

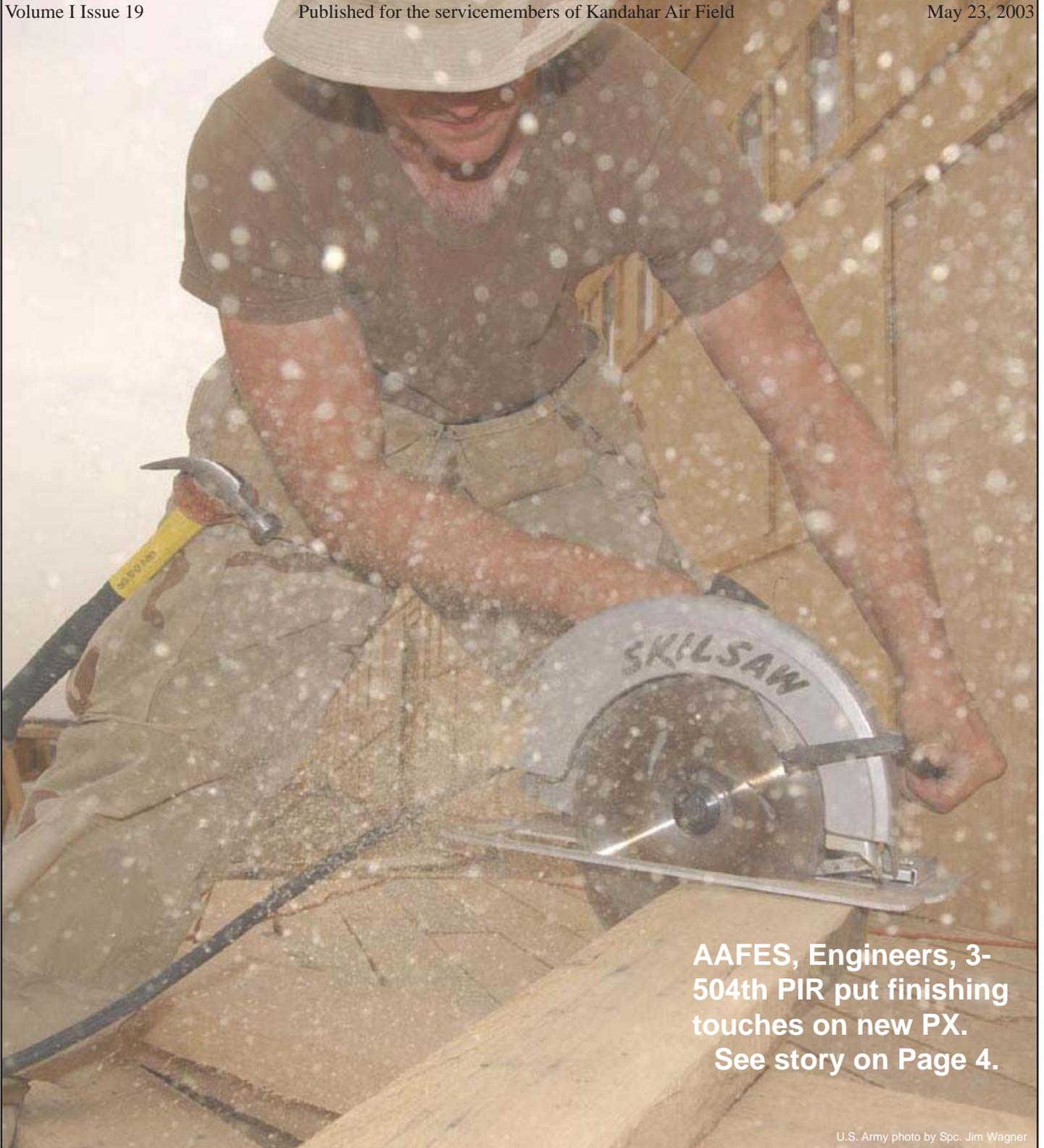


DESERT DEVIL DISPATCH

Volume I Issue 19

Published for the servicemembers of Kandahar Air Field

May 23, 2003



**AAFES, Engineers, 3-
504th PIR put finishing
touches on new PX.
See story on Page 4.**

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jim Wagner

TF Devil - Take Pride in Your Team

by Maj. Michael W. Minor
1st Brigade Executive Officer



Sometime in the not too distant future, the Task Force (TF) Devil commander will relinquish command of this magnificent unit.

This is but one of a number of changes that are occurring here at Kandahar Air Field (KAF). For some, new individuals are rotating in to allow others to progress to new jobs, permanent change of station moves, attend schools, etc. For others, it's the end of a six-, nine-, or twelve-month tour, and it's back to

home station to get re-acquainted with loved ones.

The Romanian army's 812th Infantry Battalion (Carpathians' Hawks) and the Italian's Task Force Nibbio will conduct a relief in place and another brigade will eventually relieve TF Devil and become the latest citizens of KAF. Many things will continue to change as you near the end of your time in Afghanistan. As these and other changes occur, one thing must remain constant – the level of teamwork you have achieved within TF Devil while conducting combat operation here in Afghanistan.

As I make my way around KAF, having recently arrived, I am continually impressed as I talk to units and soldiers. No matter what the subject, one theme rings through loud

and clear. This is a team effort. "Welcome to the team" a Romanian officer told me the other day. Need I say more? That stuck in my mind and drove home that message loud and clear. When a Coalition member talks in terms like that, something special has occurred.

I see it everywhere. This is also evident as I witness various organizations pulling together to create an environment that provides our soldiers and all personnel at KAF, the services they deserve. From phones, to acceptable living and working conditions, to the new post exchange ... without exception, everyone pulls together to make things happen. It occurs not only at KAF but also at the numerous fire bases at which our great soldiers reside.

Teamwork like that does not just happen by accident. I challenge each and every member of TF Devil to think about what it is that causes them, their unit, and this task force to come together as one team.

For each individual or unit, the answer may well be different. It could be as simple as sharing a common danger, maybe unit discipline, or outstanding leaders. What ever it is – keep doing it. Pass it along to the newly arrived personnel, and pass it along to the next unit as they give you a well deserved 'high-five' on the way out.

Last but not least, carry that pride and sense of teamwork back to Fort Bragg or to wherever it is you go. For those of us returning to Fort Bragg in the near future, the ability to maintain this cohesiveness and sense of teamwork, will serve us all well as we reintegrate, reacquaint, retrain, and reassume division readiness brigade. For it will not be long before our nation once again calls on our team to re-enter the game.

All the way!

Vines Makes Lt. Gen., Takes Command of XVIII Corp, Ft Bragg

by Pfc. Ryan Smith
Paraglide

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced Monday that the president nominated Maj. Gen. John R. Vines for the rank of lieutenant general and assignment as commanding general,

XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg. He will replace Lt. Gen. Dan K. McNeill, the current commanding general.

Vines, 53, an Alabama native and a graduate of the University of Alabama, is currently the commanding general of Coalition Task Force-82, Afghanistan.

Desert Devil Dispatch falls under the supervision of Task Force Devil.

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Operation Deliberate Strike

Task Force Devil launched Operation Deliberate Strike Monday, more than 60 kilometers north of Kandahar Air Field. The two-day operation consisted of a 12-kilometer movement with temperatures hovering in the 100 degree-range throughout the mission. All photos courtesy of Kamal Kishore of Reuters, who accompanied B Company, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, and captured some of the sights on camera.



New Kandahar PX Opens Saturday

Story and photos by Spc. Jim Wagner
109th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

More than 11-times larger than the current post exchange (PX) and featuring services not found before, Kandahar's new PX opens to coalition forces and civilians Saturday.

The Air Force and Army Exchange Service (AAFES) has been operating out of an 850 square-foot building since the previous PX burned to the ground Feb. 21. In the 12 weeks leading to the grand opening, the 527th Engineer Company has been busy erecting the 13,000 square foot facility.

AAFES employees and A Company, 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 82nd Airborne Division, soldiers started stocking the shelves Monday with an enhanced lineup of merchandise that far outstrips the previous PX.

"I'd say it's gotta be more than \$1 million in inventory going in there," said Dan Fint, AAFES stock room manager.

Barbara Travis, PX team leader, prom-



Dan Fint, AAFES stock room manager, left, and Reggie Douglas, retail manager, go over the inventory making its way into the new PX. The facility opens for business Saturday.

ises no break in service for Kandahar residents to the new PX, saying the temporary PX would close at 1600 Zulu on Friday and re-open Saturday at 0700 Zulu after a grand opening ceremony and ribbon cutting.

Soldiers, airmen, Marines, sailors and civilians have spent the past three months "making do" with the services provided at the temporary PX, she said, but promised the new one would more than make up for the temporary loss. In

addition to a bigger lineup of items already found on PX shelves – more DVDs, music and game titles – the new PX will provide items that have been in big demand with soldiers here, like tuna and charcoal.

Since February, waiting time in lines has been anywhere between 15 and 30 minutes. That, coupled with no air conditioning made for an unpleasant shopping experience. The new PX sports seven heavy-duty air conditioning units and six registers,

registers that allow debit and credit card "swiping" and cash-backs up to \$20.

An expanded gift shop will be found in the new PX for the time being, and the barbershop will be housed in a building next to the PX. Construction is nearly complete on the new coffee shop/barbershop/gift shop next door to the PX.

Travis also expects an AT&T phone center with 40 booths to open up for business in the coming weeks, with prepaid phone cards for sale in the PX. Twenty phones are already at Kandahar, with another 20 expected in the coming weeks.

An AT&T technician is also expected to hook everything up soon, Travis said, maybe as soon as next week.

The work couldn't have been completed this quickly without the help of units throughout Kandahar, she said.

"Everybody's been great, chipping in to help us out," Travis said. "We started stocking and the first sergeant from (A Company, 3-504th PIR) said he'd get some people to help out. Since I got here in January, a week hasn't gone by that I haven't talked to the engineers. They've done a fantastic job.

"We have a great staff of AAFES employees, all of us volunteered to come over here," she continued. "We all have the same mission here, you're here to serve us, and we're here to serve you."



Pfc. Eric Besserer, Jr., 3-504th PIR infantryman, helps stock the PX Tuesday. The new Kandahar PX is more than 11 times larger than the current PX, with 8,000 square feet of floor space and 5,000 square feet of stock space for items and merchandise.

Grappling With Giving Aid to the Enemy

Story and photo by Spc. Jim Wagner
109th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

For an Army combat medic, healing soldiers in a combat zone is second nature, but what does that medic do when the person they are charged to treat and save is the enemy?

The war on terrorism has changed the face of modern combat: no longer are enemy soldiers easily recognized by the uniform they're wearing — today they look and blend effortlessly into the landscape. Wearing traditional garb, any Afghan could be a shepherd or a remnant Taliban soldier, a farmer or an Al Qaeda member.

For 1st Lt. Steve Schmelzer, a patient hold registered nurse attached to C Company (Medical), 307th Logistics Task Force (LTF), it's a matter of tapping into your sense of compassion and remembering medical ethics courses.

"There are people you don't want to take care of but you have to do your job, which is to take care of people," he said. "You don't know whether they were an aggressor or victim and you can't let it get in the way of taking care of them."

Since arriving at Kandahar in early January, the patient hold clinic, has cared for more than 165 Army and Afghan patients either recovering from surgery or awaiting further treatment. These patients stay anywhere from one to 33 days in the care of nurses and combat medics — who normally specialize in immediate trauma care on the battlefield — specially trained to care for patients.

Many of these patients are Afghans brought in with a wide variety of injuries, from gunshot and land mine wounds to old infected injuries and illnesses.

Some are clearly the victims of unfortunate incidents, like the young child brought in after getting shot in the head. According to the story told by medics, an adult Afghan with a gun sought out the boy's father for a confrontation. Not finding the man, the Afghan instead shot the boy, who required immediate aid from a neurosurgeon in Bagram and



Pfc. Ryan Barrett, B Company, 2-504th PIR combat medic, left, Spc. Rusvin Orellana, C Company (Medical), 307th LTF combat medic, center, and 1st Lt. Steve Schmelzer, 307th LTF registered nurse, bandage an Afghan in treatment for extensive wounds caused by a land mine.

bone grafts for his skull. The boy recovered and was returned to his family last week.

But sometimes it's not so clear to combat medics who exactly they are treating.

Several days ago a suspected Taliban soldier was brought in by members of the Afghanistan Military Forces after injuries to his hands had infected, requiring immediate attention. He arrived under guard and remains a person under control (PUC), guarded around-the-clock by military policemen from the 118th Military Police Company of the 82nd Airborne Division.

It's certain the man would have lost both hands (a death sentence for any man in a country that relies heavily on manual labor) if he wasn't brought in, and it's unlikely he'll keep all of his fingers.

But how do you ask a combat medic, an Army soldier here to fight and deny sanctuary to anti-coalition forces, to heal a person who might return to cause further harm to coalition forces?

"I try not to think of what they might have done or what they might do," said Sgt. Rosalinda Lopez, non-commissioned officer in charge of patient hold.

"Of course, I think about it all the time but I try not to. As much as I wouldn't like to, I treat them the same as any soldier."

Schmelzer hopes the treatment and care shows Afghans that coalition forces aren't here to take over the country, but to help restore the country.

"Their reaction when we care for them is so weird," he said. "They're told all these stories about how the U.S. is bad; you can see the confusion on their faces when we treat them. It's my hope that if I do good things, it passes the good along — to 'kill them with compassion.'"

It's a hope that has worked, at least in one case. Schmelzer tells the story of a PUC that was brought in with injuries recently. Initially defiant, the Afghan slowly warmed to the medics treating him and when he was released bent down to show the top of his head for the lieutenant to kiss. According to Afghan tradition, it's a deep sign of respect.

Its Schmelzer's hope the Afghan will return to his village and spread a different tale of America's involvement in Afghanistan, one that leads to less medical involvement for everyone in the country.

PsyOps: Manipulating the minds of the enemy is playing a bigger role in defeating the enemy behind the lines

Story and photos by Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke
11th Public Affairs Det.

When someone thinks of war, they think of weapons, famine and struggle. But in modern combat, manipulating the mind of the enemy is beginning to play more and more of a role in defeating the enemy.

Psychological Operations are planned actions to convey certain information to influence an audience's emotions, motives, reasoning and behavior.

Used in war, it is a weapon to avoid hostile acts, said Staff Sgt. Matthew Baiza, 301st Psychological Operation Company, San Diego, Calif.

The U.S. Army Reserve's 301st PsyOp Co. plays that role here. They perform deception operations; clear military supply routes, surrender appeals and disseminate information.

The three-person tactical PsyOp team that recently returned from their fourth operation since their arrival in February, Operation Carpathian Lightning, also works with Special Forces, Rangers and Navy SEALs to assist in seizures.

"I learn something new every mission. We seem to have more and more of a role every time," said Army Reserve Spc. Ted Johnson, 301st PsyOp Co.

Not only do they take on direct functions but also indirect ones by working as a force multiplier.

"We diffuse hostile situations. Other means are taken. Without shooting guns and rockets, military force can be much more effective," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Baiza, 301st PsyOp Company team member.

The team is present on various operations to prevent unnecessary harm by working with locals to gain cooperation.

During Operation Carpathian Lightning the team handed out leaflets that depicted pictures of an Afghan and American flag with a dove. It read in the local tongue to not fight with the coalition forces, which were there to help them.

"We want to win minds and hearts. If we have people work with us, they will



An Afghan Militia Force soldier passes leaflets to villagers of Goranda during Operation Vigilant Guardian. Psychological Operations not only distribute leaflets, but also radios and other items that may help inform Afghans of the importance of the coalition forces presence here.

help us," said Baiza.

They do this by blending in with the population. An Afghan's culture is to have facial hair and appear a little scruffy, said Baiza.

It is easier to talk with the locals if you look like them, he said. PsyOp missions help avoid death by winning hearts and avoiding hostility in modern warfare.

"PsyOp is becoming more effectively applied to missions. They need us," said Spc. Al Cruz, 301st PsyOp.



**You might be
Airborne if ...**

**If you consider a "Recon" walking
around the bar looking for chicks.
- quinman**



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