most of these Soldiers lived through atrocities and hardships only known to few people around the world. In the 1990s, they fought hard and gained their independence, and now they fight as part of the global coalition with courage and a deep sense of pride for their country. It's truly been inspiring for all of us to witness.



SPC Hayashi is promoted to the rank of SGT.



Capitol 7

SFC PATRICK METZGER, HHD115th MP BN
DETACHMENT FIRST SERGEANT



SFC Metzger (mustache) and newly promoted SGT Hayashi.

Soldiers and Family Members of the 115th

Family, Friends and Soldiers, we are a third of the way through our BOG (Boots on Ground) time here in Afghanistan. Time is moving relatively quick but not quick enough. As the days here on FOB Walton pass by I have had the pleasure along with the HHD Commander to promote many fine Soldiers within our formation. Over the past several weeks I have had the pleasure to welcome many fine Soldiers into the NCO (Non Commissioned Officer) Corps of the United States Army. We have promoted from Specialist to Sergeant the following Soldiers; SGT Randy Downtin, SGT Bryant East, SGT Ma-

sanari Hayashi, SGT Tyler Middleton and SGT Angel Ross. The following have been promoted from Private First Class to Specialist; SPC David Blount, SPC Mulugeta Brtu, SPC Eric Fletcher and SPC Joseph Turner. Last but not least with much hard work and dedication to duty, Private (PV2) Chadwick Thompson was advanced to the rank of Private First Class. In addition to the Soldiers of the 115th, we have also had the pleasure to promote two Soldiers assigned to our attached FET (Female Engagement Team). Both Specialist Janae Gaskin and Mary Kovacevich were advanced to the rank of Sergeant. Please take a moment if you have not already done so to congratulate these fine Soldiers.

To all the family, friends and supporters back home I say thank you for all you do. This month I would like to send a special Thank You to Ms. Danielle Harkins, the girlfriend of my HHD Commander and friend CPT Matthew Stuhr. Ms. Harkins organized a fund raiser back in Ohio at her Spin Class which raised funds which were used to purchase a Television, Blu-Ray, table and chairs for a MWR room for the Soldiers of the 115th MP BN here on the FOB. This comes at just the right time because the FOB MWR building has been closed for several weeks for electrical repair. With the gifts from Ms. Harkins and the USO2GO package we will be receiving in the near future, we will have a well equipped place for our Soldiers to come and relax. Thanks Danielle for all you have done. Please know that each day spent away is another day closer until your Soldiers is home with you. If there is anything that the Chain of Command or I can assist with please contact us.



MAJ Taylor and CW2 Massey (he grew a mustache, but you can't see it...)

603rd MP Company 'Dark Knights'

The Long Road Home



Soldiers are survivors. Any Soldier who has spent even a short amount of time in the Army knows that the right gear can mean success or failure, and that lots of times the right gear can be in short supply. They learn, much like a squirrel stores nuts for winter, to save essential and handy gear against the day it may be needed.

In Afghanistan, for the last 12 years, Soldiers have been storing building materials, vehicle parts, ammunition, tools, nearly anything and everything that might make living better, or make them more likely to get home alive. Abetted by an oft seeming blank check from the Dept of Defense, Soldiers and Units have created quite a footprint of gear on canvas of Afghanistan. Now, finally, with the looming end of combat operations in Afghanistan, and closure of almost all bases, this store of material and equipment has caught up.

This year, bases across the country are closing, some very soon. COP Shurandam is no different, although no publicly acknowledged timetable has been published, the practical realization is that it will happen fast, and the base will have in all likelihood only a few months to undo what has taken years to build in South Kandahar City. To facilitate this withdrawal, the leadership of the 603rd MP CO, the assigned owners of COP Shurandam, has begun an aggressive campaign to reduce anything considered non-essential.

This process began with a several week process of actually figuring out what is here on the COP. Spearheaded by the tireless efforts of SFC Harlow, who was assigned to do an inventory of the equipment the Company is signed for, the Soldiers of the supply section have been cleaning out connexes, sorting items into new locations, and inventorying everything. This was followed by days of work by duty squads and a contract fork lift to lay things out in preparation for transfer to FOB Walton for turn-in.

As with all work on a deployment, completion of a task only uncovers the fertile ground of the next, and the 603rd will be dutifully employed as both partners of the Afghan Uniformed Police, and caretakers of America's material investment in Soldiers and war-fighting. However, this task promises to actually be one of the last in the gritty history still being written about this struggle.





SFAT 1st GARRISON 'ANZIO'



A finished product

Team Anzio has made great strides in our mission to assist the 1st Garrison AUP. We have focused on helping with operational and logistical proficiency within the 1st Garrison staff. We proudly work with our AUP counterparts most days each week to try to get them fully prepared for our eventual departure.

We continue to work with the Higher Education Institute of Karwan (HEIK) to procure more students and slots for future literacy classes. To bring visibility to their program's success could very well mean acceleration in AUP efficiency and self-sufficiency in the long run. If the AUP are able to handle higher level staff tasks, especially as compli-

cated as their logistical systems can be, the trickledown effect could be tremendous.

All of our hard work culminated in some much needed down time for the team. Our 603rd MP force protection squad provided us with essential supplies to have a makeshift campfire s'more toasting event. Armed with twigs collected during our travels, we invited our interpreters and our EPMs to our tiny campfire, toasted some marshmallows, made s'mores per the classic instructions provided by *The Sandlot*, listened to music, and relaxed the best we could, considering the environment. It meant the world to the soldiers and everyone who works with our team to enjoy a slice of home and to simultaneously share an American tradition with our interpreters. It was a great time.

Written by: SPC Evan Bandy, Team PAO Representative



Team Anzio scorching some marshmallows

139th MP Company 'Warlords'



SFC Adkins doing some repair welding.

Hello again, friends and family of the 139th "Warlords"! This past month, has been very successful for us. The big focus of our efforts has been improving our "foxhole," and it gets better every day. Just this month alone, we have undertaken and completed several large-scale improvement projects and innumerable smaller projects that improve the quality of life and, more importantly, our safety and security. We spent a day playing in the mud, filling sandbags for a new fighting position. The 139th Soldiers also completely rebuilt our Entry Control Point (ECP). By far our largest project, it took over three

days to complete, but greatly increasing our security. The most impressive improvements though come from Soldiers making improvements under their own initiative. These include tearing up old cables, replacing torn sandbags, repairing damaged walls and fences, and maintaining and improving gym equipment. The most loved improvement though is the basketball court. The Soldiers use it whenever they can take a rare break from their duties.

All these improvements are being done simultaneously with our retrograde operations, the process of turning in equipment in preparation for our eventual and quickly approaching withdrawal from Afghanistan. Everything has to be inventoried and prepared before it can be turned in, but the 139th has already turned in several dozens of pieces of equipment and is showing no signs of slowing down. Eventually, the 139th will move out of our current foxhole and into another one before returning home, but we will continue to make improvements to every foxhole we enter until the day we fly back to FT. Stewart.



PFC Strohm teaches an Afghan child how to "high-five"



SFAT 2nd GARRISON 'TEXANS'



SFAT Texans have continued their momentum of doing great things here in Afghanistan. They conducted an AUP Communications Trainer Course, an AUP Law Enforcement Professionalism Course, and an AUP Counter IED Trainers Course. Their AUP counterparts are gaining the sustainable skills needed to continue training their force into the future. Students became the instructors and demonstrated impressive abilities to teach the classes. SSG Lewis, Texan 1, was promoted to Sergeant First Class (E-7). The promotion was well-deserved and the team is proud of SFC Lewis. They also conducted a joint firing exercise with the AUP and Bosnian soldiers on the range. The 2nd Garrison AUP Commander brought a few of his men and joined the Texans for the event. It was good opportunity to safely share firing techniques and enjoy the comradery in the spirit of friendship. The Texans are looking forward to maintaining the strong relationships they have formed with their AUP counterparts. Their motto is "Come and Take It," and they have shown a commitment to taking the steps needed to help bring peace to this nation.



Upper: The AUP Communication Trainer Class; Pausing for a picture with Old Glory

Lower: SFC Lewis' promotion; Joint Firing Day on the range with Afghan Uniform Police.





153rd MP Company 'Griffin'



The 153rd MP CO is finishing up its first month here at the Russian Silo and really getting settled in after taking over for the 484th MP CO, of the MN National Guard. We are enjoying our little slice of Kandahar here at the Silo. Our mission is three-fold here with Police Mentorship Training, battlefield circulation, and force-protection at our outpost. We also are working alongside our fellow MP Companies and the 115th MP



From Left to Right: SGT Myers, SPC McFadden, SGT Tartaglia, and SGT Powell (on a knee) pose with local children during a mission.

Battalion on retro-grade – a buzzword and focus as the American involvement begins to come to a close in Afghanistan.

generally pretty nice people. Though we're out here in Afghanistan, we are always seeking to hone our Soldier skills. For instance recently we conducted realistic combat first-aid and casualty evacuation training.

While our main body is working out of the Silo, we can't forget about 2nd SQD, 3RD PLT who is working out of Camp Nathan Smith, tasked with providing a personal security detail for



2nd SQD, 3rd PLT climbs up a mountain for quite a view of the surrounding area.



From Left to Right: CSM Mendez, 1SG Callahan, SPC Glime, CPT Malloy, and LTC Collins conducting the transfer of authority of Russian Silo to the 153rd MP CO.

We've only been here a month, but we have already accomplished a lot. From key leader engagements to helping out on joint ANSF/ISAF missions to making our outpost even more secure. We have met with the locals and they tend to be



SGT Williams and SGT Kelly practice loading a wounded Soldier into an MRAP as Medic SPC Graves and others look on.

COL Villacres. They've gotten to see some rather impressive scenery while on the job.

All of the 153rd MP CO has trained hard for the mission, is doing great work over here and is looking forward to the future challenges and opportunities that will continue to be presented to us.



SFAT 3rd Garrison 'Coyotes'



SGT Huyhn (front) fires at a target, while CPL Stephens provides "cover" during a team shooting competition.

March hasn't seen much activity for SFAT 3rd Garrison due to various reasons. The team has traveled throughout Kandahar City during the month, though. The team has conducted range operations, and has had a few meetings with their Afghan counterparts. With the fighting season arriving soon, though, this is looking to change. The team looks forward for the operations tempo to pick up a bit, as that seems to make the time go by faster.

The team is planning a couple more cookouts here in the next month or so in celebration of Easter. And the 4 Bosnian soldiers that have been attached to the team

have fit in nicely to the Coyote family. The team looks forward to the next few months with them on our team.



CPL Stephens (front) changes the magazine in his weapon during a team shooting competition, while SGT Huhyn provides cover.



320th MP Company 'Dragons'



Working Together

Platoon Leader Paul Koziuk for the 320th MP CO in Afghanistan, Platoon Leader has had the privilege to work side by side with Afghan Uniform Police. He was welcomed into their culture and life-style with great enthusiasm. Over the past few months, he has obtained a great relationship with the Afghans which have made it much easier to be away from home. The hospitality and respect the Afghans have treated his Soldiers with shows him that over the past 11 years, a sense of brotherhood has been created and has been maintained. His assessment is that the AUP and Afghan people have developed substantially in regards to love for their country and the willingness to defend what they

love. It has been his honor to meet and work with such a Patriotic country. 1LT Koziuk learned much from them and hopes that they have learned just as much from him.

A Note From a Dragon Solider: I am SPC Barroncini, a driver here at ACS 4. Now, my job is not just to drive the Truck Commander (TC) and the gunner around on missions but I also perform operator maintenance on the vehicles as well as ensure our communications equipment are up and running before each mission. But one of the toughest things a driver has to deal with is the local traffic. You may have heard the old cliché "He drives like a New York City cab driver"? I am here to tell you; the drivers here do not drive



like those cabbies. We have to watch out for everything and anything! There are folks on bicycles, motorcycles, durangs, which has a front of a motorcycle and a bed of a small pickup truck. (This is used for transporting people and many different items.) There are small rickshaw-type motorcycles that are like those small pedal-cabs one may find in a downtown area but with a motor. Then there are compact cars like Toyota Corollas and hatchbacks. All of these vehicles can be seen cutting in and out of traffic and/or turning onto a road without stopping. We even watch out for cart vendors selling

Driving Around Kandahar

goods and customers buying them. But it's not just modes of transportation we look out for. There have been a few times where we have to slow down or even stop so a heard of sheep, goats or a couple of donkeys could get across the street. These animals are just as important to the families as the family members themselves. We, as drivers have to remember this and not hurt them or damage their possessions.



SFAT 4th Garrison 'Venom'



Team Venom takes one last team photo with security force members from the 320th MP Co.

Families and Friends of Team Venom,

We are soon approaching month five here in Kandahar City. The weather has been heating up, the enemy remains resilient, and we all miss our families and home. Your continued support has motivated us every step of the way. Morale has continued to remain high for the team and continues to rise each day as we have passed our mid tour date.

All members of Team Venom would like to thank the 320th MP Co. for providing us with 5 amazing team mates. Our 5 security force team members returned to their home unit this month. They will be greatly missed and we wish them success in their new mission with their unit. With the loss of our security force members we have gained 4 new team members from Bosnia. Our new team members have continued right where

our previous security force team left off. We have welcomed our new team members with open arms and thank their families for supporting Team Venom. We are now a multinational team. We are united by a common goal to assist our Afghan counterparts and complete our mission. Our new team members have shown us the utmost professionalism when working together. We have worked together to break language barriers and learn from each other. With the welcoming of our new team members Team Venom completed a team building exercise by climbing "The 40 Steps". It was a very hard climb to the top of the monument, but all team members completed the climb. At the top of the monument the view was amazing and our new team members had the opportunity to see Afghanistan in all its beauty.

We continue advising the 4th Kandahar City Police Garrison with continued success. Our Afghan counterparts are working hard to secure Kandahar City. They know tumultuous times may be ahead as the fighting season starts, but they remain as determined as ever. Our new Bosnian team members were welcomed by Forth Garrison Police with a very delicious dinner and Afghan hospitality.

Please visit the Combined Task Force Chesapeake Facebook page for team photos and updates

-1Lt. Tovar



Team Venom climbs The 40 Steps for a team building exercise.

Chaplain's Corner



The always smiling Chaplain Hopkins and SPC Akingbade share a laugh before SGT Hayashi's promotion ceremony

The Religious Support Team has been able to continue visiting our assigned unit's at least twice a month to provide religious support and assess Soldier's health and morale. The morale continues to be good, and the majority of the Soldiers remain upbeat about the mission here in Afghanistan. Our team was afforded an opportunity to visit one of the Police Sub-Station with the 153rd Military Police Company. We had to stay inside our assigned vehicles however; it was quite an experience to see those types of visits in action.

The RST is pleased to announce that the Debt Free Living Seminar has started. We held our first class on March 22, 2013 inside the MWR in the ALOC building. It

was a pleasure to see everyone in attendance. The classes will be held each Friday night for the next twelve weeks @ 1900 hours.

The RST has completed a slide presentation on Veterans Preference in Hiring. This presentation will present Soldiers with valuable information that has been enacted by Congress because of our service in the Military. We are planning a job information seminar for all Soldiers who will be seeking employment after returning from deployment. The exact time and date is to be determined.

The battalion worship service is every Sunday @ 1030. March was designated as Women's History Month and on each Sunday Chaplain Hopkins had a female Soldier participate in a reading about a famous female in history, or a woman that was instrumental or helped shape their lives.

We are still seeking individuals who would like to participate with our worship choir. The RST team will continue to keep each soldier and family member lifted up in prayer. If you have any concerns or new ideas to share please present your request to SGT Cooper (Chaplain Assistant) or Chaplain (CPT) Baron Hopkins.



OF1 Basic in the gym returning a serve during a heated ping pong match.