



APRIL 21, 2021 / ISSUE 34

# THE ANVIL INSIDER

A Newsletter from the 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade



**Soldiers showed their grit and toughness while enduring challenge from the Norwegian military**

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## Flight medics describe chaos after rocket attack



After February's rocket attack on Erbil Air Base that killed one civilian contractor, injured several members of the Coalition and later killed one civilian, medevac Soldiers with the 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade responded immediately to evacuate the wounded.

The rockets landed near a contractor living area and casualties were taken by bystanders to a "role 2" hospital on the base. The medical personnel there eventually stabilized them but needed to get them to a "role 3" hospital, with more capabilities, for further lifesaving measures.

Sgt. Eric Smith, one of the flight medics, said his crew arrived at the role 2 hospital as the patients were brought out of the operating room.

"We received reports from the teams that had been taking care of them up until that point, and then we conducted our own assessments," said Smith. "We applied our equipment and then prepared the patients for movement out to the helicopters."

The medical teams on the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters were Capt. Alexandra Barikian and Sgt. 1st Class Brian Collins on one and Spc. Donna Wauthier and Smith on the other. Collins and Wauthier were the lead medical providers on their respective helicopters as they transported patients to a role 3 hospital at another base.

While en route, the crews continued to manage their patients' complex medical issues.

"Both were considered critical care patients, as they were intubated, on ventilators and required several medications and procedures to keep them stable throughout the flight," said Smith. "By the time we arrived, we had improved our patient's condition from when we picked him up."

Wauthier has worked in civilian medevac and critical care transport for over 10 years and says her experience helps with her knowledge base and comfort operating in these situations.

"There are big operational differences between the two medevac worlds, but the fundamental patient care is still very similar," said Wauthier. "I've become comfortable with managing medical and trauma patients that require advanced airway management, as well as ventilator support, along with the types of interventions and medications that typically entails."

Although this was a real attack with real casualties, they say it was fulfilling to help how they could.

"Here was a patient who was pretty bad off, and we had a positive impact on his outcome," said Smith. "None of us want bad things to happen to people, but we are glad that we can be there to help them when they do."

Smith, Wauthier, Collins and Barikian are deployed with Charlie Company, 2-104th General Support Aviation Battalion, 28th ECAB.





# U.S. Soldiers endure challenge from Norwegian military



"One of my Soldiers went down right after crossing the finish line with full-body cramps," said Capt. John Lombardi. "I thought it was a pretty amazing testament to how strong the mind and body can be because his whole body was trying to quit at that point and he still willed himself across the finish line."

Deployed Soldiers with the 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade tested their minds and bodies during a grueling ruck march last weekend hoping to earn the Norwegian Foot March Badge.

Almost 100 of them stepped off late Saturday, carrying the required minimum of 25 pounds while in full uniform and boots. Their goal was to march 18.6 miles within a specified time. That time requirement was between 4 hours, 30 minutes and 5 hours, and based on age and gender.

On top of completing the march successfully, Lombardi organized the event, saying it was a great opportunity to do something unique and foster camaraderie within the brigade.

"For me, it's getting a chance to see and experience what some of our allies consider to be a challenge," said Lombardi. "We have a tendency to think that we're the baddest guy on the block, but some of these foreign award challenges can be really humbling, and I think that's important when it comes to the way we view those foreign partners."

Capt. Justin Thomas, chaplain for the 628th Aviation Support Battalion, was the top male finisher with a time of 3 hours, 18 minutes.

"That was by far the hardest thing I have done," said Thomas, a member of the All-Guard Marathon Team. "The heat, terrain at night and the ruck with weight really played a part. It surprised me how difficult it was and how much it works the body over that long period of time."

Most Soldiers suffered blisters, cramps, chafing, muscle soreness or all of those at the same time. Although many finished slower than they expected to, Capt. Kaitlyn Roberts was surprised with how fast she finished.

Roberts was the top female finisher with a time of 4 hours, 13 minutes and was seconds ahead of the second-place female finisher Sgt. Briana Barnhill. Roberts was dealing with back pain the week of the event but competed anyway.

"I didn't think I would get the chance to do it again and wouldn't forgive myself if I didn't at least try," said Roberts. "This was the hardest physical event I've done in my military career."

Soldiers also supported the event by keeping marchers hydrated and checking on their well-being. They operated water points and aid stations and drove vehicles along the route to help where needed.

In the end, 84 Soldiers ended up receiving the Norwegian Foot March badge, with many of them saying that preparation is key.

"A lot of people think because they lift or because they run, that this would be easy," said Lombardi. "I think the general consensus after the event was that it was a pretty significant challenge."

According to Norwegian army 1st Lt. Havard Boge, the march was created in 1915 to prepare Norwegian soldiers for the rigors of military service.

Certificates and badges were provided by the Norwegian embassy.



## Marine Corps MQ-9 reaches 10,000 flight hours in CENTCOM

By 1st Lt. John Coppola  
MARCENT



On March 31st, the Marine Corps' first MQ-9A Unmanned Aerial System achieved 10,000 total flight hours in the Central Command area of responsibility, a major milestone for the modernization of the force.

The MQ-9A "Reaper" is a Remote Split Operations (RSO) product from General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Incorporated. The RSO capability revolutionizes military operations by allowing the system operator to be thousands of miles away from both the launching site, and airspace covered by the aircraft. VMU-1, a squadron at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona, pilots the forward deployed Reaper, which has supported daily combat operations for Task Force Southwest in Afghanistan before its end of mission, and later 5th Fleet in the Arabian Gulf.

The Marine Corps took control of the MQ-9A in September of 2018, just over two and a half years from the 10 thousand flight hour milestone.

"The Reaper has proven operationally effective in the Central Command region. Not only does that further CENTCOM objectives, it also clears a key pathway to achieving the Commandants vision for the Marine Corps in the Indo-Pacific," said First Lieutenant Kyle Daugherty, an Intelligence Officer, and MQ-9 lead for Marine Corps Forces, Central Command (MARCENT).

MARCENT has utilized the Marine Corps' first MQ-9 assets to evolve the service as a force, capable of further integration of operations in naval, ground, air, and cyber domains. As the Marine Corps transitions to government owned, government operated employment of the MQ-9, this force design presents opportunities for similar implementation in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Commandant of the Marine Corps' Force Design 2030 articulates his priorities and desired state for the service as it looks to modernize and align all efforts to the National Defense Strategy.





**UH-60 Black Hawk maintainers with Delta Company, 2-104th GSAB provide upgrades and maintenance to a new helicopter.**



**Soldiers with our Chinook company recently flew AIR TEDDY BEAR "Staszek", in memory of the 6-year-old daughter of a Polish aviator who lost her battle with brain cancer. Today, Staszek flies on missions with Poland's partners and allies, to bring hope for children who are struggling with illness. (Photos by Spc. Rob Donovic)**



**Pfc. Kayleigh Bowes** joined the military out of impulse but she doesn't regret it, saying that she has met some really cool people.

As a wheeled vehicle mechanic, she says her smaller stature makes it harder to work on some of the bigger equipment but it has not stopped her from accomplishing her tasks.

Some of the things that have helped Bowes get through this deployment are working out, going to Zumba classes, FaceTiming her family and helping her fellow Soldiers get through the deployment as well.

After deployment, she plans on going to college to get a degree in criminology and forensic science, with a goal of one day working for the FBI.

When asked what advice she would share with someone in her position she replied "focus on yourself and your career."

Bowes is deployed with Headquarters Support Company, 628th Aviation Support Battalion.

(Photos and spotlight by Cpl. Jose Brown)





**Sgt. Wynand Lehman**, originally from South Africa, was inspired to join the South African military after 9/11/2001 but was not qualified. In 2010, he came to America as a traveling carnival maintenance operator. After receiving his permanent resident card, or green card, he joined the U.S. Army.

He recently received a challenge coin from Maj. Gen. Kenneth Ekman, deputy commander of CJTF-OIR, in appreciation for his service and excellence.

Lehman is deployed as an aircraft electrician with Delta Company, 1-137th AHB.

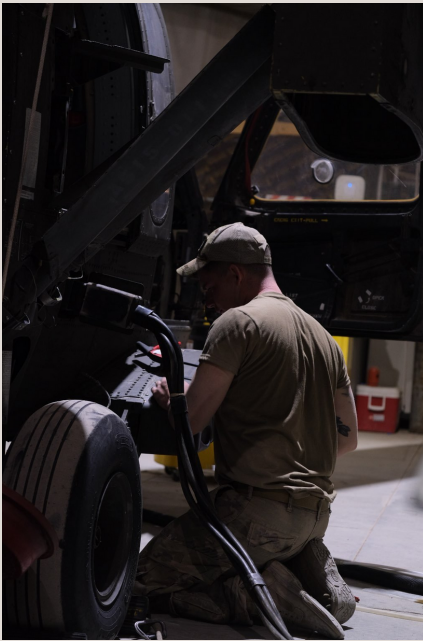


**Soldiers with Echo Company, 2-104th GSAB fueling and defueling cargo planes. We are working with our partners in the United States Air Force to accomplish our missions against Daesh.**

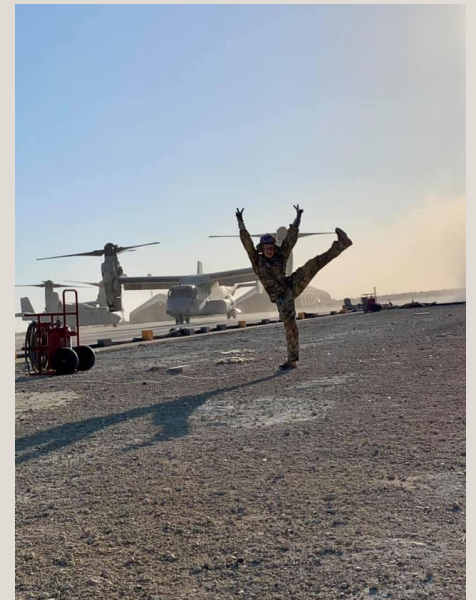
**(Photos by Spc. Mariliz Serrano and Sgt. Leonard Thaon)**







**Sgt. Ian Gruber and Spc. Troy Layman working into the evening to keep our aircrews safe, performing routine maintenance on a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. (Photos by Spc. Jose Brown)**





# 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



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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



Task Force Anvil cosponsored a Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Bingo night at the Camp Buehring MWR stage. Prizes were awarded and many individuals walked away with some extra SHARP goodies. TF Anvil SHARP office teamed up with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division and the 16<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade SARCs, as well as the post MWR office to make this event possible.

## SHARP Team Hosts 10 Mile Walk / Ruck for Awareness



The 628th ASB sponsored a 10 Mile Walk/Ruck for Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM). SARCs and Victim Advocates from other Brigades joined Task Force Anvil Soldiers to participate in the early morning event. The event began with some remarks by the 628th ASB VA and the Brigade SARC, as well as a prayer by the 628th ASB Chaplain. Walking is a great way to relieve stress and can be very therapeutic.

**MSG JP Karpovich**  
TF Anvil SARC  
570-709-2325  
Signal App



**SSG Andrea Whelan**  
TF Anvil VA  
717-609-5598  
Signal App

**SPONSORED BY TASK FORCE ANVIL SHARP TEAM**





# PEGASUS POST

*Checking in with HHC*

**April 21, 2021**



**Congratulations to all HHC Soldiers who recently earned the Norwegian Foot March badge. These Soldiers had to ruck march 18.6 miles in full uniform and boots within a specified time (~4:30:00-5:00:00).**

**CPT Kaitlyn Roberts (not pictured), with the S4 section, was the top female finisher with a time of 4:13!**

**Special shout-out to Sgt. Frisbie for the pancakes and bacon after the race.**

