

'Keeping Tabs'

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27th Brigade Combat Team --- Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII

Forward Operating Base Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan

'From our families to yours'

Donations from home help with Afghan mentoring and support mission

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



Above, Kabul Police District 5 chief speaks to students of the Afshar School to let them know that his policemen are there to help. Top right, Afghan children exit with donated supplies and clothing. Lower right, MSG Michael Molgaard helps unload boxes of donated clothing and school supplies with an Afghan policeman.

Increasingly, military family members, friends, youth groups and civic organizations in New York are taking an active role by sending donations to their deployed loved ones that are in turn used to help the Afghan people.

Clothing, foot ware and school supplies are eagerly sought. Events that bring police to schools and villages to deliver important security messages and gifts build support for the government and help the people.

“The Afghan National Police is the face of the Afghan government at the local level,” said Col. Gary Yaple from Syracuse, deputy commander of CJTF-Phoenix and the 27th. “Our intent is to place the Afghans first and in the lead and we support.

This is their nation. These are their communities, families and children. They still need our help, but much progress is being made,” he said.

The three hour mission included 23 U.S. personnel from a Police Mentoring Team and logistics troops. The team moved to the headquarters of Police District 5 where 1LT Faisal Reza from the Bronx, MSG Michael Molgaard from Ithaca, and SSG Deanna Bizette from Louisiana conferred with the police chief on the plan. Then a dozen officers moved out with the team for



the school. A security perimeter was set up and U.S. and Afghan police unloaded three trailers of donations. These were placed in a faculty office and teachers began to distribute to the neediest students.

“The donations came from various people in the Tompkins County area,” said Capt. Robert Romano from Ithaca. “My mother organized the drive with support from several local church groups,” he said adding

that the mother of another deployed officer, Mrs. Linda Pasto and a local chapter of "The Red Hat Society," a woman's group, also made significant contributions.

“Clothing was collected, inspected, packed and shipped by my mother, Marie Romano and my wife, Lana. The

first load amounted to about 650 pounds,” he said. Another shipment weighing in at 1100 pounds is already on the way, he added. “The police chief and teachers seemed especially happy with a large box of children's shoes and another one that contained winter jackets and sweaters.”

The police chief personally handed out school supplies, clothing and shoes. While he did, he talked to the children. His message was simple – “people should not be afraid to come to the police to ask for help. The police are there for the people.”

Keeping Tabs –

Is a weekly electronic newsletter produced by the HQ 27th BCT Public Affairs Section for family members and friends back home and is available on-line through the NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs website at www.dmna.state.ny.us For more information contact the DMNA Public Affairs Office at (518) 786-4581.