



During an early morning patrol on 13 August 2009, a soldier scans the hills surrounding the volatile Korengal Valley in Afghanistan's Kunar Province. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Moeller, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

# Walking Point

Maj. Joseph T. Costello, U.S. Army Reserve

Head on a swivel, scouting the trail,  
Each foot is carefully placed.  
Looking ahead, then looking down,  
For an enemy that cannot be faced.  
He takes his last step, the trigger unseen,  
Chaos tears through our minds.  
He took the hit and we owe him our lives,  
Those of us who walked behind.

## In Memory of Sgt. Justin Officer

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**Maj. Joseph T. Costello** is chief of operations for the 627th Hospital Center at Fort Carson, Colorado. This poem was written during deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom after a dismounted IED blast killed Sgt. Justin Officer, a cavalry scout, as they walked back to the command post from an Afghan village.