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# THE ANVIL INSIDER



A Newsletter from the 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade



(Photo by Spc. Stanford Toran IV)

## GSAB Black Hawk company changes hands

Congratulations to 1st Lt. Ian Lloyd, who took command of Alpha Company, 2-104th GSAB during a change of command ceremony at Camp Buehring this week. The outgoing commander, Capt. Nathan Bevans, was honored for his service during the ceremony.

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# Despite emotional toll, these Soldiers honor the fallen

"Nurture the living. Care for the wounded. Honor the fallen. If I justify my actions based on those three lines, it will get done, with or without guidance to aid and assist in honoring a Soldier's sacrifice," said Cpl. Zachary Schneck, religious affairs specialist with the 2-104th General Support Aviation Battalion, 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade.

Following January's tragic accident near Camp Buehring that took the life of Staff Sgt. Anthony Bermudez, who was assigned to Area Support Group – Kuwait, chaplains and religious affairs specialists with the 28th ECAB responded immediately to provide support to Soldiers who were grieving the loss of their friend.

Those chaplains, religious affairs specialists and other Soldiers form a unit recovery team who perform mortuary affairs and ensure fallen Soldiers receive proper honors. The hours following the tragedy, they provided services in a process called traumatic event management.

Some of those services included cataloguing, processing and ensuring the dignified transfer of the belongings of the deceased, helping organize a memorial ceremony and supporting Bermudez's fellow Soldiers after they heard the terrible news.

These services comprise a mission that this team, led by 1st Lt. Devon Schoonover, has trained and prepared for. Unable to attend formal training due to COVID-19, Schoonover educated himself on those duties with the help of Sgt. Sarah Cole, a mortuary affairs specialist with 834th Aviation Support Battalion, 34th ECAB, the unit the 28th ECAB replaced in the Middle East.

Since the beginning of deployment, Schoonover has trained religious affairs, admin and medical personnel so they knew their roles in the event of a fallen Soldier.

According to Capt. Sam DeBold, the support operations officer for the 28th ECAB, Schoonover's work ethic ensured the brigade was ready for any incidents.

"The individual efforts and initiatives of 1st Lt. Schoonover to educate himself in his duties and responsibilities contributed greatly to his preparedness for the mission," said DeBold. "Just as with any real-world incident and the preceding training that prepares us for such events, it ensures that we can stay focused on the tasks that must be accomplished."

Even though these Soldiers were trained, well-prepared and ensured Bermudez was properly honored, they admit that events like this still take a toll on them emotionally. After the memorial ceremony, the team checked on each other.



*U.S. Soldiers with the 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade's mortuary affairs team train on search and recovery. Search and recovery is a tactical task that includes the search and recovery, tentative identification, care and evacuation of human remains within the unit's Area of Responsibility. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Zach Mateja)*

"We are always prepared to perform our duties, just like anyone else, but we still hope we never have to," said Schoonover. "The lasting mental and emotional impact is without a doubt one of the primary concerns when training and executing this task."

Aside from being an Army religious affairs specialist, Cpl. Schneck is also a firefighter and emergency services chaplain on the civilian side. With everything he has seen in those jobs, he has been to more memorial services and funerals than he could have predicted. But he says this one, for Bermudez, was unforgettable.

"Never before has one impacted me more mentally," said Schneck. "Seeing the things you see when initial medical treatment is provided, you have to really step back and realize God called you to be there that day. I volunteered for this deployment to help Soldiers through the pain of events like this."

Although Bermudez was not a 28th ECAB Soldier, the team says they are ready to administer to all Soldiers no matter the person or what unit they are in.

"While this Soldier was not part of the 28th ECAB, he was a Soldier nonetheless and we did lose one of our own," said DeBold. "We hope this will be the last incident where we need to activate this team for the rest of our tenure here but remain postured and ready if we are called to support again."

Religious affairs specialists Sgt. Zach Mateja and Sgt. Joshua Auer, as well as chaplains Capt. Justin Thomas and Maj. Doug Knepp, also provided support.

## TF Spartan Soldiers commemorate Desert Storm 30 years later

By Staff Sgt. Daryl Bradford

The year was 1990, and Kuwait had just been invaded by the Iraqi regime lead by Saddam Hussein. It was a move that was met with international condemnation and eventually the combined power of coalition forces from 35 nations led by the United States in 1991.

This however was not the beginning of the U.S.-Kuwait partnership that firmly stands today, but was a catalyst to strengthening existing ties.

The U.S. first opened a consulate in Kuwait in 1951, elevating it to embassy status 10 years later when the Gulf Country gained independence.

Even before the events of the early 90s, the strategic partnership between the two countries was growing. In 1987, the beginning of a maritime protection regime was created and ensured that 11 Kuwaiti tankers could freely navigate through the Persian Gulf by reflagging them with U.S. markings.

The strategic partnership continued to grow after Iraq's invasion; Kuwait provided support and up to 60 percent of its territory for U.S. and coalition use. Then, moving further into the future but not quite to the present, Kuwait assisted with the drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq in 2011.

"We have enjoyed an enduring partnership with the Kuwait Land Forces — rooted in a shared vision for security between our two nations," said Maj. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, the commanding general of Task Force Spartan. "To see and understand how this mil-to-mil partnership has evolved since the days of Operation Desert Storm makes me proud to be standing here along with Brig. Gen. Mohammad, watching our two militaries work side by side to increase our interoperability and work toward the common goal of stability in the region."

Currently, the U.S. and Kuwait have a formal Defense Cooperation Agreement, housing approximately 13,500 U.S. forces at bases in Kuwait. The partnership between the nations consists of troop-to-troop participation and active government-to-government sales, consisting of constant trade of a substantial investment.

Most recently, in celebration of the 30 years since Operation Desert Storm and the Kuwaiti Liberation from the Iraqi occupation, the U.S. and the KLF took part in a joint exercise called Al Tahreer, or The Liberation. The concept of the exercise is to combine several different military functions into a bilateral event, creating a scenario that improves partner capabilities and interoperability between the different forces.

Many other military-to-military exercises take place throughout the year between the U.S. military and the KLF; however, this one is special, signifying a lasting partnership to the KLF commander.



*A U.S. Army Bradley tank driver from 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, communicates with his superior after a live-fire portion of the exercise Al Tahreer, Feb. 23, 2021, at Udairi Range Complex in Kuwait. Al Tahreer is a KLF nominated exercise coinciding with a national day of celebration that will be used to strengthen bi-lateral relationships between the U.S. and Kuwait as well as promote regional stability. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Daryl Bradford, Task Force Spartan Public Affairs)*

"Our partnership is based on a very solid foundation made of 30 years of cooperation between our forces," said the Kuwaiti Land Force's Commander, Brig. Gen. Mohammad Al Dharifi. "I am always proud of the great partnership between the U.S. Army forces and Kuwaiti Land Forces. It gives me pleasure to see our soldiers shoulder to shoulder in the field, learning from each other, and gaining experience and expertise."

These last 30 years have shaped a relationship between Kuwait and the U.S. that is constantly adapting to the changing world around it, especially in the wake of COVID-19. Even so, it remains a constant that both sides are committed to continuing to work together and strengthen ties in the region.

"As I look to the future, I'm excited as we recover from COVID that our future leaders of Task Force Spartan will continue to foster and grow this relationship," said Hamilton. "As a valued partner in the region, we are truly stronger and better together."

These words are a testament that exercises like Al Tahreer will continue in the future, building bonds, building military expertise, and building a lasting friendship.

"Our partnership extends the boundaries of friendship and brotherhood," said Mohammad. "Our strategic relationship always aims to benefit our soldiers. I hope in the future to see more successes and a fruitful future between our countries and militaries."



(Photos by Sgt. Joshua Mayro)



(Photo by Sgt. Carissa Diggs)



(Photo by Spc. Jason Kopp)



(Photo by Capt. Jason Nelson)



(Photo by Spc. Jason Kopp)

**1st Lt. Ian Lloyd** is a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot and recently took command of Alpha Company, 2-104th GSAB. Although he followed his family's footsteps (his father, two uncles and two cousins also serve in the Pennsylvania National Guard) he says he joined the military because he felt a personal desire to do so.

After deployment, he looks forward to earning a pilot-in-command designation and getting back to his civilian job, where he flies helicopters for the PA State Police.



(Photo by Spc. Stanford Toran IV)



**Staff Sgt. Derrick Watson** has jumped out of boats and wrestled alligators (seriously) but currently maintains AH-64 Apache helicopters. He joined the Army to get out and explore the world and be "part of something bigger." He enjoys his current job but would like to fly someday as he has always been fascinated by helicopters.

Born and raised in Louisiana, his favorite Cajun food is crawfish.

Watson is currently deployed with Delta Company, 4-4 ARB.



(Photo by Spc. Stanford Toran IV)

**Capt. Nathan Bevans** is a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot. He will finish his time in the Middle East as an aviation liaison officer for Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve after leading Alpha Company, 2-104th GSAB as their commander since the beginning of the deployment.

He originally joined the military for a sense of purpose and because of his family ties to service. After deployment, he looks forward to taking a cross-country road trip with his wife.

**Spc. Grant Lyons** originally joined the Army to serve his country and so he could go to college.

After deployment, he will finish his time in the military, return to Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania and finish his degree. He then hopes to get a job in medical imaging.

Lyons is an avid soccer fan, having played through high school. He says his favorite player is Cristiano Ronaldo because he always produces in the big moments when his team needs him and welcomes the pressure instead of getting nervous.

Lyons is deployed as a unit supply specialist with HHC.



# HOMEFRONT HEROES

Soldiers and families,

We know there are many ways our families “hold down the homefront” and we want to share their stories.

If you'd like to recognize a family member back home please do one of the following:

- 1) Send a message to the 28<sup>th</sup> ECAB Facebook page with a photo of the family member and a short paragraph describing why they deserve a shout out.
- 2) Email your FRG leader with a photo of the family member and a short paragraph describing why they deserve and shout out.
- 3) Contact the brigade PAO or your UPAR for assistance



#### Ideas include...

- A child who reads bedtime stories to their younger siblings
- A niece or nephew who sent care packages to their Soldier's unit
- A parent or in-law who has been stepping up to take care of the kids
- A child who broke a personal record at a recent track meet
- A spouse who threw a party for their child's birthday on their own (yikes)
- A spouse or parent who picked up a new skill or earned a degree

*"The strength of the armed forces of the United States is as much about its families as it is about its combat capability."*

– Gen. Martin Dempsey



Follow the link below for the latest AFN TV schedule

<https://v3.myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil/>



<https://www.facebook.com/28ECAB/>



<https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/28cab>



For the latest Army news, visit the Army News Service at <https://www.army.mil/ARNews>

# SPORTS SHOUTOUTS



Want to send a shoutout to your favorite team? Contact your company UPAR or the brigade PAO

*The Anvil Insider: a publication by the 28th ECAB and Task Force Anvil public affairs office*

## **28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade**

Commander:  
Col. Howard Lloyd

Senior Enlisted Advisor:  
Command Sgt. Maj. Sean Livolsi



# STAY SHARP



## Bystander Intervention

### What is Bystander Intervention?

When you are watching a potentially bad situation happening, and you decide to step in and make a difference. You choose to become an Active Bystander and intervene.

It is not easy to step in, even if your conscience and the Army Values are telling you it is the right thing to do. Bystanders might think: "I don't want to cause a scene," "I'm not sure what I could say or do to stop this," "It is not my business," "I don't want the other Soldiers to get mad at me," "Maybe someone else will step in." These thoughts are normal, but realize that your actions (or lack of action) might have a big impact. **Bystanders have the opportunity to prevent Sexual Harassment and possibly stop crimes like Sexual Assault from occurring.**

### How can you practice Bystander Intervention?

**DIRECT** – Intervene in the moment to prevent a problem or potentially harmful situation from happening.

**DISTRACT** – Interrupt the situation without having to directly confront anyone.

**DELEGATE** – Get help from someone who is better equipped to handle the situation.



Speak to a member of Task Force Anvil's SHARP Team for more information on Bystander Intervention.



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**Task Force Anvil SHARP Program**  
**DSN: 318-824-3058**



**DoD Safe Helpline 24/7: 1 (877) 995-5247**



# ROADRUNNER REVIEW

## Task Force Roadrunner Newsletter



### Patching Ceremony



Many Soldiers have recently received the honor of donning the 28<sup>th</sup> ID patch on their right sleeve to indicate that they have been in a combat environment.

This tradition dates back to around WWII where Soldiers would continue to wear their unit's insignia after the war.

Congratulations to all the Soldiers who have earned their patch.

*(Photos submitted by SGT Sara Miller and CPT Justin Thomas)*



### Happy Birthday This Coming Week To...

- SPC Bhasin
- SPC Davey
- SPC Fry
- SPC Teague
- CPL Schultz
- SGT Cruz, C
- SGT Hogan

- SGT Muy
- SGT Schwartz
- SGT Steiff
- SSG Giovengo
- SFC Magargle
- 1LT Tomlin
- CPT Ruffing

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- A Co.- SPC Kayla Harley
- B Co.- SPC Joyce Avila, SGT Francis Calabro
- C Co.- SPC Jason Kopp



### Get To Know Your Soldiers...

Name/Rank: SPC Anton Hargrove

Hometown: Philadelphia, PA

Age: 23

MOS: 92W (Water Purification Specialist) but is deployed here as a 92F (Fueller)

Goal After Deployment: He plans to finish his degree in computer science and go on vacation.

Hobbies: He enjoys playing X Box, and playing/watching sports. He also played on the Camp Buehring softball team.



# Wings of Iron

26 members

## Mission Accomplished!

Team Average	Miles Logged	Miles To Go
119.98	3119.54	0

### Sponsors

\$300 raised by 8 sponsors

## Taji 100 Update

- |    |                       |    |                     |
|----|-----------------------|----|---------------------|
| 1  | John Paul Karpovich   | 11 | Chris Costello      |
| 2  | Samuel Debold         | 12 | Jennifer Renninger  |
| 3  | Alexander Quintanilla | 13 | Courtney Petrauskas |
| 4  | Wesley Hicken         | 14 | Frank Palfrey       |
| 5  | Douglas Hollobaugh    | 15 | John Lombardi       |
| 6  | bradley meloy         | 16 | Betsy Rebar         |
| 7  | DURIEL FORD           | 17 | mark good           |
| 8  | Rachel Abramson       | 18 | Kellci White        |
| 9  | Brian Zimmerman       | 19 | Devon Schoonover    |
| 10 | Kat Stafford          |    |                     |

The Taji 100 is a nonprofit organization that raises money for military related charities.

As of Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> (a whole five days early for the date of completion), the Wings of Iron group attained their team average of 100 miles. Here their top 19 runners can be seen, with their top runner being within the top 20 in the world for the challenge!

In the process, these Soldiers have raised \$300.

## Love to Run



On Valentine's Day, TF Anvil hosted another marathon and had everyone out and moving in the Kuwait Sun. Many more outdoor events are to come, so stay on the look out for more marathons and 5ks to participate in soon.

Have a story, Soldier to highlight, cool photo, or something else for the newsletter? Reach out to your company level Roadrunner Review staff member or email [628thPublicAffairs@gmail.com](mailto:628thPublicAffairs@gmail.com)

## Shaping Up



SPC Connatser has been getting to work and bettering himself on this deployment. As of this past week, he has lost over 40 lbs and has just been promoted to the rank of SPC. When asked about what motivated him to lose the weight, he had this to say: "My section helped me out a lot and it has helped me feel more successful."

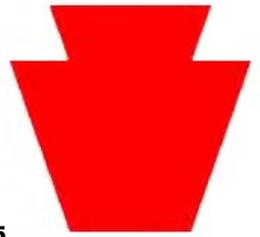


# The Wile E. Weekly<sup>-ish</sup>

On the Trail with Task Force Coyote, 2-104th GSAB

March 1st, 2021

Volume 2, Issue 5



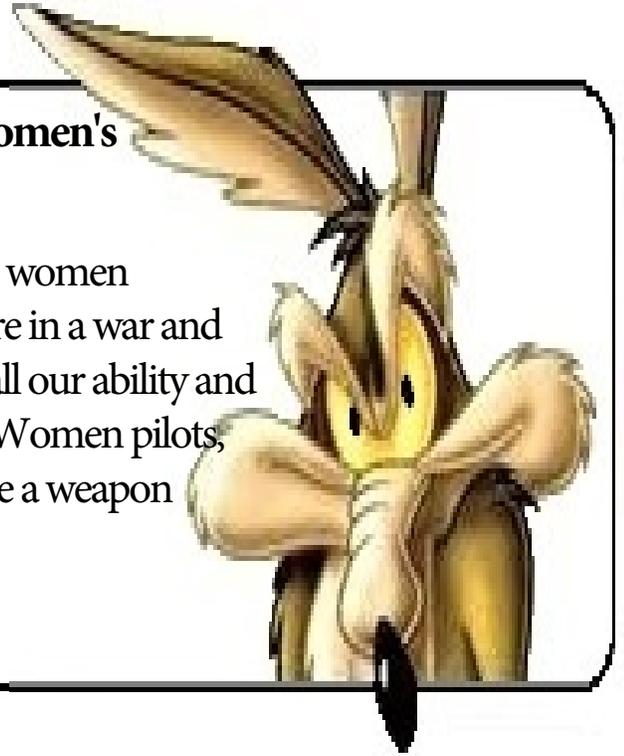
ABOVE: CPT Christopher Lehr prepares a stencil out of masking tape as he continues work on the Battalion's "T-Wall."

Photo by SFC Justin Shaffer

## March is National Women's History Month --

"This is not a time when women should be patient. We are in a war and we need to fight it with all our ability and every weapon possible. Women pilots, in this particular case, are a weapon waiting to be used."

- Eleanor Roosevelt



## Leaving Our Mark

BELOW: SGT Destiny Velazquez peels masking tape from a stencil she traced on the Battalion's "T-Wall." It is customary for units to paint a concrete barrier with a mural while deployed.

Photo by SFC Justin Shaffer



Join your company's FRG Facebook group, the battalion Facebook group, and the brigade page for updates.



LEFT: E Co 2-104 GSAB holds and awards ceremony during which SSG Justin Rush, SGT Caleb Hill, and SGT David Murphy were presented with the Army Commendation Medal for their efforts in fiscal conservation during fueling operations.

Photo by SSG Lynda Tulanowski

RIGHT: E Co 2-104 GSAB holds a promotion ceremony on 25 FEB 2020, where SPC Tyler Hertzog and SPC Mariliz Serrano were pinned as Corporals and welcomed into the NCO Corps

Photo by SSG Lynda Tulanowski



LEFT: SPC Anderson of D Co, 2-104 GSAB participates in a "FOD-walk." FOD Stands for "Foreign Objects and Debris," and this type of police-call is an important part of reducing our environmental impact as well as protecting our aircraft and crews.

Photo by SGT Joshua Mayro



## **Taking On the Army Combat Fitness Test**

Soldiers participate in the Sprint-Drag-Carry (SDC), one of the 6 events in the new Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT). SFC Justin Shaffer (TOP LEFT) and 1LT Matthew Nieberding (TOP RIGHT) take their turn at dragging 90lbs worth of plates across the turf during leg 2 of the event. CSM Shannon Cullen (BOTTOM RIGHT) carries 2 - 40lb kettle-bells during leg 4 of the 5 leg SDC event. Soldiers received instruction on, and completed an entire 6-event ACFT in order to become certified to set-up, train, and grade the fitness test during future evolutions.

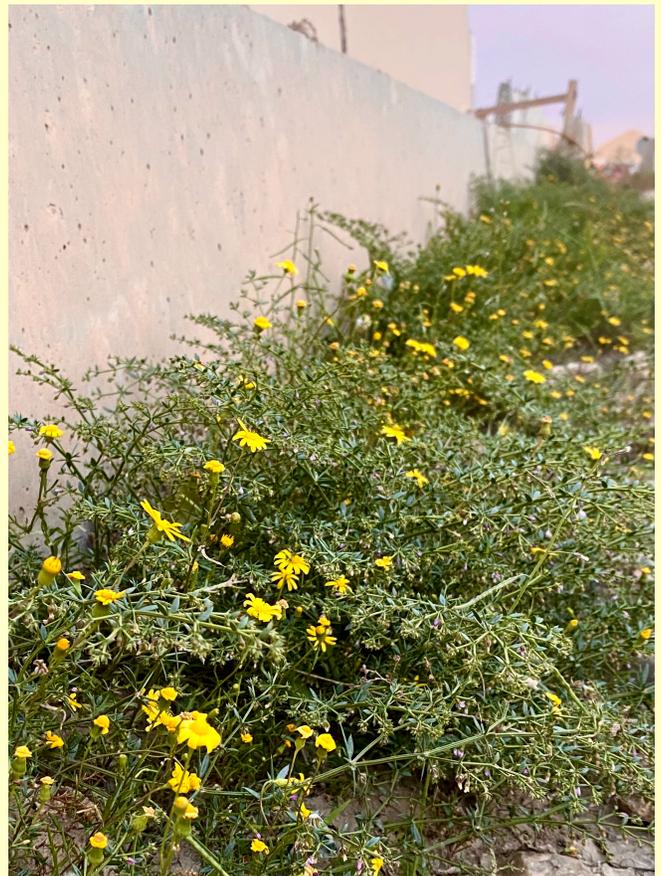
Photos by CPT Nathan Baker

***Join your company's FRG Facebook group, the battalion Facebook group, and the brigade page for updates.***

## Beauty Hidden in Plain Sight

The Arfaj Flower, or *Rhanterium epapposum*, is the National Flower of Kuwait. Most are likely to waltz past this seemingly weed-like plant without so much as a double-take. Those of us from the Western-world attribute it as akin to a dandelion, a pesky weed that we take for granted. *Rhanterium epapposum* has adapted to the arid desert ecosystem, capitalizing on minimal rainfall and robustly germinating through excessive fruit production. The flowers of the Arfaj have begun to bloom just in time, a symbol of resilience at a time when Task Force Coyote continues to "fly the helicopter," and drive on with our mission within OIR.

Photos and synopsis by SFC Justin Shaffer



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