

From Fort Bragg to Afghanistan - The First In Country Issue!

JUNE 2008

The ORION GALLIVANTER

1917 - 1919

Dickebush Sector

Mount Kemmel

Vierstraat Ridge

East Poperinghe 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 27th BCT Moves Out! - The Stars of Orion Head for Afghanistan -

The 27th Brigade Combat Team, designated to take over the mission to train and mentor the Afghan National Army and Police in 2008 as Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII, has completed two months of "theater immersion training" under the direction of First U.S. Army Division East. Nearly 1400 troops from New York moved on post near the end of January and were immediately pushed out to Forward Operating Base Patriot, where they remained throughout the two month period.

Now, nearly 60 days later, the team stands ready for overseas movement, focused on its mission and armed with a new confidence level since completing its training evaluation. "I am proud as hell to be your commander, for you to be on my team," said Col. Brian K. Balfe, West Point Class 1983 and commander of New York's 27th Brigade Combat Team. "You raised your hand, took the oath of service and are

doing this when so many others just don't get it, don't understand," he said.



From Ground Zero to the Sunni Triangle and on to the Mountains of Afghanistan

Thousands of New York Army National Guard troops performed both state and federal active duty since the 9-11 terrorist attacks. It is the only part of America's military force that has literally gone "From Ground Zero to the Sunni Triangle and is now going on to the Mountains of Afghanistan." On the day of the attacks on the World Trade Center, hundreds of New York National Guard troops rushed to the armories without being called and many from New York City were on scene even as the towers came down.

By that evening thousands of Guard troops were on duty in support of the civil authorities in New York

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THE ORION GALLIVANTER



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Commander's Message

Hello again to everyone,

It seems like time is moving along at a faster pace, or it may be I'm just getting older!

This will be the first edition that will be originating from Afghanistan. As has been mentioned in the past, the three Vice Commanders, the Gallivanter Editor, Treasurer, Quartermaster and acting Secretary have all been deployed with the 27th Brigade Combat Team.

I would like to point out that you can, and are encouraged to, send all correspondences to the address or E-Mail that is listed in the Gallivanter under MAILING ADDRESSES. Lana Romano, wife of our editor, Robert Romano has volunteered to take on the many tasks involved in getting the information to the proper people concerned and the checks deposited in the 27th Division Associations bank account. Please keep sending in your mail. Linda Hernandez, wife of our treasurer, Paul Hernandez, has volunteered to handle all financial concerns for the 27th. We owe both of these ladies a great deal of thanks for helping out. Thank you Lana and Linda.

As I said before, The 27th Brigade Combat Team has been deployed to Afghanistan. Col Brian Balfe Commanding Officer of the 27th has taken command of Coalition Joint Task Force Phoenix VII. This is a multi-nation task force along with units of the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force.

There is a web site that covers some of the activities of the 27th BCT for those that would like check it out. www.syracuse.com/following-orion.

Our editor has many articles, to tell us about what has been going on in country (as much as security will allow). As I mentioned in the March edition, many of the troops deployed to Afghanistan are members of the 27th Division Association Inc. and I ask that you keep them in your thoughts and prayers as we do all of our troops, their families and past and present comrades.

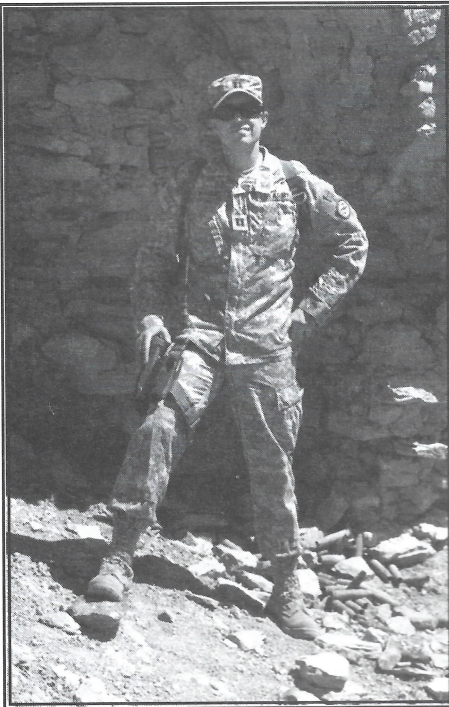
Yours in comradeship

Raymond E. Swift

National Commander



Editor's Corner



Fellow Orion Veterans,

As mentioned previously in the Gallivanter, this is a historic edition. For the first time in 62 years, the Gallivanter has been written in a foreign land. And even more importantly, this is the first time since 1946 that the Orion Colors have been posted as a command element on foreign soil. The proud heritage of the 27th serving at home and abroad continues with our deployment.

In late March we finished up our training at Fort Bragg. Although productive, the time spent there seemed to last forever as we were all anxious to finally begin the mission that had been nearly a year in the making. In a nod to our historic past, as had been done in WW1 and by the 2-108th in Iraq, the 27th lined up on a small hill and recreated the "living insignia" – the Stars of Orion. After a four day pass the first of us began shipping out to Afghanistan. Nearly everyone had a story of their journey – lost equipment, the unforgettable greeting at Bangor Airport, flaming B-1 bombers, sleeping in the Aerial Port lounges, the dust of Kuwait, the heat of Qatar, the view of the Persian Gulf and the first sight of the armored Twinkie on wheels. Of course we all would have our own personnel moment when you first arrived and realized you were on Afghan soil.

As you read this, we're entering our third month of being "in country". We've been conducting missions throughout the country - combat patrols, supply runs, helping to build schools and medical clinics. We've delivered humanitarian aid, handed out soccer balls and backpacks, medically treated babies and children and built many wells – and we've got much more to do before we return.

On a much more somber note, at this point in our mission, there have been nine soldiers who have lost their lives while wearing the Stars of Orion. We grieve with the families of these men who served with honor. Remember them as we remember all of the fallen.

"Thank you's" must be given to LTC Fanning, Major Oliver and the Public Affairs team who have helped with many of the stories and pictures you'll see in this and future editions. Also, we must take a moment and tell you of the generous gift given to us by Peerless Press, the printer of the Gallivanter. Without any hesitation, Dave and Sue offered their help with a sizeable discount in our publishing costs so that we can bring you this larger edition. If you have any printing needs in the future, I urge you to call and use Peerless in Syracuse and thank them for their support.

Enjoy this issue and I'll be talking again with you soon.

Sincerely,
Your Editor
(CPT) Robert Romano

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27th BCT HEADS OUT!

(Continued from Main Page)



City and thousands more were poised at armories and bases up-state.

In the months that followed New York National Guard troops served on extended periods of State Active Duty for homeland defense and recovery support and hundreds of other New York National Guard were called to federal active duty for Operation Noble Eagle II to protect Air Force installations throughout the New England area and for Operation Noble Eagle III to guard the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Fort Drum and other federal installations in the Northeast.

Armed New York National Guard Soldiers can be seen daily patrolling Kennedy and LaGuardia airports in Queens, and Grand Central Terminal and Penn Station in Manhattan. Even during the height of deployments to Iraq, Guard troops helped protect New York City during the Republican National Convention in 2004, went to the hurricane ravaged Gulf Coast in 2005, went to the Southwest Border in 2006 and supported their own state in the face of severe winter storms, floods and mud slides throughout that time.

First Unit to train under New Reserve Component Deployment Model

The 27th is the first Guard unit that has undergone post mobilization

training under a new Army model to limit a total deployment period for Guard and Reserve units to just one year. Under the new plan, mobilized units' total 12-month Active Duty time would include both post mobilization training as well as "boots-on-the-ground" time in theater. To meet this goal, the 27th had to complete all individual training tasks back in



their state using normal drill periods and Annual Training prior to reporting for federal active duty. Members of the 27th completed two three week AT periods last year plus an additional week of training in December at Fort Drum, NY before mobilization this past January.

The 27th is the largest unit that has trained at FOB Patriot on Fort Bragg since it was constructed last year. The 27th BCT deployment team built for Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix is comprised of the brigade headquarters, a Security Force

built around the 2nd Squadron 101st Cavalry and Logistical Task Force built around the 427th Brigade Support Battalion, plus a Training Assistance Group formed from New York's own officer and NCO training academy.

In addition to these team members, nearly 100 other New York National Guard Soldiers simultaneously trained at Fort Riley, KS as Embedded Trainers for the Afghan Security forces and an additional 230 troops from New York who were mobilized ahead of the main force completed their training at FOB Patriot in the fall.

The brigade headquarters is based in Syracuse but subordinate units have drawn Soldiers from Long Island and New York City, the Hudson Valley, the Albany area, the Adirondack North Country, Ithaca, Rochester and Buffalo -- a team drawn from across New York State. About a third of the force has already served in Iraq.

ARTEP Success

Culminating the two months of training at Fort Bragg was a 10-day test, known as an ARTEP (Army Training & Evaluation Program), of the unit's command and control and maneuver capabilities using an Afghanistan scenario. During the training, the 27th was challenged by "Taliban" insurgents, IEDs, indirect fire, com-

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(Continued from page 4)

plex attacks and civilians who ranged from cooperative to belligerent during the play. Key to the training was the ability of the brigade headquarters to gain intelligence and apply analysis to drive its maneuver and operational plans. Integrated into the exercise was Information and Civil-Military Operations tailored to support the fictional "Braggistan" government and its people against insurgent forces.

Send Off Ceremony Highlights

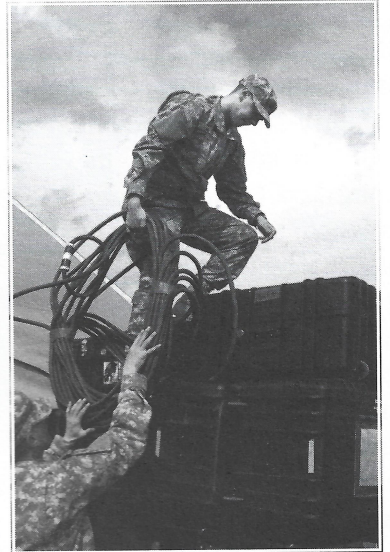
A spectacular send off ceremony was held for the 27th BCT at Seay Field, Fort Bragg on Thursday 27 March. More than 1300 hundred Orion Soldiers took the field while nearly 1800 family members and friends, military dignitaries and First U.S. Army East officials and trainers looked on. The program included honors to the reviewing officer and the nation, an inspection of the troops and a pass in review.

Packing For Trouble

Hundreds of Soldiers began the move the very next day and the effort began with lining up duffle bags and gear for loading aboard trucks to be brought to Pope Air Force Base, which shares space with the Fort Bragg installation. The Soldiers have been issued large quantities of equipment and clothing that need to be crammed into packs and bags. From cold, wet weather and warm weather clothing to body armor and tactical gear – by the time each Soldier has arrived in theater he or she will have sent at least four duffle bags plus a rucksack and assault bag – each bulging with contents.

On the Move

Hundreds of 27th Brigade Combat Team troops began movement into the Area of Operations during the first week of April. In a series of flights built around "force packages" also referred to as "chalks," members of the Headquarters Company 27th BCT, the Security Force and Logistical Task Force battalions, and the Training Assistance Group were flown out from Fort Bragg, NC. The team was moved in a series of flights, some flying days apart from each other and others within hours. The route took most through civilian airports in Bangor, Maine and Leipzig, Germany before moving on to military bases in Kuwait or elsewhere in Southwest Asia. The Soldiers will have a chance to rest and prepare for the last leg of the trip into Afghanistan. The long journey that lasted for hours will ultimately bring them all to Camp Phoenix near Kabul, Afghanistan. Some will remain there while others will be pushed out to other Forward Operating Bases.



Warm Welcome in Bangor

1LT Bannano gets the glad hand from a member of the Bangor, Maine Veterans Greeters as a line of 27th BCT and U.S. Marines enters the airport terminal. The plane both groups were sharing on their trip bound for Kuwait made a scheduled stop there to refuel. The troops were able to get off for about two hours before flying on to Germany. The vet greeters at the Bangor Airport are famous for the hospitality and support shown to the troops who pass through to and from theater. Among the services is the free use of cell phones from inside the Vet Center in order to call loved ones. The walls are covered with flags, drawings and messages of support.



Special Guest

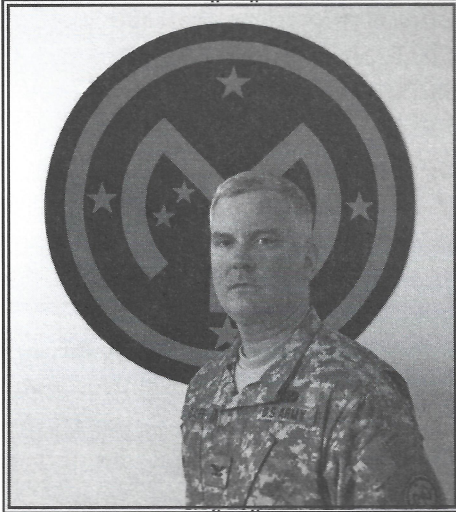
Colonel Balfe

CJTF Phoenix CO

As summer approaches, the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) is immersed in its Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix (CJTF-P) VII mission. We are approaching the two-month mark since the Transfer of Authority at the end of April. My intent and priorities remain clear and unchanged.

We are singularly committed to fulfilling our obligations to successfully complete our mission, bring everyone home safely, and make a measurable difference each day in support of the Afghan people, the Afghan National Security Forces, and the legitimate government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. We will maintain our focus and attention on developing Afghan capabilities and systems with an "Afghan First" mentality. In other words, Afghans must lead the way in their efforts to secure, develop, and run and lead their country. As guests, we must remember that this is a marathon and not a sprint. We must practice "tactical patience" in all that we do.

Our mission here is straight forward – train, advise and mentor the Afghan National Security Forces to conduct independent, self-sustained Counter-Insurgency (COIN) and security operations in order to defeat terrorism and provide a secure, sta-



ble environment within the borders of Afghanistan.

The Afghan National Army (ANA) has made tremendous strides and is the country's number one respected national institution. As a national army, it is ethnically balanced, being manned with Soldiers from across Afghanistan and its various ethnic groups and tribes.

At all levels, from Corps to Brigade and from Kandak (Battalion) to Coy (Company), much of the ANA is planning and executing their own operations. They willingly lead the fight against the insurgents, who generally avoid direct engagements, more often than not, relying on improvised explosive devices (IED) and ambushes. The ANA are true warriors, proud Soldiers, and a credit to their country.

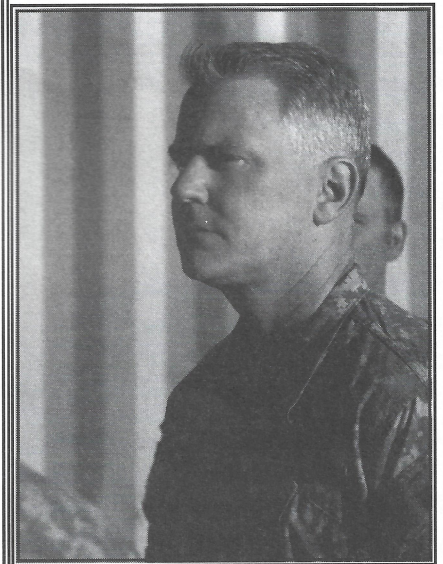
The Afghan National Police (ANP) became a new focus last year for Task Force Phoenix. Under a new training strategy, we are beginning to see improvements in the ability of the ANP to conduct COIN operations in the worst districts in the country, but the program has a long road ahead. Our desired end state: a professional, well-led, and well-trained national police force predicated on the Rule of Law for Afghanistan and its people.

Focused District Development (FDD), the program first implemented in 2007, is based on a grouping of contiguous districts along the country's "Ring Road" selected by the Afghan govern-

ment. In essence, FDD reforms and reconstitutes the ANP, while also improving governance, public works and the rule of law at the local level.

Afghan Uniformed Police recruits from a district are given eight weeks of immersion training together at a separate location before being returned to their districts. While they are training, Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) provide coverage of the district. More than 1400 police have graduated from FDD to date. More than 50 districts will be trained this year. The plan is to train an additional 170 districts over the next 2 ½ years. It will take five years to reform all 364 districts.

FDD is a vital program. The police are nearest to the Afghan people, and therefore, the face of the Afghan government. A disciplined professional police force can set the



conditions for security and good governance. Unlike the National Army, the police are typically locally recruited and based.

CJTF-P is also supporting the Afghan people directly, at the local level. Our units conduct key leader engagements in villages, hamlets and other small communities to identify

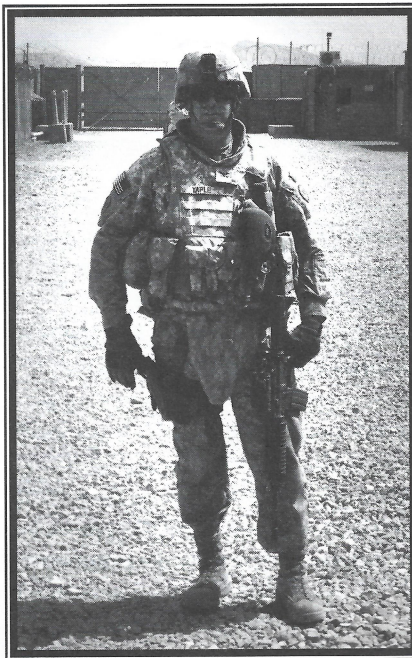
needs, and then do what they can to help. Using the Commander's Emergency Response Program we are able to fund reconstruction projects, wells, schools, drainage and more. We plan, design and fund the work and then contract with local Afghan firms to perform, which helps the economy.

We conduct humanitarian aid projects, distribute donations from home for children and families, and our troops "adopt" orphanages and schools to distribute donations from home, like school packs, school supplies and personal items.

I am extremely proud of the performance of the entire CJTF-P and I am especially pleased by the performance of Orion Soldiers from New York.

There are more than 1700 Soldiers here on the ground from across New York State. They are tapping both their military and civilian skill sets as Embedded Trainers and support staff. These Soldiers are located at dozens of Forward Operating Bases around the country and are serving as mentors for the Army and Police, serving in our Security Force and Logistical Task Forces, and serving in staff sections throughout the CJTF, supporting the Soldiers and teams downrange.

This mission is extremely challenging, yet rewarding. We strive to remain flexible, adaptable and resilient, because the pace and amount of change demand it. We also know that to be successful against the insurgency, we have to focus on the people. In his 1963 book, *Caravans*, James Michener notes "If you reject the food, ignore the customs, fear the religion, and avoid the people, you might better stay home. You are like a pebble thrown into the water; you become wet on the sur-



face but you never become a part of the water."

The CJTF-P mission is a vital national mission and the 27th IBCT has taken a firm hold on the associated challenges. We are committed to making a difference every day. As a Team, we lead the way, as dedicated professionals, confident in our training, knowledge, skills and experience, which we thrive on in the pursuit of mission accomplishment.

In the words of New York Rangers Coach, Tom Renney, "Impossible is not a fact. It is an opinion usually coming from people who have never measured themselves in the face of adversity." As always, I am honored to be your commander -- and to command such a terrific team -- performing this very special and critical mission.

Orion!

BRIAN K. BALFE
Colonel, IN
Commander
Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII
27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Special Guest

Colonel Yaple
CJTF Phoenix DCO

Hello to all -

Time is passing quickly over here in Afghanistan and the 27th is making great headway in the Global War on Terror. We continue to train the Afghan National Security Forces. I spent the last week in the Nimroz and Farah Provinces witnessing the Afghan National Army and Police forces in action against the Taliban. They are doing a great job and working very hard to help their country get back on its feet.

We miss all of you and think of you often. When the going gets tough here we reflect on the great sacrifices the men of the 27th endured in the Central Pacific. That certainly puts everything back into perspective for us! I look forward to seeing you all again in the not to distant future. God bless.

Orion!

Yours in the 27th-
Gary

GARY S. YAPLE
COL, IN
TF Phoenix VII Deputy Commander
27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Arrival In Afghanistan



Members of the 27th Brigade Combat Team began arriving in Afghanistan in large numbers during the first week of April. Most were flown into Kabul International Airport aboard Air Force C-17 Transports and then convoyed in shifts through the City of Kabul aboard up-armored humvees

and an armored bus to Camp Phoenix for in processing and billeting. Within days, troops assigned to other Forward Operating Bases were pushed out from the base in convoys while others assigned to Camp Phoenix remained to begin the battle hand-off process with members of the SC Guard's 218th BCT who were preparing to leave.



At left, troops board Camp Phoenix's armored bus for the 15 minute ride from the airport to the base. M1151 up-armored humvees provide the convoy protection and carry at least two arriving Soldiers in each round trip.

Humanitarian Assistance



Afghan children receive packages of school supplies clothing, vitamins and other personal items during a Humanitarian Assistance operation at the school near Kabul. SSG Frank Bruncato from Buffalo helps with the distribution of items that have mostly been shipped over by private American citizens to CJTF Phoenix. Such operations are routinely conducted weekly around Afghanistan and are done in cooperation with local leaders and the Afghan National Army and Police

Such operations are routinely conducted weekly around Afghanistan and are done in cooperation with local leaders and the Afghan National Army and Police

Stars of Orion On the Right Sleeve, Again!



On April 28th, Colonel Brian K. Balfe, commander of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII placed "Orion" patches on the right shoulders of the three Soldiers from brigade Headquarters Company, and the Security Force and Logistical Task Force battalions during a combat patch ceremony the day after the Transfer of Authority. The U.S. Army is the only service branch that authorizes the wearing of a combat patch on the uniform, which sig-



nifies that the Soldiers in a command have served an average of 30 continuous days in an overseas combat zone where the threat of direct or indirect enemy fire is possible. This marks the first time since WW2 that the 27th has deployed as a command element.

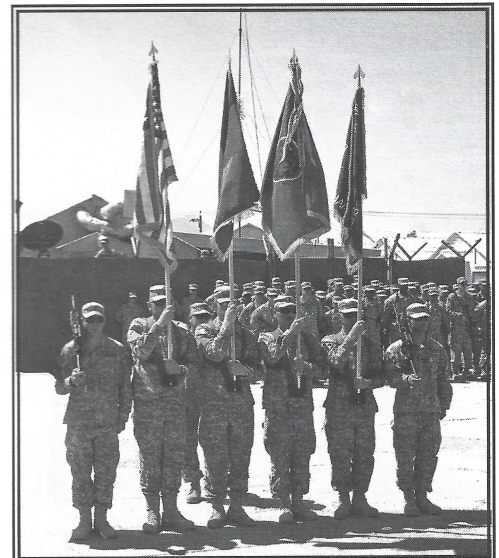
Orion Officially in Charge

CAMP PHOENIX, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN – The command of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix was transferred on April 26th from the South Carolina National Guard's 218th Heavy Separate Brigade to the New York National Guard's 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, when Major General Robert Cone, commander of Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan handed over the 27th Brigade Colors to its commander.

Colonel Brian K. Balfe, the incoming commander officially succeeded Brigadier General Robert E. Livingston during a Transfer of Authority Ceremony in Patriot Square, Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. "Members of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are proud Soldiers, with a storied history," said Colonel Balfe. "We are honored to be here as guests of the government and people of Afghanistan. We believe in our mission. It is a privilege to have been called to perform it," he said. The ceremony signaled both the transfer of responsibility from the 218th to the 27th and that the mission to train and mentor Afghanistan's National Security Forces will continue. It also points to the continued commitment by the United States to the government and people of Afghanistan.

Nearly 1700 members of the New York National Guard's 27th IBCT, from across New York State, have deployed for this mission, the largest single deployment from New York in recent memory. Thousands of New York troops have performed both state and federal active duty since the 9-11, 2001 terrorist attacks. It is the only part of America's military force that served at "Ground Zero." Roughly a third of the team in Afghanistan has already served in previous deployments for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Our South Carolina Soldiers are now returning home, having changed Afghanistan for the better," said BG Livingston. "The 27th from the New York National Guard is poised to take over and continue this vital mission. I am confident I am leaving the mission in capable hands."



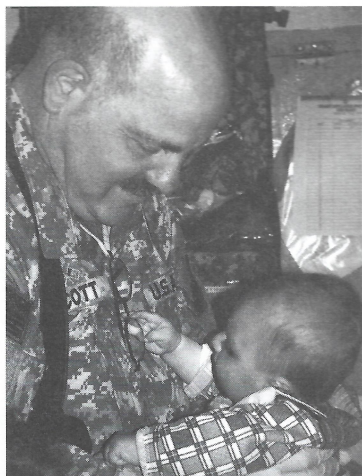
Troop Medical Clinic-saving lives

Afghanistan- Some people may think medics at the Troop Medical Clinic (TMC), Camp Phoenix, have an easy job treating soldiers with sports injuries, and that's it. Well, those who assume may be mistaken.

The Camp Phoenix medics' mission shifted about three weeks ago when an Uncle brought in a six-

monthold big brown eyed baby boy suffering from second degree burns. "I felt heartbroken. His skin was hanging down from his gluteus maximus to his heels. He was in a lot of pain," said U.S. Air Force Tech Sgt. Janelle Amador, day shift leader medical technician.

While the baby was crying, screaming and kicking in pain, the medics were holding back anger and tears while they were trying to focus in order to save this baby's life. At one point there were a total of four medics working on the baby. "We had to give the baby morphine and monitor his oxygen saturation to make sure that the morphine didn't harm him. Otherwise, he could've crashed and died on us," said Amador. Before they could give the baby morphine for the pain,



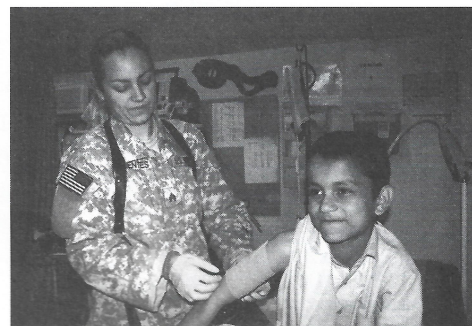
Amador had to find and hold the pulseoxygen saturation. "He was so little and we don't have much pediatric equipment so it was hard. I had to go and try to hold it still while he was crying and kicking. Thank God I was able to hold it to where he had a decent pulse oxygen saturation," she said. U.S. Air Force Staff

Sgt. David J. Herndon, a medical technician said, "We brought him in every day for three weeks for dressing changes." It was a daily routine for the baby, Uncle and medics. First they would medicate the baby, get the wounds cleaned up by debriding the wounds, which is when you take sterile water and gauze and get rid of all the dead skin for the healing process, said Herndon.

After the baby has been medicated and the wounds are cleaned, a thick layer of antibiotic cream is carefully applied on the burns and then ready to be bandaged up, he said. Also, they would give the baby antibiotics and medication for pain control. Lt. Col. Martin

Scott, a clinic nurse, nicknamed his new little friend "Butch", because he has been so strong throughout his treatment, said Herndon. "Butch" only comes in every three days now. "I feel

very good as I see him heal up and gain weight. Getting his life back on track," said Lt. Col. Glenda A. Shearn, a physician's assistant. Herndon said, "I think the initial treatment we've done for him is going to minimize the scarring, so he won't have disfigured legs. He's not going to grow up with horrible scars. The antibiotics we put him on and the treatment we gave him saved his life." "The TMC treats wounded Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, coalition forces, Afghan National Army and some local civilians depending on severity of Life, Limb and Eye Sight," said Scott. Usually, the civilians call us from the entrance point gate and they'll tell us about



the situation. Then we send someone to the gate to evaluate the patient to see if it's necessary to bring them in." A major problem the local nationals have contended with in the past is how to actually pay for necessary, but expensive, surgical procedures. However, a couple of fund-raisers have pitched in to help. "If we keep on doing what we're doing eventually we might make a difference. What we need to do is to stop holding their hands and teach them how to do all this stuff themselves, so that they can be more independent. Once they become more independent then I think Afghanistan will be a better place," said Amador.

Kabul Residents Celebrate New School Wing

KABUL, Afghanistan – Residents and students gathered on Saturday 17 May for a ribbon cutting ceremony of the newly constructed addition to the Tajwar Sultana School, located in the Koloah Pushtu area of downtown Kabul. The project began last November and now thousands of young girls in the city will be able to get an education -- something that was strictly forbidden under the former Taliban regime.

As part of the ceremony, students recited the Afghan national anthem and sang welcoming songs to their guests.

Representatives from Task Force Phoenix joined with Afghanistan's Ministry of Education, the governmental body that oversees the development of schools around the country. The ministry estimates that more than 5.4 million children are now students in secondary schools, with 35% of them being female. This compares to five years ago, when statistics estimated approximately one million students, nearly all male. The ministry also estimates that 11 million Afghans are still illiterate.

"The ministry of education has worked very hard to make this day possible," said Lt. Col. Michael Hoblin, speaking to the crowd in Dari on behalf of Task Force Phoenix. "They do this because they recognize that the children are our future."

The school was funded through the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), one of the tools available to American forces here. Allotted by congress, the money allows the military to respond to the needs and issues of the local populace within their areas of operation. Commanders can construct wells, schools, and other civil projects. Local contractors offer bids and are then awarded contracts to complete the projects, thereby injecting money into the local economy.

After 63 Years, Vet Receives Award

LATHAM, N.Y. -- A veteran's participation in the New York State Veteran Oral History Program led to his receipt of New York State's highest citation for active military service in a meritorious unit.

Sixty-three years after his Army National Guard company earned a Presidential Unit Citation on Saipan, former New York Army National Guard Staff Sergeant Nick Grinaldo received the New York State Conspicuous Service Star. Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General, presented the award to Grinaldo, aged 87 and a lifelong resident of Troy, N.Y., in a ceremony held Thursday, Dec. 27, at New York National Guard headquarters.

The New York State Conspicuous Service Star was created in 1998

to recognize New York residents who served on federal active duty in military units which received some type of unit recognition. The medal is available to any New York state resident who can prove their unit earned such an award.

Grinaldo first applied for the medal in 2001. But his records didn't indicate that he had earned the right to the Presidential Unit Citation. His request was denied.

But Wayne Clarke, a staff member at the New York State Military History Museum, who had recorded Grinaldo's story for the state's Veteran Oral History program, decided to fix that.

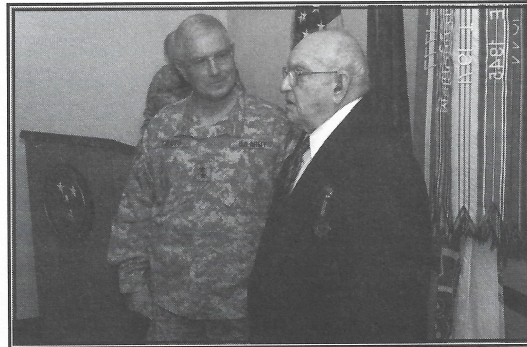
At the close of World War II, the records keeping process was often not the best as hundreds of thousands of Soldiers were demobilized, Clarke said. He tracked down the historical documents that proved Grinaldo had been a member of Company C at the time of

the award. Then he walked the veteran Soldier back through the process.

Company C of the New York National Guard's 105th Infantry Regiment, a part of the 27th Infantry Division, won the Presidential Unit Citation for its actions on July 7, 1944 when those Soldiers, and other members of the 105th Infantry, defeated the largest Japanese Banzai attack of World War II in the Mariana Islands.

When Grinaldo enlisted in his local National Guard company America was at peace. In August 1940 Congress authorized President Franklin D. Roosevelt to mobilize the National Guard for 12 months of training. The 105th Infantry left for Fort McClellan Alabama in October 1940.

As war drew nearer the National Guard's federal status was extended and after the



attack on Pearl Harbor the 27th Division and the 105th Infantry wound up in Hawaii in early 1942. The regiment and the 27th Division would go on to serve in the Pacific as one of the longest serving National Guard combat units during World War II.

It was there that Grinaldo had his most memorable experience with Lt. Col. O'Brien, his battalion commander, who died fighting to prevent his position from being overrun on July 7, 1944.

The unit was training on Bangalore torpedoes, a pipelike explosive device designed to clear barbed wire barriers and minefields, Grinaldo recalled. He was working to push the torpedo through a barbed wire barrier, when he heard O'Brien's voice behind him.

"Well, if you can't push that thing harder than that, I am going to push it right up your rump," he remembered O'Brien saying. "Those ain't the words he used, but that's the nicest part of it," Grinaldo said smiling.

Hearing Major General Taluto say that he and the other World War II veterans made today's Soldiers proud was especially rewarding, Grinaldo said.

The Story of "Orion, The Hunter"

Looking at the shoulder insignia of the 27th Infantry Division, we see a slightly distorted picture of the Constellation Orion. But have you every thought about the Orion Constellation and why it was selected to represent the 27th Infantry Division?

Orion, as you know means, "The Hunter." He was not a Greek God as many people believe, but rather a Giant created by the God, Poseidon.

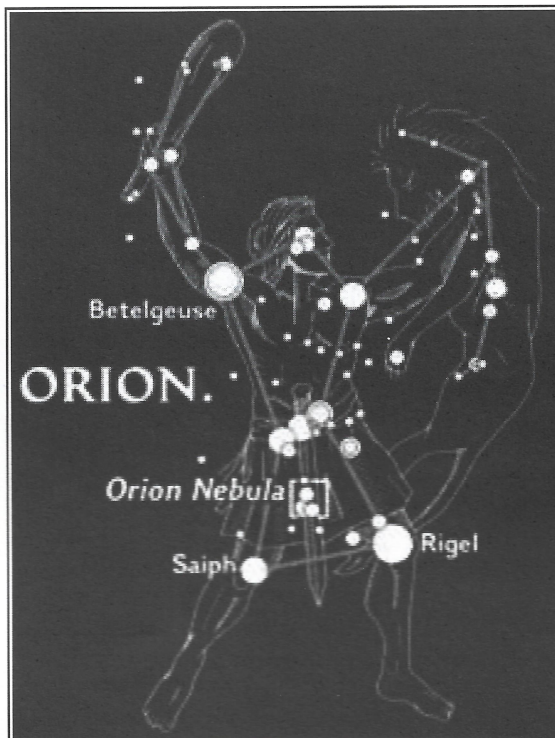
To the Greeks, Orion was their legendary hunter. Although not a God, he did live among them seeking friendship from the many woman Gods - that was his undoing. There are a number of myths about his death, but the one most favored is that Orion was stung to death by a scorpion released by the Goddess Artemis to punish him for having dared prefer the seven Pleiades sisters over her. Artemis wanted Orion for herself. Upon his death, he was placed in the sky as were his hunting dog, Sirius and the Pleiades sisters.

As Orion is rising in the East, during the winter months, the Pleiades Sisters are setting in the west. It is as if Orion is still chasing the Sisters, but will never catch them. In a similar situation, the Constellation, Scorpio, rises in the East while Orion sets in the Western sky. We can imagine, Scorpio chasing Orion trying to sting him once again.

To find Orion, face yourself in a South, South Easterly direction, around 9 - 10 o'clock in the evening. Look well above the horizon and there you will see very bright stars that are part of the Orion Constellation. The stars are very bright and are in the

shape of an hour glass. With a good imagination you can reconstruct the human form of Orion as did many early cultures particularly the Arabs, the Egyptians and the Greeks.

As you look at the configuration you will notice a bright reddish star in the left corner of the figure. This is Betelgeuse, (pronounced Beetle -



juice, an Arabic word meaning - armpit). Bellatrix is in the upper right corner while Saiph is in the lower left. All are bright stars, but the brightest, and one of brightest in the whole sky is the star Rigel, blue-white in color and located in the lower right corner. Betelgeuse and Rigel are both super-giant stars. In fact Betelgeuse is so large that, "if it magically replaced our Sun . . . it would swallow up Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars and would reach half way to Jupiter." Betelgeuse is so far away that if we wanted to reach it in a

rocket ship flying at the speed of light, 186,000 miles per second, it would take us 427 years. You will also notice three stars in a diagonal, sloping to the east. They are Alnitak, Alnilam and Mintaka, and are know as Orion's belt.

Just below Orion's belt there is a series of stars which form Orion's Sword. Contained within this series of stars is the Orion Nebula, This nebula is a giant cloud of dust and gas. It can just be made out with the naked eye but is readily seen with a pair of binoculars or a small telescope. It also contains a very famous cloud in the shape of a horses head and is named the Horse Head Nebula.

You should remember that Orion is one of the most important Constellations in the sky. It is surrounded by other constellations that fit into the hunter theme; there is Taurus (The Bull), to the west, there is Lepus (The Hare), to the south, and Canis Major, (The Big Hunting Dog) to the south of Orion.

Orion is truly the hunter and maybe that is why this Constellation was chosen to be the symbol of the U.S. Army's 27th Infantry Division who does "hunting" in a different way. Or just possibly it maybe a pun on the name of Major General John F. O'Ryan, the division's Commander during WWI.

So, the next time you look at the shoulder insignia or look up at the Orion Constellation remember, there is a lot more to the 27th Infantry Division as there is to the series of light points in the sky, called Orion, The Hunter.

**Written by guest author,
Mr. Mike Romano (USN)**

MAILBAG

-TAPS-

JACK B. HOWEY

Of Nichols, NY passed away on 14 April 2008. He is survived by his wife, Audrey, a son Clark, 3 stepsons, 2 stepdaughters, 6 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren and a sister, Maureen. Jack served 29 years in the military including the Korean War and the 27th Infantry Division retiring as a Captain in 1974 from the 204 Engineer Battalion. He was a past commander of the Owego VFW Post 1371, a member of the American Legion and a long time member of Post 11 of the 27th Division Association. Jack obtained a pilots license at the age of 16—before he was old enough to drive a car and was a pilot instructor for the Triple Cities Soaring Society

and a part-time Designated Pilot Examiner with the FAA.

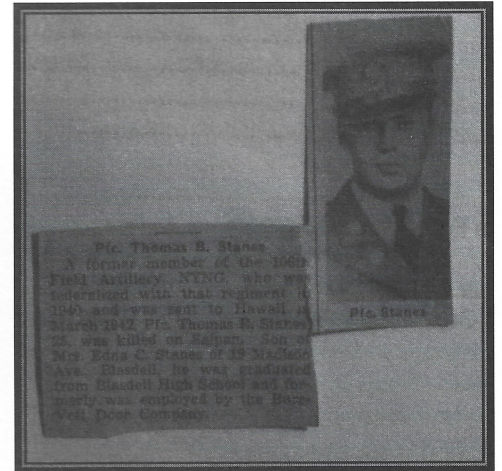
JOSEPH A NARDO

Of Endicott, New York, passed away on 5 January 2008. In 1940, Joe left for Fort McClellan with Battery C, 104th FA of the 27th Infantry Division for one year of training and served five years with the unit including the Pacific campaign. He is survived by his wife of sixty years, Helen, a son, Joseph, two daughters, Nancy and Elaine, seven grandchildren and one great grandson. He was a long time member of Post 11 of the 27th Infantry Division Association and helped organize many B & C Battery annual reunions.

CHARLES D. REHM

To whom it may concern,
Please note for your records that Mr. Charles D. Rehm passed away on 17 March 2008. As you may know he was a World War II veteran who served in the South Pacific. He was 93 years old.

Sincerely,
Dorothy T. Rehm



27th Divison Assoc. Store PURCHASE ORDER

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Fax: (315) 214-5759
E-mail: rollin.skellington@us.army.mil



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



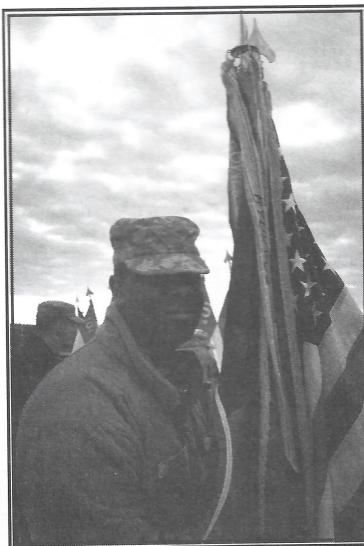
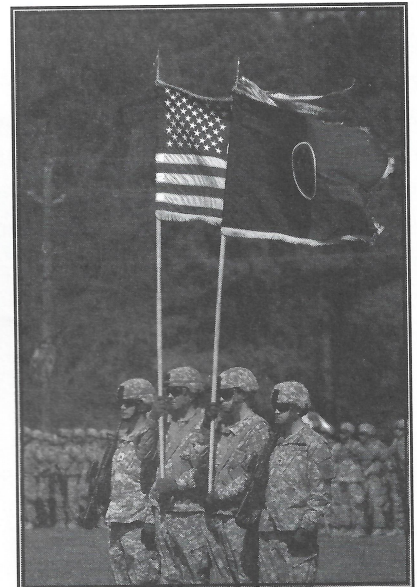
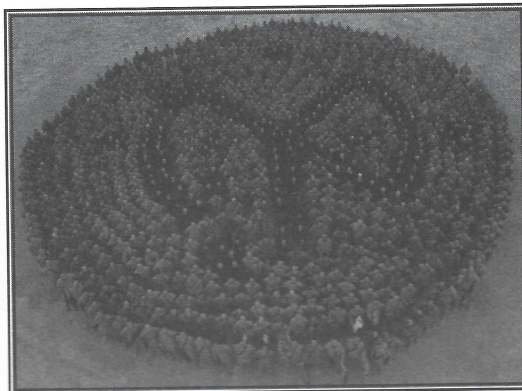
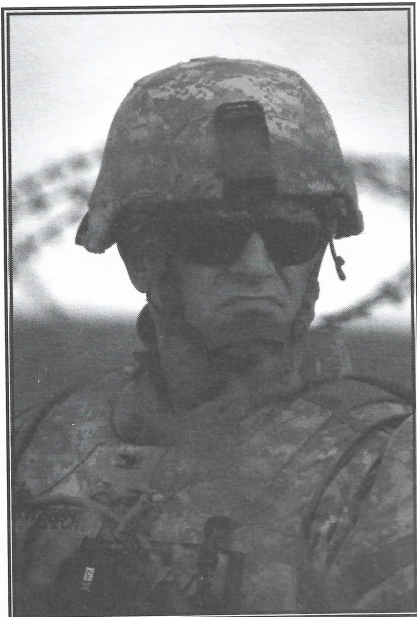
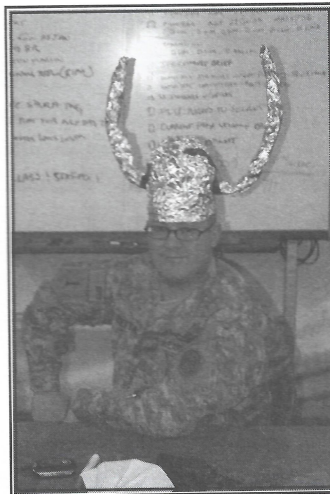
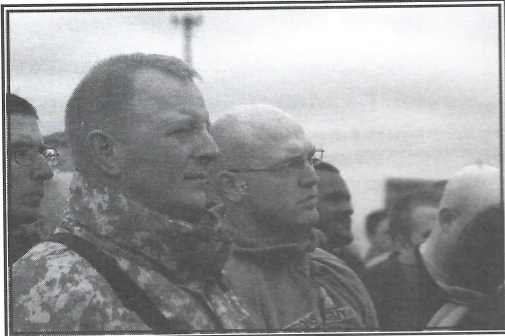
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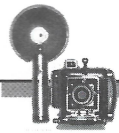
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Fort Bragg Edition



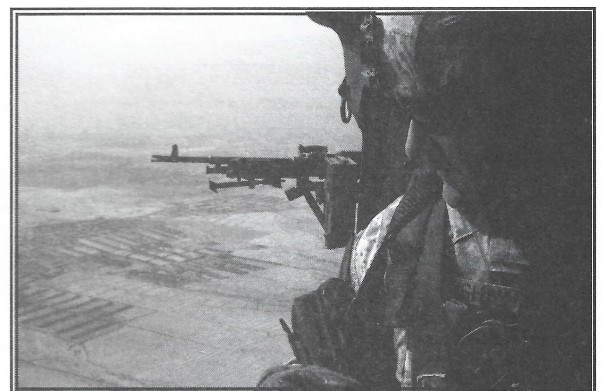
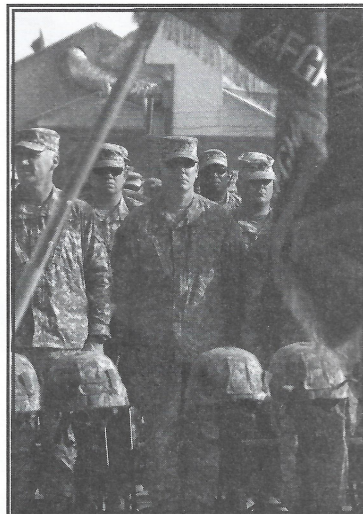
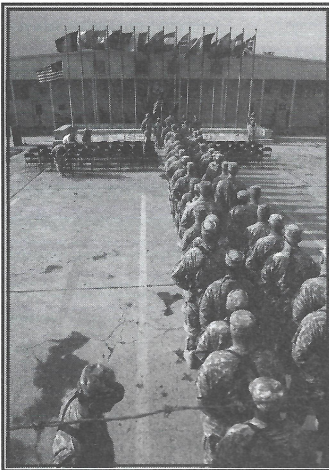
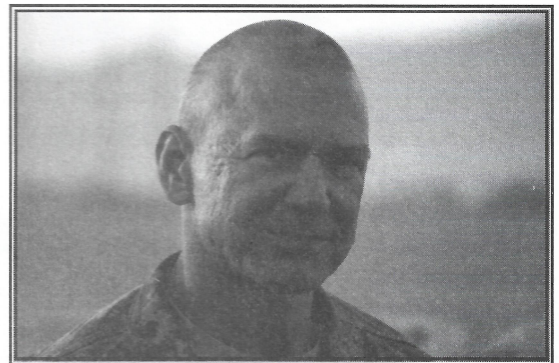
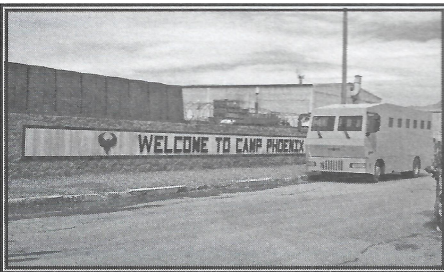
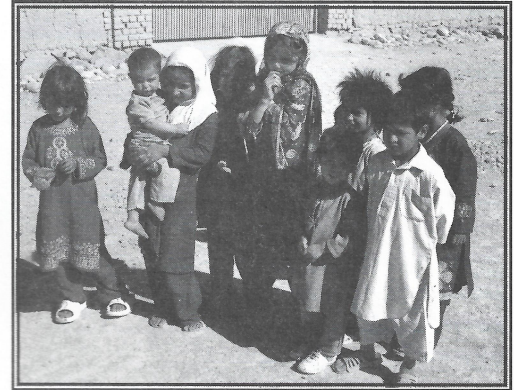
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THE SHUTTERBUG PAGE



Afghanistan Edition



THE ORION GALLIVANTER



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THE 27TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.

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