

'Keeping Tabs'

Issue 37, 13 October 08



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

Forward Operating Base Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan

CJTF-Phoenix VII hosts U.S. Representatives



CAMP PHOENIX, KABUL – Four U.S. Congressional Representatives came to Camp Phoenix in Kabul on Sunday, 12 October as part of an official Congressional visit. The delegation was led by Congressman Steve Israel (NY 2nd District) from Long Island and included Congresswoman Shelly Berkley (NV 1st District) and two more New Yorkers including Congressman Michael Arcuri (NY 24th District) from Utica and Congressman Thomas Reynolds (NY 26th District) from Williamsville. Congressman Israel serves on the House

Appropriations Committee. Congressman Arcuri serves on the House Rules and Transportation and Infrastructure Committees. And, Congressman Reynolds serves on the House Ways and Means Committee. Their trip included a planned visit with President Hamid Karzai and U.S. and coalition leaders in the Kabul area and inside a compressed itinerary. But a visit to Camp Phoenix to see members of the New York's 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) in Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII (CJTF-Phoenix) was a priority.

They arrived at Patriot Square at noon, where dozens of staff were waiting. The New York Congressmen serve districts on Long Island and in Central and Western NY, where many 27th Soldiers and families live.

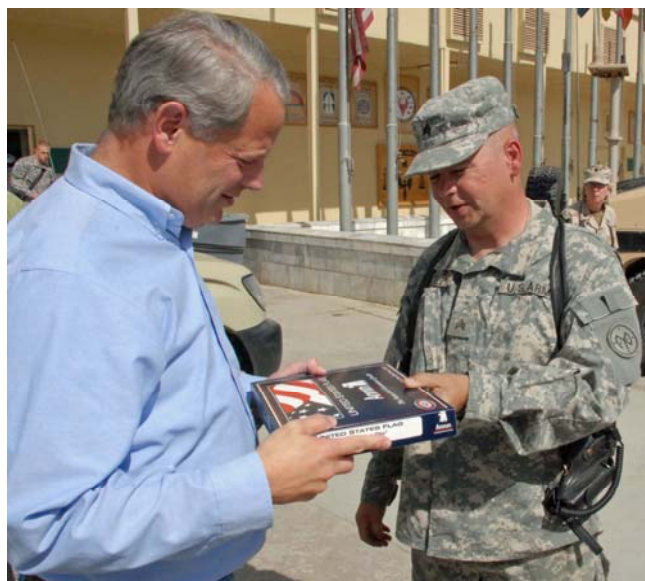
The chance to see and speak with their representative while in Afghanistan was a memorable experience. Many remembered appearances at send off ceremonies. Several joined the Congressmen for lunch and a group photo opportunity.

“I have met and spoken with Congressman Israel before,” said SGT Michael Cantley from Smithtown, Long Island, who presented the congressman with an American Flag that he flew at Camp Phoenix on 9-11, 2008.

SGT Cantley was among hundreds of Guard Soldiers who served on State Active Duty at the World Trade Center on 9-11, 2001. He was deployed in 2005 to Iraq with the Fighting 69th. “I wanted him to have this Flag,” he said. “I wanted to be the one to give it to him.”

“It was an honor to meet him,” said SSG Linda Nosbisch from Lancaster who thanked Congressman Reynolds for helping to save the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Base, which is home to the NY Air National Guard’s 107th Air Refueling Wing, now converted to a transportation wing. “My son is in the 107th,” she said.

“Congressman Arcuri lives near my parents,” said CPT Joel Abelow, originally from Utica but is now from the Albany area. “I used to see him at conferences because he used to be a



SGT Michael Cantley from Smithtown, Long Island presents Congressman Steve Israel with an American Flag that he flew on 9-11, 2008 at Camp Phoenix.

prosecutor, too,” said the military lawyer and former Rensselaer County deputy prosecutor with the Judge Advocate General office.

“This has been a fantastic visit for us,” said COL Ray Shields, CJTF-Phoenix Chief of Staff. “Our Soldiers got to see their representatives who brought along a strong message of support for our people and the job we are doing. Visits like these really help us understand that we are not being forgotten and that our work is invaluable to the nation,” he said. Its inspiring to have four Congressional representatives from NY and NV visit us 7,500 miles from the US during a critical time back in Washington – we really appreciate their visit and personal attention.”

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.