



# DESERT DEVIL DISPATCH

Volume I Issue 17

Published for the servicemembers of Kandahar Air Field

May 9, 2003

**Romanians win 1st  
Annual St. Michael's  
Airborne Association  
Kandahar run.  
See story on Page 4.**



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jim Wagner

Is your unit getting ready to return to the States? Make sure you call the Deployment Support Team at least 60 days prior to the departure date to ensure your equipment and personnel get out in time. Contact Stan Miller at DSN 580-3090 for more information, or email him at millers@kaf.cjtf180.army.mil. DST hours of operations are 0200 - 1700 Zulu.

# Finding the Beauty Beneath the Burqa

by PV2 Terri Rorke  
11th Public Affairs Detachment

Braided hair, black eye liner, jingling bracelets and henna-clad fingers of Afghan women are not seen by many soldiers, simply because of their Muslim culture – always hiding under the burqa.

Soldiers routinely conduct village searches, which entail searching people of the village. As part of the searches, soldiers ask the people to have all the women and children to go to one room while the area is being searched. Because of past incidents where women hid weapons under their burqas for fear of getting the weapons confiscated, female searchers are more and more common on the passenger lists of military operations. Usually female military police are tasked to go on these operations.

When I was tasked to go on a mission recently, as a journalist, I thought my primary job would be to take pictures and set up interviews, like I was trained to do. But I realize I am a soldier and I must do what needs to be done.

The last couple of operations I went on I was needed to help out with searching females.

“Peace. I am a woman. I have to search you,” I said in Pashto as I entered the dark rooms taking off my helmet and sun-glasses to show the scared and innocent I was a female.

Usually the two- to three-year olds would start crying and they would latch on to their mother’s beaded burqas. Despite the language barrier, I would ask them through gestures to stand up and spread their arms.

Some looked directly in my eyes as I searched them, while others tried to hide underneath their robes. Some were shy and giggled as I patted down on their shoulders. They would pull out metal containers with beads



(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jim Wagner)

**An Afghan woman strolls down a street in downtown Kandahar recently. Some Muslim cultures dictate females wear the all-concealing garb, to keep strangers from seeing the face and body beneath.**

from their dresses sequined with colors of blue, red, purple, pink and neon variations.

Of course I had my camera with me.

I wanted to take pictures, but I didn’t want to upset any of them. They were beautiful, yet so hidden? It is something I don’t understand as an American and as someone who doesn’t follow the Muslim lifestyle in the Middle East or Central Asia.

Although I didn’t totally understand what they were saying, I knew they were trying to tell me, “See, I wasn’t hiding anything,” after I was finished.

A couple of times I met women who looked just like Russians. I asked through gestures if I could take their picture. “No, no,” they would reply in Pashto.

I wished I was a fly on the wall that could just snap away and I would then be able to show the world their beauty. But all I could do was say thanks for cooperating and I

would leave them in their dark huts where their beauty remains to be seen strictly by their families, military police females and maybe a female military journalist from time to time.

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



**Task Force Devil Commander:**

Col. John F. Campbell

**Task Force Devil Command Sgt. Maj:**

Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Kalinofski

**82nd Airborne Public Affairs:**

Maj. Robert Gilpin

**Romanian Public Affairs:**

Capt. Constantin Hertanu

Desert Devil Dispatch, a U.S. Army newsletter, is produced by the 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Pennsylvania Army National Guard at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan.

**Commander:**

1st Lt. Cory Angell

**NCOIC:**

Staff Sgt. Kevin Askew

**Editor/Layout/Graphics:**

Spc. Jim Wagner

**Combat Correspondent:**

Cpl Keith A. Kluwe

In accordance with AR 360-1, this newsletter is an authorized unofficial publication for members of the U.S. military. The contents of *Desert Devil Dispatch* are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. government, Department of Defense, or the Department of the Army. All submissions are subject to editing for size and content.

If you would like to receive the Dispatch electronically, please send an email to jim1wag@yahoo.com

# CSM: We Continue to Bring Peace, Stability to Area

by 1st Lt. Cory Angell  
109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

With almost 29 years of service in the United States Army, CSM Gary Kalinofski finds himself in one of the most challenging and rewarding positions of his career as the Regimental Command Sergeant Major for Task Force Devil.

The task force has the current mission to kill, capture and deny sanctuary to terrorists and those who harbor terrorists in Afghanistan.

TF Devil is comprised mainly of infantry battalions from the 504<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment but is also contains other 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division elements, several tenant units, a battalion of Romanian infantry among other coalition elements.

Kalinofski feels that TF Devil has a number of successes since it has been operating in Afghanistan.

"I'll tell you how I measure success," said Kalinofski. "In the four months that we've been here, this task force... in the various operations we've been doing, has been aggressively pursuing terrorists and disrupting all of their planning..."

"(Anti-coalition forces) have not been able to plan offensive operations, and as

a result of that we continue to bring peace and stability to the area," said Kalinofski.

"Is it still bad guy country? Absolutely! Will it take time to rout out some of these bad people? Yes."

Despite the challenges presented to combat forces in Afghanistan Kalinofski feels the outcome is clear.

In an interview on FOX News with Geraldo Rivera, Kalinofski thanked all the family members for their support of the troops and made clear what he feels the outcome will be.

"...we are here, we are ready, we are at the tip of the spear and we will not fail in Afghanistan," said Kalinofski.

Kalinofski seems to have a strong concern, not only for soldiers, but their families as well. He served as the 82<sup>nd</sup> equal opportunity advisor for three years.

"One of the jobs that went along with the equal opportunity advisor job was; I was responsible for all the family support groups at that time. Now they are called Family Readiness Groups," said Kalinofski. "I was also responsible for operating the Family Assistance Center for the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division -- one of the first of its kind."

The task force has suffered casualties during it's operations in Afghanistan and it has strengthened his concern for sol-

diers and their families.

"We've sustained casualties with soldiers," said Kalinofski. "It is a tragic event when we lose brave men and women. It is absolutely essential to remember that any given day, anyone of us could be taken away. We should never, ever once take each other for granted."

Despite the losses and the pressures that come with leadership in a combat zone, Kalinofski remains focused on the mission and his role as Command Sergeant Major of TF Devil.

"I think my enlisted soldiers can expect me to first, always set the example. I will address their needs. I will make sure they are trained. I will make sure they have all the tools that they need, and all the equipment they need, in order to accomplish anything that we ask of them," said Kalinofski.

"We're never going to put soldiers anywhere in harms way unless we have overwhelming force. We're always going to give them what they need to accomplish their mission, whether it is ammo, weapon systems, or other systems that make them successful, in order to minimize loss of life, and to accomplish the mission. That's what we do. That's what the leadership team here in Afghanistan does."

## Rumsfeld Pleased With Progress in Afghanistan

by Kathleen T. Rhem  
American Forces Press Service

KABUL, Afghanistan (May 1) -- The situation on the ground in Afghanistan has clearly moved from "major combat activity to a period of stability and stabilization," Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said during a visit today to the Afghan capital.

Rumsfeld said he is "impressed with the marked change" in Kabul since his last visit in April 2002.

The differences might not be so readily apparent by someone who sees the city every day, he said, "but for me to come back after many months now

and see the progress, to feel the energy in the street, to see the kiosks and people active and cars moving around and young children coming and going, ... It's a measure of progress.

"It's a measure of the success that's taking place here and, needless to say, it warms the hearts of those of us who have wished this country well and look forward to the continued progress of the Afghan people," he added.

During a joint press conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Rumsfeld said a sure sign of progress in Afghanistan is that the people are "voting with their feet" and returning to the country. "They are saying that the cir-

cumstance here is something they want to be a part of," the secretary said.

There are, however, still pockets of resistance throughout the country. The American and Afghan governments continue to work together, the secretary noted, to "see that any areas where there is resistance to this government and to the coalition forces will be dealt with promptly and efficiently."

Karzai disputed a reporter's suggestion that he should be in firmer control in areas of Afghanistan far removed from Kabul.

"Have we achieved something from last December till today? Yes," he said. "Is it enough? No."

# Romanians Take First Annual Kandahar Run

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

Romanian Army Capt. Suciu Ioan and Capt. Mihal Muresan won the first annual Kandahar St. Michael's Airborne Association run Thursday, crossing the finish line side-by-side — nearly a full minute ahead of the second-place runner, Spc. Greg Harris, a radio telephone operator with C Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 504<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division.

Ioan and Muresan finished the 6.2-mile race in 36 minutes, 31 seconds, a full 43 seconds ahead of Harris, who finished with a 37:14 time. All three said the conditions in Afghanistan affected their times.

“Because of the conditions, the heat and the elevation, we ran slower,” Ioan said. He said a normal time for a 6.2-mile race in Romania is somewhere in the mid-31 minute range for himself and Muresan. Harris said his pace puts him somewhere around 34 minutes back in the U.S.

Other factors contributing to a slower run time was the uneven running surface, which shifted from gravel to sand to blacktop throughout the course, making runners more self-conscious of their stride.

see **RACE**, page 5



From left to right: Spc. Jason Votis, Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 3-504th PIR medical specialist, 1st Lt. Shannon Ford, Headquarters and A Company, 307th LTF intelligence officer, and 1st Lt. Alyson McInernay, C Company, 307th LTF executive officer, rope off the finish line during the race Thursday.



**ABOVE:** The twin dangers of heat and uneven running surfaces were a big concern for event planners. To alleviate possible injuries, engineers watered and grated much of the course the night before the race, and volunteers manned water stations every two miles to avoid dehydration. **RIGHT:** Crew members of the 126st Air Ambulance Company wave to race participants after the race. The MEDEVAC crew was on hand to airlift anyone who was injured during the race, conducted Thursday. The course would throughout and around Kandahar.



Chaplain (Maj.) Jeffrey Waters talks to troops prior to the race. The run was held in conjunction with the National Prayer Day and St. Michael's Airborne Association run held in the U.S. Thursday.



**RIGHT:** The 900 registered runners of the St. Michael's Airborne Association Kandahar run get started on their 6.2-mile trek.

**BELOW:** The overall winners of the 1st Annual St. Michael's Airborne Association Kandahar 6.2-mile run, from left to right: Spc. Greg Harris, left, Capt. Suci Ioan, center and Capt. Mihal Muresan.

**RACE**, from page 5

The two Romanians were nothing but modest over their convincing win Thursday, thanking their American hosts and the many volunteers who made the race happen in the first place.

"We're feeling good, and want to thank our colleagues and fellow runners," Muresan said. "It was very well organized."

"All of us that ran in the race today are winners," he continued, "and I'm happy I was able to participate."

According to race director Capt. Jerry Hicks, Headquarters and A Company, 307<sup>th</sup> Logistics Task Force executive officer, approximately 900 U.S., Romanian and Italian soldiers signed up for the event; another 400 participated by running unofficially in unit formations.

"It was awesome," he said. "Who would have thought we'd have more

than 1,300 run a race in Kandahar, Afghanistan?"

A team of 45 volunteers were instrumental in the success of the event, Hicks said, volunteers who manned the water stations found at every two-mile mark on the course, set up and cleaned up after the event, and kept track of the runners.

Because of the efforts of the volunteers who were at the finish line, the race committee was able to hand out awards to the top winners in the nine categories (broken down by sex and age group, as well as overall winners).

Hicks made particular mention to the medical staff on hand, in the air and on the

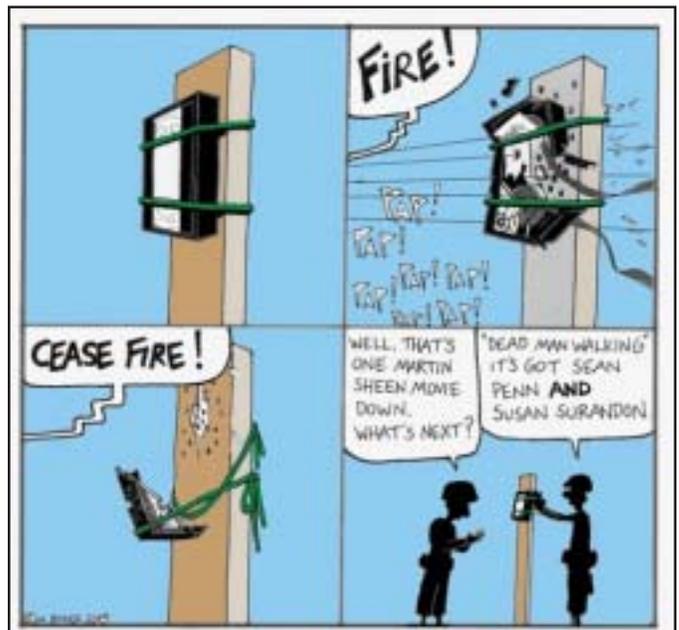


ground, in case of injury, and the engineers who watered down the course and grated the back stretch of the course for a more stable running surface.



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

**Your wife's "high 'n tight" is more squared away than your commanding officer's. - quinman**



# U.S. Army Could Be Out of Afghanistan by 2004

by Chris Kraul  
L.A. Times Staff Writer

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan** — The departing commander of U.S.-led military forces in Afghanistan says those troops' success fighting terrorist holdouts, combined with improved recruiting by the new Afghan army, means that Americans stationed here could start going home as early as summer 2004.

During an interview in which he reviewed his year in command, Army Lt. Gen. Dan K. McNeill gave no timeline for a U.S. withdrawal. And Afghan ground troops may need U.S. air support indefinitely, since there is no plan at present for the American military to train Afghan helicopter or jet aircraft pilots, he said.

But he credited a shift in allied military tactics last summer to battalion-size conventional operations for cleaning out large numbers of terrorist holdouts, uncovering several huge caches of weapons and crippling enemy forces' ability to mount a meaningful offensive.

"From a military point of view, we have done a superb job," McNeill said. "There's still some enemy out there, just a whole less of them. A lot of people expected the enemy to mount a spring offensive this year, and the fact is that the [military force] mounting it was us."

The general said Friday that 9,000 Afghan soldiers should be trained and on duty by the summer of next year, which would permit a gradual reduction of allied forces. The latter currently number 11,500, of whom 8,500 are U.S. soldiers, Marines and airmen.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld told reporters during a visit to the Afghan capital, Kabul, on Thursday that the combat phase of military operations in Afghanistan was largely over and that forces had begun "shifting their weight" to concentrate more on civil assistance and reconstruction projects.

But remnants of the deposed Taliban regime and Al Qaeda terrorist network continue to harass U.S. bases and patrols — especially near the Pakistani border, where many have taken refuge — killing and wounding U.S. and Afghan troops.

As he has in other interviews, McNeill criticized Pakistan for not doing more to police its border and control the movements of terrorist forces known to seek shelter there. But he also praised the country for arresting about 470 Al Qaeda and Taliban suspects and giving the U.S.

The change in tactics "produced fruit immediately" in limiting the enemy's ability to find sanctuary, the general said. U.S. forces also benefited from developing better local intelligence.

McNeill, 56, has been in charge of allied forces, whose headquarters are in Bagram, since May 2002. He expects to be ordered to resume his previous command of the 18th Airborne Corps at Ft. Bragg, N.C., in coming weeks. The North Carolina native is also a former commander of the 82nd Airborne Division.

He described Afghanistan as a harsh environment for any commander. Allied forces have had to deal with climatic extremes; blinding dust storms; a variety of pests, including cobras and scorpions; and the threat of diseases such as hepatitis, typhus and dysentery. Disease and noncombat injuries took a heavy toll on Soviet forces during their occupation.

"Extraordinary measures" to maintain hygiene have kept the incidence of disease among troops very low, McNeill said.

The general said he is optimistic that a United Nations-backed and Japanese-financed plan to disarm thousands of Afghan militiamen will be successful — as long as an ongoing effort to reform and

reconstitute the leadership of the Afghan Ministry of Defense is successful.

The ministry is now dominated by Tajik commanders from the Northern Alliance coalition of militias, which combined with the U.S. military to drive the Taliban from power. But other ethnic groups, including the Pushtuns, must have greater representation before they give up their arms, he said.

For disarmament to be successful, the country must also see a "bolder step" in the pace of large-scale reconstruction projects and the jobs they create, so that demobilized militiamen have alternatives to being on the payrolls of warlords, McNeill said.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jim Wagner

**The success of U.S. Army conventional forces, like the weapons haul brought in by 82nd Airborne Division troops during Operation Valiant Strike recently, could mean an early exit, according to Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan.**

military transit, flyover and basing rights.

The allies have launched a dozen large-scale conventional operations, with forces numbering up to 500, since August. Previously, it concentrated on sending out small units, such as Special Forces platoons, to seek out and confront the enemy, he said.

McNeill said he made the change because he and his staff calculated that one of the mistakes committed by Soviet forces during their disastrous 10-year occupation of Afghanistan, which ended in 1989, was that they "hunkered down in bases next to airfields too much and did not stay on the move."