



THE BIT & BRIDLE

2ND SQUADRON, FIRST CAVALRY REGIMENT

JULY 2018



For none but the shades of cavalrymen
dismount at Fiddler's Green



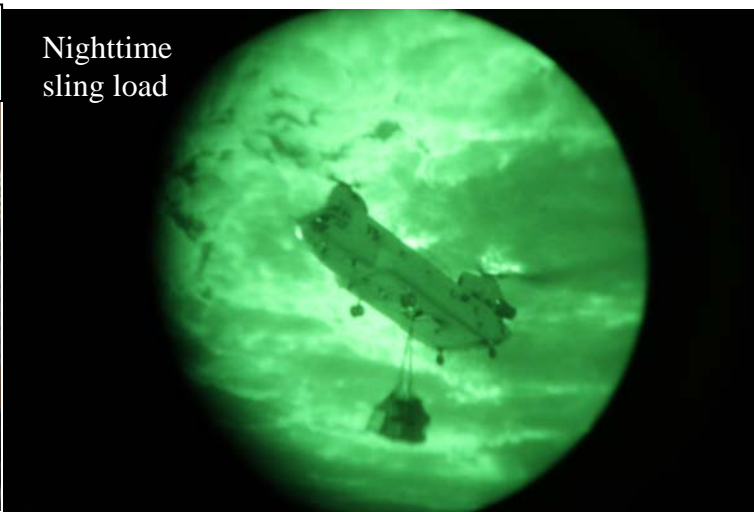
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LTC Fulton &
CPT Garcia

Nighttime
sling load



COMMAND TEAM COMMENTS

"In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved."

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

Dear Friends and Families of the Blackhawk Squadron,

As we took the opportunity to celebrate Fourth of July here in Afghanistan, I couldn't help but reflect on the above quote by our 32nd President of the United States. We fully recognize that this mission in Afghanistan can only be achieved by, with, and through our Afghan partners. They must achieve it. We cannot bestow it upon them. Every day we see evidence of their efforts in action. Most of what is being accomplished by them or us does not make the news. Our Troops continue to build partnerships with the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police and in support of our Advising partners. Our operational tempo continues to intensify, and our Troopers are on mission. Despite the requirements of daily operations, the Squadron found time to celebrate our Nation's independence on the 4th of July by participating in outdoor sports, enjoying a grilled BBQ meal, and a cake cutting ceremony at both out-stations. CSM Jackson and I thank you for your continued support of the Squadron throughout this deployment, and we hope you continue to be as proud of our Troopers as we are. Courageous and Faithful!

LTC David Fulton
"Blackhawk 6"



CSM LeVares J. Jackson
"Blackhawk 7"





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SOLDIER OF THE MONTH



SPC HAMILTON

SPC Hamilton serves as a dismount team leader for Battle Troop. His attention to detail allow for a constant state of readiness in AP Lightning.



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NCO OF THE MONTH



SGT RUBACK

SGT Ruback currently serves as the Night Fires NCO at Camp Dahlke, AF. He is one of the most dedicated and hard-working members on the team, always willing to help and support his fellow FIST and the entire Blackhawk organization



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CHAPLAIN NOTES

UMT Update

The Unit Ministry Team (UMT: Chaplain and Religious Affairs Specialist) does a lot more than just hold worship services (although we really enjoy doing that as well). This month we had a lot of fun coordinating with the USO in Bagram to host an Independence Day celebration at Camp Dahlke. With the help of Soldiers volunteering to setup, cook, and officiate, we had a carnival-like atmosphere with fun, food and games. To help work off the funnel cakes, we also helped get people out to a CrossFit competition and the 1,000 lbs. competition on the morning of the 4th.

We've been really blessed by the generosity of people who continue to send care packages to our Soldiers. One organization, the Stano foundation, sent 115 care packages this month! It's gratifying to see how much people back home really care about your Soldiers.

Signing up for fun and games at our Independence Day carnival



Thoughts on Couples Communication

Last month I wrote about how routines can be very helpful for maintaining continuity in your communication. Having a set time to talk to each other can give you both something to look forward to during the week. There is a downside to routines though. After a while, each time you talk to each other can start to feel kind of...well, routine! It's too easy to feel like you really don't have anything new to say to each other, and your communication falls into a rut.

One way out of communication stagnation is to find a growth project for you to work on together.. This is a great opportunity for you to work together on some of the things that you usually don't make time for. There are tons of books on any number of subjects that you can read together a bit at a time, and then talk about what you're each learning. This gives you a topic to talk about besides "how's the weather there?"

Not a giant fan of reading? You could pick a movie, TV show, or documentary that interests you both, or trade off picking one that you'd like your significant other to watch. Then, you can talk about what interested you in the show, why you liked it, and what you learned from it. Sometimes these discussions are great catalysts for learning to appreciate your partner's unique point of view.

When we're not deployed, it's too easy to just spend the evening watching TV, not talking with each other. Deployment gives you a chance to deliberately discuss things you've read or seen in a way that helps you to better understand and appreciate how each other's minds work. Don't let the distance keep your hearts from growing closer together!

Declaring independence from weakness on the 4th



Soldiers with a shipment of care packages





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HATCHET TROOP

It's been a busy few weeks for Hatchet Troopers. Our Troopers at AP Lightning and Camp Dahlke are settling into their jobs while our Troopers at Camp Buehring, Kuwait are moving in and starting training. In Kuwait, Hatchet Troopers are increasing their individual weapons proficiency and basic Soldier skills through the execution of several small arms ranges. We are thankful for the training opportunity our Troopers have, and we look forward to when we can bring them back to Afghanistan.

Training continues for Hatchet Troopers at AP Lightning and Camp Dahlke as well. Though our primary job of conducting mission command and sustainment operations for 2-1 CAV and Task Force Southeast keeps up busy, we continuously find time to train to increase our marksmanship, communication, and medical skills. Our medics received training on storing and administering immunizations so that we can all stay healthy half way around the world.

Hatchet Troopers found time to take a break from the busy schedule to celebrate Independence Day here in Logar and Patkia provinces. At Camp Dahlke, the USO hosted the Patriot Games, in which teams competed in a series of events including a fitness competition, pie eating contest, and a tug of war. Fourth of July festivities at AP Lightning included a 5k race, volley ball tournament, and a cook out.

Hatchet Troopers distinguish themselves on a daily basis here in Afghanistan. We'd like to take a moment and brag about a few specific Troopers. SGT Ruback was the Blackhawk Squadron NCO of the month in June, LTC Fulton and CSM Jackson promoted CPL Ramone into the Non Commissioned Officers Corps, and SGT Brooks reenlisted. SPC Nebel graduated on the Commandant's list at the Basic Leader's Course, and both she and SPC Rodriguez received coins and AAMs from COL Rone, our brigade commander.

Thanks for your continued support back home!

Raise Hell!

Lt Clifford, Maj Miller,
& Maj Hertz on HLZ



SFC Harvey meets with
Afghan partners



LTC Fulton and CSM Jackson
promote CPL Ramone





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HATCHET TROOP



Above: PFC King learns how to administer immunizations.



Above: 1LT Bach dominating the pie eating contest in the Camp Dahlke Patriot Games.



Below: The Hatchet Troop volley ball team poses in between matches.





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APACHE TROOP

Hello friends and families of Apache Troop! It has been another busy month, here in Afghanistan for Apache Troop. Apache Troop started off this month by conducting 4th of July celebrations with support from the USO. For this celebration there were foods such as fried Oreos, cotton candy and snow cones. The USO also hosted a post wide competition which consisted of four events; PT challenge, pie eating contest, memory test and tug of war. Apache Troop made a sweeping victory in all events clinching the championship title for the Squadron! The Post also conducted a 1,000lb Club Competition. The 1,000lb Club Competition consists of three events, deadlift, bench and squat, with the total weight between all three exercises equaling 1,000lbs or greater. Thirty Soldiers competed across the post, with twenty-three making the 1,000lb Club. Apache Troop had five Soldiers out of the twenty-three.

Apache Troop has also continued to conduct security missions with 3-1 SFAB advising the Afghan National Army in multiple locations. Overall these missions have maintained a steady tempo, which still enables Soldiers to receive time off to relax and speak with loved ones back home. All of us here express our gratitude to the tremendous amount of support we continue to receive from our friends and families. Thank you for checking in and be on the lookout for the newsletter next month.

1,000lb Club

1LT Matthew Moher
1LT Tucker Lundstrom
1SG Chad Ryan
SGT Zachery Bradley
PFC Angel Olmos

USO Champions

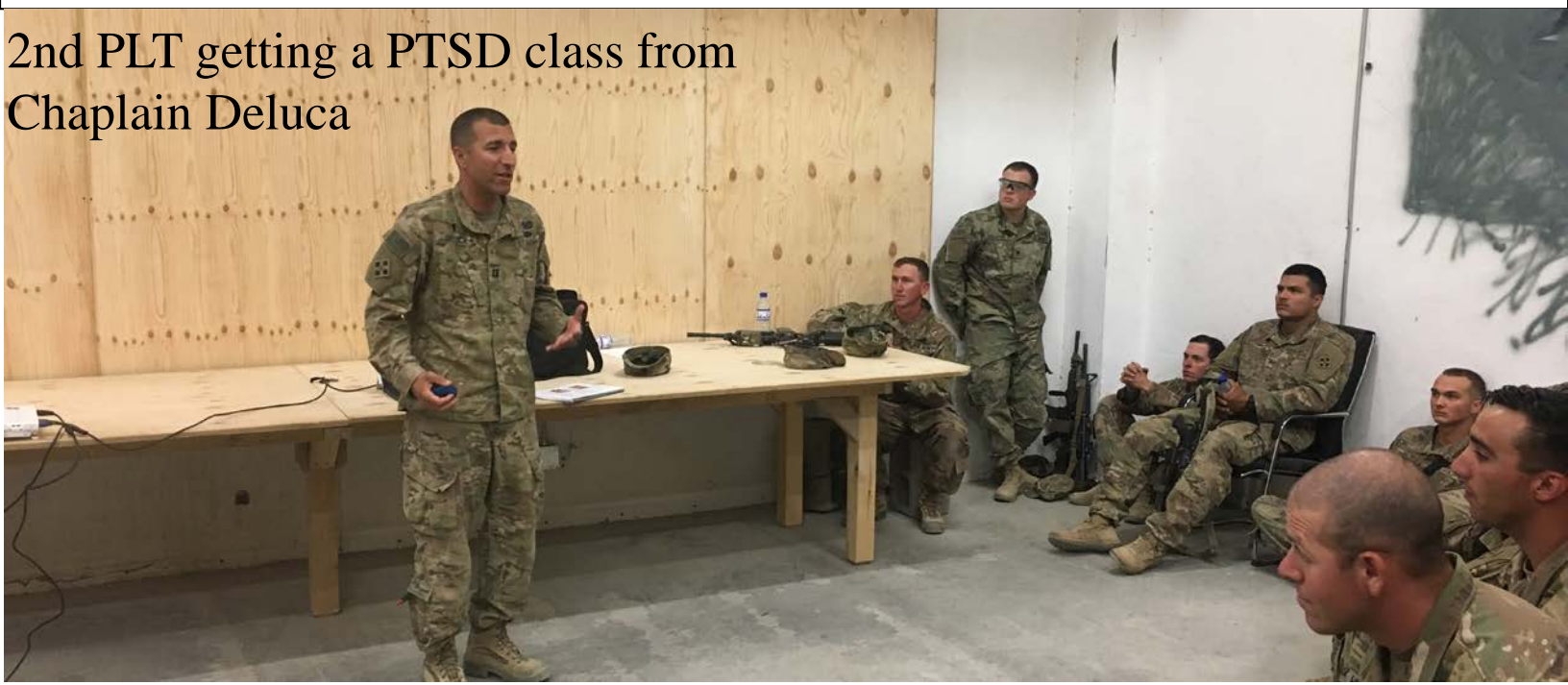
1LT Tucker Lundstrom
1LT Matthew Moher
1LT Nick Walker

Awards/Recognitions

PFC Joseph Jack
SSG Rueben Smith
SPC Maleek Boston

Best Wishes to All,
Apache Troop

2nd PLT getting a PTSD class from Chaplain Deluca





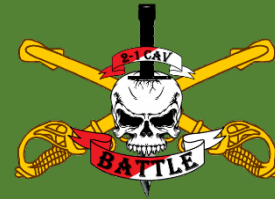
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APACHE TROOP



1st PLT conducting advising mission



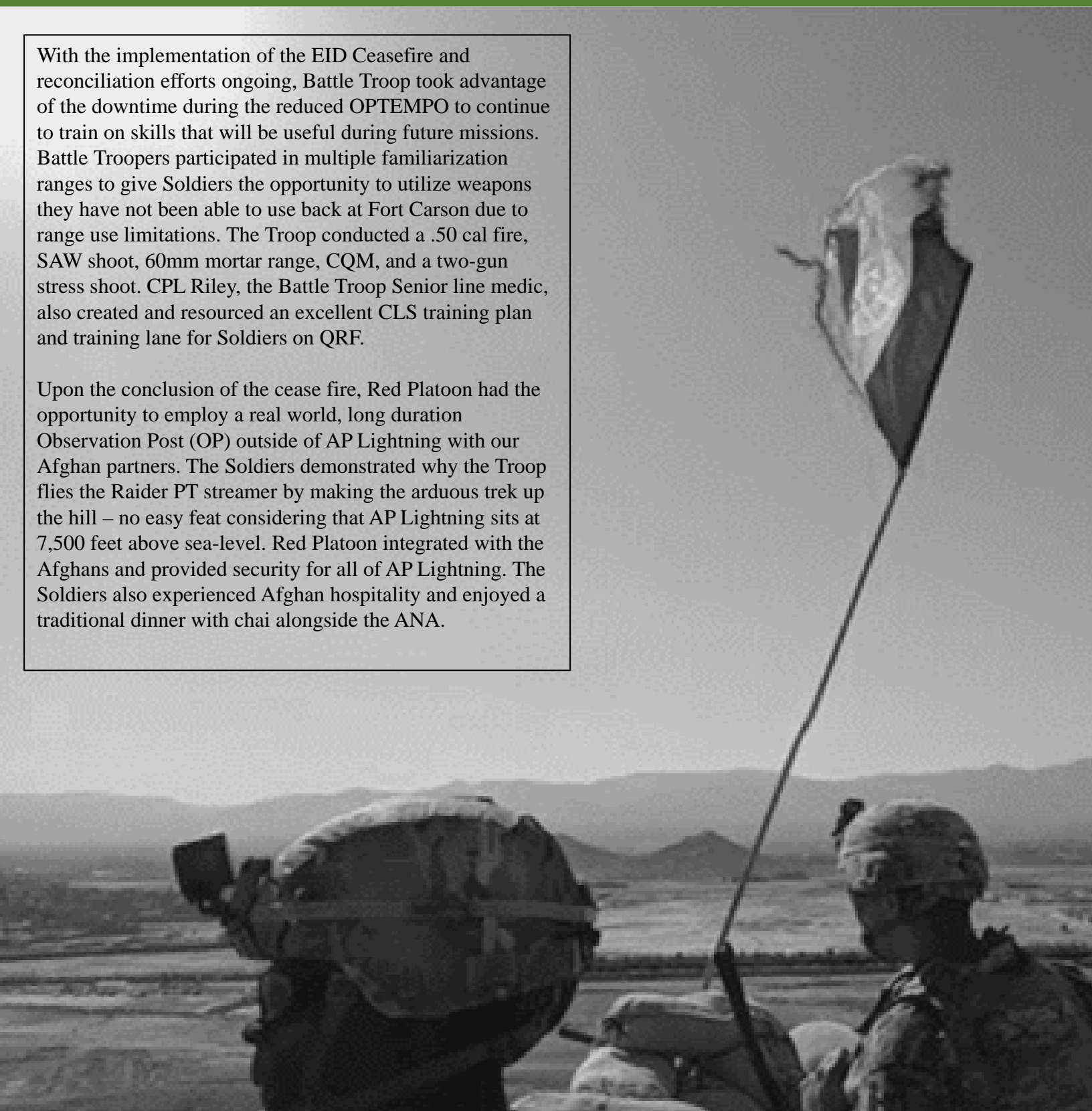
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BATTLE TROOP

With the implementation of the EID Ceasefire and reconciliation efforts ongoing, Battle Troop took advantage of the downtime during the reduced OPTEMPO to continue to train on skills that will be useful during future missions. Battle Troopers participated in multiple familiarization ranges to give Soldiers the opportunity to utilize weapons they have not been able to use back at Fort Carson due to range use limitations. The Troop conducted a .50 cal fire, SAW shoot, 60mm mortar range, CQM, and a two-gun stress shoot. CPL Riley, the Battle Troop Senior line medic, also created and resourced an excellent CLS training plan and training lane for Soldiers on QRF.

Upon the conclusion of the cease fire, Red Platoon had the opportunity to employ a real world, long duration Observation Post (OP) outside of AP Lightning with our Afghan partners. The Soldiers demonstrated why the Troop flies the Raider PT streamer by making the arduous trek up the hill – no easy feat considering that AP Lightning sits at 7,500 feet above sea-level. Red Platoon integrated with the Afghans and provided security for all of AP Lightning. The Soldiers also experienced Afghan hospitality and enjoyed a traditional dinner with chai alongside the ANA.





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BATTLE TROOP

The Troop displayed their physical dominance during the 4th of July activities. Battle Troop took 3 of the top 5 positions during the AP Lightning 5k with SGT Barber of White Platoon coming in first place.

I'd like to recognize the Soldiers of Battle Troop who succeeded at the multiple boards held during June:
SPC Hamilton of Red Platoon won Soldier of the Month
SGT Barber is now promotable to Staff Sergeant
SPC Matheson and SPC Pesola passed the SGT board and were laterally promoted to CPL

The Troopers continue to stay busy with their wide and varied mission set that ranges from providing base security, conducting patrols, and providing security for the Police Advising Team in diverse locations around Afghanistan. Battle Troop will continue to enable the SFAB as they expand their advising efforts. The Soldiers perform above expectations given their varied mission set and I look forward to writing about their successes in future newsletters. – Battle 6

Battle Mortars conduct 60mm range.



White Platoon poses
after the 5k.



SGT(P) Barber is awarded 1st place for
winning the AP Lightning 5k by BG
Johnson





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COMANCHE TROOP

White Platoon and the Mortar Section, a.k.a. Steel Rain, continue to perform admirably drawing considerable recognition for their professionalism on mission. Red Platoon is enduring quite possibly the hottest place on earth while they prepare to begin their comprehensive warfighter training. Each day we get better and will continue to until we arrive safely back home.

All soldier's incentive and separation pay should be in effect. I urge you to continue to talk about finances and develop goals with the extra money you will be able to save over this stretch. I also urge you to look into the Saving Deposit Program (SDP) that you all are now eligible for which is a great way to gain 10% return risk-free on what you put into the program.





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COMANCHE TROOP

We hope you enjoyed America's birthday! We remain extremely busy but occasionally break away for some extreme, "Top Gun" style volleyball. We hope you are all enjoying Colorado. Know that you are in our thoughts and prayers and look forward to reuniting shortly!

Comanche 6





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DARK HORSE TROOP

While 2-1 CAV continues to serve abroad, our Rear Detachment excels at holding down the fort. Due to their previous exceptionalism, the 2-1 CAV Color Guard was selected and performed at the nationally televised US Senior Open. The squadron also displayed professionalism while supporting Fort Carson's retirement ceremony. To celebrate the greatest country in the world, 2-1 CAV held an FRG cookout on July 3. Also on July 3 we received our returning Troopers from deployment and they started their re-integration process. The Rear Detachment is also staying proficient on their equipment and weapons. We support 62nd (EOD) OD Company with the movement and assembly of an 8,000 pound nuclear bomb with the M984 Wrecker. We also conducted M4 Assault Rifle qualification range with a 91% qualification rate.



To maintain unit readiness, 2-1 CAV rucks every Thursday morning for PT.



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DARK HORSE TROOP



Dark Horse assisting with 8,000 pound nuclear bomb.

Despite the heat, the Corn hole games never ceased.





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EAGLE TROOP

Hello Families and Friends of Eagle Troop!

The Soldiers of Eagle Troop continue to get after it here in Afghanistan. The Soldiers have taken a very active role in base defense as Camp Dahlke continues to expand and evolve. We have begun executing patrols of our Ground Defense Area which we believe has had an impact on the enemy in our area of operations.

The living conditions haven't improved much since our last newsletter. Everyone is still living in 12 man tents and we still don't have flushing toilets; porta pottys only! The camp is trying to catch up its infrastructure in order to support the number of Soldiers that now live here.

The Soldiers had the opportunity to celebrate the 4th of July here on Camp Dahlke with an event sponsored by the USO. We have begun doing the occasional movie night in the tent area and smoking cigars together has proven to be an effective way to unwind at the end of the day. Some Soldiers have signed up for online college classes. They have all found ways to pass the down time.

The morale is high in Eagle Troop! While we work through the challenges of developing our camp and the tempo of the mission requirements; it has fostered an incredible bonding experience for the Soldiers of Eagle Troop. While being here in Afghanistan is inherently dangerous, I assure you that Eagle Troop Soldiers are well resourced, well equipped, well trained and well led. It is my privilege to serve alongside all of them.

Very Respectfully,

Captain Jonathan DeCosta
Commander
Eagle Troop, 2-1 CAV

Eagle Troop Soldiers
conduct cold load training
on Camp Dahlke



Soldiers of Eagle Troop conduct
handheld IED detection training
with camp EOD personnel

PVT Jones is presented an
Army Achievement Medal
for his efforts in the Camp
Dahlke Aid Station





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EAGLE TROOP



Soldiers of
2nd PLT
conduct
close
quarters
marksman
ship



ISG Coalter is presented a coin by
the Secretary of the Army Mark
Esper



Eagle Troop Soldiers fill
sand bags prior to meals in
order to help increase force
protection on the camp



Eagle Troop medics participate in a simulated mass casualty
exercise in the Camp Dahlke Aid Station