

RED WARRIORS

1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment



Memorial stands for our recently fallen heroes

A Very Difficult Month

By Captain David Peterson and Major Korey Brown
1-12 IN S1 and XO

Shortly after our last newsletter was sent, we lost three heroes from Alpha Company. SSG John Reiners, SGT Jeremiah Wittman, and SPC Bobby Pagan were killed as a result of an improvised explosive device (IED) detonation on 13 February 2010 in the Bag-e-Pol area, Zhari District of Southern Afghanistan.

A memorial ceremony was conducted to honor their memory 18 February 2010 at FOB Wilson.

SSG John Reiners was born 23 December 1985 in Lakeland, FL and joined the Army 28 July 2004. He served in two previous deployments to Iraq. He has been awarded the Bronze Service Star Medal, two Purple Hearts, an Army Commendation Medal, two Army Achievement Medals, the National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, NATO Medal Army Service Ribbon, two Overseas Service Ribbons, Ranger Tab, Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Air Assault Badge.

He is survived by his wife Casey, son Lex, and his parents Gregory and Ronna



SGT Jeremiah Wittman was born 9 July 1983 in Darby, MT and joined the Army 9 March 2004. He served in two previous deployments to Iraq. He has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, NATO Medal, Army Service Ribbon, two Overseas Service Ribbons, and the Combat Action Badge.

He is survived by his wife Karyn, his daughters Miah and Ariauna, and his parents Robert and Cynthia.

SPC Bobby Pagan was born 23 November 1986 in Austin, TX and joined the Army 17 July 2008. He has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, NATO Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

He is survived by his parents Robert and Peggy and his fiance Diana.

On 21 February 2010 Delta Company encountered an IED and it took the life of PFC Salvacion.

A memorial ceremony was conducted to honor his memory 28 February 2010 at COP Sanjaray.



PFC JR Salvacion was born 30 December 1982 in the Republic of the Philippines. He joined the Army 4 February 2008. He has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the NATO Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon and the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

He is survived by his wife Joy, son Zildjian and his parents Gene Salacion and Milagros Robiniol

Rest well Red Warriors. You will never be forgotten by those lives you touched.

Dear Red Warrior Families,

We are in the final stretch here of the deployment and we have already shipped out our first load of equipment in preparation for our return. We are conducting operations and accomplishing our redeployment tasks at the same time so everyone is very busy. Because we are busy – it is making the time go very fast. I was pretty pleased the other day when I asked a few Soldiers how many days they thought we had left – every one of them said they did not know the exact number but figured it would be around the end of May or beginning of June. It is very apparent that they are ‘not counting the days’ but ‘making the days count’. I am so very proud of these great men and women as they each do their part to accomplish our collective mission.

We have about two months left on the ground and the decision about our extension has been resolved. TF Red Warriors will stay an additional 10 days. In our final months here we are focused on setting our next unit up for a smooth transition into this area as they prepare for their year here building on the successes that your Soldiers have achieved. The President’s surge has already begun in Southern Afghanistan and has made a significant difference in a short time. The insurgents are having difficulty conducting their operations and we have not had a significant IED go off on the ring route for several weeks. This time last year there were about 10 IEDs a day either being found or detonated on the stretch of highway that we are responsible for. Today the enemy has tremendous difficulty getting close enough to the road to emplace them. If he is lucky enough to get one in – we are finding them before they can be used. We face a very smart and devious enemy here but the professionalism and dedication of the Soldiers here keep the insurgents off balance and uncertain for what we will do next.

When we arrive home we will go through a re-integration process to ensure we meet all the physical and emotional needs of our great Warriors. This will take some time as we move back into western culture and adapt to life in the United States again. Please be patient and as well as vigilant as you reconnect with your Soldier. Unfortunately, combat is a very ugly thing. Though the vast majority will have smooth transition home a number of our Soldiers have experienced some very horrific and traumatic events and they will need some additional help adjusting to our environment back at Ft. Carson. Friends and families will have a large part in ensuring those who need assistance get it – you know your Soldier better than anyone so please help us ensure they get the help they deserve.

Thank you all for your never ending support to the Soldiers that makes up this great Task Force. I am certain that all your thoughts, prayers and care packages have made this a much more tolerable deployment away from our families, friends and loved ones. As we all approach this joyous homecoming and reunion time, please do not forget the families of our Eagles who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of our Nation’s goals of peace and stability not only for our country but also the world.

As information about the redeployment becomes more detailed, I will send updates to ensure the Families are getting the latest information.

Sincerely,

REIK C. ANDERSEN
LTC
TF RED WARRIOR Commanding

Although these last few months have been very stressful and trying times for the Red Warriors, many of us took comfort in watching the Olympic Games during breakfast or in the company Morale, Welfare, and Recreation tents. Sharing this battle space with our Canadian brothers, the Gold Medal Hockey Game was a huge event. Unfortunately the United States brought home the Silver medal and we had to endure many days of Canadian flags, banners and “in your-face” type banter; all in fun. However, we had our chance to repay the banter when the final results were in and the United States took home many more medals than our Canadian counter-parts.

This month our re-enlistment rates continued to be the highest in the brigade proving that the Red Warrior Team is doing great things. We are well above 150% reenlistment in all categories and we are still continuing to reenlist the finest Soldiers and Non-Commissioned Officers in the Army. Due to the recent surge of re-enlistees, Alpha Company was able to conduct a “mass” re-enlistment prior to the change of command between CPT Seth Langston and CPT Aaron Miller. Speaking of the change of command, CPT Langston departed FOB Wilson and moved to FOB Fenty in Regional Command –East to work on the brigade staff.



Although the Red Warriors will be moving in force into the current area of operations in the next couple weeks, camp and strong point upgrades continue. FOB Wilson is being developed to house 4000 Soldiers and contractors in the near future. There have been many upgrades in and among the strong points to improve the security, communications, as well to improve living conditions. Additional housing units for A, B, and C Cos were added to their strong points to increase the amount of living space and privacy and D Co received wireless internet that will be established soon. Shower units will be arriving to these strong points prior to our departure.



This month the Red Warriors had the privilege to host many visitors to FOB Wilson and many of the strong points. This month we hosted the Commanders of the International Security and Assistance Force (General McChrystal - Left), the International Security and Assistance Force Joint Command (US) and his Command Sergeants Major, the Regional Command-South Commander (British) and his Command Sergeants Major, the top leadership of both the Afghanistan National Army and Afghanistan National Police from the Afghanistan capital of





Kabul and Colonel George, 4th Infantry Brigade Commander. All of these visits were designed to thank our Soldiers for their hard work and sacrifice, conduct an assessment of our joint US, Canadian, and Afghanistan National Security Forces Operations Control and Coordination Center – Zhari District, and to set the military, political, and developmental conditions of our area of operations.

The monthly battalion awards ceremony saw 8 Purple Hearts, 7 Army Commendation Medal with Valor device, 3 Army Commendation Medals, and 2 Army Achievement Medals being awarded. We also took time to recognize our Language and Cultural Assistants (Interpreters) for their sacrifices and a job well done during the deployment and to dedicate our new Helicopter Landing Zone to Sergeant Jonathon Walls, C Co, that was killed on 3 August 2009. A dedication in the name of Specialist Brian Bowman, killed on 3 January 2010, for our new aid station is expected to be conducted in the next 2-3 weeks.



I would like to close this letter out with a few final notes on redeployment. We expect to receive information on timing of our redeployment around mid-April and once we get this information we will be sure to pass it along. There a lot of questions on the timings of our replacements and how Task Force Red Warrior will “flow” out of Afghanistan and once the information becomes available, we will be sure to inform the Rear D FRG, and send letters to be posted on the website. Again, individual Soldier return times will not be truly known until 72 hours in advance due to air flow times and dates not being published in advance. More information coming soon on redeployment.

Thank you for all of your support from back home. We would not be successful “forward” in this fight if it were not for your efforts. They are truly appreciated.

Kandahar Air Field Administrative and Logistics Center Sends

Over the past few weeks and months, the guys have been busy at work supporting the Battalion operations. We’ve continued our focus on shipping out additional building supplies for the FOB, COP and Strong Point expansion projects, along with equipment and supplies for daily sustainment operations. We’ve completed our move to the new Administrative, Logistics Operations Center (ALOC) building and have also completed work on additional RLB’s that will allow for an expanded footprint for our replacement unit. Our time here in Afghanistan is fast approaching an end. As we wrap up our 10th month, there’s still a lot more work to be done before our mission is completed. While we remain focused on daily ongoing operations, we’re also busy with planning and preparation for our upcoming redeployment. Over the course of the next few weeks, we’ll begin shipping multiple containers filled with our equipment back to Fort Carson, CO. The guys are all excited, as am I, about our upcoming reintegration with our families. We’re all looking forward to it, but until then, it is back to the business at hand.

Best of wishes to you all...cheers!!!
1LT Dwayne L. Anderson
DET CDR (KAF ALOC)