

# 4th CAB opens new DFAC; celebrates July 4 in style

BY MAJ. JOHN A. KAE0 MOTT  
4th CAB

**MEZAR-E-SHARIF, Afghanistan** – “Servers on line!” Staff Sgt. Alexander Joseph bellowed July 4 inside the new U.S. Forces Freedom Rings dining facility as a hungry crowd anxiously waited outside its doors.

Joseph is the Freedom Rings DFAC noncommissioned officer-in-charge with a team of 19 cooks and servers augmented by kitchen patrol personnel. His team is responsible for satisfying the culinary expectations and appetites of the restless mob outside.

Servers manned every station and started uncovering a feast that ran along both sides of the DFAC. Music played in the background as Capt. Megan Burke, commander of Company D, Task Force Mustang, danced over to her position.

Burke decided to serve the Soldiers on this festive occasion, to help spread some holiday cheer at

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the start of the brigade's 12-month-long deployment.

Joseph's team worked hard preparing the feast. He credited his team for the results.

“There are no secrets to success,” he said. “It's the result of preparation, hard work and learning from

failure.”

The DFAC filled with red, white and blue decorations, which seemed to explode from the ceiling and walls, brought a feeling of patriotism and pride on Independence Day. On the front doors to the DFAC, a poster of the Statue of

Liberty, holding the Declaration of Independence, served to remind troops of the importance of their mission in Afghanistan. The serving lines and seating areas also were lined with “Let Freedom Ring” decorations for patrons to enjoy.

The Fourth of July menu included shrimp cocktail, steamship round, barbecued ribs, T-bone steak, lobster, chicken, barbecued chicken, fried scallops, fried shrimp, corn-on-the-cob, assorted vegetables, macaroni and cheese, freshly-cut assorted fruits and nearly a dozen different cakes and pies decorated in red, white and blue.

Ice-cold soft drinks, sports drinks, juices and iced tea also were available to quench the thirst of all the patrons.

Once the doors opened, a shout of “Come on in!” rang out across the crowd. Soldiers, airmen, Marines, Department of the Army civilians and contractors squeezed together to get closer to their goal.

With tables filled, discussion of the feast began.

“The food was amazing,” Pvt. Casey Wagner, a fueler from Co. A, 404th Aviation Support Battalion, said. “The DFAC has come a long way. It's a huge morale booster.”

Pfc. Jeffrey Cox said he enjoyed the holiday dinner but appreciated that he could have eggs, sausage and ham for a more traditional American breakfast in the new DFAC.

“It's amazing what an American Soldier can do under austere conditions to feed all American and multi-national military and civilians,” 4th CAB ground logistics officer Maj. Todd Brauckmiller, said. “They went from nothing to a full-fledged DFAC in less than 72 hours.”

The Freedom Rings DFAC is scheduled to remain open throughout the 4th CAB's deployment, offering breakfast, lunch, dinner and a midnight meal daily to accommodate all shifts.



Private Shannon Sayler and Pfc. Nigel Grayson, both from HSC, 404th Aviation Support Battalion Provider, 4th CAB, take a quick break after setting up for the 4th of July dinner in the new Freedom Rings dining facility.



Soldiers wait in line for a July 4 meal at the new Freedom Rings dining facility.

Photos by Senior Master Sgt. Shella Salas, RC-N Public Affairs



Photo by Pfc. Amy M. Lane, 4th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs

## Best chow on installation

Fort Hood and III Corps honor the manager and staff of the Freeman Café with a runner-up award in the small category for best dining facility Friday at Fort Hood.

The Freeman Café competed

against the Patriots and Eagle's Nest dining facilities in the 2010 Philip A. Connelly Awards Competition. The competition rewards dining facilities that exceed Army standards and operate at a level that

showcases teamwork, professionalism, quality, and service.

The Freeman Café serves the Soldiers of the 13th ESC, 4th Sust. Bde., 1st Med. Bde. and 15th Sust. Bde.

## Kings: Knocking off 'rust'

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Crewmembers said the training was practical and necessary.

“Going through the training helps the crew to build muscle memory. Once we deploy, if we are under stress, we are able to rely on the training and do our jobs,” Spc. Carl Degraaf said.

During the maneuvering portion of the training, Spc. Robert Jones put his vehicle through a series of occupying positions, following commands given by the chief of the section.

“Training as a driver, you have to be in-line with the chief. Not only are you driving, you are watching out

for improvised explosive devices or other possible threats,” Jones said. “Once we arrive at our point, the driver has to follow the chief's (directions exactly). The driver maneuvers us into position to put steel on targets.”

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**Not only are you driving, you are watching out for improvised explosive devices ...**

– Spc. Robert Jones

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With gunnery training scheduled for August, Capt. Eric Gust, the battery commander, said the current training is paramount for Soldiers.

“Many of our Soldiers have not done (Howitzer) core tasks in a while. The current training gives them a chance to knock off the rust, reinforces our core tasks and prepares them for our upcoming certification Table V gunnery next month,” Gust said.



Photo by Joy Pariente, Sentinel Staff

The Fort Hood ASAP offices are located at the corner of Support Ave. and 58th St. They offer preventive and treatment services for drug- and alcohol-related programs for Soldiers, civilians and family members.

## ASAP: End state to benefit troops, families

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There is also a pool of 9,000 civilian employees used for testing.

The previous set up meant a separation between clinical and preventative services, which complicated the treatment process. To address such problems, the new integration of services and command and control was directed by the Secretary of the Army to make ASAP more effective in addressing a surge in substance abuse, domestic violence and suicide by Soldiers and family members, which has been through nine years of war. It became effective May 1.

“This is the right move at the right time for our Soldiers and families and it's a mission IMCOM is proud to take on,” IMCOM commander Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch said. “Integrating ASAP at the installations will make a vital program even more effective in helping the Army family thrive and maintain

its resiliency.”

“I think the end state of realignment will be much greater for the Soldiers, the families and reservists that are in this immediate area,” Shipman said. Reservists are now eligible to receive care at nearby military installations if they haven't been able to get an appointment through the Veterans Administration, Shipman said.

IMCOM has already borne much of the ASAP mission for many years, so the change may not be immediately obvious to customers and even staff. Yet adding the clinical services to the ASAP office's existing workload is a significant realignment that will move people, equipment and facilities on the garrisons and ensure the resources are properly matched up according to the Soldier and family requirements.

This major movement is Phase I of the realignment operation that will proceed through January

2011. Garrison commanders will provide the facilities and equipment, recruit and train staff where needed and carry out effective communications to ensure ASAP customers and stakeholders understand the changes and can find an ASAP office if it's relocated.

Shipman hopes that having one location for all ASAP services will streamline the process for those seeking help and for their leadership, which is tracking changes.

“We want to make sure all our Soldiers can come in and receive substance abuse prevention services and treatment and, hopefully, if they need treatment we can get them back to duty in a short period of time,” Shipman said.

ASAP facilities are currently located at the corner of Support Avenue and 58th Street. They can be reached at 287-8868.

(Editor's Note: Sentinel staff writer Joy Pariente contributed to this story.)