



Army Reserve Sgt. Andrew Stahl, recently home in July for R & R is pictured with his mother Lisa Stahl and members of Celina VFW Post 5713 Honor Guard with the flag case he presented the Post. Inside the case is one of 20 flags VFW Post 5713 sent to Sgt. Stahl and members of his unit to send home in recognition of ongoing support for the military. Sgt. Stahl is currently serving a tour of duty supporting Operation Enduring Freedom with the 412th Civil Affairs Battalion based in Whitehall, Ohio and presently serving in Afghanistan.

The 412th Civil Affairs Battalion is one of the newest in the Army Reserves. The soldiers of the 412th perform many humanitarian missions and assistance. Late in September, 2009, 32 soldiers from the 412th's Alpha Company left for training at Fort Dix, NJ, and later arrived in Afghanistan on January 1, 2010. The soldiers trained in teams of four for nearly a year before their deployment, and after arriving in theater, each team was assigned to either a Forward Operating base or a small Combat Outpost.

Sgt Stahl's four member team is assigned to Combat Outpost Monti, named after Staff Sgt Jared Monti, who bravely died saving a fellow soldier on June 21, 2006. He became the first soldier to receive the nation's highest award for valor in Afghanistan! Combat Outpost Monti is located in the Kunar Province of Eastern Afghanistan and is currently "home" to approximately 125 soldiers. Sgt Stahl's team began the year in support of the 173rd Airborne, and after the Army's tactical changes, are currently in support of the 101st Airborne, 327th Infantry. The 412th soldiers proudly support their motto "Forging Peace", and continue to reach out to the locals, the Afghan National Army, and the small Afghan police forces.

Combat Outpost Monti has been hit hard since March 7, 2010, where there have been ten soldiers from the camp to be killed in action. The names of the 10 soldiers are memorialized with brass name plates on the top of the flag case pictured.

Sgt. Stahl is a 2005 graduate of Celina High School and past Cadet Commander of the Civil Air Patrol Squadron at the Lakefield Airport in Montezuma. Stahl and the 32 soldiers from the 412th will end their tour of duty in late October. He anxiously anticipates returning to his part-time patrolman's job at the Rockford Police Department, and returning to classes at Ohio State University where he is a senior.