

Military surgeon ponders Christmas

BY ANDREW BECKETT

This is my second Christmas in Afghanistan as a Canadian Forces surgeon.

Again, I am away from Stouffville. There is little sign Christmas is around the corner in these mountains of Afghanistan — except the chill in the air.

Still, we know there will be a Christmas dinner for us and maybe that parcel, lovingly sent to us from back home, will arrive before Christmas.

These are the thoughts that keep Canadian soldiers going at this time of year.

TRAINING DOCTORS

On this mission, I am training Afghan doctors so they can provide better care to their patients in this war-torn country.

The level of care patients receive here is much lower than we have come to expect in Canada.

Still, the patients are grateful for the care they receive.

Stouffville had a dusting of snow

early this morning, as I heard from my dad across the crackling of the satellite phone and the nine-and-a-half-hour time difference.

I can imagine Stouffville now, as it gets ready for Christmas: the wreaths on Main Street, the carols being played, the annual Christmas parade and the expectation something special is about to happen.

Stouffville, my home, is far away again this Christmas, but the thought that it's there brings comfort to me.



Andrew Beckett (left) is in Afghanistan helping train doctors.

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