

March 2009

The ORION GALLIVANTER

1917 - 1919

Dickebush Sector
Mount Kemmel
Vierstraat Ridge
East Poperignhe Line
Hindenburg Line
LaSelle River St. Souplet
Meuse-Argonne St. Mihiel



1940- 1945

Makin
Majuro
Eniwetok
Saipan
Okinawa

2001- Present

*Enduring Freedom,
Afghanistan*
Iraqi Freedom
Noble Eagle

The Stars of Orion Return Home! - Command Transferred to the 33rd BCT -

CAMP PHOENIX, Kabul, Afghanistan – December 19 marked the start of the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team’s journey as the headquarters for Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VIII, Operation Enduring Freedom.

In a Transfer of Authority ceremony here, the New York Army National Guard’s 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team passed authority of CTJF Phoenix December 19 to the Illinois-based 33rd IBCT. Brig. Gen. Steven P. Huber, Illinois Army National Guard, took command of the task force with confidence that the vision and efforts of the 33rd IBCT could successfully uphold the standards set by the task force’s outgoing command.

“Today we celebrate the success of one command, and the bright future of another,” Huber stated. “The 27th paved a way for their own success and provided a path for ours.”

Col. Brian K. Balfe took command of CJTF Phoenix VII on April 26, and assumed control of the responsibility to train and mentor the Afghan National Security Forces (Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police). Despite shortages, Balfe led the 27th through 9 months of tough operations, said Maj. Gen. Richard P. Formica, Combined Security Transition Command- Afghanistan commander.

“While training the ANSF, the 27th helped deliver a better life to the Nationals through a wide array of humanitarian efforts,” Formica said.



Balfe stated with pride his confidence in the transition of command to the 33rd IBCT “... in better condition than it was given to us.”

(Continued on page 4)

THE ORION GALLIVANTER



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Attn: Sec/Editor, P.O. Box 2522, Syracuse, NY 13220-2522

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Commander's Message

Hello to everyone,

I would like to take this opportunity to say WELCOME HOME and WELL DONE to the members of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and all of CJTF Phoenix VII, as they have completed their deployment to Afghanistan. We wish them well, as they adjust to life back home.

As happy and pleased as we are that the troops are back, We will always remember the 43 troops, of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII, that made the ultimate sacrifice while doing their duty. They will always be in our thoughts and prayers.

On Saturday February 14, 2009, a Board of Directors meeting was held at Hafners on Taft Road, N. Syracuse. There were 11 members present and it was a very productive meeting. After the meeting was opened, a motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously, that the current officers maintain their present positions until the Annual-Reunion.

There is a committee set up to organize the 2009 reunion. The Reunion will be held this year in Syracuse, NY on the second weekend of September. A heads up announcement appears in this edition of The Gallivanter, with full details in the June edition.

All correspondence should be sent to the address that is published in the Gallivanter. The Secretary will make sure the proper person gets the mail. Orders being sent to the Quartermaster should be sent to the address on the Purchase Order form.

I am hoping that warmer weather has arrived by the time this edition reaches you.

Please keep all our members, Troops and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Always remember our fallen comrades.

Until the next edition,

I remain yours in the 27th.

Raymond E. Swift

National Commander



Editor's Corner



Fellow Orion Veterans,

As you read this, the 27th has returned from its mission in Afghanistan and is currently going through the reunion and reintegration process with family, friends, work and with our individual units.

Two things to mention upfront: I apologize for the lack of a December issue. As you can imagine, things were rather busy as we transferred control of the mission to the 33rd BCT from Illinois. We had to not only hand off our individual jobs to our replacements but had to prepare and package our equipment for shipment stateside. Just before Christmas, most of the Brigade was enroute stateside via a stopover at Manas, Airbase, Kyrgyzstan. This left little time to produce an issue. Secondly, this issue is later than usual but for good reason. We wanted to complete the planning for the reunion dinner and get the information out in this issue so everyone would have time to make plans and reservations so we can have a great turn out.

With that in mind, we've been hard at work signing up new members for the association. Our latest deployment reminds us of the bond that all Orion veterans have and we can only remain a functional organization if we actively recruit the next generation of members.

Please note that there has been an increase in the annual dues from \$10 to \$15 starting in 2009. Costs have risen for events, the Gallivanter, etc. so the increase comes out of hard discussed necessity. Beginning with the Summer issue of the Gallivanter, members will be able to "opt out" of receiving a traditional mailed copy and only receive an electronic version.

The reunion date has been set and reservation sheets are included in this issue. As we did in 2007, the reunion will occur in Syracuse with a memorial service and numerous displays at the armory on Thompson Road. All indications point to a healthy turn out so please mark your calendars!

Lastly, thank you all for your patience and understanding with not only the Gallivanter but with association issues as well over this last year. Although we were quite busy and certainly had other things to contend with the association was still on our minds.

See you all at the reunion!

Sincerely,
Your Editor
(CPT) Robert Romano

Mailing Addresses:

27th DIV ASSOCIATION **MEMBERS**

- Unit & Personal Remembrances
 - 80 Plus Club to the Editor
 - Historical stories
 - Reunion Notices
 - Mailbag items
 - Taps
 - New Membership application
 - **Membership Dues—\$15.00**
 - Memorial Fund Donations
 - Gallivanter Donations
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27th Division Association

Attn: Acting Secretary

Lana Romano

P.O. Box 2522

Syracuse, NY 13220-2522

Email: Lana.Romano@us.army.mil

Make checks payable to:
The 27th Division Association, Inc.

(continued from Page 1)

Many were called, few chosen and many volunteered, said Balfe, in order to improve the Afghan peoples' chances for a better life.

"An act of terrorism brought us here and all of us will never forget," Balfe said. "Being here brought us full circle."



And now that they begin their trek home, the leadership of CJTF Phoenix VII has full confidence in the abilities of CJTF Phoenix VIII and the 33rd IBCT.

"I have every confidence that the 33rd will build upon the great work of Task Force Phoenix VII," Balfe said.



CJTF-Phoenix VII accomplishments:

The Afghan National Army (ANA) has grown by 6 Kansas (Battalions), resulting in 7,382 additional Afghan Soldiers.

24 ANA Kandaks were validated CM-1 for independent operations, resulting in 25% of the ANA Kandaks validated as capable of independent operations.

Assisted in the planning and execution of over 100 major named operations with the Afghan National Security Forces.

The ANA fielded thousands of modern NATO weapons and equipment, including M16A2 rifles and up armored homes, improving their capabilities while reducing their vulnerabilities to enemy actions

Established a Counter Improvised Explosive Device (CIED) team that trained thousands of Afghan Soldiers and Policemen

More than \$115 Million has been committed to nearly 400 separate construction and improvement projects at Forward Operating Bases, Company Outposts and District Centers across Afghanistan in support of U.S. and ANSF

Over \$39 million obligated through the Commander's Emergency Response Program to build roads, schools, clinics, dig wells, etc. to improve living conditions for the Afghan people

Over 1,250 tons of humanitarian assistance aid delivered to women, children, schools and orphanages, an average of approximately 150 tons per month

CJTF-P also conducted hundreds of humanitarian assistance and civil medical assistance operations in conjunction with ANSF, improving quality of life for ordinary Afghans while enhancing the bonds between the people, ANSF and their government

Established a Logistics Cell enabling the Afghan National Security Forces to receive more of the equipment and weapons they need sooner through increased support and development of the Afghan logistical system and capabilities, expediting modernization and long term sustainability of its forces



Thanksgiving in Kabul

CAMP PHOENIX, KABUL – Thanksgiving at Camp Phoenix was celebrated with all the enthusiasm that Americans come to expect. The day began with more than 180 runners at the Camp Phoenix track before the sun was up for a “Turkey Trot” fun run that shadowed an event in Austin, TX. The runners worked up an appetite for a tremendous feast which began at noon. The dining facility came alive with festive displays including Native American teepees, horn-of-plenties and pilgrims. The menu included roast turkey (of course!), prime rib, baked ham, corn bread stuffing, vegetables and full salad bar.



‘From our families to yours’

Donations from home helped with Afghan mentoring and support mission

AFSHAR SCHOOL, KABUL – Donations of school supplies and children’s clothing from military families and friends at home helped 27th BCT Soldiers in their mission to mentor and train Afghan Forces and support the people.

Thousands of pounds of schools supplies, children’s clothing and shoes sent over from New York communities were delivered to boys and girls of the Afshar School in the suburbs of Kabul on 4 October by members of the Afghan National Police (ANP.)

Humanitarian assistance missions help ordinary Afghan families and build bonds of trust and support for the nation’s developing army and police. Trainers and mentors from Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix (CJTF-Phoenix,) guide and support ANP and Army units as they conduct local operations.



Marking Guard Birthday and Service Legacy

CAMP PHOENIX, KABUL – The 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) dedicated a marble plaque on Saturday in Patriot Square at Camp Phoenix in Kabul where it has served since last April in command of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix (CJTF-Phoenix) VII.

The National Guard’s 372nd birthday on 13 December framed the occasion as the outgoing 27th and the incoming 33rd IBCT prepare to hold the official Transfer of Authority on 19 December.

“I can’t think of a better way for us to mark the birthday of our service than for two historic commands to meet at an important crossroads while serving the nation from a combat zone,” said COL Brian K. Balfe, commander of CJTF-Phoenix VII and the 27th IBCT during a short program inside the Camp Phoenix dining facility following the unveiling of the marble plaque.

“Today we mark the 372nd birthday of America’s National Guard from the opposite side of the world while performing the kind of duty that has always been our hallmark,” he said. “Through our efforts, our example, and our service we are helping to build a nation and the National Guard has been doing exactly that for almost four centuries, when you

think about it.”

“Citizen Soldiers have always defended and then helped build our nation to what it is today. During war, we have always fought from the front and when hostilities have ended we helped support the

peace and contribute to reconstruction,” he added. “We have always seen ourselves as patriots, liberators and servants – never as conquerors or aggressors.”

The program also featured the unveiling of a memorial inside the dining facility as a tribute

to the service members who fell in during CJTF-Phoenix VII, including 8 NYARNG members.

The production and installation of both the plaque and the memorial were overseen by Command Sgt. Maj. David Piwowarski but the design and finishing work came from several volunteers including COL Mike Leonardo, SFC Michael Sirles, SSG Anthony Lechanski, SPC Ray Ramirez, and SSG Linda Nosbisch.

The marble was obtained locally but the computer-generated designs were etched in using a laser engraving machine on base. SSG Nosbisch later hand-painted the Orion patch and the phoenix on the commemorative plaque mounted in Patriot Square.



“We should all remember this Guard birthday because we are celebrating it here in Afghanistan, together, and in fulfillment of everything the Guard has and continues to stand for,” concluded COL Balfe. “I am a Citizen Soldier and am proud to say it.”

Additional Memorials in the Camp Phoenix Dining Facility



New York Army Guard Mounting Largest "Reintegration" Effort Yet

More than 1,000 Soldiers, Spouses To Go through Program in Next Two Months

ROCHESTER NY -- More than 700 Soldiers and family members filled the Riverside Convention Center here Feb. 21, as the New York Army National Guard launched its most intensive reintegration effort, since the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program was launched in January 2008.

Over the next three months, 1,700 members of the 27th Brigade Combat Team who returned from a 10-month long Afghanistan deployment in December and early January will go through the program along with their spouses and children. This is about same number who went through the program to date.

"This is the largest unit reintegration we've conducted since we launched our Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program a year ago," said Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General and Commander of the New York National Guard. "We want to incorporate everything we've learned in running smaller units through the process and add new programs."

In September 2007 and in January 2008, the New York Army National Guard mobilized almost 1,700 members for service in Afghanistan, training the Afghan National Army and Police. It was the largest deployment since about 3,500 New York Guard members served in Iraq in 2004/05.

Now these Guard Soldiers are back home and trying to fit back into civilian life. The goal of the Yellow Ribbon program is to help them do that, said Col. Curtis Williamson, the director of human resources for the National Guard. "We help them find the new normal," Williamson said.

To accommodate those Soldiers, the New York National Guard is holding reintegration events in Western New York (Rochester) the middle of the state near Albany, and in Westchester County, just north of New York City.

"The way this is organized, put together and carried out is phenomenal," said Command Sgt. Major John Gipe, the Army National Guard Command Sergeant Major who was present at the Rochester event. "I am so impressed with the content of the program and the number of people here to attend the program, it's just incredible,"

"You've done something most Americans could not do and would not do," Chaplain (Lt. Col) Eric Olsen told the Soldiers during the day's opening session.

But while their year in Afghanistan should shape their life, it should not define their life, Olsen said. There are Vietnam veterans still stuck in that war 40 years later, Olsen told them. "We don't want you to be stuck in Afghanistan or some other emo-

tional place. We want you to come home."

For 1st Lt. Frank Washington, a member of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion, coming home meant dealing with feelings of being left out of the family. His wife was now making decisions he used to make and he wanted to get back into the family circle. But the program helped him understand what his wife went through while he was gone, Washington said.

Taluto, urged the Guard members and their families to do the hard work it takes to work through the issues of separating and coming home again. "This is about you individually, behind every face there is a story," Taluto said.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program mandates that all Soldiers be present for paid assemblies at approximately 30 and 60 days after their return from a combat deployment. The events are held in non-military settings at hotels paid for by National Guard Bureau. Families are encouraged to come but are not required to be present.

At the 30-day event Soldiers and their spouses are welcomed home by the Adjutant General, view a welcome home message from the governor, and get some basic briefings on indicators of stress and how to work to reintegrate back into home life and civilian jobs.

They also participate in a "Provider Fair" where they learn what military, non-military and veteran's services they can take advantage of.

At the 60-day events each veteran will see a non-military Veterans Affairs counselor for at least 15 minutes to try to identify any issues they have or need for more help.

At a 60-Day session held in January, 67 of the 150 Soldiers present asked for help of some kind. That indicates there is a need for these services, Taluto said.

The New York State Department of Labor will also hold a career fair for Soldiers at the 60-Day event.

The goal is to keep changing the program to make it more relevant to the new combat veterans, Taluto said.

"New York has this wrapped up solid," said Army Guard CSM Gipe. "They have done a tremendous, tremendous job and I'm very glad I had the opportunity to see this first hand."

By Eric Durr, NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs

MAILBAG

— TAPS —

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to inform you of the passing of my father, Leonard M. Piedmont Sr. on January 20th at New Rochelle, NY. He enlisted in the National Guard in 1939. He entered Active Duty in 1940, later serving in the Pacific. He was honorably discharged in September, 1945.

He was a member of the 106th Infantry. He received numerous decorations including the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster.

He had many memories of his service and I remember him talking very highly of General Ralph Smith.

A lifelong resident of New Rochelle, he is survived by two sons and five grandchildren.

— Information —

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to you in hope that you may be able to help me find out about the WWII record of Company M, 105th Infantry.

I recently acquired a copy of my grand-uncle's separation papers which told me that he fought in the above unit. I have searched the internet but have never been able to find a comprehensive document detailing its war record.

I am looking for an official record of the unit, listing such things as where it fought, the names of soldiers in the unit, an

official chronology, etc.

My Uncle's personal information:

Name: George Donovan

Serial #: 32443804

Rank: PFC

Unit: Company M, 105th IN

If anyone can help me with any information, please contact me at: jonathanodonovan@hotmail.com

Dear Sirs,

My Father, Joseph Faden served in the 27th Division, 105th IN during the 1940's. At age 95, he is wondering the fate of the men he served with as he was sent to Prince Rupert.

If anyone has information please contact me at:

Mindy Kohn

5746 N.W. 100th Terrace

Coral Springs, FL 33076

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Customer Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

QTY	ITEM	ITEM COLOR	SIZE	LOGO TITLE	PRICE	TOTAL

SHIRT COLORS: RED, WHITE, GREY, BLACK, GREEN, RED & BLACK, AND BULE.
HAT COLORS: WHITE, RED, BLACK, TAN, RED & BLACK, AND BLUE.

SUB TOTAL	
SHIPPING	\$ 7.00
TOTAL	

LOGO TITLES: 27TH DIVISION ASSOC.
27TH BCT

ITEMS	PRICE
COFFEE MUG	\$ 5.00
SHIRT	\$ 20.00
HAT	\$ 15.00



AUTHORIZED BY _____

DATE _____

The Annual 27th Division Association Reunion
SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2009

Doubletree Inn
6301 State route 298

East Syracuse, NY 13057

FOR TOTAL PACKAGE RESERVATIONS

Total Package Includes:

Schedule of Events:

- Lodging Friday & Saturday night
Dinner Friday, All meals Saturday &
Breakfast Sunday

- \$315 for a single (includes room, all
meals & gratuities for one person)

- \$435 for a double (includes room, all
meals & gratuities for two people)

- Friday: Board of Director's Meeting at
4pm, followed by "Blinger" (Buffet)

- Saturday: Breakfast, static displays at
the armory, a memorial service followed
by a General Meeting & Commander's
Luncheon in the afternoon. Reunion
dinner Saturday Evening (Buffet with
chicken, Pasta and carved sirloin.)

Room and Meal Payments: Make checks payable to the 27th Division Association. Room reservations will be made by Paul Hernandez, Treasurer 27th Division Association as per the RSVP card received below. The Division Association will handle payment due to the Doubletree Inn. A special registration table will be set up by the hosting Reunion Committee. For Registration, meal tickets and program package.

There will be NO \$10 Registration fee this year.

Total Package Reservation Card

Please print and complete all appropriate information and return this card with a check payable to "The 27th Division Association". Mail to HQ's 27th Brigade Combat Team Attn: CPT Paul Hernandez 6900 Thompson Road Syracuse, NY 13211. PH (315) 438-3009

ACCOMODATIONS INFORMATION

27th Division Association National Reunion 25-27 September 2009

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Spouse/Guest Name: _____

Street: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: () _____

Number of Rooms: _____ Number of Persons: _____ Number of Nights: _____

Two Double Beds smoking non-smoking OR One King Bed Smoking non-smoking

RSVP Must be received No Later Than September 1, 2009

The Annual 27th Division Association Reunion
 SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2009
 Doubletree Inn
 6301 State route 298
 East Syracuse, NY 13057

FOR MEALS ONLY RESERVATIONS

Meal Package Only Prices:

Friday Night Blinger: \$27/Person
 Saturday Morning B-Fast: \$16/Person
 Commander's Luncheon: \$26/Person
 Banquet Dinner: \$40/Person
 Sunday Morning B-Fast: \$16/Person

Indicate Required Meals by number of
 People in each box below.

Schedule of Events:

- Friday: Board of Director's Meeting at
 4pm, followed by "Blinger" (Buffet)
 - Saturday: Breakfast, static displays at
 the armory, a memorial service followed
 by a General Meeting & Commander's
 Luncheon in the afternoon. Reunion
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MEAL INFORMATION

27th Division Association National Reunion 25-27 September 2009

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

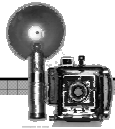
Spouse/Guest Name: _____

Street _____ City _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: () _____

Friday Blinger \$27 each Saturday B-Fast \$16 each Cdr's Luncheon \$24 each Reunion Dinner \$40 each Sunday B-Fast \$16 each

RSVP Must be received No Later Than September 1, 2009



THE SHUTTERBUG PAGE



Afghanistan Edition



Have a picture you want to submit for the Shutterbug Page? Mail a copy of the photo to the Editor's Home address (See: Masthead) or E-Mail a scanned copy to the Editor at: Robert.romano@us.army.mil

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E-Mail Address _____

Post No. _____ or Check if member At Large _____

Age Please check <30 \$200 31-40 \$190 41-50 \$170

51-60 \$150 61-70 \$120 71-80 \$90 81 & up \$60

LIFE MEMBER