

August – September 2004

HHB 25TH DIVARTY

Red Knights

FAMILY READINESS GROUP

Members of the Tropic Thunder family:

Let me start off with thanks—for your support and your sacrifice in this great campaign against global terrorism. The soldiers of the Division Artillery, to include all our attached units and soldiers share great pride and enthusiasm for our deployment to Afghanistan. Your love and support is key in our ability to accomplish our mission. Know that we are all supremely confident in our abilities and training and are without a doubt ready for whatever comes our way.

Our mission in Afghanistan is clear and just; to rid the country of terrorists and to help establish a central government that can provide basic services and security for its people. Our initial tasks will be challenging. We will establish a forward headquarters from the ground up, assume command and control of operations from a Marine Regiment, and lead our subordinate battalions through a campaign to destroy the enemy and rebuild the country. Difficult as this may be, we are more than up to the task.

I appreciate all of the support each of you has given to our Family Readiness Group and know that it will continue over the course of the year. CPT Mike McCarson is our rear detachment commander, MSG Robert Berry is our senior NCO, and Mrs. Kori Lin Buchheit is our battery Family Readiness Group Leader. I have complete faith in each of them and ask for your continued support and participation in our Family Readiness Group to ensure it is able to help families be self sufficient and able to cope with the long separation ahead.

Our nation has called us to duty and while our deployment will be arduous, it will be successful, because of the character, intelligence and talents of our soldiers. I promise you that we will faithfully relay stories of our experiences and accomplishments over the coming months and we all look forward to sharing the stories, pictures, schoolwork and family life from Hawaii. As you cope with our year-long separation, stay strong, stay active, and draw strength from each other and pride in proving once again, that you can manage just fine without us.

While we are all soldiers and patriots of our great nation, it is our love of family and our God that sustains us through the challenging times like these. Better than anyone else, we know that nothing compares to an Army family—none give more to our freedom than you. Thanks for your support and your sacrifice.



Transfer of Authority ceremony

- “Tropic Thunder!” COL Cheek



MP Crew

Hello,

1SG Berry and I hope that all families of soldiers deployed with HHB/Divarty are doing well during this challenging time. The well being of soldier's families is essential to the success of Divarty's mission in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Our soldiers expect their families to receive the best care and support, which is the primary mission for HHB/Divarty's Rear-Detachment. Please do not hesitate to call or come to the HHB headquarters with any issue you encounter during your spouse's deployment. Thus far, the deployed soldiers and the Rear-Detachment have been very successful and we will strive to keep up the effort on the families' behalf. Thank you for supporting HHB and its soldiers.

CPT Michael McCarson
Divarty Rear-D OIC

Aloha Everyone!

As we begin our journey through this deployment, I want to tell everyone that it is truly an honor to be able to lead the HHB Divarty Family Readiness Group. The soldiers and the families they belong to are all special and valuable entities to the Army as a whole. As your leader, it is my mission to make sure that every family is empowered with the knowledge they need to get through these trying times. I want to stress that the FRG serves everyone best when everyone is involved. It is important that the purpose of the FRG is never misinterpreted or deterred by rumors, lack of informational resources, or low member morale. We will continue to hold meetings, arrange social events, and coordinate fundraisers in order to better the FRG in everyway possible. Staying positive, staying in touch with everyone regularly, and keeping compassion for the job ahead are all qualities I will strive to maintain excellence in. God Bless everyone and stay strong....

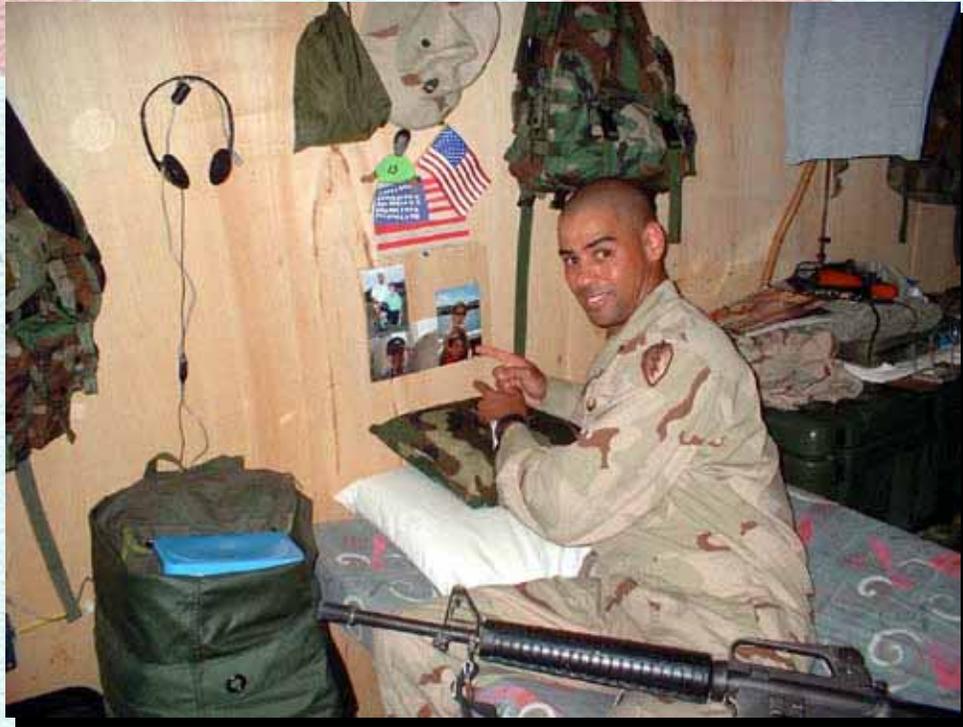
Your FRG Leader,
Kori Lin Buchheit



SSG Henderson and PV2 Santos

Calling all ideas Do you have an idea for a ...

FUNDRAISER? FRG Meeting? Something fun for all to do?
Then PLEASE let us know! Contact Kori Lin by phone or send an email
to **hhbdvrty25@yahoo.com**



SFC Baylis shows off his pictures of his family

RECIPE CORNER...

"Ain't your Momma's Baked Beans"!

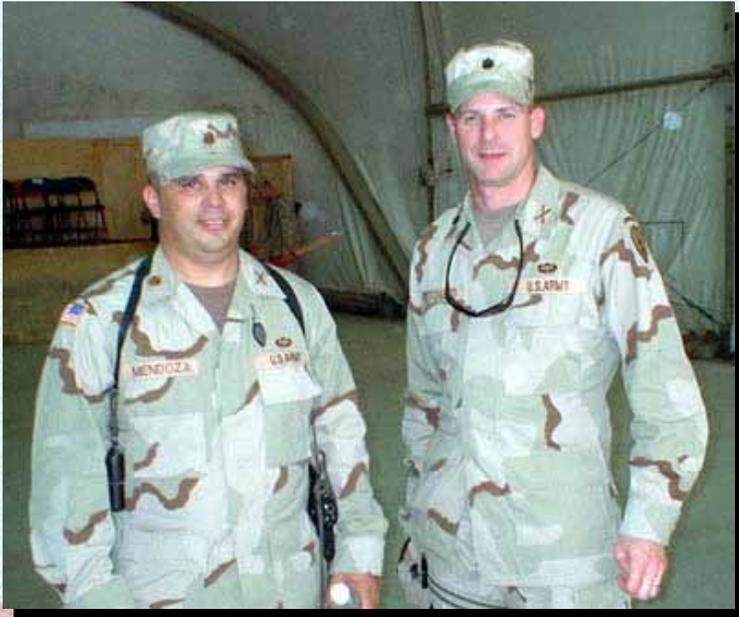
Ingredients:

- 2 Large cans of Bushes Bakes Beans or any other preferred brand.
- One tube of Jimmy Dean Sausage..(regular flavor)
- A 12-to 16 oz jar of "medium" heat salsa.

Brown the sausage and chop it up into small bits in medium size frying pan. Add salsa to the meat when it's cooked completely. Sauté the sausage and the salsa together on medium high for about 10 minutes. Stir occasionally. Add the can of beans. Turn the heat to medium and allow the mixture to simmer for about 20 minutes....

Serves about 10 to 12 people. About 5 to 6 if people come back for seconds, which they usually do! Its a great side dish for Bar-b-que, pork tenderloin, and Kabobs.

Enjoy!



LTC Pritchard and MAJ Mendoza

CONTACT INFORMATION

Staff Duty 655-2729

CPT McCarson 655-6575

Kori Lin Bucheit 672-0600

Comments, ideas, pictures?? If you have any of the above for the newsletter, please send them to hhbdvrtty25@yahoo.com. Any and all welcome and appreciated.

birthdays over there

August

- 2-Aug PFC Bauer
- 6-Aug SGT Hilliard
- 7-Aug PV2 Powell
- 8-Aug PFC Oertel
- 13-Aug SGT Henson
- 14-Aug SFC Daigle
- 19-Aug PFC Dasho



September

- 2-Sep SPC Cruz-Rivera , SPC Urbastch
- 4-Sep SFC Baylis, SGT T. Davis
- 5-Sep 2LT Kay, PFC Carreras-Brazoban
- 10-Sep SSG Birosh
- 13-Sep PFC Milford, PV2 Santos
- 19-Sep SSG Holden
- 20-Sep PV2 Altizer
- 21-Sep PFC Billingsley
- 22-Sep MSG Fisher
- 25-Sep SGM Brewer
- 29-Sep CW2 Gomez
- 30-Sep 1LT McCartan

Soldiers that have birthdays in Afghanistan still receive gifts, even if they are homemade. For instance, PFC Bauer received a card signed by his peers, along with feminine razors. But it's the thought that counts right?

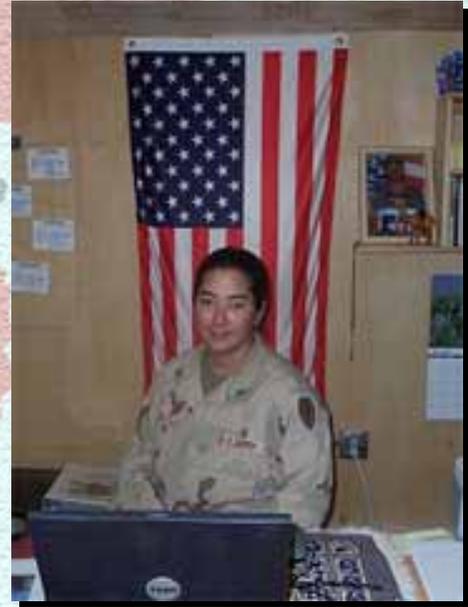
OUTSTANDING HHB SOLDIERS

PFC PEASE



With only one year in the Army, PFC Pease is taking care of business. His MOS is 96B (Intel Analyst), a valuable asset to the S2 section. PFC Pease provides situational awareness that helps not only TF Thunder, but also CJSOTF.

SGT PIASECKI



SGT Piasecki is the unit supply sergeant (92Y). She manages the Commanders property book along with keeping track of all the supplies. SGT Piasecki is also in charge of looking after the shipment of goods, receiving of equipment and supply, plus any other movement of property. SGT Piasecki's dedication has greatly enhanced the unit's overall readiness.



SGT HENDERSON PV2 POWELL

The S6 shop is a vital communication piece between all units. SGT Henderson and PV2 Powell are the mobile, fix all team. Whether you need a communication device for the field, or a quick fix for the computer these two soldiers are the answer.

PROMOTIONS

Outstanding soldiers have been promoted since we have been in Afghanistan:

SSG Sirignano to SFC Sirignano

CPL Henderson to SGT Henderson

SPC Takisthia to SGT Takishita

PV2 Billingsley to PFC Billingsley

PV2 Carter to PFC Carter

PV2 Fann to PFC Fann

PV2 Pease to PFC Pease

PV2 Rogers to PFC Rogers

PV2 Santos to PFC Santos

PV2 Schwary to PFC Schwary



RE-ENLISTMENTS

These soldiers have decided to provide the Army with great leaders for more years by re-enlisting. Re-enlistment opens many doors for high-speed soldiers while serving in a combat zone.

SFC Baylis

SGT Ragugalyang

SGT Elkins

SGT Hilliard

SGT Gould

SPC Hartsfeld



SGT Elkins, giving a speech after re-enlisting into the Army for another 6 years.

A DAY AT THE BAZAAR

The Bazaar is one event that gives us something to look forward to; it even helps us remember what day of the week it is. Whether HHB soldiers are smashing ten people into one car, or walking over a mile and a half down Disney Road to reach the Bazaar, we always seem to find time in our busy schedules to see the extravagant items being sold every week.

The local Nationals are now friendly faces to us, with their items piled on top of one another, secluded under little canopies. The sun always seems to be blistering hot on Bazaar days, without a speck of wind. Even glancing towards an item being sold and the local Nationals swarm around you to make a deal. Since there is no set price on any item here, the prices seem to fluctuate with every person. Therefore, the soldiers here are now acquiring the skills of becoming a successful bargainer. Whatever price they tell you the item is sold for, it's automatic that we respond with, "I can only afford half that amount right now." Then the bidding game begins. When all is said and done, someone always ends up going home with a great deal, while others obviously gave in too easily.



Rows of DVDs for sale



Other jewelry items that are sold

The items that are sold at the Bazaar range from beautiful rugs to little plastic trinkets for children. But the number one best seller clearly is the DVD's that are sold for only three dollars each. There are rows upon rows of these DVD's being sold here, with every single movie title you can think of. (see right hand corner)

Another popular item sold is the jewelry. Spouses, if you haven't received a present from your husband/wife yet, you better put your foot down! For the fashion guru's, men's watches are perfected nicely with diamonds, while there are necklaces, rubies, earrings, etc. for the women. This is another best seller among the bazaar goers. A variety of tapestries and rugs can also be purchased at the Bazaar, whether you would like something to wrap up in for winter,

or a carpet to lie on the floor. The prices are according to the size of the carpet, but they are very reasonable for every item you buy. To top off the bazaar, in the corner away from all the tables there is even a camel available to take pictures with. Even though the camel's not for sale, soldiers still enjoy its company.



The luxurious tapestries



More extravagant jewelry

The Many Accommodations of Bagram



Even though HHB's soldiers are far, far away from Hawaii, Bagram Airfield (BAF) tries to provide a place that we can call home away from home. Right outside of Camp Thunder a shuttle bus is available to take us to and from all locations of interest. For instance, the MWR buildings provide entertainment such as a ping pong table (CPT Telfort's obsession), 2 pool tables, morale phones, computers with internet, TV's which are used for Playstation 2 and X-Box, and a movie theatre that even provides hot popcorn! Next we have the gym inside an open hut (which is usually packed), with great music, free weights, and cardio machines. A majority of the soldiers do extra PT at this location on their own, but the PT program that our Platoon Sergeants and other leaders supply is whipping our soldiers into amazing shape. You at home are going to be so surprised at the changes in your family members; from their personal appearance, physical endurance, or even some soldiers commitment to getting into shape. In first platoon there is a little competition going on between a few of the soldiers for something called "The Heavy-weight Champion". To others, it's just considered part of the uniform, just a regular PT belt. However, PFC Arroyo currently holds the title, which was last held by SPC Reilley. It has gotten so competitive that on SPC Reilley's PT belt, "Daniel Real Deal Reilley, Heavy Weight Champion" can be seen written in black marker! The new up and comer champion, PFC Arroyo, proved himself to be the new title holder on the last PT test which was held in July.



SGT Ragulang, SPC Amposta, SPC Lauofo

Being a mail handler here for HHB DIVARTY is not an easy job. At first I thought all I needed to do was drop off outgoing mail everyday and pick up the soldiers mail to sort through and hand out. Oh was I wrong! About three times every hour a soldier asks the infamous question: "Did I get any mail today?" SFC Rocheleau and 1SG Sinapati take the prize this month for receiving the most mail; which is great because they also know how to share very well with others. The Post Office is open every day of the week here, even on holidays. It doesn't quite offer the services like back home, but it is sufficient enough to get the job done. The closest thing Bagram has to a mall would be the building with the PX, education center, Yuri's gift Shop, the coffee shop, and a day spa. Yes, a day spa. Although the spa isn't the Hilton Retreat, it does offer us a place to relax for a while. The services are haircuts, hair coloring, massages, pedicures, manicures, and waxing. The prices are phenomenal! On most services the prices are half that of those in the states. As for the coffee shop, it's open 24 hours a day and has all the basic coffees, hot or cold. Even on scorching day's soldier's rush to the coffee shop just for a little caffeine and a muffin. Yuri's gift shop is a fun store with jewelry for sale, mink robes, and also dolls for children. SSG Paxton has invested 1/3 of her paycheck in this store on gifts for relatives, friends, and a little something here and there for herself too!

The Many Accommodations of Bagram (cont)

When HHB first arrived in BAF, there was only one PX which is located exactly a mile away from Camp Thunder. Fortunately, right outside of our chow hall a second PX was built recently with even more items for sale. There is always OEF t-shirts for sale, along with snacks for soldier's, CD's, DVD's, cards, magazines, and many more odd items. The PX closest to our camp is the same in comparison with the old PX, yet most soldiers have decided that it is well worth the trip to take the bus or walk the mile hike to the other one. This is the reason: Not only does the old PX have the gift shop, coffee shop, etc - Burger King, a Pizza place, and a Tai food eatery also opened recently. Who can complain? These places keep the morale high and the friendships growing.



**TASK FORCE
THUNDER**



PFC Santos looking stronger than ever