

OPAHEY Shout Outs!

"Hi to my family. I love you and miss you all. I can't wait to get back to TKD! Love, Cutter" - SGT Ragusa, HHC

"Hi little wifey, I love you and miss you. I'll see you soon! Love, Chris" - SGT Wall, DC

"Axzavor, mama loves ya from the middle east! Love, Mom" - SSG Dill, FMC

"To my wife, I love you, keep on fishin'. To my kids, stay out of trouble and keep on fishin! Can't wait to see you guys. Love, Vince" - SGT Alcantara, BSMC

"Greg and Emma, I love you and I miss you. I'll see you soon! Love, Mom" - SGT Voss, HHC



that the distance from loved ones and sacrifices we are all experiencing is all worth it; our Soldiers are truly getting after any task, making us all extremely proud to be a part of the OPAHEY Nation.

Furthermore, their dedication to the job and knowledge base is the number one reason this Support Battalion enjoys an outstanding reputation from the units we support. This comment does not sound significant, until you realize how

From the OPAHEY Command

The OPAHEY Soldiers have been the backbone of this STRYKER Brigade and have aggressively hit the ground running to ensure the Arctic Wolves' Soldiers have everything they need to take the fight to the enemy. There is no doubt that they are the best Support Battalion in Southern Afghanistan. The BN leadership and Soldiers have shown continued high levels of integrity and hard work while demonstrating immense networking skills. The airfield is like a big city back in the states and it is all about who you know to get things done. The impressive personal characteristics the OPAHEY Soldier possesses have propelled our mission accomplishment to its highest level ever. There is no doubt

absolutely difficult logistics is in this primitive country. As I move around checking on Soldiers I ensure they are calling their mother and that always gets a smile. I am just amazed with the great attitude and outstanding work everyone is doing and the time is moving by quickly. Most of us have R&R in our sights and look forward to seeing our families real soon. Thank you all for your efforts and sacrifices! See you all next month!



"OPAHEY 6 & 7"
-LTC John McMurray
-CSM Alton Haney

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Brothers in Arms

JUNE 6, 2011. Monday was a great day in the US Army, when US forces teamed up with our Canadian counterparts for a friendly game of deck hockey. For some of us, it evoked fond memories of long summer days spent playing the greatest game. We played in the street, shifting the cones to make way for mums and dads coming home for the night. Street lamps cast a weak yellow glow across the makeshift rink, and still we passed the ball. Mothers threatened no supper, and we would continue to play, enjoying the

greatest game ever. Only when the ball bounced into the sewer, and even the smallest child couldn't find it under the manhole, would we retire for the night. For some of us, street hockey developed into ice hockey; for others, it developed into a game of floor hockey one hot afternoon on Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan.

Regardless of the skill level, Soldiers and leaders from both nations

faced off at the centerline and went toe-to-toe for over an hour. The Opahey Battalion Commander solidified foreign relations, teaming up with the Canadian Command Sergeant Major.

This was an unforgettable event, full of fun and cheer.



RSS, 2SCR Transfer of Authority to BSB, 1/25th SBCT

May 23, 2011 marked the Transfer of Authority (TOA) from the Regimental Support Squadron (RSS), 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment (2SCR) to the 25th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), 1/25th Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT). On this momentous day, LTC Michael McCulley and CSM Kenneth McKoy (Commander and Command Sergeant Major of the RSS, 2SCR) relinquished their mission to LTC John McMurray and CSM Alton Haney (Commander and Command Sergeant Major of the 25th BSB, 1/25th SBCT).

The Soldiers of the 25th BSB, 1/25th SBCT worked diligently during the Relief in Place (RIP), ensuring the unit could quickly assume responsibility of all brigade support operations throughout Southern Afghanistan. Leaders and Soldiers at all levels worked side by side with their 2SCR counterparts, as the departing veterans shared their experiences and wealth of knowledge. The RIP was demanding, but the 25th BSB Soldiers



LTC McMurray and CSM Haney Uncase the Colors

were highly trained and ready to take on the challenge **WITHOUT DELAY**.

On a hot Monday morning, the Soldiers of the RSS, 2SCR and the 25th BSB, 1/25th SBCT stood proudly side by side during the TOA Ceremony. The RSS troop guidons and the squadron colors were cased, signifying their end of mission and a successful deployment. The 25th BSB company guidons and the battalion colors were uncased, marking the start of their journey.

The leaders and Soldiers of the 25th BSB quickly put their rigorous training to the test, providing first class logistics support to the 1/25th SBCT's Arctic Warriors. In just one short month, the Opahey Team has demonstrated their unmatched ability and their resilience. A strong start that will lead to a strong finish.



A Combat Patch Ceremony "Under Fire"

This memorable event was shared with the 1/25th SBCT Commander, COL Todd Wood, and Command Sergeant



The 25th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) Command

Major, CSM Bernie Knight, our Romanian counterparts, and the 1-24 Infantry Battalion Command Team. It is safe to say, no one had experienced a Combat Patch Ceremony quite like this.

A special thanks to our Forward Maintenance Company (FMC) welders. Their skill, dedication and talent made this event possible.

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The Combat Patch, officially known as the Shoulder Sleeve Insignia, is reserved for Soldiers actively participating in, or supporting ground combat operations, against hostile forces in which they are exposed to the threat of enemy action or fire, either directly or indirectly (Army Regulation 670-1, February

2005). After 30 days of consecutive service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Soldiers of the 1/25th SBCT were authorized to wear the Shoulder Sleeve Insignia. **June 26, 2011** was a night to remember. Soldiers of the 25th BSB gathered at dusk eagerly awaiting the ceremony. The burn barrels were lit, Jimi Hendrix was blaring, and 25th Infantry Division (ID) patches surrounded by fire were hung by wreckers with care. Each Soldier crossed under the flaming patches, as their command teams affixed the 25th ID combat patch to their right shoulder. The ceremony was followed by a barbeque, complete with near beer and 25th ID branded steaks.



Flying High with Eagle Company



transition of mission with the Regimental Support Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck Germany. Following the transition, the

Eagle Company was responsible for pushing 2SCR personnel out of theater, while assuming the support mission for 1/25th SBCT. HHC Soldiers are operating all hours of the day and in multiple locations across Afghanistan to support the brigade mission. Thank you families for your support during these busy times.

-CPT Daniel Winnie

FROM THE Eagle Family forward to yours,

Kandahar Air Field is the home of the HHC, 25th BSB while they are deployed in support of OEF 11-12. Only one month into the deployment, and the Eagle Team has accomplished numerous activities. HHC completed a smooth

SSG McDougald's Promotion

During the last month there have been multiple promotions in HHC, 25th BSB, but SSG McDougald had a promotion to remember. CPT Nedderson and SFC Hertzberg worked with Killer Company of the 101st Airborne Division to hold the promotion up close and personal with an Apache Helicopter. SSG McDougald got in the Apache, performed operational checks, and toyed with the camera sys-

tem. We were all a little nervous, as the Apache was armed to the teeth with rockets and fire, but all are alive to tell the story. In the picture, you see an outstanding new SSG (SSG



McDougald) and the two gentlemen that made this event possible (CPT Nedderson and SFC Hertzberg). Thank you

to all who wanted to be here but were unable to attend; your love and support enabled this great day in the Army.

Promotions

- o 01JUN11:
- PFC Whittenberg
- SPC Triplett
- SPC Rice
- SGT Padilla
- SSG McDougald

Reenlistments

- SPC Djogbessi

Births

Shanna, wife of 1LT Thor Hartwig gave birth to Mari Soleil on June 18, 2011.

The Battalion's First Reenlistment



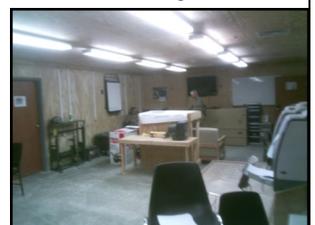
Reenlistment has been a critical force in the US Army since 1864. When 480 men (that's 50% of the unit) from the 9th New Jersey Volunteer Infantry agreed to reenlist. The regiment changed its name to the 9th New Jersey Volunteer Veteran Infantry. The men reenlisted for "three years or the war." It is one of the greatest moments in a commanding officer's career when one of his outstanding Soldiers steps forward to fight longer for his country's freedom. SPC Djogbessi has been trying to reenlist for over a year, and on June 6, 2011 at 1100 he did. He reenlisted for the MOS

35N, Signals Intelligence Analyst. Analyzing foreign communications and non-communications helps our military experts better plan our nation's defense. That's where a Signals Intelligence Analyst is most valuable. Last year there were only five selected for the MOS 35N. This year there have only been two and SPC Djogbessi is one of them. Congratulations!



Mayor Cell Operation

Making things happen for the BDE starts here. The HHC, 25th BSB is charged with the Mayor Cell mission. The Mayor Cell transports any 1/25th SBCT elements on KAF, manages the NTV Fleet, opens all work orders, and is the POC for R&R. When SGT Ragusa hit the ground, he took the mayor cell to the next level. His crew consists of SGT Doody, SPC Simanteris, SPC Anderson, and PFC Juengel. THANK YOU!!



Distribution Company



Commander's Corner

I want to start off this inaugural newsletter by thanking all the family members and friends of the Bison family for all of your support and encouragement. Whether it's a letter in the mail, a phone call, text message, email, or care package, your efforts have an amazing effect on the morale and overall well-being of your Soldier.

Happy Father's Day to all of our Bison Dads. Thank you to all

of the family members who took the time to place your handprints on the bed sheet to wish your Soldier a Happy Father's Day.

Well, after 20 hours in the air and a brief stop in the country of Kyrgyzstan, we all arrived safely in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Some of us stayed here and are based out of Kandahar Air Field, while others pushed out to Forward Area Support Teams (FASTs) on outlying Forward Operating Bases.

Leaving Alaska during the tail end of winter and arriving in Afghanistan where the average high temperature is 110 degrees has not been easy for most of us. Everyone has learned to trade in their sodas and energy drinks for bottles of water. Water is plentiful here but depending where you grab it from it could be ice cold or could be like water from a hot shower.

Distribution Company Soldiers continue to impress me and their leaders at all levels with their professionalism, positive attitudes, and determination to accomplish their mission of supporting our brigade. It truly is an honor and a privilege to

serve with this amazing group of Soldiers.

-Captain Scott Schoen

LHS Team

SSG Ellison has the huge responsibility of taking a group of Distribution Company Soldiers from all job specialties and forming them into a team responsible for driving supplies from point A to point B. On a daily basis, LHS Team Soldiers can be seen strapping down loads to their trucks, maintaining their vehicles, and driving around southern Afghanistan picking up/dropping off supplies. Their mission is vital to the success of our brigade.

Promotions

- SSG Barrett of the SSA was promoted to SFC
- PFC Tricou of the 1-24 FAST was promoted to SPC
- PFC Kidd of the 5-1 FAST was promoted to SPC
- PV2 Wirick of the SSA was promoted to PFC

Awards

- The following Soldiers were awarded Good Conduct Medals in a ceremony on June 2, 2011:
 - SGT Overton: SSA
 - SGT Moreno: 3-21 FAST
 - SGT Marrero: LHS Team
 - SPC Tillemans: LHS Team
 - SPC Altenbaumer: MRAP Team
 - SPC Gibson: SSA

Births

- Shannon, wife of 1LT Greg Wardwell, gave birth to Bennett Myles on June 27, 2011.

SSA Getting it Done



Shown: SPC Graves operating a bobcat, vehicle of choice at the SSA

Responsible for receiving, storing, issuing, and turning in supplies while providing 24-hour support to the brigade, SSA Soldiers are always up for the challenge. As the night shift prepares to leave, the day shift arrives to the yard and begins prepping their equipment for the day's tasks. Soon after, customers and battalion representatives arrive to claim their supplies and load them onto trucks. Every unit in the brigade relies on the Soldiers of the SSA to do their part in getting them the supplies they need to do their jobs.

First Sergeant's Corner

We are here! Everyone has made it to the place we have read about in the newspapers and seen on TV. We have prepared ourselves by training in Alaska at the Yukon and Donnelly Training Areas and in California's Mojave Desert at the National Training Center (NTC). Along the way, we earned the title of being "The Best Unit" our NTC Combat Trainees had ever seen. We have anticipated this moment for the last six months.

The time has come to place our mark in the history of the United States of America. Every task we accomplish over the next year brings us one step closer to victory and to coming home. With every gallon of fuel we dispense, every mile we drive, and every supply we distribute, we continue to do it with determination, motivation, and professionalism. Distribution Company Soldiers are already leaving their mark on history.

One word comes to mind as I ponder the daily activities of our awesome unit – PRIDE. I am proud of being a part of this unit and take great pride in leading all of these great Soldiers. Many of my peers have stated how professional and "on point" we perform all of our missions. Whether they are speaking about the SSA, Convoy Security Teams, LHS Teams, Forward Area Support Teams, or the company's HQs, all are getting their missions completed in an outstanding manner. It is the effort of our Bison Soldiers that makes me proud.

-1SG Douglas Whittaker



Viper Company



The Soldiers of the VIPER Company have continued to set the standard within the BN, by earning the Retention Streamer of Excellence for FY11. 1SG and I are privileged to have the finest Soldiers around, who are dedicated to the mission at hand. I'm honored to serve with these great warriors!

-CPT Phillip Castillo, FMC CO



The month of June has come to a close. We continue to prove ourselves as the best support battalion in the Army. We accept every challenge thrown our way, from conducting multiple recovery missions to teaching our Afghan counterparts how to maintain their fleet. The days are long and hard, but the Soldiers are hungry for the challenge.

-1SG Kevin Morain, FMC 1SG

CPT Kochkodin Farewells the VIPER'S PIT "XO," as he is commonly known as by all the Soldiers in FMC, has been called up to the big leagues and will assume duties as the BN S3 Plans Officer. This is a great opportunity for a fine officer, but he will be sorely missed by his Soldiers. XO has been instrumental in moving the company to Afghanistan, while serving as the Company Unit Movement Officer. He ensured that we had all the property and systems required to function in Afghanistan. Chase also served as a convoy commander, and conducted many Logistics Patrols outside the FOB without injury to his Soldiers, while servicing the Stryker Brigade without delay. As a XO, Chase has been a total asset to the team allowing the CO with the ability to survey the field. -VIPER 5 OUT!



Promotions

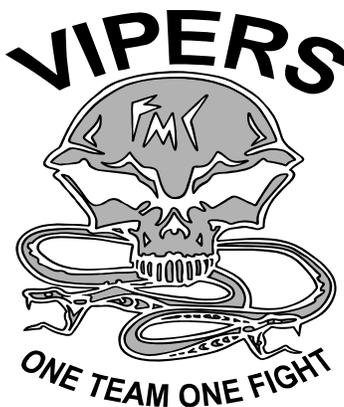
o **To SGT**
SGT Douglas

o **To SPC**
SPC Rivera-Naranjo
SPC Delgado
SPC Wilk

o **To PFC**
PFC Olmstead
PFC Lebrija

Reenlistments

SGT Saastamoinen 91S (6yrs)
SPC Eilers 91S (6yrs)



PFC Fason of EMS Rocks the Free World Afghan Style

PFC Fason, a 94F Computer Detection Repairer from Arkansas, never imagined he'd be fighting the war on terror here in Afghanistan. The son of an Airman, PFC Fason was born on July 24th, 1970 and grew up in Tyler, TX. Like most youth growing up in America, he dreamed of becoming a rock star and picked up the guitar at the age of 13. At 24 years, he was playing in a band when their music attracted a record company. PFC Fason's band made great strides as they toured the nation, playing in various venues. Along with playing in a young band, PFC Fason worked long and arduous hours in the construction business, trying to support his family. He later divorced and was re-married to Jamie on September 11, 2007. They celebrated the birth of their son Micah and soon thereafter PFC Fason found himself back at work, only this time in the drilling business. He again worked long hours in an attempt to support his family. Some weeks consisted of over 100 hours to make ends meet and at the age of 39, PFC Fason looked to the Army as a possible alternative to the long back-breaking hours. He joined the Army in July 2010 and began his career in the EMS section. During AIT, he and Jamie celebrated the birth of their second child, Trevor. PFC Fason would like the families back home to know that every Soldier here is looking out for each other, talking about what's on their minds and really showing how much they care for each other. The conditions are not that bad other than the infamous Poo Pond smell located on Kandahar Air Field. The hours are nowhere near what he was used to, and he's just fine with that. His goal is to get a college education in Behavioral Health and to reenlist when the time arrives. A proud father and Soldier, PFC Fason knows where he's come from and what it takes to be successful in the Army. With hard work, dedication and the will to succeed, anything is possible in life. "The VIPER Company is honored to have this great Soldier in our ranks."

-CPT Castillo.



HUSKY DAYS: Running With the Medical Company



Team Lagman

Team Husky is quickly closing on their second month of the 1/25th Stryker Brigade Combat Team's (SBCT) deployment to Afghanistan. It is truly amazing what the Brigade Support Medical Company (BSMC) has accomplished in such a short time. The leaders and Soldiers of the BSMC continue to impress us and simply "**Never Quit**". The unit's Relief in

Place/Transfer of Authority (RIP/TOA) was complete May 23, 2011, and the BSMC quickly assumed the mission. The majority of our Soldiers are located on Kandahar Air Field (KAF), running an Aid Station. We also established a second Aid Station in support of the Brigade Headquarters. Physical Therapy, Preventive Medicine, and Behavioral Health continue to circulate, providing their services throughout the brigade, while some company medics provide support to our Battalion's Logistics Patrols. The support of our amazing Family Members allows us to focus on the mission. Thank you for your continued support.

-CPT Jessica Milloy (Husky 6) & 1SG David Farquharson (Husky 7)

The Husky PM Team goes on Tour

The Husky Preventive Medicine (PM) Team consists of CPT Paul Hester and SPC Casey Newsted.

They are responsible for identifying health threats and occupational/environmental health hazards, assessing the health risk associated with these threats, and recommending protective measures. Their efforts

greatly decrease Disease and Non-Battle Injuries (DNBI) throughout the brigade. CPT Hester and SPC Newsted started



CPT Paul Hester (PM Officer) and SPC Casey Newsted (technician)

conducting Base Camp Assessments at the end of May, and have collectively visited more than 20 bases throughout the brigade. In addition to assessments,

this team conducted on site Field Sanitation Team (FST) training, further preserving the brigade's health. SPC Newsted will present the teams findings at the Combined Joint Task Force-10 (CJTF-10) PM Conference in July 2011 at KAF.

Promotions

o to Private First Class (PFC)
27MAY11-Robert Power
01JUN11-Edgard Alfaro
01JUN11-Bryan Burkhardt

o to Sergeant (SGT)
01JUN11-Vincent Alcantara



Births

o PFC Monie Green gave birth to Maylin Sophia Ruth Green at Bassett Army Community Hospital, Ft. Wainwright, AK on 21MAY11.

o Karleen, wife of CPT Paul Hester, gave birth to Mark Norman Hester at Madigan Army Community Hospital, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA on 25MAY11.

Our ANA Brothers

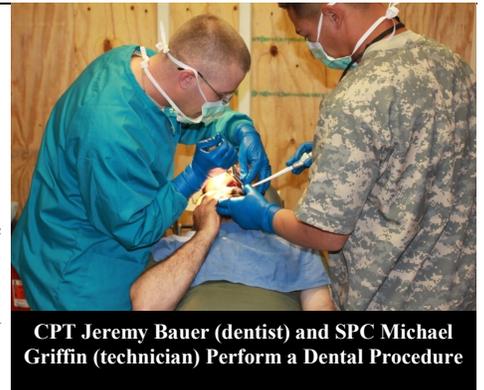


PFC Hassan Omar (medic) takes MG Saeed Jamaluddin's Vitals

The BSMC has quickly developed a partnership with the Medical Company of the 5th Kandak (Battalion), 1st Brigade, 205th Corps (5/1/205), Afghanistan National Army (ANA). SGT Shaine Harris (medic) serves as our Senior Medic Trainer, playing an integral role as we work along side our ANA brothers. He developed a detailed training plan to assist with ANA medic certification, and continues to share techniques and best practices that have contributed to the success of the

US Army Medical Corps. In addition to SGT Harris' efforts, the BSMC continues to find new and unique ways to develop a relationship with the ANA built on trust and confidence.

CPT Jeremy Bauer (dentist) and SPC Michael Griffin (dental technician), performed a tooth extraction on MG Saeed Jamaluddin, commander of 2nd Brigade, 205th Corps, ANA. CPT Bauer and SPC Griffin look forward to partnering with the Medical Company, 5/1/205 ANA dentist in the future.



CPT Jeremy Bauer (dentist) and SPC Michael Griffin (technician) Perform a Dental Procedure



CPT Marilyn Cowles (PA) with ANA Dependent Children

dependent women and children. During this clinic, coalition forces work along side the KRMH Afghan Midwife.

CPT Marilyn Cowles (physician assistant) and PFC Brittney Summey (medic), assist a Bulgarian Army OB/GYN and midwife during the weekly Women/Child Clinic located at the Kandahar Regional Military Hospital (KRMH). This clinic was designed to support the ANA



PFC Brittney Summey (medic)