



FROM THE FRONTLINE

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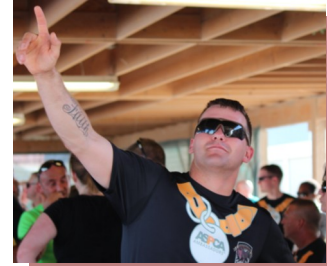
We are online! Check out our Facebook page for current events and photos!

Frontline Soldiers Participating in 5K Runs at KAF

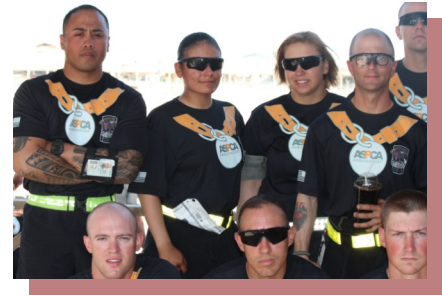
Aside from the daily operations we are faced with, Frontline Soldiers still find the time to get out and stretch their legs for sponsored 5K runs here on KAF.

Participation is voluntary, but many have made it tradition to run every 5K run KAF has to offer. This results in Frontline Soldiers participating in a run almost every weekend. Participants who sign up typically get a T-shirt from the run's sponsor and the coveted bib number containing their roster number.

The photos here show our Soldiers participating in the ASPCA sponsored 5K earlier this month while wearing their new T-shirts.



SPC O'Neal Ready to Lead the Race



Soldiers From Across the Battalion Participating in the ASPCA 5K

237th Army Birthday Celebration and Ceremony

It is always a good time to celebrate a tradition in Army. On June 14th, the Frontline Battalion at KAF conducted one of the Army's honored traditions of cutting a birthday cake on the day of the Army's birth.

Key elements to the cutting of the cake in honor of the Army's birthday include having the youngest and oldest Soldiers from within the unit in attendance. Additionally, the commander of the unit will be present. SFC Smith

and PFC Arceo qualified as the oldest and youngest members of 296 BSB on KAF.

After a brief history and exchange of traditional narration, PFC Arceo passed the saber to SFC Smith to cut the cake. They along with the commander were the first to enjoy pieces of the cake. Afterwards, everyone got to enjoy some of the refreshments that included the cake!



PFC Arceo and SFC Smith Preparing to Cut the Cake



The Audience of the Ceremony.



Battalion Events

Independence Day Extravaganza

To celebrate the 236th year of our Nation's independence, the Frontline Battalion hosted several team and individual competitions at KAF on July 4th.

Kicking off the events was a company squad competition. It involved litter carries, gator pulls, tire flips, pallet pulls and chain carries. Of course between each event was a lot of running to each station. Coming



HHC Squad Flipping Tires

from behind against A Company the C Company squad secured the best time for first place with 10:17.

Also, individual physical competition took place in the Arrowhead Fitness Center. These include push-up, sit-up, pull-up, dead lift, last man standing: Insanity, and bench press events. MSG Solis took three events; push-ups (64), sit-ups (113), and light weight category for bench press (265 lbs) . SSG Vongsy won at the most pull-ups. SPC Reyes took the last man standing Insanity competition with surviving for over 11 minutes without stopping.

In the morning and the evening, there was a basketball tournament that had 8 teams including our Ro-



Alpha Company Running with the Litter

manian partners. At the end, the Distro Squad from A company claimed victory over the team from HHC.

Taking place indoors in the resiliency center was the spades, Texas Hold 'em, and ping pong tournaments. SPC O'neal and PFC Anwar claimed victory in the Spades tournament after many hours of playing. PFC Ruiz dominated the ping pong tournament after winning 5 rounds to include the championship round against SPC San Agustin.

Overall, the events were fun and everyone had a chance to relax for the day. Soldiers were also able to enjoy a barbecue hosted by HHC that included steak, lobster, and shrimp. We made the most of what we have here and enjoyed the 4th of July as much as possible.



SGT Andress Competing in the Push-up Event



Battalion Events

Independence Day Extravaganza (Continued)



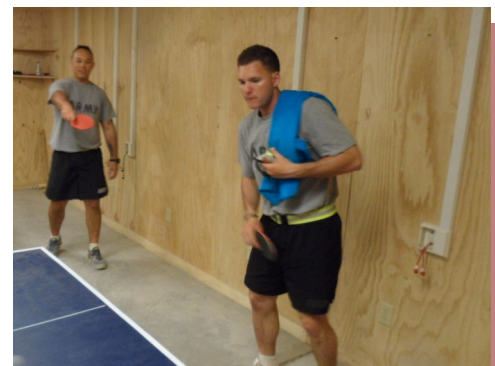
SSG Torres-Rivera's Promotion



Players at the Texas Hold 'em Tournament



Spades Tournament



Players in the Ping Pong Tournament



1SG Lee Competing in the Dead Lift Event



B Company Basketball Team versus A Co: Distro



The HHC Squad Pulling a Pallet in the Squad Competition



Competitors in the Sit-up Contest



Battalion Events

Grand Opening of the Arrowhead Resiliency Center

On June 21st, the Frontline Battalion opened the Arrowhead Resiliency Center to all Soldiers within the Arrowhead Brigade on KAF. This facility has been renovated from a storage and office space to a fully functional center for reset and relaxation!

All of the work shown in the photos provided has been conducted by your very own Frontline Soldiers! This includes the painting, cleaning, carpentry, ordering and installation of equipment, and staffing of the facility. Our Soldiers' efforts are truly remarkable.

Inside the center Soldiers will have the opportunity to watch movies in our very movie theater, play numerous video and board games, surf the web, call home on morale calls, and much more!

The Arrowhead Resiliency Center is another component of our Arrowhead Reset and Resiliency Program along with the Arrowhead Fitness Center, which has been in operation for the past few weeks.



The Literature Selection in the Reading Room



The Cinema Entrance



Ping Pong Tables

Visit From the DCG (S), Brigadier General Timothy McGuire

The Frontline Battalion was once again host to a distinguished visitor, BG Timothy McGuire, on June 19th. BG McGuire serves as the Deputy Commanding General—Support for the 82nd Airborne Division.

We presented BG McGuire our Battalion's mission, operations, and all of the changes and improvements we have made in the past few months of stay here at KAF.

BG McGuire recognized several Frontline Soldiers on his tour throughout the Battalion footprint with coins and thanks. Needless to say he was very impressed and thankful for our Battalion's accomplishments and support.



BG McGuire Speaking to Soldiers at the Aid Station



BG McGuire Presenting SPC Butkos a Coin



Hazard, Headquarters and Headquarters Company

An Update From All the Staff Sections

As we push forward in our deployment here in Afghanistan, members of HHC are continuing to be resilient. Whether our jobs entail working on food and water supplies, intelligence analysis, spiritual and moral support, and administrative work; the Hazard company is getting it done.

We continually are thankful for all the support we receive from our loved ones back home. The candy and treats we get are well received as well as the letters and gifts.

Our Soldiers have been kept occupied with their work and all the other forms of entertainment we do to include barbecues, 5K runs, and much more! We are all working together to make it back home soon. Know that we are doing our best and making the most of our time here

Hazard Promotions in June

PV2 DAVIS, SHAWN



SPC Butkos and Her Flat Stanley



2LT Han Arriving to Work



SSG Anderson and SPC Ewing Working Food Orders



SPC Campbell Heading to Chow



SPC Mayfield Trying to Concentrate on Work



MSG Solis and SGT Velasco



Animals of Alpha Company

"Welcome to the Animal House"

SSA Platoon

Alpha Company's Supply Support Activity continues to demonstrate outstanding support to the Combined Task Force Arrowhead Mission. During the month of June, Forty Seven additional customers were added to the previously 291 supported customers. The Receiving Section of the Supply Support Activity, which is responsible for processing all incoming supply receipts, was able to reduce the number of 436L pallets awaiting processing for redistribution from 63 to 27. A total of 6729 receipts were successfully processed throughout the month of June.

This month, SPC Bearden, PFC Jablinske and PFC Key were recognized the by the Battalion CSM for their hard work and dedication. The Soldiers were invited to dine with the BN CSM and were presented with Battalion Coin for Excellence.

SFC Tilton Washington III was recognized by the Department of the Army as the Recruiter of the Year on June 15 2012. The SSA was elated to receive four additional personnel which include, SSG James McDonald, SGT Leon Gammons, SGT David Etherton, and SPC Sultan Brown.

Animal Promotions in June

SPC LOVE, KOVEN

Photos of Our MET Squads





The Black Knights of Bravo Company

Message from Black Knight 6

Captain Ryan Wilson

Another month has come and gone, but the Soldiers of Bravo Company are doing more than ever. Our mission has increased and we met these new challenges with professionalism, determination, and a sense of mission accomplishment. I see all the great things the FRG are doing. I am happy to see the bonds we have does not stop with the Soldiers, but carries forth to family and spouses. Thank you for all the care packages. The personal touch made it even more special. As always thank you for all your support.

Message from Black Knight 7

First Sergeant David Lee

Well, we have made it into our 4th month now. Pretty soon we will be over the halfway hump and will be on the down slope of our deployment. The Soldiers in B CO continues to amaze me every day. In the 100 degree heat the Soldiers are working outside all day repairing equipment, sling loading, picking up parts, going on convoys and doing details all day but they never complain and carry a Smile all day. Families back at home would be Very proud of our Soldiers. It won't be long before. We get home to our loved Ones.

Black Knight

Promotions in June

SPC AINSWORTH, KENDRICK-

SPC ESQUIVEL, JASON-

SPC SPIRITOSANTO, CONLAN-

SPC RAMSEY, SKYLAR-

SGT BUTLER, DUANE

Wheeled Vehicle Platoon

Staff Sergeant Peppler

Wheel Vehicle Platoon has been busy with training, inventories, and maintenance support throughout the month including weapons, Bobcat, and SHARP training. The platoon completed over 50 vehicle inspections and removed fifteen vehicles from the Non Mission Capable report in the last two weeks alone. Many trucks and trailers are now able to safely go out



Members from the PLT recovering a Stuck Vehicle



A Stuck Wrecker that was Recovered

on mission. The Recovery Section successfully conducted 37 recovery missions so far this month bringing trucks back to base that couldn't move on their own.

We had a couple of additions to the platoon as well this month. Wheeled Vehicle welcomes SPC Allen, SPC Proffitt, and SGT Conklin joined us from Headquarters Platoon. Welcome to the Family!!!



The Black Knights of Bravo Company (Continued)

Headquarters Section

Staff Sergeant Widmer

The Shop Office Section has been hard at work making sure that all of Task Force Arrowhead's equipment is being properly tracked for maintenance and repair, keeping it all mission ready in the best condition possible. They have been feeling the pinch of giving up personnel to locations across the battlespace, but are still making the mission happen because that's how we do it here!

We're going to miss SGT Gammons and SGT Small as they switch to other companies and locations, but we know they will come back! Luckily, with every loss comes some kind of gain, so the section now consists of the following superstars: SFC Vongsy, SGT Kimba, PFC Freels, PFC Martin and PFC Martinez. You guys ROCK!



Members of HQ Section



MSP Platoon

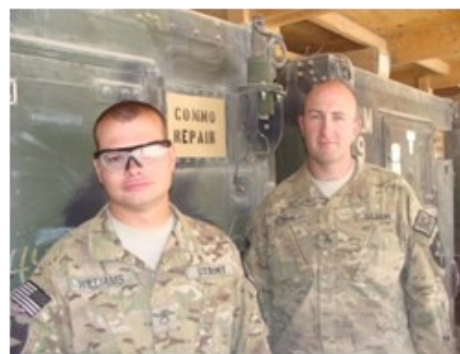
Sergeant First Class Kirk

Summer months are upon us here at Kandahar Airfield and business in the MSP Platoon has really picked up over this past month. I first want to congratulate SGT Andres Solorio for winning 296 BSB Battalion NCO of the Quarter!

The GSE section's Generator shop has been working with Romanian Army soldiers to teach them how to repair a 60kw generator and the A/C shop has been working consistently with CECOM to learn more on repairing commercial A/C's as well as repairing refrigeration units.

The Armament section has been busy traveling to various Forward Operating Bases conducting annual services and maintenance for the Brigade's M777A2 155mm Medium Towed Howitzers. These services and repairs are vital to ensure proper firing capabilities to support offensive and defensive mission support.

The EMS shop was busy performing over 700 Technical Inspections (TI) for the Battalion to turn in excess equipment. SGT Jarvis and PFC Williams greatly contributed to this by doing an additional 300 TI's at another FOB in a 6 day period.



Soldiers from the Commo Repair Section



Ch-47 delivering a M777 Howitzer recently overhauled by CW3 Sibley



Cheyenne, Charlie Company

Behavioral Health Battlefield Circulation: visiting 1-23 IN Captain Michelle Garcia

On the night of 7 June, around 1700 hrs, PFC Eilers and I were preparing to join the MET on a convoy to an outlying location. We were quickly integrated with the vehicle crew and enjoyed talking with them (SGT Burgess, SPC Nunez, and PFC Bryan). It was a hot, humid ride through Kandahar City, our “diapers” or ballistic underwear were no help to our comfort either. Despite these minor setbacks, we arrived safely. We were quickly intercepted by the medics, given a tour, and a place to sleep. At the first location, we happily enjoyed three delicious meals a day and conducted patient care, both informal and formal sessions. I was deeply moved by a phone conversation that occurred between the medics and an injured medic



The “Other” Boardwalk

who was in the hospital.

A few days later, I was sad to learn about a death in the BDE for a Soldier at another location. After linking up with the chaplain, CPT Kim, and LT Rueth, the BN medical officer, we discussed going there to offer our assistance. Within 30 minutes, I was on a convoy standing in the hatch of the Stryker, seeing all the grape huts and local Afghans along the way. I was greeted by CPT Cuthrell, his medics in the aid station, and the platoon leader for 3rd PLT, B Co, 1-64. Though seemingly in good spirits, this platoon leader introduced us to all of his Soldiers given the gravity of their most recent loss. I was impressed by the commander’s speech and the support of the leadership for the Soldiers who lost a fellow comrade. After talking to a few Soldiers in the platoon informally, I could tell that their combat exposure was

in-



The Cheesecake

credibly stressful (two attacks within one week) and yet they were able to go back out on missions because of their unit leadership and support for one another.

After this location, PFC Eilers and I traveled to two additional locations. We were well taken care of no matter where we went, though the porta-johns where my least favorite part (thank God for indoor plumbing). In between patient care, usually in the evenings, we were entertained by the medics at each site. We even played Scrabble with the PA (CPT Rodriguez) where he and SGT Barranco-Oro were privy to my competitive spirit. Is “ora” really



CPT Cuthrell, 1LT Rueth, and CPT Fawley

a word? I visited another kind of boardwalk while

Cheyenne

Promotions in June

SPC ADAMS, CHELSEA



Cheyenne, Charlie Company (Continued)

Behavioral Health Battlefield Circulation: visiting 1-23 IN (Cont.)

there, in which I tripped almost daily. Their DFAC, which was named "Schiller's Lounge" after a fallen Soldier, was pretty good especially the night we had cheesecake!

While forward, the A Co 1SG was adamant about introducing us to all the Soldiers, even if they didn't want services, by taking us into their sleep tents. We went up into the guard tours to chat with the Soldiers on duty, which was a great plan so they could not escape from us. PFC Eilers and I



PFC Eilers Working On Patient Notes

conducted our first Traumatic Event Management (TEM) the first night we arrived forward. Again, I was impressed by the platoon leadership all the way down to the squad leader level and moved by the support of one another, especially for their recently wounded Soldier. When I relayed the importance of honoring their comrades' memories, whether their teammate was hurt or injured I



CPT Barker and SPC Williams

told them about naming something on the base in memory of that individual.

Over our 14 day trip, we conducted four intakes, eight informal sessions, eight walk-about in which we spoke to over 50 Soldiers, six command contacts, and one TEM. I gained a new insight and respect for what our Soldiers are doing everyday in our AO, whether they are infantrymen, engineers, EOD, medics, cooks, or transporters.



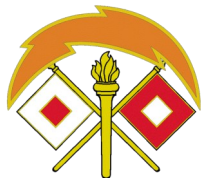
Medics and PFC Eilers at the Aid Station

Cheyenne

Promotions in May

SPC Preston Robbins

PFC Abbi Trimble



Bolt, 334 Signal Company

Commander's Corner

Captain Michael McCasland

This being my first "Commander's Corner", let me begin by saying thank you to all the "Bolt" Soldier's for all their hard work during the Change of Command Inventories, it's a tedious process that requires a lot of time and attention to detail, they did an outstanding job. I also want to personally thank all the families and Soldier's for all the sacrifices they make on a daily basis for our country.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce my family to everyone. My wife, Jacqui and I have one daughter, Skylar, who is 6. We are from Spokane, Washington and love the Pacific Northwest. With new Command Leadership, my wife will be taking the reins from Dana Krauss as FRG leader. I would like to personally thank Dana for all the hard work and personal time you gave to the company as FRG leader, it can be a thankless job and I appreciate it.

During my first month of command my focus will be getting an assessment of the company. I can already tell you these Soldier's work hard. With summer temperatures rapidly approaching (it's already around 110 degrees) they work continuously to not only provide the Brigade with robust communications, but provide as much comfort as possible where little exists. Every day that I have been at Masum Ghar, "Bolt" Soldiers are outside in the heat building something for our Company area. Shade, protection barriers, doors to work areas and hopefully a mini-driving range within the next week (hurry and get that net SGT Neely).

Bolt

Promotions in May

SPC JONES, RODNEY

At FOB Shoja

Sergeant Fennell

This month, the team at FOB Shoja has been working hard to extend their helping hands to the personnel around the FOB. SGT Fennell and SPC Dennis provided oversight to the Security Forces Assistance Team to re-establish an Afghan National Army radio link to their subordinate Companies and Brigade Radio Network. The detail was tasked down by the SFAT S6 Officer, LT Haider. LT Haider is an intricate liaison from the SFAT Team to the 334 Signal Company Operators on FOB Shoja, which works with the 334 Signal Company personnel to provide the SFAT Team with the best possible communications on the FOB. LT Haider requested that the 334 Signal Company personnel, SGT Fennell and SPC Dennis, help setup and maintain a radio link for the ANA personnel. SPC Dennis, a Radio Operator, provided his subject matter expertise to LT Haider on the radio antennas. Such as a bolt of lightning flashes, both teams had two Radio Antennas in place with both transmit and receive voice flowing to each radio. MAJ Ridley, the SFAT Team Officer in Charge, has since congratulated SGT Fennell and SPC



CPT McCasland Speaking to Soldiers of 334

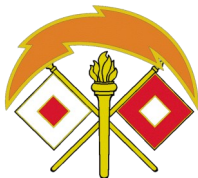
On my first day of command I was able to participate in a patching ceremony for those Soldier's who deployed in March. The patch ceremony was conducted on June 6th, D-Day. This is a significant event in the life of a Soldier, they are no longer "fuzzy" sleeves. The Combat Patch will be with them the rest of their lives, it's an identifier for what they have done in their career. Congratulations.

I am proud that my first command is with the 334 Signal Company. I look forward to working with each and every one of your Soldier's and eventually meeting the rest of the team (you) upon re-deployment to JBLM. It's my job to take care of your loved ones, which includes families. Do not hesitate to contact my family if you need to reach out. Just like I have an open door policy with the Soldier's, that same courtesy is extended to you. Until next month.....



SGT Fennell (above left) and SPC Dennis (above right), are captured providing the finishing touches to the ANA Radio Antennas.

Dennis on a job well done and thanked them on their knowledge, sense of duty and selfless service to the accomplishment of the mission.



Bolt, 334 Signal Company (Continued)

Bolt Soldiers In Action



PFC Massey and PV2 Vargas receiving MK-19 training from SPC Filby



SPC Baumgartner preparing to give a demonstration on how to clear a M249



SPC DeJesus with her favorite red pen ready to correct awards, documents and anything else that crosses her desk



SPC Shine and Lucero assisting in Change of Command inventories at FOB Lagman



A rare photo opportunity of the LTs in 334th before being split-up by new missions from BDE



334th Signal Co. lead by 1SG Mabey rendering the last salute to CPT Bardell to make the start of change of command ceremony

Updates from Our Forward Logistics Elements (FLE)

1-23 FLE at Zangabad

Sergeant First Class James Lunsford

Greetings from Afghanistan. We have settled into a battle rhythm here with most Soldiers working a 12 hour day, plus another two for PT. The Distribution team has a schedule more dependent on missions than a set schedule but they have high morale and a very strong sense of purpose.

As the key players for moving items around the area, the Distro team has moved items as diverse as tractors, bottled water, food and building supplies. The team has driven more than a thousand miles this month which may not seem like much until you realize that the terrain and poor roads keep us moving at a snail's pace. The task force truly depends on these twelve Soldiers to continue to operate and this keeps the team hopping. They often spend more time off the FOB than on it. However, the Distro team has developed a strong bond with each other and a high morale.



PFC Campbell Driving an Atlas Forklift

The mechanics of the CRT keep the task force rolling. They have already increased the readiness of the task force by getting the equipment into shape and have actually been able to scale back the hours to a mere 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Except, of course, when mission calls them back out for a recovery mission. This is farm country and our heavily armored

trucks and Strykers will sink into the mud or slide into a ditch without warning. When that happens, the units dial for the tow truck. The recovery operators have a potentially dangerous job, using heavy cables and chains to pull tons of equipment up and out of the mud. They make it look easy.

The cooks work hard to keep us fed while keeping their kitchens operational. SPC Fleming and his crew at one of the sites had to tear down the old kitchen set up and put up something newer just to provide a quality service. He and his crew, SPC Cooke and PFC Murray, have made great improvements with more on the way. SPC Fite, SPC Melgar and PV2 Johnson



The Food and Décor Set Up

have earned an excellent reputation for their hard work and excellent cooking. CPL Hubbard, PFC Campbell and PFC Shaw have contracted assistance in the DFAC but also have the largest DFAC to manage, to include having some extra food on hand to use as a distribution point. And CPL Hoskins is managing a contracted DFAC all by himself, with excellent results.

Despite hitting our stride, we have a lot of work to do in the next six months but this team has shown time and again they can tackle any obstacle head on and overcome.



On Point!

296th BSB (Forward)

Kandahar Airfield
APO, AE 09355

296th BSB (Rear)

BLDG 3736
Stryker AVE.
JBLM, WA
98433



FRONTLINE SUPPORT
Respect and Honor

Advice from the Chaplain

It's important to always try to be growing together in our relationships. The less we try to grow together then the less we desire to be with the other person. But the more we try to grow together then the more we desire to be with each other, and this is especially true when we spend long periods of time apart. Are you still trying to grow together during this deployment?

Focus on the Family says, "Some days will be tougher than others to persevere. Despite what others tell you, you don't need to 'move on without him' and you aren't 'temporarily single.' There is much you can do to continue building and bettering your life together while your spouse is away. If the two of you are in debt, look for ways to earn and save to rid yourselves of the financial burden. Learn to bake his favorite childhood foods. Read up on being a mom if you plan to have kids some day. Do something that makes you happy and let him know you did so. (You deserve it, and he'll be glad to know you're taking

care of yourself.) Similarly, maintain your health by exercising regularly, taking a daily vitamin, getting enough sleep and eating well."

Another simple suggestion is to keep a note pad with you everywhere you go. Jot down a quick note every time you have a pleasant thought about your loved one. At the end of the day you will be able to remember the thoughts you had earlier in the day because of the notes you made. The trick then will be to put those pleasant thoughts into an email or letter and tell your loved one about all of the pleasant things that you thought about him or her that day. This will encourage the one you're away from because it will highlight those special qualities and characteristics for which they are loved by you.

Trying to still grow together while we are separated from our loved ones will grow our desire to be with each other, which will make our reunion a very joyous occasion.

Forward Deployed Contacts:

BN Commander

LTC Michael B. Siegl

BN CSM

CSM F. Cervantes Jr.

Executive Officer

MAJ Stefan Bandas

HHC Commander

1LT Robert Price

A Company Commander

CPT Scott Dyer

B Company Commander

CPT Ryan Wilson

C Company Commander

CPT Bryan Shrives

334 Sig. Company Commander

CPT Michael McCasland

Rear Detachment Contacts:

OIC

CPT Fredrico DeVera

NCOIC

MSG Darren Nixon

2IC

CW3 Aaron Skinner

FRSA

Mary Hanchek-Scott

Battalion Staff Duty: 253-967-6959