

*January 22, 2009* . . . Dave DiTullio is back from Afghanistan! This whole adventure had its birth when Dave, son of Dick and Debi DiTullio of Grand Island, joined the Navy after attending Abilene Christian University in Texas.

Dave started out in the Aviation field working closely with officers who were learning to fly the EA6-B Prowler. He then attended Navy SEAL selection school including Basic Underwater Demolition training. He deployed with the Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit in 2003 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In this role Dave provided ship-board security to military contracted ships transporting fuel, weapons and medical supplies.

Dave is now a Staff Sergeant in the Army National Guard, 2/101 Cavalry (RSTA). He has been enlisted 16 years, the last six with the Army. He graduated from Army Air Assault School, Long Range Advance Scout Surveillance System training, and a Combat Life Saver course.

While stationed in Southern Afghanistan in the province of Kandahar, Dave led a 13-man Police Mentor team. Operations included raids, reconnaissance, search and recovery, "presence" patrols, and High Value Target search, all part of a bigger plan of the Counter Insurgency mission to gain the trust of the local people and their government.

Dave attended numerous shurais (a gathering of local village elders) in order to discuss their needs, concerns and security. This information was used to help the local population with medical/dental care, humanitarian aid, and veterinary care. This also allowed Dave to gain critical intelligence to assist in tracking down Taliban strongholds, weapons caches, and illegal drug trafficking. He was overseas in this tour for nine months.

Dave was awarded the Bronze Star, the Combat Infantry Badge, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Overseas Ribbon and the NATO Medal.

SSG DiTullio will attend the US Army Pathfinder course in August 2009, a school that teaches how to locate, identify, and operate rotary and fixed wing drop zones and landing zones. He will also go through US Army Special Forces training that starts at Fort Benning, Georgia. He will then continue with the following schools: Army Airborne School, Special Operations Preparation Course (SOPC), Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC), and Live Environment Training (LET). Dave plans to retire from the military in 2013.

Outside of serving in the Guard, Dave enjoys spending time with his wife, Elisa, and daughter, Aubrie. Dave also enjoys skydiving, scuba-diving, and just working out in general. He is employed by TSA at the Buffalo Airport, serves as a Deacon at the Amherst Church of Christ, and runs his own corporate security firm, RAMACOR.