



The Talon Times



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"Above Valor and Courage"

From The Top

I am proud to say that we made it safe and sound to our destination here in Kuwait. Our Soldiers have worked incredibly hard to get us here safely and with everything that we need to accomplish our demanding and critical mission.

Since we have hit the ground, our Soldiers have put an enormous amount of energy in gaining understanding of and executing the mission in an incredibly complex and ever changing environment. The Soldiers of this brigade have been charged to perform one of the most important, if not the most important, Army Aviation missions in the world.

For the friends and family members who are not familiar with our mission I would like to give you a brief explanation of what your

Soldier is and will be doing.

Simply speaking, the 185th Aviation Brigade is charged with providing a wide



Colonel Ronald Beckham
185th TAB Commander

range of Aviation support to US Army Central (USARCENT). This includes cargo, utility, fixed-wing, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, attack aviation assets, as well as all the support elements that make it possible for us to

fly.

In addition to providing general aviation support to an area that spans more than 13 countries throughout the Middle East, our brigade is tasked with a theater security cooperation mission— that is, building partnerships and enhancing bilateral and multilateral military-to-military cooperation and coordination.

For our Soldiers throughout the brigade, I want you to know that your dedication does not go unnoticed. I am extremely proud at how the Talon brigade, as a whole, has rapidly developed into a team.

Given the composition and

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Never Quit

A group of soldiers from the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade participated in the "Never Quit" 5k/10k on April 18, 2015. With over 3,000 participants, it was a festive event that provided a much needed repose from the Soldiers' daily lives.

Each Soldier chose someone or something to run or "Never Quit" for. Whether

it was there friends, family, or themselves, each Soldier carried with them the cause for which they were running.

The run was originally inspired by the life of former US Navy Capt. Gerard Petroni. After an extended period of not being able to communicate, due to a stroke, Petroni was asked if he could write anything on a piece of

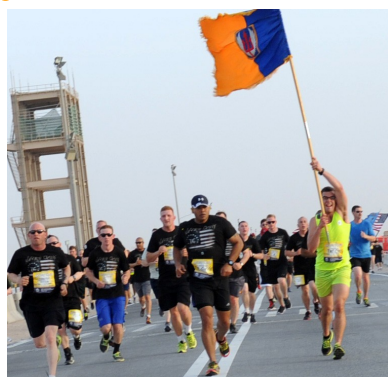
paper, what would it be? It took him some time to write what appeared to be a few words but he managed to write down the words "Never Quit" on a piece of paper.

—Capt. Allen Baxter

185th TAB Public Affairs Officer

This Issue:

- From the Top
- Training Highlight
- 185th Takes over Aviation Mission
- Happy Mothers Day
- And more...





What's happening with Task Force Talon...

185th TAB Takes over Aviation Mission



Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Willie Ross salutes Col. Ronald Beckham after uncasing the colors at the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade's transfer of authority ceremony, April 20, 2015.

After an extensive and rigorous training period leading up to their current deployment, the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade has taken the reins in assuming command of all aviation assets within the U.S. Army Central's area of responsibility.

The Mississippi Army National Guard unit, with subordinate commands comprised of Active Army, National Guard, and Army Reserve elements from across the United States, was mobilized in support of Southwest Asia.

While deployed, the brigade will be responsible for a wide range of aviation operations and support missions including: conducting training missions with partner countries, supporting ongoing and future operations throughout the USARCENT area of operations, and facilitating and participating in training with other U.S. services.

"It's a really unique and challenging mission but I have confidence that the members of this brigade are prepared to perform with both perseverance and distinction," said Col. Ronald Beckham, the 185th TAB commander.

As USARCENT's combat aviation brigade, the unit will be responsible for conducting Theater Security Cooperation as well

as providing aviation support to Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq.

"Balancing the operational requirements from the Theater Security Cooperation perspective with those presented by Operation Inherent Resolve is a top priority," said Beckham. "We bring some of the most seasoned and well-trained aviators and support personnel that you'll find anywhere."

The brigade is a unique combination of Active Army and National Guard units from across the United States.

"Everyone is jelling well and there really is a one team attitude throughout the organization," said Command Sgt. Maj. Willie Ross, the 185th TAB command sergeant major.

The unit will command and control the 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment from the Ohio Army National Guard, the 351st Aviation Support Battalion from the South Carolina National Guard, and the 1-501st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, an active Army unit based out of Fort Bliss, Texas. Like the brigade, each battalion has elements from a number of different states.

"Bringing five states together, including the active component,

and acting as one (is a challenge)," said Lt. Col. Pat Durbin, the 1-137th AHB commander. "We have the ability to integrate everybody (and) get them on the same page to move forward to accomplish (the) mission. I will be extremely pleased with that. There is no doubt in my mind that we will do that," Durbin said.

—Capt. Allen Baxter

185th TAB Public Affairs Officer

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Or DVIDs at:

www.dvidshub.net/unit/185-tab



Lt. Col. Pat Durbin and CSM William Adams uncasing the 1-137 AHB's colors during their transfer of authority ceremony, April 19, 2015.



Lt. Col. Pete Nelson uncases the 351st ASB's colors during their transfer of authority ceremony, April 18, 2015.

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size of our brigade building a team will be an ongoing process. I look forward to meeting and working with each of you.

—Talon 6



Sgt. Phillip Sword raises the Mississippi flag in front of the brigade headquarters as the 185th Aviation Brigade, a Mississippi National Guard unit, assumes command, April 20, 2015.



Mother's Day from afar

It's a day that only comes once year; a day where families honor motherhood. Typically in the South, on mother's day, families start the day off by going to church. The rest of the day is all about mom. Whether it's a nice meal, or giving mom a mother's day gift that is more than appreciated, this year mother's day will be quite different for one Soldier. Instead of going to church with her family Spc. Allison Harris, of the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade, will spend the afternoon

face timing them from Camp Buehring, Kuwait, where she is currently deployed in support of Operation Spartan Shield.

"This is usually when we have all of our get-togethers with family and friends," said Spc. Harris. "Being away from them is the hardest part about being here," said Harris, who is approximately 7,400 miles away from home. This may not be exactly where Harris had planned on spending mother's day but she said if there was

anything she could say to her family and friends back home it would simply be, "Try to be worry free. I know ya'll are terrified that I am here but you don't understand the current circumstances. It's really not that bad and I am safe".

Being deployed is not only hard on Spc. Harris during this mother's day weekend; it's also hard on her son Dawson, who is 10 years old. There is no doubt that he misses his mother as much as she misses him.

With mail taking anywhere from 10-15 days to arrive to the soldiers, there will be a lot of mail headed to Camp Buehring, Kuwait for this special day. If only one gift could be given to his mom this year Dawson said, "The only thing I wish I could give my mom this year for mother's day is a big hug."

— Sgt. Michael Needham

185th TAB Public Affairs NCO

The "Chappy" makes me Happy!

Soldiers pride themselves on being trained, professional, and hardened warriors. This pride manifests itself in a tough, unfeeling exterior that protects that Soldier from the rigors of deprivation, deployment, and danger. Their steely gaze and unshakeable expression are the hallmarks of their commitment and dedication to the mission and task. Sometimes, that tough exterior can seem impenetrable. However,

mention "Mom" and the walls come down.

Physically large and intimidating Soldiers often melt into Jell-O at the mere mention of "Mother". Whatever defensive mechanisms, walls, or barriers may have been erected over the years, they all dissipate under a gush of warm, sincere emotion. No matter how hardened a Soldier may become over the course of their life and career, it

is the idea of "Mother" that keeps them grounded and tied to their humanity. The best of all that it means to be Human is inextricably tied to that notion of "Mom".

This Mother's Day, Soldiers everywhere will pause from the mission critical tasks assigned, if for just a moment, and remember Mom. In so doing, they will remember all that it means to be compassionate,

charitable, and sacrificial. For a moment, even the toughest will soften, and some may even become misty eyed. Because under all that tough exterior, we are still just boys and girls who love our Moms. Happy Mother's Day... and thank you.

— CH (CPT) Randy D. Wilson

185th Theater Aviation Brigade Chaplain

Don't Forget about the JAG...

Just a brief reminder for Soldiers and their families – **DON'T FORGET TO UTILIZE LEGAL ASSISTANCE!!**

Over the course of our deployment, various legal issues will arise for Soldiers and their families. When these things happen, do not hesitate to bring these matters to your Judge Advocates and Paralegals. We can provide assistance to both Soldiers overseas and their families back home. In addition to the legal assistance available here in theater, your State's National Guard Joint Force Headquarters stateside is there to provide legal assistance and guidance, too.

Often, matters arise that soldiers and their families may believe require a soldier to return home to address, when in fact, they can be taken care of from afar with the help of both overseas and stateside legal assistance. Remember your JAG offices, both home and abroad are **YOUR RESOURCES**. Remember, **KEEP CALM AND CALL JAG!**

185th TAB JAG Team:

Maj. Mark Lampton

Capt. Rob Mayhuc

Capt. Andrew Lake

Staff Sgt. Adrian Young



Spc. Allison Harris, 185th Theater Aviation Brigade (TAB), talks to her son Dawson on Facetime, April 26 2015. Spc Harris is deployed with the 185th TAB to Camp Buehring, Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield.



Editor's Note:

"People are always blaming circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get ahead in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can't find them, make them." – George Bernard Shaw

There is little doubt in my mind that some of the highest caliber citizens in the United States today, and throughout history, can be found in the U.S. military.

As a recent participant in the 'Never Quit' 5k, along with a number of other members of the 185th Aviation Brigade, I was reminded of a code and way of life imbued in the minds of Soldiers that I believe, if adopted and practiced, could have wide-reaching impacts and ameliorate a number of extant problems for society as a whole—the Warrior Ethos.

I will always place the mission first. In the military our mission always comes first. Whether it's flying helicopters, destroying the enemy, maintaining equipment, or cleaning latrines the mission is our foremost concern. Everything else falls to the wayside.

Accomplishing the mission requires both focus and dedication. Sometimes our mission is exciting like the stuff you see on TV recruiting commercials. Often times the mission is less flashy. In either scenario Soldiers almost always find a way, no matter what the circumstances, to accomplish their mission.

I will never accept defeat. Defeat is a mentality not a permanent condition. Sure, you don't always win every battle or win first place in every race but you never stop fighting or trying to get first place.

Abraham Lincoln, a man not so unfamiliar with the topic of defeat, said, "My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure."

I will never quit. It sounds simple enough, doesn't it? Yet how many times have you heard someone say, "I just can't go on" or "I can't do this anymore"?

Soldiers understand that quitting comes at great expense to themselves and their comrades. If our aircraft don't take off because any key person doesn't persevere and do his or her job, it can have lasting and even catastrophic consequences.

I will never leave a fallen comrade. Whether under fire, in austere weather, or at the expense of our own lives, Soldiers don't leave other Soldiers behind. This is much broader than just on the battlefield though.

The stresses and hardships that Soldiers face while on the job are immense. Often times, as is currently the case, we leave our families, friends, and personal lives behind to carry out the mission.

In my experience Soldiers are extremely good about recognizing when their battle buddy is down or struggling with something. It might be listening to something someone is going through in their personal life or giving their buddy a push to keep going another mile. Whatever the

case, comrades, teammates, or friends often transcend self-interest and place the well being of others above their own.

Soldiers apply and live this code in their daily lives and everything that they do. While the Warrior Ethos was conceived for the military, certainly the underlying principals can be adapted for civilian life too.

As circumstances seem unbearable or impossible to circumnavigate remember the principals that Soldiers live by. Stay focused on the mission or task, never accept defeat, never quit, and don't leave a comrade, friend, or family member behind.

—Capt. Allen Baxter

185th TAB Public Affairs Officer



Soldiers participate in the 'Never Quit' 5k, April 18, 2015.



An aircrew from 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment wraps up after a long day on the flight line, April 24, 2015.

I will always place the mission first

I will never accept defeat

I will never quit

I will never leave a fallen comrade



Lt. Col. Brad Howe (center) and CSM Willie Ross (right), 185th Theater Aviation Brigade meet with Col. Fahad A. Al-Douseri (left), Deputy Commander Ali Al Salem Air Base on 12 April, 2015



Colonel Carey M. Wagen, Commander, 1st Armored Division Combat Aviation Brigade, exchanges a salute with Staff Sergeant Tiffani Rodriguez, HHC, 4-501st ARB "Pistoleros", during an awards ceremony at Udairi Landing Zone, Camp Buehring, Kuwait.