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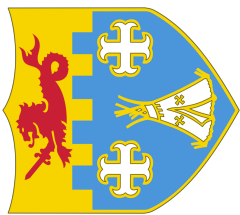
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1ST BATTALION — 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT (LIGHT)

The Red Warrior Path

Volume 1, Issue 2
June 2012



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LTC Scott Green—The Final Chapter Battalion Commander

Here we are yet again. Another month has passed, and I must say, I relish the opportunity to write to all of you and brag about our Red Warriors. They have accomplished so much since we talked last.

CSM Day and I continue to be impressed by all that our Soldiers are doing. Another reason I am excited to be writing to you again is the fact that it means we are another month closer to returning to all of you.

I want to give you some insight into the actions of our Red Warriors here in Northern Kunar, and why I can say without reservation that they continue to impress. Just prior to writing this letter, I had the privilege of presenting one of our Red Warrior medics the Army Commendation Medal with “V” for valor for his valorous actions during the indirect fire attack our Forward Operating Base (FOB) sustained on 18 May.

This young Sergeant ran to the danger while many normal men would have run from it. By doing so, he ensured the rapid treatment and evacuation of numerous wounded Soldiers. This is one example, and there are many more out there. Your Red Warriors lead the brigade in valorous award recommendations submitted thus far through the deployment.

Over the last month our Red Warriors have been hard at work partnering with our Afghan Security Force partners and bringing them closer to independence. Additionally, they have been working with local leaders and district level government officials. Through the hard work of our men and women, we have completed the construction of a girl’s school in one of our districts, continued construction of a new school in another district, and made numerous minor improvements to three other schools across the battalion area or operations.

Through our partnership, we continue to further the rule of law in Northern Kunar with the arrival of two prosecuting attorneys, a judge, and an Afghan law professor. We are close to holding our first trial here in one of our districts. This would be a first for all of Northern Kunar.

Furthermore, our Soldiers have brought much development to the area. Through hard work and a concerted effort, we lead the way in the number of dollars budgeted for development projects across the entire Kunar province. Finally, our Soldiers work tirelessly to improve the cleanliness, order, and force protection of all of our locations.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize our first class

team back in Fort Carson who continues to train Soldiers for deployment, improve our facilities, and provide mentorship and supervision of the biggest company in the battalion. They often go unrecognized but their efforts and contribution to the mission have been immeasurable.

As we continue to write the pages of this chapter of history for our nation’s involvement in Northern Kunar, we know we are writing the final chapter. Recently we were informed that we would be the last Coalition task force here in our area. This is very big news for all involved. For us it means we have lots of work ahead as we work to transition many of our locations to our Afghan Security Force partners. It also means we will close some locations when we depart at the end of our time here.

This is good news in the fact that it means our Afghan partners will assume the lead and control of security in this area in a few months. That is demonstrable progress and I firmly believe they will succeed. For our Soldiers, it means we will be busy up until the very end of our deployment working to improve our partner’s capability and retrograding years of equipment that accumulated across all of our locations. This is a monumental task but I know that the Red Warriors are the right team to accomplish this mission.

As always, I want to take a moment to thank all of you for your undying support of our team. I know it can sound patronizing sometimes, but I truly mean it when I say that your support keeps every Soldier here going. You give us a reason to accomplish this mission and make you proud. Thank you!

Recently we were informed that we would be the last Coalition task force here in [Northern Kunar].

THE RED WARRIOR PATH is published by 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment (Light) for the families and friends of Red Warrior Soldiers. 1-12 Infantry (L) is part of Task Force Mountain Warrior (4 IBCT, 4 ID). The task force is currently deployed to Afghanistan, Regional Command East, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Contents of *THE RED WARRIOR PATH* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government or the Department of Defense. Please send all questions or comments about *THE RED WARRIOR PATH* to CH (CPT) A. Lamont Risner at lamont.risner@afghan.swa.army.mil.

ON THE FRONT COVER: A view of one of the many capillary river valleys that feed into the Kunar River.

Northern Kunar Province: Our Home Away from Home

by SSG Courtney Kargel, Battalion S2 NCOIC

The terrain of northern Kunar has a significant impact on the movement of not only people but ideas as well.

A view from Asmar Base.



The Soldiers of the Battalion stand in formation just as the sun begins to set behind the peaks of the surrounding mountains, casting pink and orange across a cloudless sky. Moments like these are strangely familiar to ones experienced back home in Colorado, making it easy to forget that we are in a combat

zone thousands of miles away from our families. But for the men and women of Task Force 1-12 Infantry, the Northern Kunar River Valley is our home away from home.

Kunar Province is located in the northeastern portion of Afghanistan, embedded deep within the Hindu Kush Mountains along the Pakistan border. As a Battalion, our responsibility falls within the northern region of the province including Shigal, Dangam, and Asmar districts to the south, Ghaziabad district in the center, and Naray district to the north.

This area is dominated by the Kunar River as well as the extremely rugged mountains that surround it. The river runs the complete length of the province with several tributaries that branch off into steep valleys on

each side.

Not unlike us, the local population maintains a significant presence along the Kunar River or nestled in villages deep within the offshoot valleys along terraces built into mountain sides. The terrain of northern Kunar has a significant impact on the movement of not only people but ideas as well. Being so deep in the mountains with few roads and little access to other regions, the people of northern Kunar have for centuries been somewhat isolated from the rest of Afghanistan.

The major livelihood in the region is farming, and the people use the ancient terraced slopes of the mountains to take advantage of every square inch of farmable land. Other trades in the region include timber log-



(Courtesy of Christian Science Monitor)

(Continued on page 4)

Home Away From Home (continued)

Each time the Battalion Commander dresses in full Afghan garb for shuras... it builds a stronger bond and trust...

(Continued from page 3)

ging, shop keeping in the bazaars of the local villages, goat and sheepherding, and illicit smuggling across the Pakistan Border.

The typical family in northern Kunar lives in a *kolat* or large family housing compound with as many as 50 or more people living in an extended family dwelling.

The Pashtun people in this region dress conservatively. Most women don the *burka*, a garment that covers the length of the body to include the head and face. The men typically dress in a *shahwar kamis*, a long tunic that covers baggy pants, usually worn with a vest or blazer and a scarf. Many Pashtun men wear a *pakool*, a traditional round headgear made of wool. Children, especially the young girls, wear colorful dresses. Small things go a long way with the people of Afghanistan.

Each time the Battalion Commander dresses in full Afghan garb for *shuras* with local tribal elders or a female Soldier wraps her hair with a headscarf, it builds a stronger bond and



An engineer discusses a development project with the District Sub-governor (right) of Ghaziabad Province. Like many men of the region, the governor is wearing a shalwar kamis, vest, and pakool.

trust with the Afghan people, presenting an understanding of their traditions and an eagerness to relate to them.

One of the best ways to gain insight into Afghan culture is to observe the meal or dining process. A vital element of Afghan culture is the notion of hospitality, a deeply rooted tradition closely linked to honor and reputation. No matter how poor the person may be, people will always offer tea or food for guests. When such hospitality is offered it is extremely important

to accept it, thus maintaining the individual's sense of honor.

Men and women do not dine together if a non-family guest is present. While the rule may be flexible for extended family members or close family friends, Afghan women will usually eat in a separate room.

Meals, commonly made up of rice and stew, are usually served on several community platters generally placed on a dining mat the floor. Utensils are not used for Afghan meals but instead the diners will use their right hand.

Although we predominately eat within dining facilities located on our US bases, Soldiers are frequently invited to share a traditional meal with our Afghan partners. Meals like these not only provide us with greater insight into Afghan customs and traditions but also offer an excellent opportunity to build rapport.

The people of northern Kunar are predominately ethnic Pashtuns, who have various tribal fundamentals centered on shared lineages and geographical areas. Pashtun and Afghan soci-



The village of Shamasur, a local farming village on the banks of the Kunar River.

(Continued on page 5)

Home Away From Home (continued)

...Soldiers are frequently invited to share a traditional meal with our Afghan partners.

(Continued from page 4)

ety are family-based. Families are generally closely knit with a strong sense of respect for other family members and a shared sense of familial pride. They are primarily Sunni Muslim and the Islamic religion is deeply ingrained into the culture, language, and practices of the region.

The people here subscribe to *Pashtunwali*, an unwritten code of behavior focusing on honor and justice, shame and redemption. Pashtuns never forgive or forget a wrong, however slight, and will defend their honor, even unto death, as an obligation.

“Sweeter to me is death than life, which is passed day to day without honor,” claims an old Pashtun adage.

For us, each day that passes we gain a better understanding of the local population of Kunar, which not only contributes to the protection of our Soldiers but allows us to have a greater impact with our operations.

Every day we are reminded of the beauty that resides within the boundaries of our area of operations, whether it is during a patrol on a steep ridgeline, manning a guard tower with our ANSF partners, or in a simple

Red Warriors share a large, traditional Afghan meal with our ANSF partners and local elders.



Three Afghan children look on with smiles in a village in Kunar Province. (Photo courtesy of Army News Service)



Afghan women wearing burkas pass by a mosque in Kunar Province. (Photo Courtesy of Sky News)

conversation with a local shop owner.

Although the words above cannot begin to describe the beauty and splendor of this region, I hope it has provided a glimpse of what the Soldiers of Task Force 1-12 Infantry have witnessed over the past three months in northern Kunar.

Who are the Afghan National Security Forces?

by MAJ Jim Pangelinan, Battalion Executive Officer

We recognize that Afghan Soldiers and Police are the key to American troops finally coming home from our long mission in Afghanistan.

President Obama announced last year that by the end of December 2014, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) will have completed the transition of security responsibility in Afghanistan to the Afghan government and the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

Towards this end, Task Force Red Warrior has been working in daily partnership with our Afghan Army and Police partners to help them build capacity, professionalize the force, and become more accountable to the Afghan people that they serve and protect.

Security Force Assistance operations have become our battalion's primary focus, and developing the ANSF is both challenging and rewarding. We recognize that Afghan Soldiers and Police are the key to American troops finally coming home from our long mission in Afghanistan.

The Afghan National Security Forces consist of three major pillars: The Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan National Police (ANP), and the Afghan Air Force (AAF).

The ANSF is an all volunteer force with Soldiers, Police-



CPT Chris Cheney, 1-12 Battalion Surgeon, provides medical aid with ANA Soldiers to a civilian in Kamdesh. (Photo courtesy of Reuters)

men, and Airmen from across the 34 provinces of Afghanistan. These forces are controlled by the Afghan government's Ministries of Defense and Interior. The Soldiers and Policemen of the ANSF represent multiple ethnicities and regions of the country.

Today, the ANSF is over 250,000 strong and growing to 305,000 by the end of 2014. Ultimately, the security and defense of Afghanistan belongs to the Afghan men and women that fill the ranks of the ANSF.

Having Afghans in the lead for their own security in the country is a long held aspiration of the people of Afghanistan.

Until the past decade, there had not been a national security force in Afghanistan for nearly thirty years. Today, with the hard work and assistance of American and international troops, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is closer than ever to achieving the goal of Afghan led security in the country.

The Afghan National Army is responsible for national security, particularly against the current insurgency led by the Taliban. The force is divided into six corps, each responsible for a different region of Afghanistan. A separate ANA division is responsible for security in the capital, Kabul. Each division is divided into brigades, which are further subdivided into battalions, or "kandaks."

The Army is primarily a light infantry force. It is armed with NATO weapons, like the M16 assault rifle and the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. It also has up-armored trucks and heavy weapons, such as the M2 .50cal machine gun and D-30 Howitzers.

In Area of Operations Red Warrior, our Soldiers partner daily with two ANA kandaks



Afghan National Army Soldier fires a SPG-9 Recoilless Rifle in Kamdesh. (Photo courtesy of Reuters)

(Continued on page 7)

ANSF (continued)

There has been a great deal of progress in developing the ANSF across Afghanistan.

(Continued from page 6)

from the ANA's 201st Corps.

The Afghan National Air Force is still in its early stages of development. Currently, NATO is working closely with the AAF to develop the pilots, training centers, and logistics systems that are required for any modern air force. The AAF is a nationally controlled asset with Air Wings that support each of the ANA Corps. They fly both fixed wing aircraft, like the C-27 cargo plane, and helicopters, such as the Mi-17 utility helicopter. In AO Red Warrior, we periodically work with AAF crews when they fly in support of our Afghan partners in the battle space.

The Afghan National Police are divided into three principal forces: the Afghan Uniform Police (AUP), Afghan Border Police (ABP), and the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP).

The AUP serves across Afghanistan in a local law enforcement capacity, somewhat similar to the town police or sheriff departments in the U.S. The ABP secures the nation's borders, much like the U.S. Border Patrol. They also process customs revenue for the government. The ANCOP is a specially trained police force that ensures civil order within the country. They are designed after the European Gendarmerie forces, such as the Italian Carabinieri or the Spanish Guardia Civil.

In AO Red Warrior, our Soldiers work in partnership with three Afghan Border Police Kandaks and five District Police Headquarters. Our work in training and advising the police is augmented by American police professionals with decades

of law enforcement experience. Additionally, we have Security Force Assistance Teams from the 101st Airborne Division partnered with us to help achieve our Army and Police development goals.

There has been a great deal of progress in developing the ANSF across Afghanistan. Each day the force gets stronger, more professional, more accountable to the people, and better equipped and trained. In the three months that Task Force 1-12 Infantry has been in country, we've seen significant

field artillery and mortars.

While there has been great progress, there still remain some very difficult challenges in this mission. Because of three decades of warfare, the Afghan education system has largely broken down. As a result, only about 15% of new recruits to the ANSF can read or write.

Illiteracy and innumeracy is a problem across the country, but it causes a significant challenge in our efforts to professionalize, educate, and train our ANSF partners. Imagine a police officer who can't read the laws



An Afghan Air Force Mi-17 helicopter lands in Nuristan Province. (Photo courtesy of NTM-A)

progress in our ANSF partners. Slowly but steadily, they are improving their capabilities to secure key infrastructure, combat Taliban presence and activity, patrol their areas of responsibility, communicate with the local populace, and command their forces.

Our focus today remains on helping them to improve the systems that sustain a military force in combat, such as logistics, command and control, communications, and maintenance. We are also assisting in the ANSF's development of critical combat enablers, such as

he's charged to enforce or a Soldier who can't read a map to call in medical support to his position.

Corruption in both the government and the ANSF poses another long term issue. Corruption by ANSF or district government officials serves to drive a wedge between the government and its people. We are helping our ANSF and government partners combat corruption through training, mentorship, and other measures that aid them in becoming more trans-

(Continued on page 8)

ANSF (continued)

Red Warriors have performed superbly in their mission to develop, train, advise, and mentor their ANSF partners.

(Continued from page 7)

parent and accountable to the people of northern Kunar Province.

Another very significant challenge to the mission is helping the ANSF to become more independent from U.S. forces. Until recently, many of their supplies, equipment, and other assets have come to them through Coalition units. Today at all levels, ISAF is working with the ANSF to take the lead in their own logistics and supply networks, administrative procedures, and mission command systems.

The final major challenge we face in partnering with the ANSF is the threat of enemy infiltration into their ranks. The Taliban understand that co-opting or coercing the ANSF Soldiers or Police into attacking their U.S. partners degrades the trust and cooperation required of effective combined operations.

Red Warriors have performed superbly in their mission to develop, train, advise, and mentor their ANSF partners. Though we have a long road over the upcoming months, there are numerous signs that our partners are growing increasingly ready to assume security responsibility in northern



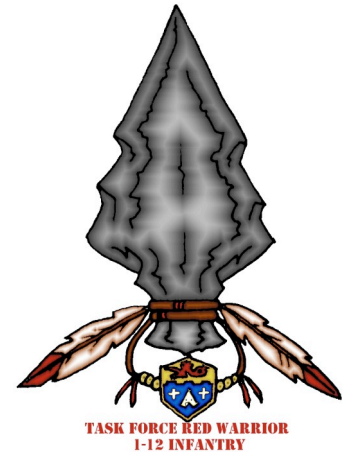
An Afghan Uniformed Police patrolman gives candy to children in Naray District.

Kunar. Our partnership with the ANSF continues to expand as we work daily with them in combat operations and in training.

Many of the Afghan Soldiers and Policemen with whom we work are much like our own Soldiers. They want to be responsible for the security of their families and communities. They want their country to be a strong and independent nation. They are fighting for Afghanistan's future and are proud of their progress and accomplishments.

Like American Soldiers, the Afghan Police and Army have taken a significant toll in human lives in this war. They have fought bravely alongside Coali-

tion Forces, but they still have much to accomplish. Our Red Warriors understand the importance of this mission to help them achieve their goal of taking the lead in the defense of their nation.



UNIT ADDRESS LISTING

HHC, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 FOB BOSTICK
 APO, AE 09310

A CO, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 COP PIRTLE-KING
 APO, AE 09310

B CO, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 COP MONTI
 APO, AE 09310

C CO, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 FOB BOSTICK
 APO, AE 09310

(1st, 4th, and HQ Plt of D CO)
 D CO, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 COP KALAGUSH
 APO, AE 09310

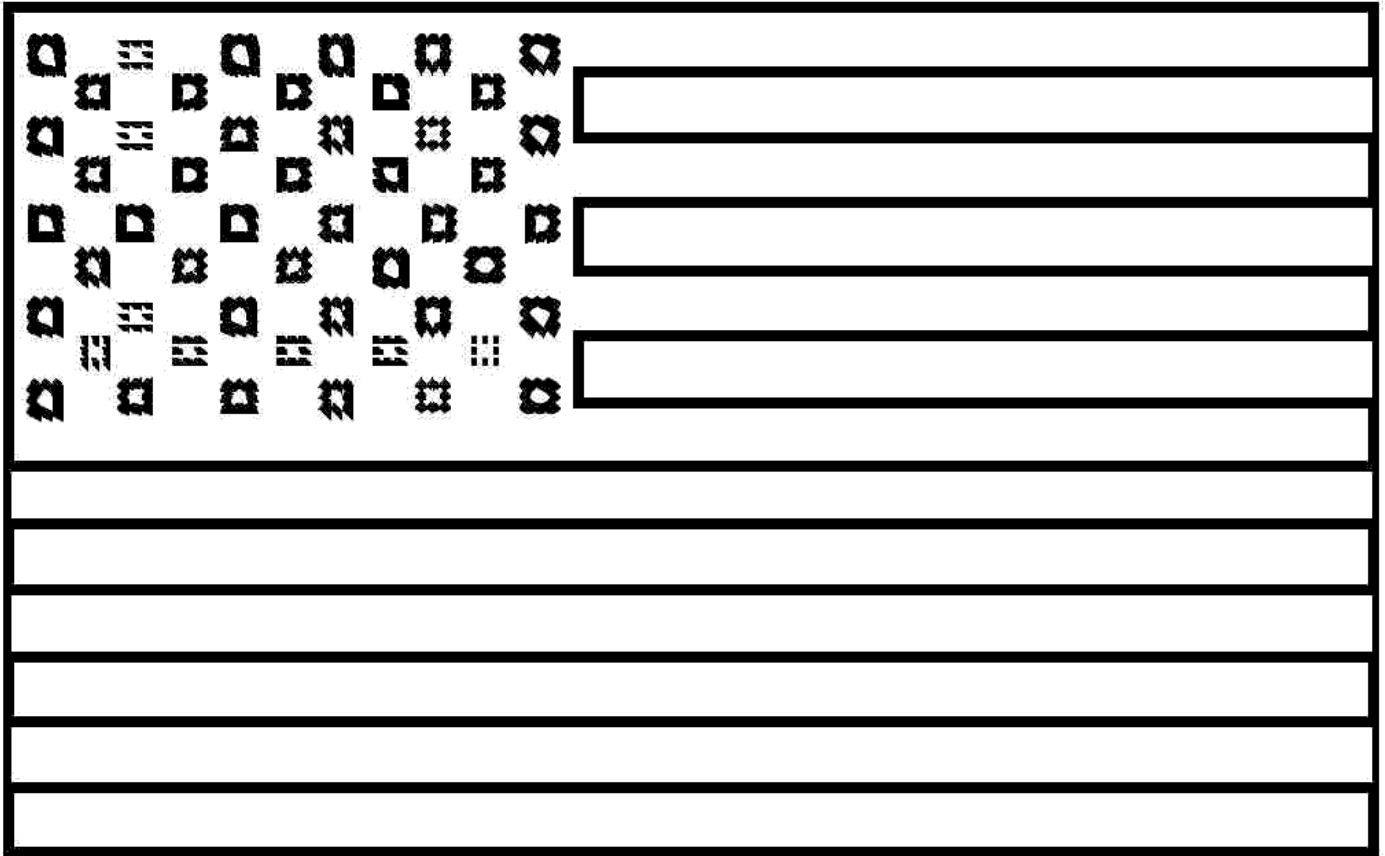
(2nd Platoon of D CO)
 D CO, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 FOB GAMBERRI
 APO, AE 09310

(3rd Platoon of D CO)
 D CO, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 FOB METHAR LAM
 APO, AE 09310

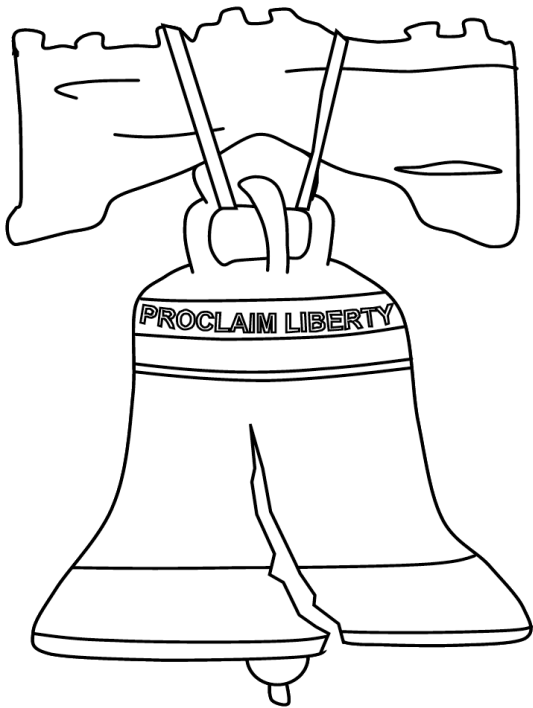
E CO, 1-12 IN, 4 IBCT, 4 ID
 FOB BOSTICK
 APO, AE 09310

U S Flag

THE KID ZONE



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Happy
4th
of
July





I fear [1LT Adams] may become drunk with power and turn the place into some 'Lord of the Flies' summer camp.



Dog Company—Lord of the Flies by CPT Adam Marsh

Family and Friends of Dog Company, well summer has hit Afghanistan and it is in full swing. The temperature gets over 100 degrees in the daylight and the sun is murder.

1LT Cooley, SPC Morgan, and SGT Hamby are even more red than usual; the Afghan sun is not kind to these fair skinned Dog warriors. But don't worry too much, we have plenty of sunscreen and are using it.

The flies are another thing; now that it's warm the flies are out in force. It is very common to have a flyswatter close by at all times.

At least now Dog Company is assigned under 4th BDE, 4th ID. So now we are back with Mountain Warrior.

We have been assigned to the Special Troops Battalion so we are in Task Force Gryphon, but our Red Warrior family still takes good care of us.

Dog Company is currently divided into three separate areas: The Headquarters along with 1st and 4th Platoon are up here at



The CO cutting the cake for Memorial Day; we are fed very well at COP Kalagush.

COP Kalagush; that's in western Nuristan province.

We have a good life here; this is a large base so there is lots of room. It is very hard to get to our base except by helicopter, but we still have a great chow hall and a recreation building with movies, games, computers and phones.

The 1SG has been working hard to improve the quality of life here. He got us a foosball

table and some new weight room equipment.

2nd PLT is at FOB Gamberri, in Laughman province. They are assigned as a force protection and security for all the high ranking officers that live there.

Unfortunately, 1LT Adams has been put in charge of all the operations and security of the FOB. I fear he may become drunk with power and turn the place into some "Lord of the Flies" summer camp.

3rd PLT is at FOB Methar Lam, also in Laughman province, 3rd is working with the Headquarters of Task Force Gryphon and helping with the Combat Advisor Teams working with the Afghan Army.

We are all doing a lot of guard duty and at times it can get pretty monotonous. But, I am constantly amazed by the commitment of these Warriors.

They work long hours in the hot sun walking up and down mountains or manning gates and towers. Yet, they still manage to stay motivated. We are all ready to come home, just as soon as we finish up what we have to do.



SFC Anderson on patrol in the Mountain; the town over his shoulder is Kalagush.

Charlie Company—A Vital Step Forward by CPT Brian Sbertoli

“The local villagers have begun placing greater trust in the abilities of their Afghan security forces...”

- Bennett Riley

The month of May marks the third month of deployment for Charlie 1-12 Infantry.

In this short time frame, Charlie 1-12 has made remarkable strides in fostering a strong partnership with ANSF forces.

Under the guidance of the Naray District Police Chief Haji Yousef, the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) has assumed a more prominent role throughout the Kunar Province.

“The local villagers have begun placing greater trust in the abilities of their Afghan security forces,” remarked Charlie Company Platoon Leader Bennett Riley, “this is a vital step in the transition towards ANSF led

operations.”

Charlie Company welcomed Civilian Police Advisor (CPA) Walter Bryant into the Coyote family. Local governance in the surrounding villages, most notably in Naray, have welcomed Mr. Bryant’s expertise and look forward to training under his guidance.

Aside from partnered operations, Charlie Company has successfully begun utilizing their Female Engagement Team (FET) to reach out to women and children of surrounding villages.

“Reaching out to the local female population is a very gratifying experience,” says FET

member SPC Leak. “I hope to continue and expand our operations during the remainder of the deployment.”

Charlie Company has also expanded the number of micro grants awarded to local Afghans desiring assistance in opening small businesses. Current business proposals include opening up bakeries, chicken farms, and tailor shops in surrounding villages. Once opened, these small businesses will be extremely beneficial to the villages by creating jobs and helping fuel the local economy.



(above) Afghan policemen, led by Haji Yousef, meet with elders and the Girls School principal in Jabeh.

(top left) CPL Chase and 1LT Chavez present the Jabeh Girls School Principal with Waves 4 Water filtration systems.

(left) AUP, led by Haji Yousef, meet with elders and the Girls School principal in Jabeh.



Bravo Company—Dedicated Blackhearts by CPT Jeremy Flight

I challenge anyone to show me a group of men, more dedicated to their duty in all of history, than the men of the Blackhearts Company.

Another month has rushed by (or 33% is over) and Blackheart Soldiers continue to fight the good fight and everyday answer the call to freedom.

Your support is the cornerstone to our efforts; without every one of you, Blackheart Soldiers would not be the incredible men they are.

Every day I am a little more proud of my Soldiers, your husbands, sons, brothers, or fathers who continue to act with honor, patriotism, and professionalism.

I cannot imagine fighting alongside better men. I challenge anyone to show me a group of men, more dedicated to their duty in all of history, than

the men of the Blackhearts Company.

There couldn't be a more proud company commander in the United States Army than I am.

I want to personally thank every member of the Blackhearts Family for continuing to fight the fight in your own ways, making us the fighting force that we are.



(above) B Company Soldiers stand watch in their part of the river valley.
(left) An Afghan security partner and CPT Flight examine a poppy field.



B Company Soldiers compete in a sport tournament at COP Monti with their Afghan security partners.



(above) B Company Soldiers show their "true colors."
(left) There's always time for some fun.
(below) Ralston Falls is fully operational.



Headquarters and Headquarters Company—One Big Family by CPT Dennis Hall

[Headquarters Soldiers] have also proven in recent weeks that they possess tremendous bravery...

Hello again families! It's been an eventful month here at FOB Bostick, and thanks to the Soldiers of Hammer Company a successful one as well.

Before I recognize the outstanding performance of our platoons and sections, I would like to pay tribute to 1LT Alejo Thompson, a former member of Hammer Company who gave his life while performing his duties in support of the Battalion mission.

Even though he had moved on to A Company, I will always consider him a member of our family and will miss him greatly.

Although the loss of LT Thompson and two of our brothers from the attached field artillery platoon struck a tragic note last month, there were

some incredibly valorous acts committed by our Soldiers that uplifted us all.

First and foremost, the Soldiers of our Medical Platoon have several times gone above and beyond what anyone could expect of them to treat our wounded warriors. Their selfless commitment to providing care to others is truly inspiring.

I would also like to recognize our Battalion Mortarmen and the Scouts for demonstrating remarkable courage in recent weeks. Our mortars, scouts and snipers regularly provide a blanket of security over the entire area of operations that allow the rest of us to do our jobs in relative safety.

While I can always count on these Soldiers to conduct their

routine duties with the utmost competence, they have also proven in recent weeks that they possess tremendous bravery and an unfailing commitment to their brothers in arms for which I have no words. You all should be very proud.

As always, the Staff continues to plug away, providing our Battalion the intelligence, insight, and experience required to accomplish the mission, under any conditions. Though the workload has at times appeared to be more than anyone could possibly bear, they always get the job done without complaint and usually still have time left over for an hour of Staff Physical Training. They are the well-oiled engine that keeps this train

(Continued on page 15)



An Afghan security partner shares tea with CPT Anderson, 2LT Scott, and CSM Day.

One Big Family (continued)

...you would be amazed at what your Soldiers have accomplished here, and should take great solace in the fact that we have come together as one big family...

(Continued from page 14)

rolling along, every day closer to completion of the mission.

In closing, I want to tell you all that you would be amazed at what your Soldiers have accomplished here, and should take great solace in the fact that we have come together as one big family, each Soldier looking out for those at his or her sides.

As always I encourage you to keep corresponding with your Soldier as much as possible, and keep the care packages coming! Keep us in your thoughts and before you know it, we'll be back in the Springs. Talk to you all next month. Hammer Time!



MAJ Bordwell at OP Bari Ali, Kunar River Valley, Eastern Afghanistan, March 2012. (Photo courtesy of WSU Alumni Association)



SSG Cossairt and MAJ Pangelinan share a bench on a "balcony" at OP Mustang.

Alpha Company—Night Crawlers

by 1LT Marissa Readinger

Excitement peaked when the Reuters reporters crafted their popular news-story about the “Vampire” lifestyle at COP Pirtle-King...

Alpha Company plugs along! As we approach the fourth month of this deployment, we take time to reflect on where we’ve been and on the challenges that lie ahead.

Third Platoon came down from Outpost Bari Ali to be replaced by First Platoon at the beginning of this month. The swap was welcomed by all as an exciting change of pace and scenery.

On June 8th, 1SG Chris Little handed over the reins to 1SG Deron Timmerman. The switch was emotional for the entire company, because of 1SG Little’s 4-year run as First Sergeant – but it certainly was a great day for 1SG Timmerman, eager and excited to get to know his Soldiers and facilitate CPT Norman’s vision and mission.

Executive Officer Andy Heath has been up at Pirtle-King for about 2 months now, and his handiwork has surpassed everyone’s expectations - the Commander and First Sergeant now enjoy the spacious floor-plan of the “Lodge” as their meeting area (we are looking at

the feasibility of installing a hot tub!).

The new Security Forces Assistance Team has arrived on the Combat Outpost, and their living and working spaces have all been fashioned by the hard work of the A Company Soldiers over the past 4 weeks.

Excitement peaked when the Reuters reporters crafted their popular news-story about the “Vampire” lifestyle at COP Pirtle-King – certainly a good read for friends and family alike.

At FOB Bostick, the Alpha Company Administrative and Logistics Operations Cell and its 5 Soldiers continue to run resupply missions, facilitate administrative, personnel, and Local National Contracting issues.

The COP Pirtle-King Soldiers make their way down to FOB Bostick about once or twice every month, allowing them to relax and revive, with the simple amenities that the FOB has to offer.

We are all staying safe, staying motivated, and keeping each other happy and healthy. We miss home, of course. We are thankful for all of our family and friends stateside that continue to support us with packages, love and prayers.

To the Thompsons: We miss 1LT Thompson very much. We know he is watching down over you and over us – stay strong! We send you love and many prayers!

(below, left) 2LT Scott chats on the Radio in Kunar Province.

(below) A Company Soldiers keep their basic rifle marksmanship skills honed at a FOB range.



Easy Company—No Mission Too Tough

by CPT Alex Bonilla

Easy company paid homage to our motto, "No Mission too Tough" and immediately shifted focus to rebuilding our motor pool...

Red Warrior and Easy Company family, greetings from Afghanistan, the "new" Easy 6 here, CPT Alex Bonilla.

Since the last news letter Easy Company bid farewell to CPT Michael McGuire and welcomed my family and I to the Easy Company and Red Warrior Family.

It is truly an honor to join the ranks of the outstanding Soldiers of Easy Company and the Red Warrior Battalion. I arrived at FOB Bostick on 14 May, and immediately felt welcomed.

The transition was flawless, except for a brief pause due to



Easy Company on 14 June



From left to right, Mike McGuire (outgoing Easy Company Commander), LTC Green, CPT Alex Bonilla (incoming Easy Company Commander)

the structural damage caused to our Motor Pool on the 18 May indirect fire attack.

Easy company paid homage to our motto, "No Mission too Tough," and immediately shifted focus to rebuilding our motor pool, while still providing world class support to the Task Force at FOB Bostick and every location in the Red Warrior footprint. The versatility of our Soldiers truly makes this company a top notch organization.

My wife Jessica has assumed duties as the new company Fam-

ily Readiness Group leader. Our goal is to continue the great work and support to the families that Mike and his wife Britin provided.

Britin, thanks a million for your assistance during the transition and for the dedication to the Soldiers and Families of Easy Company. Rest assured, you leave them in good hands.

To our families, please have a safe and enjoyable summer... until next time!



Easy Company takes a break from daily duties and enjoys a 3-on-3 Basketball game.



Eight Easy Company Soldiers re-enlist



Ducti Amore Patriae
Led by Love of Country



THE BACK PAGE



A Soldier from Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment provides over-watch in Northern Kunar Province.