



Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



Task Force Bobcat,



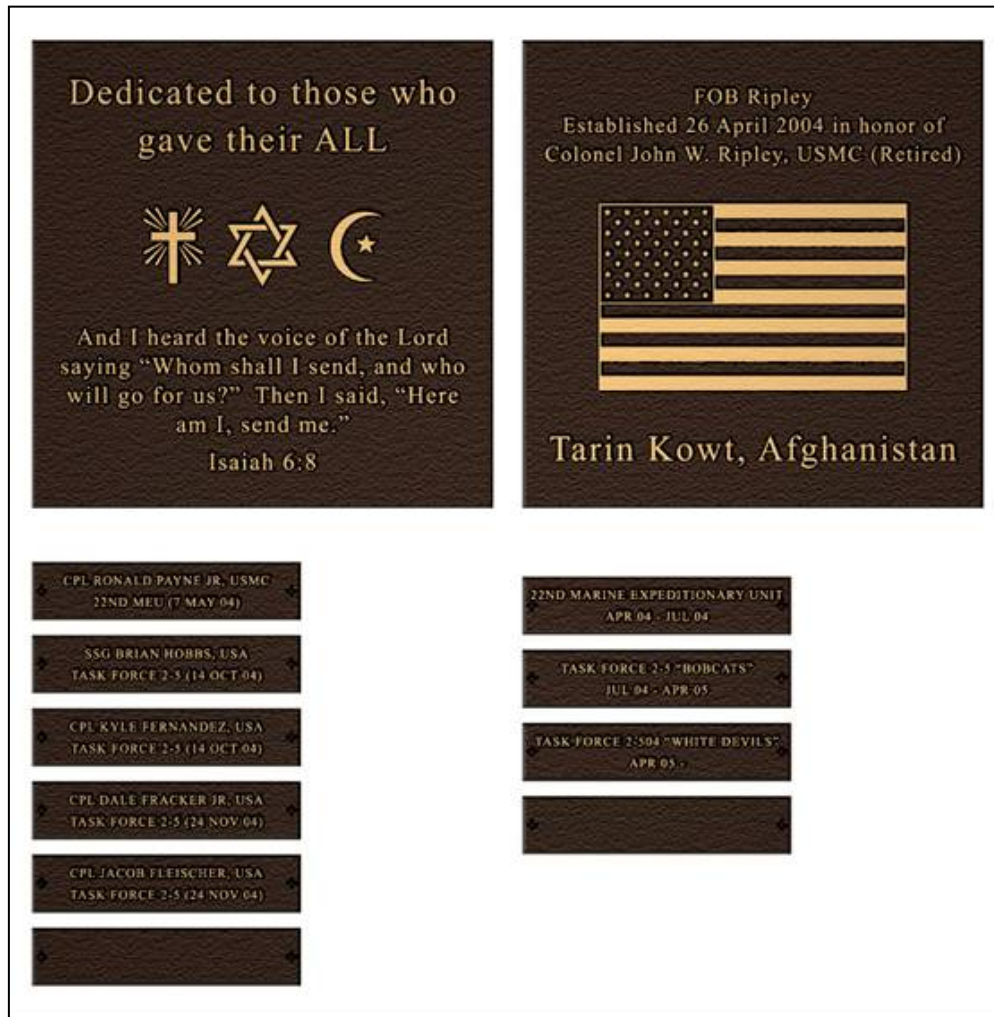
Aloha from Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan! Well – It is finally time to announce our return from Operation Enduring Freedom V- Afghanistan. We will conduct Relief in Place (RIP) operations over the next several weeks to ensure that our replacement unit, 2nd Battalion 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment from the 82nd Airborne Division, is well acquainted with the terrain, environment and personalities in the Uruzgan Province. The initial steps of the RIP occurred over the past few days as equipment and a small security detachment arrived at Kandahar followed by the 2-504 PIR ADVON personnel a few days ago. The 2-504 ADVON was greeted by MAJ Seigny and the Rear CP Crew. They settled into billeting and then began their respective orientation briefs and certifications. While it was a good feeling to have them arrive it was an even better feeling to know that our own ADVON party departed Manas, Kyrgyzstan and landed on da island... Oahu, Hawaii! Yee Haw!

Unfortunately this month, the good news is tempered by some bad news. On 29 March, a C Company patrol returning to FOB Cobra from Operation Highball struck an IED in the Cehar Cineh/Osay District. Two Bobcats were seriously wounded, SPC Dennet Oregon and SPC John Short. The patrol immediately secured the area, started medical treatment for the wounded Soldiers and pursued the potential Taliban/ACM suspects that fled the immediate vicinity. SPC Oregon and SPC Short were MEDEVAC'd to FOB Ripley and the 2nd Field Surgical Team (FST) immediately went to work further assessing the injuries and providing appropriate treatment. The 2nd FST was assisted by our own medics and Task Force Surgeon as well as medics and the PA from the PRT. The team did a super job and further stabilized the patients prior to transporting them to Kandahar by UH-60 MEDEVAC. SPC Short spent about six hours in surgery and unfortunately due to arterial damage in his right leg he lost the leg just below the knee. As with our previous casualties, I request that you keep these Soldiers and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Further, I request that you specifically pray for all of C Company and especially 2nd Platoon. These great men have borne a heavy load in our deployment and operations in Afghanistan. They have done an outstanding job and continue to make us proud... they deserve our appreciation and support. SPC Oregon remains hospitalized in Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany awaiting transportation to Tripler on Oahu, Hawaii. SPC Short recently arrived at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, DC.

CPT Dave Gohlisch and Deb remain the POCs for the most accurate information regarding redeployment and block leave. I will remind you that we must still observe Operational Security and should not be discussing exact unit movements and times over unsecure means. Continue to use the Rear Detachment and FRG Leaders as your source for accurate and up to date information. We need your assistance to ensure rosters and information dissemination channels remain open and accurate. In this manner we will be able to rapidly share new developments and assist those that need it. Most of all, Maintain your focus! There is a lot of work yet to accomplish as we continue operations here across Uruzgan. Please continue your work to support the Bobcat Ohana on Oahu, the Main Land, and here in Afghanistan. Your thoughtfulness and sacrifice has made the time pass more quickly and made our separation much more bearable. Our thoughts and prayers remain with each of you during this time. Much Mahalo!



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As promised, the above picture illustrates what the Bronze plaques will look like for the Memorial Markers at FOB Ripley. The scripture captures the selfless nature of these men's service and ultimate sacrifice. We will conduct a ceremony in the coming weeks to appropriately memorialize the sacrifice of these outstanding Soldiers and a Marine from 22nd MEU, C Company, during a ceremony on 2 April, dedicated Hobbs PZ and Fern DZ inside FOB Cobra. Keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers; SSG Brian Hobbs, CPL Kyle Fernandez, CPL Dale Fracker, and CPL Jacob Fleischer. Likewise, please do not forget all of our wounded comrades; CPL Jorge DeLeon, 1LT Drew Sloan, SPC Jeffery Guerin, SPC Joey Banegas, SFC "IZ" Izqueirdo, SGT Zach Parinello, SPC Dennet Oregon and SPC Jimmy Short. No day passes without remembering the price these Soldiers and their families have paid to make Afghanistan a more secure and stable country. Ultimately, a more secure Afghanistan means a more secure United States. Bobcats will run through the finish line here.

I am extremely proud of every Soldier and Leader. Their collective accomplishments here in Afghanistan have truly made a difference.

Remain strong in the Bobcat Ohana! I deeply appreciate your individual and collective sacrifice. God bless each and every Soldier, family member and loved one. Mahalo!

Aloha, Meke Ahui Hou!
Bobcat 6/Bobcat 7



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Viper Base,

Hello again to all the family members back in Hawaii and abroad. The 1SG and I hope all is well. The company continues to support the Task force throughout the Oruzgan Province. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to lead these fine men during OEF-5A. I am extremely proud of the hard work and dedication of all the Soldiers in this company. We are coming closer to mission completion, but we can not lose our focus until the next unit, TF 2-504 PIR, relieves us in place. I ask that you assist the leadership in helping all the Soldiers to maintain their focus until our job is done here. I also want to thank all the family members for their support and help in dealing with the deployment. I know it is hard on everyone, but this company made a significant impact here in Afghanistan. Please be proud of your Soldiers and their accomplishments.

NCO Promotions

1 Mar 05

Rigdon, James to SSG

Graves, Neil to SGT

Chatelain, Keith to SGT

Anger, Jeremy to SGT

1 Apr 05

Leing, Jomo to SGT

McBride, Cheyenne to SGT

Pajimula, Godofredo to SGT

Abitz, Joseph to SGT

AT Platoon

As the deployment winds down, the AT Platoon is keeping up a lightning pace and finishing strong as we return to the tropics. The rain continues to pour, but we haven't let that slow us down too much. Last month, we led the way on two large operations. During the first operation, we captured several Anti Coalition suspects thanks to intelligence acquired by our very own SPC Gholz and a Soldier from Charlie Company. On the second operation, we drove farther and visited more villages than we ever have before in this area. The infrastructure and security in the region is growing in leaps and bounds, and it is truly rewarding to see first hand what we have accomplished. At this time, we have already started working toward redeployment. Needless to say, everyone is excited about the big move back. With less than a month of missions left, we are going to finish out the deployment with the same dedication and level of performance we've kept all along. God bless you all and we'll see you soon. Mahalo.

Commo Section

The communications platoon has been busy as well. SFC Gordon and the team have been ensuring that everyone is talking. PFC Kent Smith is now SPC Kent Smith and PFC Vacchelli is now SPC Vacchelli. The whole section has been on a well deserved leave and now ready to begin the redeployment and see their loved ones.

S-1 Section

While simultaneously focusing on combat operations and redeployment, the S-1 section planted our feet and put forth our best effort last month. When all the paper cleared we found ourselves tired but proud of the hard work we completed. For the most part, all the admin work for redeployment is complete. We are now scrubbing rosters to ensure every Soldier in Task Force Bobcats is taken care of. SSG Pepin left last month on ADVON, and the S-1 team stepped up to fill the gap. Additionally, SPC Villalobos reenlisted last month. His reenlistment brought the task force to 100% for initial reenlistments. We are all proud that he has dedicated another tour of service in the Army.



S-4 Section

CPT Pearson, SGT Hall and SPC Signorile are continuing their diligent work at FOB Ripley pushing out 2-5's equipment to KAF for the redeployment to Hawaii. SFC Lowery and SSG Gachet are busy at KAF ensuring that the 2/504th's equipment is getting prepared and sent out to the outer FOBs. SPC Labarca is doing an outstanding job keeping all of the FOBs stocked with PX supplies. The entire section is very excited to be packing up! They are even more excited to be getting ready to come home to their loved ones.

Sincerely,

Viper 6/Viper 7



Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



Quickstrike Base,

I can't tell you how happy I am that this is the last newsletter I will have to write. I say that only because by this time next month, I will be able to tell you in person what an amazing job your husbands did in Afghanistan. The snow has melted and the spring months have brought beautiful weather to the Khas Uruzgun and Chora Districts of Afghanistan. Tm Quickstrike Soldiers have taken advantage of the good weather by executing two major operations. In early February, Soldiers of the AT Section, The Scout Platoon, 3rd Platoon and others executed an Air Assault into the Sha Wali Kot region south of Tarin Kowt. During the mission, Soldiers worked hand in hand with our new partners, the Afghan National Army (ANA), to bring security to the area and promote the influence and effectiveness of the Afghanistan Government. 1st Platoon and the same contingent of A Company Soldiers (minus 3rd Platoon) just returned from a mission to the Chora District in which they were able to accomplish similar objectives. The good weather unfortunately let up during the mission and heavy rains brought flash floods and lasting memories for all those involved. To the right is a picture from a river crossing that didn't quite go as planned. You learn as you go and fortunately nobody was hurt in the process.



Tm Quickstrike maintained our war fighting skills by conducting squad live fire exercises. The training included elements from the ANA, AT, mortars (60mm and 81mm), and all platoons. We were also fortunate enough to have the Mountain Warfare Team come up for a week to train Soldiers on various tasks. The class despite the poor weather was a success and was enjoyed by all. In the next month we will attempt to balance the mission requirements with redeployment tasks. Just a few days ago, we sent out our B and C bags to FOB Ripley in preparation for the move back, a tangible sign that our homecoming is just around the corner. Rest assured however that we are maintaining our vigilance and will not lose focus until we are reunited with our families and sitting in front of the TV with beer in hand (just kidding on the last part). 3rd Platoon changed over with 2nd Platoon in Kabul and will remain in place there until our RIP with C/2-504. They have been staying busy with training, PT, and the PX and are representing Tm Quickstrike well.



I am proud to say that over 20 Soldiers have reenlisted since I last wrote and more than that were presented awards by the BDE Commander for their selfless service here in Afghanistan. We hope that you are doing well. We pray that you remain safe until our reunion, and we anxiously await that moment. See you soon.

Sincerely,
Quickstrike 6/Quickstrike 7



Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



Battle Base,

By the time you read this, the ADVON should be back in Hawaii, and we should have about three weeks left before we arrive to Hawaii. I know everyone is really looking forward to the Soldiers of B Company stepping off the plane in the good ole Aloha State!!! We are all in for a bit of culture shock going from Afghanistan back to Hawaii, but it's one we are all ready for.

We have once again been extremely busy this past month with all of our missions and now we're also in all our preparations to redeploy back to Schofield Barracks. We have extended our reach into new AOs with a week long patrol in Deh Rawod; in which our reception from the locals was once again surprising. Less than a week after our patrol into Deh Rawod, we were woken up early and told to get a platoon ready to fly to Deh Rawod to assist the locals in the area who were suffering from a flood. We then spent the next 6 days helping the people of Deh Rawod. The flood was caused by a couple days of heavy rain. The Helmand River was already running high due to melting snow. The combination of these two caused the river to flood a large section of the Deh Rawod Valley. Soldiers from the company and TF assisted in pulling locals from the water and also assisted families that were on islands formed by the increase in water. Entire families were loaded into helicopters and flown to locations where we set up to distribute food, water, tents and blankets. It was another mission that those who were involved will not forget any time soon. It was a sight to see the Soldiers working side by side with local police, AMF, and average citizens to help distribute bags of wheat, cooking oil, tents and blankets. Our Soldiers quickly established a bond with those whom we were assisting. Even though the locals had been affected by this flood, they would still bring out trays of tea and bread and at night they would bring out turkey, sheep meat and bread to feed the Soldiers. In a short amount of time, the Soldiers showed the locals that we are here to help and that we are dedicated to that mission of assisting the people of this country.

Now that this deployment is coming to a rapid end, there is a lot for the Soldiers in the company to look back on. We have done a lot to help this country rebuild itself and done even more to assist with the security. From our first days in Ghazni, to our surprise move here to Tarin Kowt, the Soldiers of B Company have made me proud to be their commander. They have tackled the tough terrain and weather this county has offered and still completed the missions presented to them. Whether in the mountains of Hazerbuz dealing with 130 degree temps and elevations reaching 10,500ft or the waist deep snow in Bagar Char Valley, your husbands, boyfriends, and sons have done an outstanding job to assist the people and government of Afghanistan. As you know, we have made a huge impact in Afghanistan. Actions such as SSG Gonifas helping a local boy carry a 50kg bag of wheat and 1LT Hong, SGT Hill, SPC Harper, and SPC Herrera distributing food, tent, and blankets have made a difference. I am truly proud of the work the Soldiers are doing. In doing so, they have better prepared this country for the day when they will take control of their own security and there will no longer be a need for American Soldiers in Afghanistan. It has truly been a great experience to be over here with the Soldiers of this company. We all have memories that will last a life time.



Without your support this deployment would have been that much more difficult, but with the help of the FRG and family and friends from back home, we all have known that our loved ones were behind us all the way. Thanks from all of us in B Company- we look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,
Battle 6/ Battle 7



Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



Cobra Base,

Hello again, family and friends! This has been an exciting month for Team Cobra. Cobra Base continues to grow and improve. We now have a gym that rivals any in country. We have worked on improving our running track; we now have a two-mile route. We used it for the diagnostic APFT last month. Everyone at Cobra Base continually improves their hygiene habits, still having four working showers.

The weather over the past month has been extremely unpredictable. We have now endured numerous lightning storms, flash floods, and hail storms. Each day brings a new surprise in regard to the weather. Constant modifications are being made to the base due to the flooding. We now have a river running in front of the base. The constant water level rising has made getting around quite a task. Currently, 1st Platoon is involved in a relief effort in the Deh Rawod area, assisting all of the local nationals displaced by the flooding. Their efforts are making a huge difference in the comfort and safety of the locals.

2nd Platoon has been reintegrating into life in the Cehar Cineh District. Both 2nd and 3rd Platoon have been involved in projects concerning Humanitarian Assistance. We have conducted large scale medical assessments and treatment, wheat and farm tool distribution, and handed out winter clothes and shoes. All of the hard work and effort has gone a long way in winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan people.

Our reconstruction efforts in the Cehar Cineh District are nearing completion. We will soon open the first official school in the area since 1980. We have provided the people with numerous wells, irrigation ditches, police uniforms, and school supplies. We will soon open a new soccer field, challenging the locals to a friendly competition. The area has come a long way due to the hard work and dedication from each and every Soldier.

Redeployment efforts are in full swing, exciting everyone. The end of a long and challenging deployment is nearing. Everyone is filled with anticipation of seeing loved ones and readjusting to a life filled with comfort and amenities. Dreams of arriving home to loved ones will soon become a reality. Everyone is missed dearly, but soon we will be reunited.

God Bless You All and The United States of America!

**Sincerely,
Cobra 6/Cobra 7**





Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



WarDog Base,

The "Wardogs" have worked hard this month while spread out all over Afghanistan. The 4th and 6th sections continue to provide indirect fires in support of a Special Forces team in Eastern Afghanistan, 1st and 2nd sections continue to work with the "Bobcats", and 3rd and 5th sections work at Kandahar Airfield assisting the incoming Artillery units from Fort Bragg, NC and Vicenza, Italy as they prepare to move to various locations to relieve elements of 3-7 FA. The battery continues to conduct daily operations while shifting our focus towards redeployment.

The weather here has become warmer and the snow has melted away from the mountains around us which has caused thunderstorms to become more prevalent. This is the most rain that Afghanistan has seen in years and is a promising sign that the drought is coming to an end. Unfortunately in some areas the amount of snow and rain caused severe damage to villages causing Coalition Forces to respond with humanitarian assistance in order to improve their living conditions.

SPC Wyman and SGT Zambrano performed outstanding on their promotions boards this month. We expect to see them promoted soon. SPC Erickson and PV2 Gilbert were also promoted this month. Several "Wardogs" re-enlisted this month in order to take advantage of the opportunity of staying in Hawaii with the Unit of Action or Striker Brigade while earning thousands of tax free dollars as an incentive. The Soldiers that took the oath this month are SGT (P) Zambrano, SGT Konken, SPC Moore, and PFC Hernandez.

As a sign that Operation Enduring Freedom – 5 is coming to a close, the Brigade Commander made special trips to as many locations as possible to present each and every Soldier with a Brigade Coin to commemorate our service here. Prior to our departure many of our Soldiers will also receive service awards for their outstanding service as everyone played a key part in the establishment of the new democratic government which included the countries first ever free elections. You have every right to be proud of what your Soldiers have accomplished during their year here.

This is the last newsletter we write to you from Afghanistan and I want to tell you how proud we are of every Soldier in the Battery. Each has endured well through our year together and performed above and beyond our expectations. As we make our way back to Schofield Barracks we will see the unit transition into a Unit of Action and we will lose several outstanding Soldiers to the Stryker Brigade in Hawaii as well as other places and units back on the mainland. We are also very fortunate that many of the "Wardogs" have either re-enlisted or extended to stay on with A/3-7 FA through the transition. These leaders will be our source of continuity as we receive new Soldiers and prepare for new challenges in the coming years. We are very excited about our return and know that you feel the same. I personally look forward to meeting and getting to know as many of you as I can in the coming months.



Sincerely,
Wardog 6/Wardog 7



Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



Task Force Fire Support Element,

Recognizing that the month of March was the last full month of operations the Task Force is focused on setting the conditions for the success of the follow-on force of TF 2-504 from Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Fire Supporters are side-by-side of our Infantry brethren as we formalize local government relationships in the Uruzgan Province. The warmer weather has opened some of the mountain passes which has allowed us to move deeper into the regions which we have been unable to reach and make a positive impact on the local population.

While focused on the mission here in Afghanistan, we are all excited to return home to our loved ones and our island paradise. We understand that there is some significant work to be done on redeployment prior to departure. We will grant the same attention to detail on the mission of redeployment as we do when we Call For Fire in order to safeguard personnel and equipment. "It's not over 'til it's over."

We want to thank all the family and friends of the Task Force for their support over the past year. We have been extremely triumphant in our numerous missions across Afghanistan because of you, your letters, and your care packages. Thank you.

Sincerely,
FSE

Task Force Engineers "GET 'R DUNN",

With one more month to go before we come back, the morale of the platoon has never been higher. The past month can best be described as wet and muddy, which has presented many challenges for our Sappers and made our rubber assault boat come in handy. 1st Squad continued to conduct operations in the mountains of Khas Oruzgan and finally got their showers working. They now have the nicest showers in the Task Force. 2nd Squad spent most of their time on extended missions and repairing water leaks in their tent. Taking mentorship from SSG Hessler, SPC Guzman reenlisted for another tour as a Sapper. 3rd Squad gained quality experience using the Bobcat to move equipment and supplies for their Forward Operating Base. The Headquarters Sappers continued to build the Task Force FOB at Tarin Kowt. PFC Mitchell experienced a little heartache sending the SFE back to Kandahar for redeployment. SPC McFarland focused mostly on evacuating local national patients from the Front Gate to the Aid Station. Even though the conditions remained muddy and wet, morale is high, and we'll be home soon!

Sincerely,
Castle 26/ Castle 27

Task Force ADA,

Aloha to the friends and family of 1st Platoon. Last month was another busy month for us as we packed up our equipment and bags, and prepared our containers to ship out of FOB Ripley.

Last month was a big month for reenlistments and promotions. SSG Shafer and SSG Landry both reenlisted in March to stay in the Army until retirement. SGT Jones and SPC Thornton attended the promotion board and both were recommended for promotion. So soon after we return to Schofield Barracks, SGT Jones will be promoted to Staff Sergeant and SPC Thornton will be promoted to Sergeant; a big step up for the both of them. Also this month, SSG Madison celebrates his birthday on March 31st.

As we close out our deployment here, we want to thank everyone who supported us through letters, packages, and/or any other types of correspondence. You helped contribute to our success here in Afghanistan and everything you did was greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Old School 6/ Old School 7

