



DESERT DEVIL DISPATCH

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**EOD returns to
"Ammo Alley"
See story on Page 3.**

Easter brings us strength to meet the challenges of the day



by Chap. (Maj.) Jeff Watters
1st Brigade Chaplain

American Beauty won five academy awards in 1999, including best picture. The director, Sam Mendes, called it a "kaleidoscopic journey through American suburbia, and a hugely articulate one at that." It is a spell-binding movie with many twists and turns to the plot, with superb cinematography. However, a disturbing theme of despair and hopelessness is woven throughout. Lester (the father) decides to quit his job and stay at home while acting like a spoiled 18 year old. His wife, Carolyn, pursues a relationship

with the real estate mogul in her town. Jane, their daughter, looks and seems depressed throughout the movie. Finally, the family, already torn apart by strife and selfishness, is rocked when Lester is brutally murdered in his own home. At the end of the movie, Lester sums up his existence by calling it "my stupid little life."

So what does American Beauty have to do with us? It's premise should shock us into realizing we don't have to be led down that same path. We don't have to have a "stupid little life." Easter picks up where American Beauty leaves off. In the midst of hopelessness and despair, when things were at their worst, Christ arose. The disciples, who were hiding in fear thinking they were the next ones to be crucified, were changed into dynamos going everywhere proclaiming the good news, the effects of which are still with us. He promised to all those who embrace Him an inexhaustible supply of strength to meet the challenges of the day. At times it is hard, being separated from family and friends without a set re-deployment date. Fighting the war against terrorism is difficult and arduous. But with the power of the risen Christ working in us, it makes it easier to bear the burdens of the day. We don't have to live in depression and despair, Christ has made it possible for us to be victorious in spite of our circumstances.

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Easter Service Schedule

Good Friday

Protestant 1500Z
Freedom Chapel

Catholic Mass 1630Z
Freedom Chapel

Easter Vigil

Catholic Mass 1300Z
Freedom Chapel

Easter Sunday Services

Sunrise Service 0100Z
DFAC Stage

Catholic Mass 0430Z
Aviation Hanger

Protestant Service 0630Z
Aviation Hanger

Protestant Service 1530Z
Freedom Chapel

BOOM in “Ammo Alley” EOD returns to site where four were killed last April 15 to finish demolition mission



Two caches of 107mm rockets are destroyed by explosions (Above) set by Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams from Kandahar Air Field in Ammo Alley, 35 Km northwest of the air field. (Below right) EOD technicians from the 731st Ordnance Company prepare a cache site for destruction.

*Story and Photos by Cpl Keith A. Kluwe
Kandahar Public Affairs Office*

A mission started a year ago was brought to conclusion Tuesday when Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians here destroyed two caches of ordnance in what has come to be called “Ammo Alley.”

Completing the mission was delayed more than a year after three EOD technicians and one U.S. Special Forces soldier were killed in an explosion last April 15, at the same site 35 kilometers northwest of Kandahar Air Field.

“One of my good friends was killed there last year, Sgt Jamie Mulligans. We went through both phases of EOD school together, and then we were stationed together for a year in Korea. He was a real good friend of mine and this mission brought closure being able to go out to where he was killed and destroy that cache,” said army Staff Sgt. Baylin Oswalt, an EOD team leader with the 731st Ordnance Company (EOD) from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

“Everyone felt their loss. We’re a very tight-knit community so when some one dies in the line of duty, their name doesn’t just go on the memorial. We all remember them, whether we knew them

from school or through friends. Staff Sgt Jeffrey Mclean, an EOD team leader with the 754th Ordnance Company (EOD) from Ft. Monmouth, N.J.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams from the 731st, 754th and 705th Ordnance Companies (EOD) rigged the two piles of ordnance with C-4 explosives, destroyed two large caches of Chinese made Type 63, 107 mm fin-stabilized rockets, like the ones that are used in attacks against all the fire bases around here, said Oswalt.

The EOD teams were supported by heavy equipment engineers that plowed a new road to the cache sites, and a safety around the sites. The roads gave a safe area from the EOD teams to rest and a safe route from the main road in the valley out to the sites.

“With caches in this country you have to watch out for booby-traps,” Mclean said. “We

knew this site had been previously booby-trapped.... We used the bulldozer to sever any hard wired remote-controlled devices that might have been at the objective we were dealing with.”

In the long run, this mission into “Ammo Alley” also keeps weapons and ordnance out of the hand of people wishing to destabilize the national and provincial governments, or cause harm to U.S. forces.

“We are denying the enemy use of the 107 mm rockets because it seems like they are weapon of choice for the most part,” said Lt. Col. Keith Angles, the battalion commander of the 184th Ordnance Battalion (EOD) from Ft. Gillam, Ga.. “It’s almost everyday we hear about one of our compounds getting a 107 mm rockets at it, so the more of those we dispose of, the less they are going to have to shoot at us.”

“Ammo Alley is still a big concern. There is still a lot of ammunition and ordnance out there that can be used by hostile Taliban or Al Qaeda, or anyone else that wants to do harm to coalition forces,” Mclean said.

There are still more than 20 known munitions cache sites in the valley.



A Different Perspective on Combat Patrols: Airborne on the Ground

Story by Spc. Jim Wagner
Kandahar Public Affairs Office

Four 118th Military Police Company (Airborne) soldiers narrowly avoided serious injury on the night of April 8, when the armored HMMWV they were riding on patrol struck an anti-tank landmine, an incident that could have turned out much worse.

The three MPs and one combat medic from the 118th Military Police Company (Airborne) were on an area security patrol several miles outside Kandahar Air Field when they ran over a TC-6 anti-tank landmine, launching the armored vehicle four meters in the air and directly over a second nearby TC-6 mine rigged with a flechette round. The second mine, fortunately, wasn't triggered.

Though the Army has written off the armored HMMWV as a complete loss, amazingly enough the four occupants – Sgt. Brian Githens, team leader; Sgt. Shawn Brown, combat medic; Pfc. David Templeton, .50-caliber gunner; and Pfc. Justin Tester, driver – suffered nothing more than minor cuts and bruises.

"We were just driving along (the road) and it happened so fast, we didn't know what happened," Tester said.



The after effects when a 118th Military Police Company (Airborne) HMMWV that struck a TC-5 anti-tank mine during a security patrol several miles outside of Kandahar Air Field April 8. No one was injured during the mine strike.

Unsure whether they were under ambush and hit by a rocket-propelled grenade, or hit by a land mine, the team quickly scrambled down a ditch off the road while the other two vehicles in the patrol provided front and rear perimeter defense over the wrecked vehicle, launching a parachute flare and

white star cluster to see if the mine strike was the opening move in an ambush.

"We just stood by and waited for movement with the rest of the patrol," Templeton said. "We were all deafened."

SEE MINE, Page 6

Weekly Bazaar coming to Kandahar Air Field

TF Devil will conduct a bazaar in the vicinity of Gate 1 every Saturday starting April 19. The bazaar will start at 0500Z and end at 1200Z.

It will provide those stationed at KAF an opportunity to purchase local Afghanistan goods and promote commerce to the local vendors.

When shopping at a bazaar in Afghanistan vendors expect the buyer to haggle over the price. The price you are first quoted is usually considerably higher than your final purchase price.

The bazaar offers a secure place to shop for souvenirs to take home. Make sure you know the rules on what you can and can't take home and have a great time shopping.



U.S. Army photo by Msg Dick Breach

Coalition forces at Bagram Air Field enjoy the Bazaar in March. Saturday is the first Bazaar at Kandahar AirField. The bazaar's hours are from 5:00 a.m. to noon .

Airborne History

American parachutists — Devils in Baggy Pants — are less than 100 meters from my outpost line. I can't sleep at night; they pop up from nowhere and we never know when or how they will strike next. Seems like the black-hearted devils are everywhere.....

(Translated from the diary of a dead German officer at Anzio - February 1944)

Freedom: 82nd liberates Woebbelin Camp

*Compiled by Cpl. Keith A. Kluwe
Kandahar Public Affairs Office*

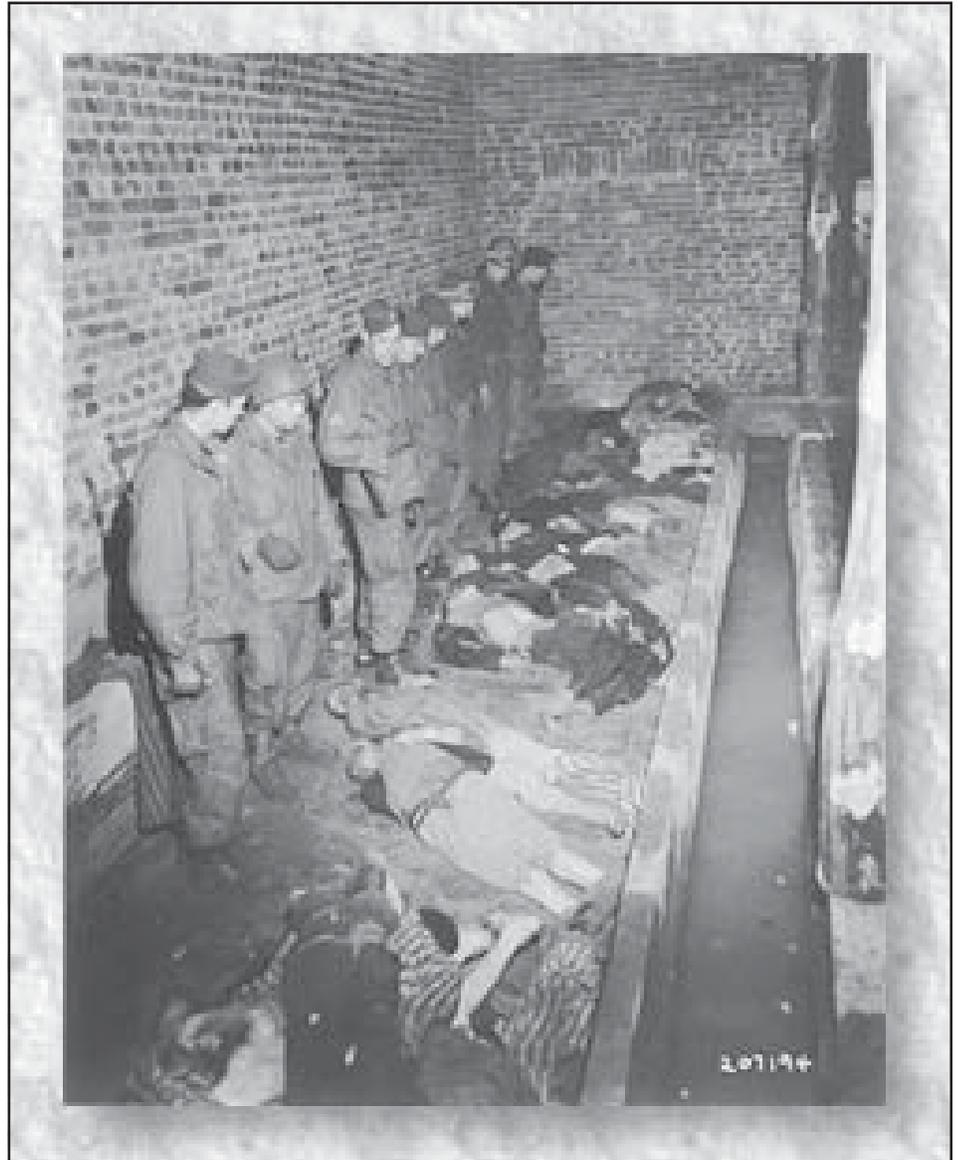
As German forces were being decimated along all fronts by the allied army and they were retreating into the heartland of Germany, paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division found and liberated concentration camps the German government hoped would never be found.

On May 2, 1945, this Division liberated 3,500 survivors of the Wöbbelin concentration camp, a satellite of the Neuengamme extermination camp near Ludwigslust.

The Nazi plan displaced millions of families from all over Europe. Through their massive concentration camp system, with well over one thousand camps of various sizes, all designed to imprison innocent humans, considered sub-human by Nazi standards. Every human right was replaced by Nazi laws, rules and arbitrary decisions. Almost every major German city had at least a slave labor camp nearby. The inmates of these camps were forced under the pain of death to work for the German war effort, with no pay, inadequate food and other necessities to survive. Death camps, constructed for the sole purpose of mass executions by means of poison gas, shootings, starvation, disease, and torture were used by the Nazis to exterminate those fellow humans—men, women, children, and infants—by design.

The camps were not limited to just Germany. Concentration and death camps were found throughout Europe including, Germany, Holland, Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Belgium and others.

After the liberation of the camps, para-



Courtesy photo

Paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne division examine bodies found in a latrine in Woebbelin Concentration Camp in May, 1945. German SS troops fled the area as the Paratroopers arrived.

troopers from the 82nd provide food, water and medical aid to the people they freed.

With Germany crumbling and the Nazis on the run, allied forces and the 82nd would have their work cut out for them carry for the sick and injured and trying

to find who was responsible so they could be brought to justice. This would continue until well after World War II ended and Hitler was dead.

(The series continues in the Apr. 25 edition of the Desert Devil Dispatch)

MINE, from page 4



Photo by Spc. Jim Wagner

A mechanic assesses the damage to an M-1114 armored HMMWV after it struck a TC-6 Landmine April 8.

Githen's team was in the second vehicle in a three-team security convoy. Covering 20-30 miles a day, sometimes twice or three times a day, the patrols are meant to keep a secure buffer zone around the base housing Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps service members.

According to Templeton, the convoy had driven by the site of the two land mines as recently as an hour and a half prior. But because of the heavily-rutted roads, the convoy missed the mines on the way out, and the first vehicle in the convoy missed them on the way back.

"The roads have been traveled so much, it was impossible to follow directly behind the vehicle in front of you.

Unknown at the time immediately following the first mine strike was the existence of the second land mine, some six feet away from the first mine. This second mine was rigged by anti-coalition forces with an anti-personnel flechette round, which contain hundreds of little steel darts. Where anti-tank mines are designed to knock out tank tracks or penetrate armored hulls, flechettes are singularly made to penetrate body armor and Kevlar helmets.

According to Staff Sgt. Baylin Oswalt, the 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company team leader dispatched to the site, it's likely the second mine wouldn't have succeeded where the first mine failed, though there would have been a lot more damage.

"Would it have penetrated? I don't think so," he said. "The flechettes would have damaged the exterior more, but the mine probably wouldn't have penetrated the armor."

The first land mine, located six feet away from the second one, left a crater 32 inches in diameter and two feet deep. When the HMMWV was thrown in the air, it landed straddling the second, rigged, mine. It was blown up in-place by the EOD team.

"At the time, our adrenaline was running so fast that we weren't worried," Githen said of their reactions immediately after the mine strike. Brown agreed, saying they were cracking jokes at the time.

"Yeah, I told Tester that my wife was going to cuss him out for his driving," Templeton said.

None of the four were hospitalized after the mine strike, and all reported back to duty two days later.



Photo by Spc. Jim Wagner

From left to right, the members of the 118th Military Police Company (Airborne) involved in the mine strike: Pfc. David Templeton, .50-caliber gunner, Sgt. Brian Githens, team leader, Sgt. Shawn Brown, combat medic, and Pfc. Justin Tester, driver.



You might be Airborne if ...



your joints sound like rice-krispies when you get out of bed.

- AbnDaddy



Pvt. Murpy's Law
by Mark Baker

Hot weather tips to prevent serious injury

Story by Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — With warm weather here, soldiers need to be concerned with the conditions the heat may cause.

The three main injuries a soldier should be concerned with are heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

The symptoms of heat cramps include muscle cramps, involving less than the whole muscle mass, primarily abdomen, legs, and arms.

Heat exhaustion usually involves fatigue, nausea, dizziness, fainting, vomiting, disorientation, irritability and elevated temperature.

A heat stroke has the same symptoms, but is more severe and can be fatal.

Drinking water is one of the best ways to avoid becoming a heat casualty.

The amount of water you need to drink is based on the heat category. This is determined by the Wet Bulb Global Temperature index, which uses three thermometers to determine the heat index.

After the heat index is determined, soldiers should use the Rest/Work chart to determine how much work and rest they should take and how much water they should drink. The chart also tells how much work and rest a soldier should take while doing light, moderate and heavy work.

"A person working inside doesn't have to drink as much as someone outside on detail," said Sgt. Rommel Tawatao, preventive medicine specialist, 791st Preventive Medicine Detachment.

Drinking water is important, but soldiers also need to ensure they don't consume too much.

"Proper hydration is very important. A person should consume no more than 12 quarts a day and 1 ½ quarts

an hour. It is detrimental to you, if you drink too much water because you lose electrolytes," said Tawatao.

What a soldier consumes can make them more susceptible to injuries.

"Warm food and drink and foods that are difficult to digest cause someone to be more prone to becoming a heat casualty," said Tawatao.

Soldiers should do physical training in the morning or the evening. They are more prone to heat injuries in the afternoon. If a unit has group PT, they should find out who has had previous heat injuries because they are more likely to have another.

Another threat during the summer months is sunburn. Soldiers should be sure to use sunscreen and keep their sleeves rolled down.

Preventive medicine also suggests wearing the booney cap rather than the patrol cap because it is designed to provide shade.

'Tis the season for snakes to appear here

Story by Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — After hibernating all winter long, snakes around the world are waking up to spring, which is the beginning of snakebite season.

"Assume all snakes are poisonous," said Maj. Douglas Sommers, chief of emergency medicine, 48th Combat Support Hospital. This is something to assume since two of the most deadly snakes in the world are known to slither in this area. Afghanistan is home to the Asian cobra and the Russell's viper snake.

According to Sommers, 60 percent of those bitten by either of these snake dies.

Another sited snake of the area is the Common Krait, the deadliest snake

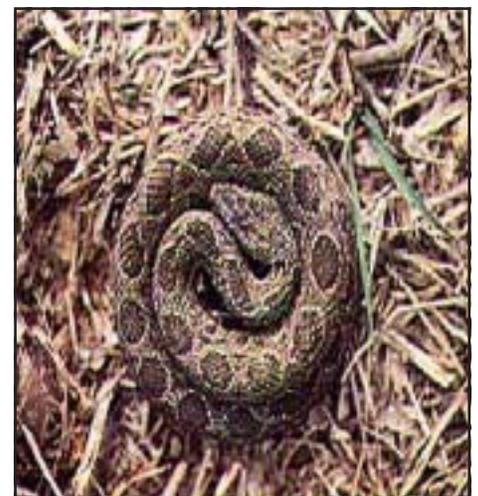
in the world, according to www.wildlifeofpakistan.com Its venom is said to be 15 times more virulent than vipers and cobras.

If someone sees a snake, they should leave it alone, said Capt. Cory Campora, preventive medicine commander, 791st Preventive Medicine Reserve component, Stanton, Calif.

"Don't leave your clothes laying around. Shake out your sleeping bag before you climb in (it)," he said.

Even with taking these precautions, getting bit is a possibility.

There is currently immune serum against snake venom and antivenin on order for the hospital, but Sommers currently has 20 vials, which can treat a severe case. "It's an anti-polyvalent, which is for five different types of snake bites. Only 20 percent of people bit need antivenin," said Sommers.



Snakes bite in an act of defense, said Sommers. Usually baby snakes will strike worst, because they can't control the secretion of the venom.

In the case of most snakes, "You don't mess with it, it won't mess with you," said Sommers.