



The Talon Times



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"Above Valor and Courage"

From The Top

As we rapidly approach the mid-point of our deployment here we are well set in our routines. Certainly, our routines help the time pass and allow us to factor into our schedules important things like exercise and communicating with our families, for example. Yet it also can have a tendency to breed complacency.



Colonel Ronald Beckham
185th TAB Commander

theater, and others return home, it is absolutely imperative that we remain vigilant in executing our mission as safely and efficiently as possible.



CSM Willie Ross
185th TAB CSM

soldiers that are not acclimated to the heat in Kuwait, people getting tunnel vision as they are focused on returning home, and crews that are not as geographically familiar with our area of operation.

To this end, I need the leaders, and all Soldiers, to watch your buddies, stay focused on the mission, and incorporate safety and composite risk management principles in everything

that you do. Every accident can be viewed as a chain of events. At some point in the sequence of events in any accident there was or is potential to break a link in

(Continued on Page 2)

Throughout the course of this deployment, our organization has and will continue to change—both in size and composition. As new units arrive in

New units bring in fresh perspectives on how to address a variety of issues and provide motivated soldiers that are ready to execute their mission. But there are also increased risks such as:

4th of July, Kuwait Style

The soldiers in the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade, enjoyed a much needed day of semi-relaxation at Camp Buehring. The day was centered on a unit lunch prepared by the chefs of the 185th. Everything from hamburgers, hotdogs, sausage, fried chicken, and even a little taste of home with some fried catfish.

With multiple grills lit, TVs going with either

movies or video games, the 4th of July cookout was something every soldier in the 185th needed. "I saw Lt. Col. Corley playing the PlayStation with SPC Gainey like they were just two guys hanging out. Even though it was only for a few hours, the cookout made me forget I was on a deployment and made me feel like I was back home hanging out with some good ole Mississippi folks," said Spc.

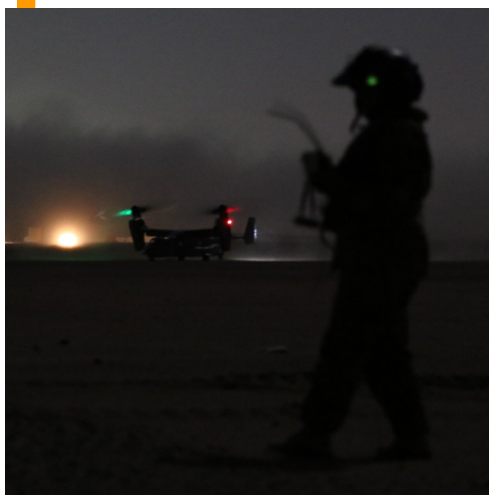
Janella Campbell.

The unit function gave each unit member the chance to eat a little better and a chance to see each other outside of the workplace which made the cookout feel a little more like home. "Of course we would have all preferred to be barbecuing in our own back

(Continued on Page 4)

This Issue:

- From the Top
- 4th of July, Kuwait Style
- A family Mission
- Soldier Spotlight
- And more...





What's happening with Task Force Talon...



Soldiers of the 185th TAB visit with MG Lusk, The Adjutant General of North Carolina.



A UH-60 Blackhawk from the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade lands on the deck of the USS McFaul on July 27, 2015.



Soldiers from Foxtrot Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, recover an MQ-1C Gray Eagle after a mission at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, July 22, 2015.

A Family Mission

When Pfc. Dylan Mitchell began his senior year of high school, he realized that his dream of being a soldier in the Mississippi Army National Guard was about to come true. "It just seemed like a really nice lifestyle and the way I wanted to live—being able to help people and travel the world," said Pfc. Mitchell. He told his mom that he wanted to fly Apache helicopters, so he and his mother spoke to a recruiter to start his enlistment paperwork to join the Mississippi Army National Guard.

On the day the Mitchell family met the recruiter his mother, Adrian Mitchell, jokingly said, "If I am able to re-enlist, I will go back in." Two months after the initial visit to the recruiter's office, Adrian Mitchell re-enlisted into the Mississippi Army National Guard. She spent the first part of her military career serving with the active Army, the Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard. Less than one year after re-enlisting she was at Fort Rucker training to become an air traffic controller.

While most high school seniors were preparing to walk across the stage at graduation, Dylan learned a slot had opened up for basic combat training (BCT). He had a

choice to make: he could walk with his fellow classmates or leave for BCT. Dylan chose to chase his dream instead of walking with his classmates at graduation. After



basic training, Dylan attended Air Traffic Control School with his mother, who had already begun training at the school. The last month and a half of her advanced individual training, she was able to train with her son Dylan.

The mother and son combination now both serve together in the same unit, based in Southaven, Miss.

"They call me 'Mamma Mitchell' in the unit; a lot of the younger soldiers say 'hey mom,'" said Spc. Mitchell. The small tight-knit unit provides a family-like atmosphere, which not only strengthens the Mitchells' Soldier bond, but the family bond as well.

Less than one year after graduating from Air Traffic Control School at Fort Rucker, Spc. Mitchell and Pfc. Mitchell returned to the 2nd Battalion, 185th Aviation Regiment and received orders mobilizing them with the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade to Kuwait in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. The two arrived in Kuwait in April, and the duo was split up. Spc. Mitchell works at Camp Buehring and her son Pfc. Mitchell works at Camp Arifjan.

"Being away from him, even though I am only two hours away is the hardest part of this deployment," said Spc. Mitchell.

The mother and son combination both decided to extend their deployments and spend another nine months in Kuwait. "I'm thankful that we have this opportunity because not a lot of people get the opportunity to do what we are getting to do and I feel blessed that we are in the unit that we are in," said Spc. Mitchell.

Sgt. Michael Needham

- 185th TAB Public Affairs NCO

From the Top (Continued from Page 1)

that chain that prevents an injury, loss of life, or damage to Army property. I implore each of you to be on the lookout for a link in the chain that can be broken to prevent an accident from happening.

Lastly, thanks for all your hard work. I truly can't say enough how much I appreciate the sacrifices and contributions that each and everyone of you in the brigade make on a daily basis here to contribute to the

mission.

— **Talon 6**



Lt. Col. Kendall McKenzie, the brigade surgeon provides medical training to the 185th TAB, July 21, 2015.



A Pilot from the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade takes off from the USS McFaul in a UH-60 Blackhawk on July 27, 2015. The 185th Theater Aviation Brigade conducts interoperability training to enhance mission capabilities between U.S. Army Aviation and U.S. Navy.



Soldier Spotlight

SFC Jarvis Parker:

Since 185th TAB's presence in Kuwait, the Geospatial Intelligence section has thrived and flourished under the outstanding leadership provided by SFC Jarvis Parker. SFC Parker has shown a strong level of commitment to his work and has received well above average results from other 185th colleagues and counterparts alike. He has been able to approach problems with practical common sense, and has shown an exceptional level of knowledge within his field.

In many instances, he has come up with ingenious solutions to apply his knowledge to a more concrete data and to extract

meaningful links and conclusions. 185th TAB has found SFC Parker to be an excellent NCO who is dedicated, industrious and thoroughly professional. He has been a meticulous and uncompromising Senior NCO; discrepancies discovered by him are never left unresolved. His initiative and vigorous 'can do' attitude easily marks him as a self-starter and 'lead by example' type NCO.

SFC Parker takes an obvious pride in his work and displays a personal tenacity that refuses to brook any challenge or obstacle. He has outstanding communicative skills and possesses a remarkable talent for efficient organization. He impressive conduct, personal behavior and reli-

ability are beyond reproach. He is a true asset to the 185th TAB.

SPC Ronald Newell:

SPC Newell serves as an Intelligence Analyst for the 185 TAB. His knowledge and expertise has led to increased efficiency in its daily intelligence operations and improvement in overall mission readiness for the 185th Theatre Aviation Brigade.

SPC Newell has played a vital role in assisting the 185th TAB in the creation and shaping of its daily products to meet the needs of its customers and counterparts alike. His exponential ability to learn never ceases to amaze. He possesses a remarkable ability to

assess a situation, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations when providing input and analysis.

Over and beyond this unique ability, he has gained both the credibility and confidence of seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. SPC Newell is seen as a "Go To" and Subject Matter Expert for daily analytical products. He is truly an asset to the 185th TAB.



Staff Sgt. Toby Wheaton (left) and Staff Sgt. Samuel Grant prepare food for Soldiers of the 185th TAB, July 4th, 2015.

The "Chappy" makes me Happy!

As of 27 June I have resumed my responsibilities as the BDE Chaplain. I have been privileged to be a part of Army aviation my entire career and for a second time deploy with the 185th. I have learned that each deployment is filled with both obstacles and achievements.

Everyone comes to a moment of missing home and longing for the simple pleasures of life that we have left behind.

Yet, there is a great task ahead of us, and quickly we will take our part in the history books, but for now we give all we have to the cause of American liberty.

I have always believed that my participation in a deployment in some small way allows my wife and children to sleep safely at night and to enjoy the freedoms that patriots of every generation have secured for them. I count it a great

honor and an obligation to serve beside each of you in the days to come.

It is my prayer that when we leave this theater, we will be better men and women than when we arrived. Let us strive for greatness in all that we do and ask God to bless our endeavors.

— CH (MAJ) John Branning
185th TAB Chaplain



Ch. (Maj) John Branning visits with Sgt. Josh Hinton of Foxtro Co, 1st Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment (Grey Eagle) at Al Asad Airbase, 22 July, 2015.

Stay off the JAG Tracker!

As we get into the dog days of summer, we also get into a period of time when many soldiers become bored or complacent within their routines. These times present opportunities to stray from the proverbial straight and narrow. Please do not become one of the statistics on the Brigade Judge Advocate's activity tracker! Be mindful of the things that get soldiers in trouble: 1) Fraternalization is a big "no-no" that all soldiers should be constantly vigilant towards. Soldiers of differing grades (i.e. soldiers of different ranks) are prohibited from having sexual or intimate relations with each other, gambling with each other, loaning money to each other, or any other activities or conduct that would create an actual or clearly predictable adverse impact on discipline, authority, morale, or the ability of the command to accomplish

its mission.

2) Sexual assault and sexual harassment are both high visibility issues for the 185th Command and the Army. Any incidents of either will not only not be tolerated, but will be dealt with swiftly and to the fullest extent allowable under both law and regulations. Sexual assault can range from a violent rape to an incidental/accidental unwanted touching. Sexual harassment can be inferred from actions or words and will be assessed from the standpoint of the victim or person offended and not from the intent of the alleged offender. 3) Insubordination, loss of military bearing, dereliction of duty and AWOL are four areas of concern especially when fatigue, frustration, anger and complacency set in during the course of a long mobilization. Be mindful of

your attitude, responsibilities, and duty to your fellow soldiers, state and country. Take a moment before you speak and/or act, especially when you're tired, frustrated or angry and ensure that you remain professional. If you do not feel as if you can, walk away and compose yourself. If you are having any difficulties, either professionally or personally, talk to a friend, leader, Chaplain, JAG or whom ever you feel comfortable. The important thing is not to let things build up! We are all in the same boat and need to help each other. 4) Be mindful what you post on social media. This is a growing problem! Don't let the notion of "free speech" disillusion you to

reality. Negative comments made about leadership, whether on Facebook, Instagram or any other public electronic format, are viewed the same as if said directly to the person. Disparaging comments about public officials on social media can also get you in trouble. Also, before revealing your past or intended conduct to your friends and the world on social media, ask yourself if this could get me in trouble. Be careful and think before you hit the send button. 5) When you are driving on post in a truck, car, SUV or van, wear your seatbelt, be mindful of your speed, stop at stop signs and pay attention to your surroundings. If you are driving a gator or other similar

**4th of July, Kuwait Style****(Continued from Page 1)**

yards surrounded by family, but we did have our 'deployed family' with us, and we were certainly surrounded by many friends," said Sfc. John Sumrall.

- Sgt. Michael Needham



Sgt Michael Needham covers Deck Landing Qualifications on the USS McFaul, July 27, 2015.

Stay off the JAG Tracker**(Continued from Page 3)**

vehicle, make sure you are wearing the appropriate safety gear, your seat belts are fastened, and you obey all the other rules of the road.

As always, please let your Brigade Judge Advocate Office know if we can help you in any way – we are your resource, use us...just try to stay off our tracker!

- Capt. Rob Mayhue
185th TAB JAG



Sgt. Beau Branch (left) and Spc. Matthew Deal (right) provide air traffic control services at Al Asad Airbase, Iraq, 22 July 2015.

Editor's Note:

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it." – Thomas Paine

Every year millions of Americans gather with friends and family to celebrate the Fourth of July—America's Independence Day. Some go to the lake or the beach. Others simply stay at home and enjoy fellowship and fireworks. On any given fourth of July the media is rife with coverage of the parades, firework shows, and, yes, all the bad things that happen when people "celebrate" a little to hard. While there's absolutely nothing amiss about this celebration, how many people actually stop to think about the hardships and sacrifices that were made in order to shape the national holiday that we now celebrate?

I recently watched a short news clip on the internet where the interviewer asked a number of Americans some basic questions about American Independence and the history of the national holiday. It was disheartening

to see that many of the interviewees couldn't answer basic questions like: what does the Fourth of July signify (the signing of the Declaration of Independence) or what is America's birthday (July 4, 1776)? When asked who the first president was, one individual responded with "Abraham Lincoln." Some of the individuals interviewed were even college students where, one would presume, this stuff is taught.

As sentiment in the 13 Colonies gradually waned away from the British Crown and shifted in favor of Independence, a small group of politicians gathered to address a number of grievances related to a number of unfair taxes. Much of the population and many influential leaders that participated in the Continental Congress did not desire to split from Great Britain. Yet, with Parliament's recent imposition of the Coercive Acts, which was just the

latest of what many perceived to be a series unfair treatment and taxes 'without representation', it was clear that action had to be taken. This culminated with the American Revolution and, on July 4, 1776, the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The men that signed that document, declaring America's independence from the Crown as well as outlining a number of fundamental human rights, surely knew that they would be met with fierce resistance from the British Parliament. Their adversary was a formidable foe, with a well-trained army, the largest Navy in the world, and a robust capability for financing war efforts.

In spite of all the challenges they knew they would face and the sacrifices that would have to be made, our founding fathers knew that freedom was a worthy cause to fight for. They saw a

vision of the future where people from all walks of life and from all over the world could live in without fear of persecution for their personal or religious beliefs.

Rather than remaining passive in the face of injustice, our founding fathers and the men that fought in the Revolutionary War overcame one of the most powerful militaries in the world. Unwilling to stand idly by while their rights were trampled on they asserted that, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

— Capt Allen Baxter,
185th TAB PAO