

A close-up photograph of a man with a mustache and dark hair, wearing black sunglasses and a desert camouflage uniform. He is focused on playing a violin, with his bow drawn across the strings. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light brown.

The  
**MOUNTAIN VIEW**  
MAGAZINE

OFFICERS  
and PAGE 4  
BLUEGRASS

Female Pilots  
Officer's Oath  
Short Roadrunner

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**FOUR FOOT RUNNER  
PAGE 10**

**BRASS AND BLUEGRASS  
PAGE 4**

## REGULARS

**AROUND RC-SOUTH  
PAGE 14**

**LATEST LOLS  
PAGE 16**

**TOP SHOTS  
PAGE 8**

## COLUMNS

**COMMAND COLUMN  
PAGE 13**

**THE DON SAYS  
PAGE 12**



4



14

## THE OATH



Lt. Col. Oswald C. Arroyo, officer in charge of the Combined Joint Resource Management Shop for Regional Command South of Intelligence and Sustainment Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion celebrates his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the Army by reaffirming the oath of office March 11, at the ISAF RC-South headquarters.

Read the full story on page 17

On the cover



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Diaz

Canadian Air Force Capt. Paul Dacier, officer in charge of priority air mission requests for RC-South, plays bluegrass music at the RC-South headquarters, March 18, 2011, at Kandahar Airfield, in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

### The MOUNTAIN VIEW MAGAZINE

Regional Command South  
**Commanding General**  
Maj. Gen. James L. Terry  
**Command Sergeant Major**  
Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Greca

The Mountain View is an authorized publication for members of coalition forces. Contents of The Mountain View are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, coalition governments. All editorial content of The Mountain View is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Regional Command South Public Affairs Office.

Editorial Staff  
RC-South PAO Lt. Col. Web Wright  
RC-South PAO NCOIC  
Master Sgt. Tami Hillis  
Command Information OIC  
Ensign Haraz N. Ghanbari  
Managing Editor Sgt. Matthew Diaz

*Media queries please contact RC-South Public Affairs at [10thmntpao@gmail.com](mailto:10thmntpao@gmail.com)*

Contributing Units

- TF Destiny
- TF Kandahar
- TF Lightning
- TF Raider
- TF Strike
- TF Thunder
- CT Uruzgan
- CT Zabul
- NTM-A
- 16th MPAD



# Bluegrass Buds

Story and photos by Sgt. Matthew Diaz  
Regional Command (South) Photojournalist



Afghanistan: combat, progress, bluegrass?

Two ISAF Regional Command (South) officers bring a little twang to Southwest Asia.

U.S. Army Col. John Sims, chief of information effects for RC-South, and Canadian Air Force Capt. Paul Dacier, officer in charge of priority air mission requests for RC-South, get together every Friday morning to play a little bluegrass.

With Sims on the banjo and Dacier scratching the fiddle, the pair tries to brighten the day of passers-by. They set up in an open area usually utilized for ceremonies in front of the RC-South headquarters and play for an hour for anyone that will listen. Some folks stop and listen for a while, others pass by with no interest, but a few get comfortable and start their Friday with a little musical enjoyment.

This unlikely pair met at Fort Drum before their current deployment during an exercise to prepare their units for Afghanistan. The visiting Canadians held a barbecue at the end of the exercise and invited the Americans to join them. Some of Dacier's colleagues asked him to bring his fiddle along to provide a little entertainment. When he arrived he found out that an American brought a banjo with him. They jammed together that night. That is how the pair of Sims and Dacier came to be.

When Sims and Dacier parted ways, they made an agreement to bring their instruments with them on the

deployment so they could continue to play music together. They both made good on this arrangement and now regularly enjoy each other's company and musical style once a week.

Dacier is no one-trick pony, he plays fiddle, piano and guitar. He also runs his own business teaching people to play the fiddle or piano. He's been playing instruments since he was 10 years old.

"I started with the piano at 10, then one night my dad was practicing the fiddle, and I wanted to learn to play," said Dacier. "I picked up the fiddle and learned the song on the spot; I was 17 years old then."

Sims too comes from a musical family, noting that everyone in his family plays some sort of instrument. He attributes his start with the banjo to being a bored youth.

"I started playing when I was about 14," recalled Sims. "I was hanging out at a gas station with nothing to do and a guy on a motorcycle rolled up with a banjo on his back, I

asked what it was, he said it was a banjo and I decided I wanted to learn it."

Sims said he wanted to be a musician for the Army, but he decided to swing it in another direction.

"I joined the Army to play the banjo in the Army band - that was in 1980. That didn't quite work out the way I wanted it to," said Sims. "I became a field artilleryman, but if you love music, you don't just leave it, and it goes with you."

When playing together, the pair mostly goes off the

**"I picked up the fiddle and learned the song on the spot."**

-Canadian Air Force Capt. Paul Dacier, officer in charge of priority air mission requests for RC-South

cuff, playing whatever song comes to mind. Their selection may range from favorites like "Do Your Ears Hang Low" and "Pachelbel's Canon" to gospel classics like "Amazing Grace."

Dacier said when you know a lot of well known songs it's easier to just sit and jam with someone as opposed to composing your own tunes.

The duo's informal approach to bluegrass works well for them. The performances are generally well received by passers-by and those who take the time to stop and enjoy the music.

Playing for their fellow Soldiers does more than allow them to have a little fun once a week.

It sets a good tone for the day and could have an effect on someone who just walks by and gets a cheerful tune stuck in their head.

"This is a very important mission that we're here doing, and we're pretty serious about it, but you have to

sharpen your axe," said Sims. "We only do it an hour once a week, but it's just long enough to get in there and hopefully bring a bit of peace and stability to Afghanistan."

The musicians get something personal out of the weekly jam sessions as well.

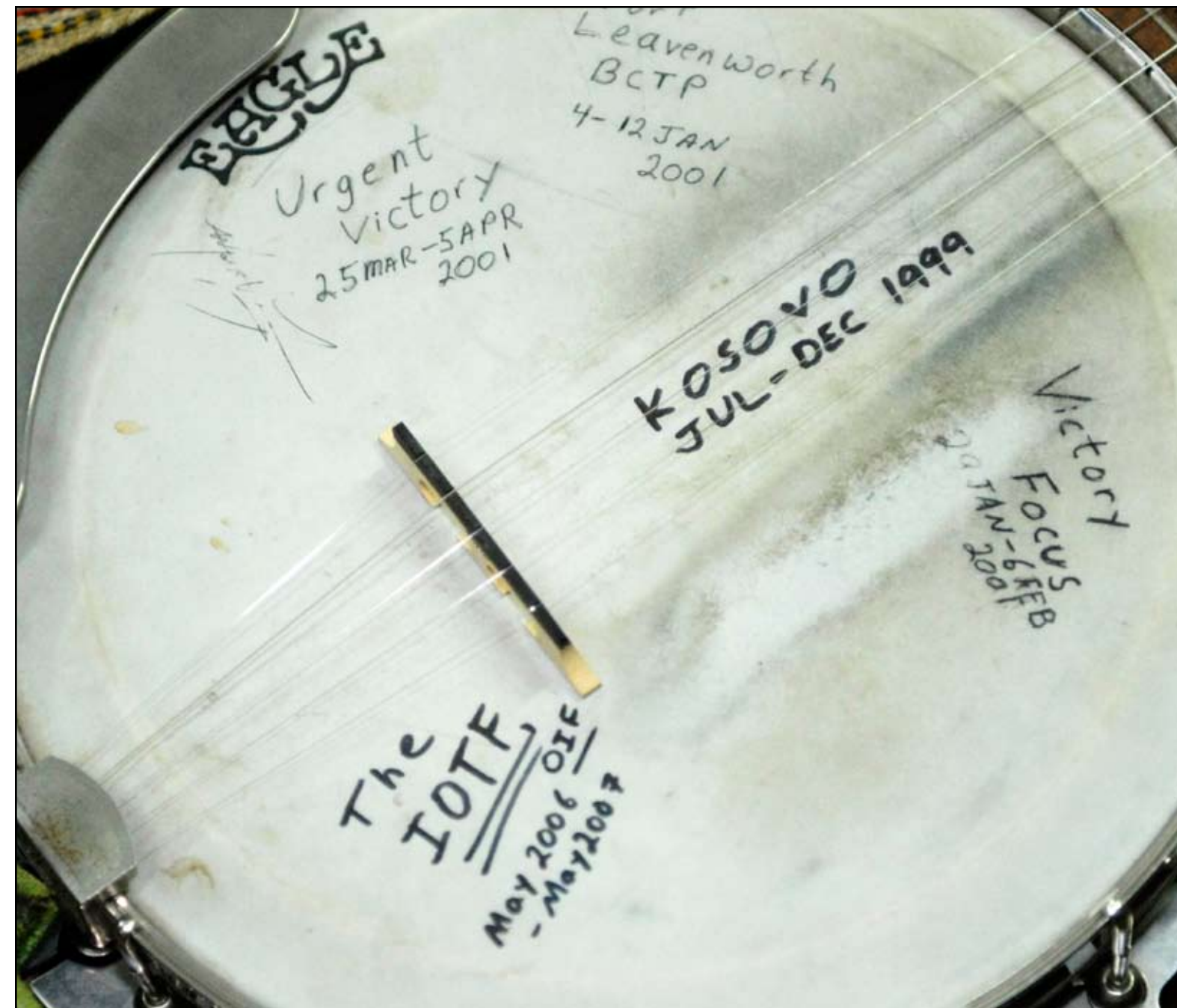
"When I play music I think about nothing else," said Dacier. "I just play the song the best I can so all my focus goes into the song and I just forget about the war and conflict."

Being from a family of musicians, Sims isn't content to let music fade from his life

"Music was always something that held my family together, and just like that I think I passed that on to my kids so my kids are musicians or they sing, they dance and my wife Theresa is our favorite fan," Sims said.

While playing music helps clear Dacier's mind, Sims said it's good plain fun.

"It's my favorite day of the week," remarked Sims.





# TOP SHOTS



"TOP SHOTS" ENTRIES ARE OPEN TO ALL READERS.

ALL "TOP SHOTS" SUBMISSIONS MUST BE IN BY THE FRIDAY BEFORE PUBLICATION DATE. SEND SUBMISSIONS TO [10THMTNPAO@GMAIL.COM](mailto:10THMTNPAO@GMAIL.COM)



# 10th Mountain's shortest officer takes part in KAF's biggest runs

Story and photo by Sgt. Matthew Diaz  
Regional Command (South) photojournalist

Running. To some it is an exercise of torture. To others it is a way of life. More than just a way to get from point A to B, running can provide a stress outlet for deployed Soldiers.

For Capt. Loan Vo, engineer projects manager for RC-South with Operations Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, running is part of her daily life.

The Vietnam-born, Fort Smith, Ark., native has been running in races since 2006. Since her arrival to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, she has participated in more than 15 races and has come in first or second place every time.

"I started running when I went to Fort Lewis," said Vo. "I always loved running but didn't run that much before. There was a captain there who asked me to join the (Army) 10-miler team and that's how I got started."

Vo is easy to pick out in a crowded field of runners as she is usually the shortest person competing. She said her short height does not leave her at a disadvantage on the track.

"I do get comments about being short a lot, but I just run," she said with a laugh.

Vo is widely accepted as the fastest person in her battalion, with many others struggling to keep pace with her in a race. Her name has become synonymous with speed and Soldiers aspire to keep up with her. To date she has not been able to find someone to match her pace. This means she has to motivate herself to work harder and become faster.

The short statured runner said most of the time it is just her running against her watch. This does not hinder her training though; her motivation is such that she is always pushing herself regardless of the competition, or lack thereof.

"She gets up pretty early, I don't know the exact time but I know I sleep for several more hours after she gets up," said Vo's roommate, Towanda, Pa. native, Capt. Megan Cain of Headquarters Support Company, HHBN, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division (LI). "I call her crazy number one as a result of her running. There are definitely a lot of comments about her short legs and how she can run so fast. I know it's because she trains. We were making fun of her one day because she was very muddy after a race; she said she was so close to the ground, she couldn't help it."

Any runner needs to train and Vo is no different. She spends hours on the treadmill daily just to keep in shape. When a big race comes up she begins to increase her workouts in a manner that will avoid injury.

Vo said ideally she would get to train a few months prior to a big race. On KAF, runs are often announced with very short notice but she makes do.

While she may be the fastest around, Vo is not alone on her runs. Her roommates participate and support her in the races.

Cain said when she and her roommates participate in a race with Vo, that Vo would finish so fast she has time to go home, grab the other's jackets and be waiting for them at the finish line.

Currently, running is just a hobby for Vo. She said she would like to improve, but said she doesn't see herself running professionally.

"There are certain people around here who will say, 'I kept up with Captain Vo for a whole quarter of a mile!' I like to tell her that when I hear it," said Cain.

Just as important to preparing for a run, is the mindset during and after the race. If a runner starts to doubt themselves in the middle of a marathon it will affect them for the rest of the race. Vo's first thought after finishing a long race? "I'm hungry!"



Staying hydrated in this arid environment is a mainstay for a Soldier's health, survival and ability to stay in the fight. The temperature is changing as I'm sure everyone has realized. It is going to get hotter still. It is important for everyone to acknowledge their own limits. The recommended daily intake of water is about six - eight full glasses of water per day. In Kandahar, it is my feeling that up to eight - 10 bottles of water should be consumed daily per person. That rate should be increased with strenuous activities or missions, i.e. going to the gym or sitting in MRAPS. It is also important to recognize the signs and symptoms of dehydration not only for yourself but also for your battle. Some signs and symptoms are pale, flushed, lack of perfusion (sweating), lightheaded or dizziness. It is important to take the proper measures to combat dehydration. Moving yourself or your battle to a shaded area, drinking water, loosen clothing, and contacting medical assistance are primary measures for treating a heat casualty. So make sure you are drinking water 10<sup>th</sup> MTN! Climb to Glory!

## Cultural Considerations:

**Afghanistan films and theater shows had many viewers in the past, but during the three decades of war and conflict, Afghanistan films/movies have received the most damage and almost lost its value among Afghan People. The biggest damage to Afghanistan movies was during the period of Taliban rule when they shut down the cinemas, burned and destroyed the movies and banned all entertainment in Afghanistan. After the collapse of Taliban government there was a reopening of cinemas and re-broadcasting of television. Due to lack of Afghan movies, people turned to foreign movies but especially to Indian movies.**



## SOLDIER IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**Name:** Spc. Russel W. Akers  
**Unit:** 552nd MP, Co., 504th MP BN  
**MOS:** Combat Medic  
**Hometown:** Hamlet, N.C.  
**Quote:** "As the Platoon Medic it is my job to place the needs of the platoon ahead of myself."

Spc. Russel W. Akers distinguished himself as the platoon medic on 27 February 2011 while conducting a dismounted patrol with his platoon in district 7. While moving back to their dismount point after completing their sweep of the area Akers' squad was hit by a command detonated IED. The blast blew Akers 10 feet up in the air onto his back. Within seconds Akers went into action disregarding the safety of his own life knowing there could be secondary IED's in the area. Akers jumped into a ditch to retrieve the body of his fellow comrade and pulled him out. Once he had him out he determined that he was KIA and he immediately moved on to another comrade who was wounded in the middle of the road. Akers assessed his wounds and prepared him for immediate MEDEVAC. It was not until six hours later once he knew his comrades were safe that he checked himself into Role 3 with issues breathing.



COMMAND COLUMN

### Recognition

How do you say "thank-you" and recognize heroes who risk their lives every day in support of you and their team? I often think about this as I'm circulating the battlefield and wonder if I am doing enough. I say thank-you, attempt to smile and laugh, present a medal or Coins of Excellence when asked, and just try to listen to their concerns. They love to tell their stories and I love to listen – where they are from, about their families, and typically what made them join the Army. I tell them how proud I am of all of them, how proud their families must be of them back home in the States, and how they are making history. I try to make them feel important and know that this leadership team cares, about them and their families. They are all important, heroes, and we could not do this without them and I am humbled to be part of their team!

Climb to Glory!  
 Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Greca  
 Mountain 7



## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

What is Your Story?  
 CH (LTC) Kelly Moore

What's your story? Everyone has one. It is always fascinating to me when I hear how people got to where they are today. Some people had difficult childhoods and had to go through some rather hard times. Some people had relatively "normal" lives and things perhaps stayed normal, or perhaps some event occurred that changed their course. Some may have started out normal, but because of some event life became hard. In every story there is the intrigue of people and events weaving together to create a unique personal story.

There's an old saying that, the events of life will either make us bitter, or better. When I hear of what some people have had to experience I find myself very grateful to have had a somewhat normal and stable life. But it is always inspiring to me when I hear of the hardships, yet the person telling their story is upbeat and has a bright view of the future. Obviously, they used those difficult events to become a better person, not a bitter person.

I am also reminded of an e-mail I recently received from my daughter, who is a college student at the University of Oklahoma. She was on spring break and she had planned to simply rest and do some things she wanted to do. She wrote me, "God had other plans." And went on to describe how events she had not anticipated "changed" her week. She was not bitter, but actually better, because she had the realization that, "Man plans his ways, but the LORD directs his steps." (Proverbs 16:9). She was not bitter about her change of plans, she was better. She also understands Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

I'll ask again, "What's your story?"  
 More importantly, has it made you bitter or better?

# Female aviators defy reported odds

Story and Photos by Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Stephanie L. Carl  
Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- When Chief Warrant Officer 4 Trudy Truax arrived at her first unit as an OH-58A pilot in 1996, her commander refused her orders.

"I've had my own battalion commanders not speak to me," Truax said.

Truax was one of the first females to join the community of Cobra, Apache and Kiowa pilots after then-President Bill Clinton lifted the restrictions that kept women from flying the traditionally combat-focused rotary-wing birds. She was one of only six women in her class – three from West Point and three warrant officers. Today, she's the only one of the six still serving in the Army, and she serves as the standardization instructor pilot for Company C (Dustoff), 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 52<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Regiment, which is currently deployed to Afghanistan with Task Force Thunder, the 159<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade.

According to a study released earlier this month by the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, women account for only 16 percent of leadership positions in the military – a seemingly staggering statistic to release during National Women's History Month. But not so much so when compared to the overall statistic of women serving in the military, which is 16.4 percent, according to a September 30 report released by the Department of Defense.

To Truax and the other women who fill key positions within the aviation community, the numbers are just that – numbers. And they don't take into account the positions that women are holding within the military or where they were 20 years ago.

Lt. Col. Neil Reilly, the squadron commander for 7<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, was assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Sqdn., 17<sup>th</sup> Cav. Rgt., in 1998. With him was then-Warrant Officer Anne Wiley, who had recently graduated as an OH-58 Kiowa pilot. Today, Wiley is a Chief warrant officer 4 and serves as the senior standardization instructor pilot for Reilly's unit. She is the first female to hold that position at a squadron level. But she didn't get there overnight.

"I went through relentless hazing," Wiley said of her time as a new pilot and a female in a man's world. "But today, when one of my peers comes up and bumps me on the shoulder and asks how it's going, I know it was worth it, and that I've made it."

The challenges Wiley and her counterparts faced in the beginning paved the way for many who've come since.

"Flying has been my recurring dream since

I was little," said Capt. Carmel Cammack, an assistant operations officer in Task Force Palehorse and an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior pilot. "I've never been treated any differently, and I appreciate the fact that (other women) were the ones to pioneer this for me. I know that they went through a lot of hazing and a rash of other stuff that I have not had to go through."

For Reilly, it's never been about gender, and Wiley and the female pilots like her have proven that time and again.

"Miss Wiley maintains a mission focus, but has the personality, the charisma, and also has the professionalism and experience that afford her a great deal of credibility," Reilly said.

For the women filling the leadership roles, the professionalism and experience are the important parts.

"As you show your competence and as you show that you can hang with the boys, you show that you're as good as the boys, your acceptance is there," Truax explained. "You must always maintain – as with any aviator – proficiency and excellence, and if you can show that's what you have, then you're fully accepted."

While Truax and Wiley have been around long enough to know what it's like to be evaluated on gender rather than competency, they've witnessed the shift throughout their careers, and the younger women coming



From left to right: Capt. Carmel Cammack, Capt. Donna J. Buono, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Anne Wiley, and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Elizabeth Kimbrough, assigned to Task Force Palehorse, pose for a group photo outside the task force's operation center at Kandahar Airfield.

up behind them have only experienced evaluations based on capabilities.

Capt. Donna J. Buono, the company commander for Company B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment, which is task-organized under Reilly's unit for the deployment, was commissioned in 2004 and joined her first unit as a platoon leader while the company was deployed to Iraq. She was the first female to serve with the company in more than 15 years.

She said she was expecting the fact she is a female to cause some push-back, but she got more flak for being a new platoon leader.

"It's more about being a good leader and being competent, and much less these days about male-female," she explained.

In fact, the main challenges that limit the number of females serving in leadership positions are often brought on by their own accord rather than by restrictions or gender bias within the Army.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Elizabeth Kimbrough is a pilot in command and safety officer with Co. B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn., 101<sup>st</sup> Avn. Rgt. She flies the AH-64D Apache, which often serves to intimidate on the battlefield. At nearly 32, Kimbrough said she loves what she does, but thinks her family is afraid she'll stay in forever.

"My time will be up after June of next year, and I'm still on the fence," she said. "I love, love my job, but I'd still like the opportunity to get married and have kids, and I don't know how I'd do it if I'd stay in. So that's something I think about nearly every single day."

Kimbrough isn't the only one facing that challenging decision.

"I have kind of fended off most relationships that have possibly started," said Cammack. "I personally think it would be extremely hard to have a family in the military. Right now I have the opportunity to say that I don't want kids in the military – I think that would be hard, and that is not something that I want to do, how that's going to play into future career, I don't know. I don't know. It's tough."

As pioneers for women in aviation, both Wiley and Truax stand as an example in this regard too. Wiley started her aviation career as a single mom. Truax has a different perspective.

"Women can be in the Army, and we can have 20-plus year careers and we can have 20-plus years married to the same man, and like I have – I have four children," she said. "I want it all. I want the cake and the ice cream. You can have a solid marriage. You can have children and still do your time in combat."

As with anything in life, it's about balance and maintaining that delicate harmony between professional and personal. But for those women who want to fill the leadership roles, the doors are far from closed.

"I never expected to be where I am today, and I never expected to be in the positions I've been in," Truax said. "Standardizations wasn't a place women went. I think the new men of the Army – new commanders – they understand, and if I didn't cut the mustard I wouldn't be in the positions I've been in. But they very much have unlocked the doors to allow us to show that we have the ability to do what we (Army aviators) do."

"I had to open the doors by proving myself, but they unlocked them for me."



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Anne Wiley (left), the senior standardizations instructor pilot for 7<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, and Capt. Carmel Cammack, an assistant operations officer for the unit, both OH-58D Kiowa pilots, conduct pre-flight inspections on their aircraft at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.





## Yoga exercise balls



- Great exercise in yoga
- Throw at people... SNEAK ATTACK!
- BOUNCY SEAT!

### Soldier's Board

Name three categories of heat injuries

Heat cramps  
Heat exhaustion  
Heat stroke

## SHOUT OUTS!

**Here is your chance to say hi to your friends and family. Contact the RC-South Public Affairs Office to put in your shout out request at [10thmntpao@gmail.com](mailto:10thmntpao@gmail.com)**

# 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division officer marks 25 years of service

Story and Photo by Sgt. Matthew Diaz  
Regional Command South Photojournalist

Twenty-five years ago the Internet was in its infancy, the world was mourning the loss of the Challenger shuttle crew and Eddie Murphy was singing about his girl who liked to party all the time.

Twenty-five years ago, a 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division (LI) officer was enlisting in the Army.

Lt. Col. Oswald C. Arroyo, officer in charge of the Combined Joint Resource Management Shop for Regional Command South of Intelligence and Sustainment Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion celebrated his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the Army by reaffirming the oath of office March 11, at the ISAF RC-South headquarters.

The Philippines native joined the Army after his parents immigrated to America and discovered he could join the service without being an American citizen.

"I went with them for a few months and then went back to the Philippines to finish my schooling," Arroyo said. "I heard you can join the Army as an immigrant – we always thought you had to be a citizen – in the Philippines, being in the service is a big deal."

With \$85, a pair of jeans, running shoes and a hygiene kit, Arroyo enlisted in the Army on March 11, 1986, as a private first class.

"Not only is Lieutenant Colonel Arroyo a highly valued member of the 10th Mountain staff, 25 years of service is a true American success story," said Maj. Gen. James L. Terry, Regional Command South and 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division (LI) commander. "Ozzie is a son of the Philippines who enlisted in the U.S. Army with the support of his young family who reunited with him in the United States after he completed training and was assigned to his first duty station."

Saying goodbye to his family, he shipped off to basic training at Fort Knox, Ky. He went to advanced

individual training at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind., to become an accounting specialist.

"When I became a citizen in 1990, I applied to (Officer Candidates School), but to go to OCS you needed to have college credits, I had my schooling in the Philippines so I had to find a way to transfer my credits," recalled Arroyo.

Twenty-five years of service is no small feat, but Arroyo said he is proud of his service.

"I've always wanted to be a Soldier so I just kept continuing on. If the Army didn't want me they would have told me to pack my bags and leave," he said. "Being in the Army is a lot like being a marketing major, you have to sell the Army to your Family."

At the end of the day, Arroyo doesn't serve for the money, he serves for his Family.

"The Army doesn't make you rich, but at the same time it makes life comfortable for you. The Family being supported enough helps; there are a lot of good benefits that come with it," said the seasoned finance officer.



Lt. Col. Oswald C. Arroyo, officer in charge of the Combined Joint Resource Management Shop for Regional Command South smiles as Maj. Gen. James L. Terry, Regional Command South and 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division (LI) commander makes remarks about the officer before he reaffirms his oath of office.

Become a friend and check in often for the latest news, pictures and video from RC-South. FACEBOOK

[www.facebook.com/ISAF.RCSouth](http://www.facebook.com/ISAF.RCSouth)

TUMBLR

[www.ISAF-RCSouth.Tumblr.com](http://www.ISAF-RCSouth.Tumblr.com)

TWITTER

[www.twitter.com/ISAF\\_RCSouth](http://www.twitter.com/ISAF_RCSouth)

YOUTUBE

[www.youtube.com/user/ISAFRCSouth](http://www.youtube.com/user/ISAFRCSouth)

DVIDS

[www.dvidshub.net/units/RC-S](http://www.dvidshub.net/units/RC-S)

RC-South Social Media Director: MC1 Thomas Coffman

The Mountain View Magazine wants your input! We are looking for cartoonists, columnists, sports fanatics and many more to contribute. If interested, contact the RC-South Public Affairs Office at [10thmntpao@gmail.com](mailto:10thmntpao@gmail.com).

