



WHITE CURRAHEE

3 MILES UP



3 MILES DOWN



Volume 1, Issue 6



March 2011

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The Command Desk

Greetings once again from East Paktika, Afghanistan. White Currahee 6 is back off R&R, the MAJ Houston Era has come and gone, and the sun is out in East Paktika. The winter weather tried to keep this Battalion pinned down on its FOBs and COPs, but lost. Insurgents who attempt to infiltrate into East Paktika this spring will see a different picture than when they left.

This month has seen the White Currahees take and clear ground no coalition forces or Afghan Security Forces have taken before. The BN is making great strides in preparing our Afghan counterparts to assume their role as this country's independent security force. And as you all know, you can't do this by sitting on the FOB. TF White Currahee is dedicated to getting out and reaching the people through active patrolling that will take the fight to the enemy.

Specifically, this month we have conducted numerous air assaults, reconnaissance missions, and logistics and dismounted patrols. Dog Company has been scaling and clearing the high ground, working border interdiction operations and cutting insurgents off at the start of their travels. On the other side of the mountain Easy Company continues to make its presence known in the Zerok district through constant patrolling and reconnaissance from key terrain. The White Currahees are out cutting off insurgent supply lines and finding caches. Fox Company pushed their operations north, expanding their coverage and reconnoitering new grounds. Whiskey continued to demonstrate its versatility by supporting three Battalion Air Assaults as well as controlling the terrain and population around FOB Orgun-E. India company showed its ability to reach out and touch the population by air assaulting 30km south of the COP and clearing multiple villages. Sierra company continues to supply the force, conducting two major resupply operations and pushing over 65 trucks through over 200km of arduous terrain and raging wadis. An awesome effort across the entire battalion.

The tempo continues to be high as the White Currahees work to stay ahead and out in front of the insurgents. We would like to say good-bye, however, to a fallen comrade, PFC Arturo Rodriguez, who was killed in action this past month. PFC Rodriguez was an outstanding person, friend, and Soldier. He will be greatly missed, but we will continue to feed off the memories of him and his commitment to the team. CURRAHEE! STANDS ALONE!



Lieutenant General Bucknall chats with 1LT Wright on COP Margah on 21 March 2011



Brigadier General Uberti congratulates PFC Wilmot after presenting him with an Army Commendation Medal for Valor

Dog Company



Soldiers from 1st PLT, 2nd PLT, and HQ receive Combat Awards at the CIB/CAB awards ceremony at COP Munoz



MIDDLE: Displayed are the CIB, CAB, Bronze Star with Valor, and Company Coin



SPC Wang (Left), PFC Rodriguez (Right)

NEW SOLDIERS



SGT Farley
SGT Toon
SSG O'Connell

Awards



Bronze Star with Valor:
CPL Kolasinski

March has quickly passed by, bringing with it the much anticipated warm weather. Dog Company has continued a steady schedule, conducting more than 20 combat patrols and covering over 300 km (horizontal) this month alone.

Of the many events that occurred for Dog Company this month, the end of the month awards ceremony summarized the hard work and courageous actions that the Men of Dog Company have endured over the past 7 months. Presenting at the CIB/CAB ceremony was Colonel Jenkins, Major Houston, Captain Churchill, Command Sergeant Major Menton, Sergeant Major Santos, First Sergeant Ortega, and Staff Sergeant Billet. Of the many individuals receiving awards, CPL Kolasinski from 3rd PLT was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor for heroic actions back in October.

We would like to recognize a Fallen Hero, PFC Arturo Rodriguez, who was killed in action on March 12th. Arturo symbolized Dog Company in every respect and will be greatly missed by his Family, friends, and Brothers in Arms. Please keep his Family in your prayers. Two other heroes, PFC Glenn-Camden and SPC Wang, are currently on the path to recovery after receiving wounds in combat. Both are expected to make a 100% recovery.

We could not be more proud of the men of Dog Company!

RIGHT: SPC Wang (Left), PFC Glenn- Camden (Right)



Soldiers from 2nd PLT, 3rd PLT, and HQ receive Combat Awards at the Combat Infantry Badge/Combat Action Badge ceremony at FOB Tillman

Easy Company



SPC Mashburn and SGT Brooks prepare to clear a village with the Afghan National Police

From the Commander:

With the onset of spring, Easy Company Soldiers have begun trading cold weather gear for extra water as temperatures have already climbed into the 80s and 90s during the day. With the warm weather, Easy has redoubled its efforts in order to maintain the dramatic gains the company has made in the area. All of the platoons have patrolled aggressively throughout March – dominating the mountains and building relationships in the villages.

The Soldiers have also been busy building new living quarters, making life at COP Zerok more comfortable. Soldiers have been receiving mail and care packages from home. Those items really help morale, so keep them coming! At the end of the month the Soldiers of Easy Company took some time out of their active schedules as COL Jenkins recognized those among them who had earned their Combat Infantry Badges, Combat Action Badges, and Combat Medic Badges. CURRAHEE and God Bless!



1st platoon Soldiers pose for a picture with their Afghan National Army counterparts above COP Zerok .

NEW SOLDIERS



Ssg Joseph Camarillo
SGT Cory Hutchison
SPC Andrew Allen
PV2 Raymond Martin

CURRAHEE KIDS



Mikaela Mae Hill
Daughter of SPC John Hill



PFC Visi and PFC Nuckols follow SGT Brooks down a mountain to conduct a snap TCP.



COL Jenkins awards PFC Clark the coveted CIB.



Fox Company



White Smoke Guides in CH47 for Re-Supply at COP Margah



**WELCOME TO
CPT TANNER,
FOX COMPANY'S INCOMING
COMPANY
COMMANDER, AND
FAREWELL TO
CPT SCHULZ**



PROMOTIONS

**PFC HEIMES
PFC HUSKEY
PFC VERDUZCO
PFC WILMOT
SPC GRAMMER
SPC HALL
SGT LOVINGOOD
SSG GIBSON
SFC DOLAN**

Spring arrived in Fox Company's AO in a matter of days it seemed, and the snow covered mountains have returned to looking more like a lunar landscape. The line platoons have wasted no time taking advantage of the better weather conditions and have resumed their heavy patrol schedules that before the winter months led to solid gains over the enemy in Bermel Valley. All the Winter preparations are already paying dividends.

Over-watch Security in Margah Area



Due to the outstanding work of Fox Company Soldiers since we arrived in country back in August, we were visited by numerous Army VIPs over the last month. 101st Division's Commanding General, MG Campbell, LTG Bucknell, BG Uberti, and Command Sergeant Major Schroeder visited. Our Brigade Commander, COL Jenkins, and our Battalion Command Sergeant Major, CSM Menton presided over a Company awards ceremony where they presented Combat Badges and conducted the reenlistment and well deserved promotion of SFC Dolan.



CPT Tanner Commends SGT Mroczek After Being Honored at Fox Company's Award Ceremony at FOB Boris



Second Platoon

Whiskey Company



2LT Rackley (Left) and 1LT Hahn. 2LT Rackley is smiling because he's nervous and doesn't know what else to do. 1LT Hahn is smiling because he now has LT Rackley to carry his heavy assault pack.



ANA Leadership tries to "out-hug" W-CO Leadership. This activity went on for a while with no clear winner identified.



LT Helbig and SSG Fraley review their objectives while on patrol with DOG Company.

March was another busy month here in East Paktika for the men of Whiskey Company. As the weather warms up, our mission schedule has increased and we continue to fly, drive and walk to conduct operations. 2nd Platoon traveled to FOB Tillman to aid Dog Company in some extended patrols toward the end of the month and achieved great success! Third Platoon under CPT Rascher at COP Curry made some great headway in their area of operation over the past week while 1/W continued to focus their efforts on training our Afghan Border Police Partners at the 5th ABP Compound.

The Company is happy to welcome 2LT Nick Rackley this month, who comes to us as a Fire Support Officer (FSO). The XO, 1LT Beach, is gearing up for baseball's opening day by laboriously working on his pitching arm, earning him the nickname "the kid" (SPC Romero catches for him, and has been seen icing his hand after a catch). As we approach the end of this deployment it is very exciting to see the development of our Company, as they continue to impress the rest of the Battalion with their capabilities and "Can-Do" attitude. The men are extraordinarily motivated which makes leading them, at all levels, an honor and a privilege. Keep the packages and the prayers coming this direction, we truly appreciate them. Currahee! Stands Alone!

NEW SOLDIERS



2LT Rackley



Members of 1st Platoon waded through the snow in the mountains while on patrol earlier this month.

India Company



PROMOTIONS



SPC Batchelor
SPC Scarlett

NEW SOLDIERS



We welcome Major Michael Scioletti as the Battalion Executive Officer. He will replace MAJ Houston, who is our new Operations Officer, while we say goodbye to MAJ Rob Born, who is moving to Brigade Operations!

India Company is happy for the spring weather and melting snow with March. Time seems to be speeding up as the weather improves. We are building a new Tactical Operations Center and plan to have it up and running before the spring rains set in. We are increasing operations as the weather improves to make a lasting difference as we simultaneously begin preparations to redeploy home to Fort Campbell. We still have a job to do, but our time here is growing shorter. We will continue to accomplish our mission with a sense of pride and excellence.

The Mortars continue to play a vital role in operations. SSG Wright was able to conduct an atypical Air Assault mission by using a gator to transport a mortar system in support of maneuvering elements. The Scouts are happy the snow is melting so they can stop carrying all that extra gear. Multicam uniforms do not blend in well with snow! Our medics are doing an amazing job treating both U.S. and Afghan patients and continue to earn the call sign "Archangel." These warriors save lives.



SPC "Doc" Blackburn can't wait for the snow to melt!



SGT Stone promotes his Soldiers: SPC Batchelor and SPC Scarlett

The Company Headquarters element at Curry is working well with our newest team members: 3rd Platoon, Whiskey Company. Team Curry conducted another Air Assault operation with the Scouts and were happy to have 1SG Gallagher on the ground. Curry is currently in transition as we are improving living conditions for the Soldiers. We are sending Captain Rascher away for a much earned leave and hope he enjoys his time home with his Family in April. We continue to make plans for the future to establish the presence of Afghan governance and provide more security for the local populace. Curry continues to draw attention for our hard work in a large area as we received visits from the Division Commander, Division Command Sergeant Major, and Brigade Commander this month.



CPTs Weaver, Richardson, and Laakso celebrate Motivational Mustache March in style



TM Curry preparing to blow a cache with EOD

Chaplain Update

Happy Spring! I have finally returned back to Afghanistan (OE) from my 'extended stay' at home and I am excited to begin circulating to the outlying COPs again with SGT Birdsong. While I was at home, it was great to be able to do some counseling with our Rear-D Soldiers and spouses, and was even able to conduct two baptisms! While I was away SGT Birdsong was busy with many projects for the battalion which include our White Currahee Yearbook as well as making some very needed improvements at the Chapel at OE.

March was a trying month for the battalion, specially because of the death of PFC Arturo Rodriguez. We are reminded that "greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) I would ask that you please continue to pray for the Rodriguez Family as they continue to grieve as well as all of our Soldiers who are doing an exceptional job. "When you pray, better to let your heart be without words, than your words be without heart." (John Bunyan)

Chaplain's Corner



Baptizing PVT Webber at Memorial Chapel, Ft. Campbell



SGT Birdsong standing next to the new and improved 'Free-EX' in the OE Chapel.



New chapel banners from a member of 'Soldiers' Angels.



Dog Co. Soldiers receiving X-Box games from 'Adopt-a-Soldier Platoon.'

An Interesting Thought...

With only four or so months left, the 'light at the end of the tunnel' is beginning to appear for many Soldiers and Family members. As we begin to think about this topic, one of the areas that I will be focused on with Soldiers (in briefings) will be in the areas of... change, communication, intimacy, anger, and guilt. When we return these will also be some general themes that will be covered at the marriage retreats and other events. I would encourage you to start generally thinking about each of these areas. What are some areas that may be a problem for your Family, which of these areas have you struggled with before? Begin thinking, praying, and talking with your Soldier about these issues to minimize or improve them down the road.

Helpful Deployment Verses
Proverbs 15:15, 1 Timothy 6:6,
Psalm 37:23-24, & John 16:33



(Above) The new deck and baptistery under construction at the OE Chapel (right).





2-506th Family Readiness Support Assistant

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IMMEDIATE RESPONSE INFORMATION SYSTEM (IRIS)

The day is finally here! You're getting ready to start your day and welcome home your White Currahee hero. You suddenly get a phone call and it's an automated message from the Battalion. Your Soldier's flight is coming home three hours early! The anticipation of our White Currahee Soldiers returning home is building. As that day approaches we wanted to let everyone know about the automated phone system we use to help keep Families informed of when they can expect their Hero home.

White Currahees depend on the Immediate Response Information System (IRIS) to rapidly let Families know when their Soldier has begun his or her flight back to Fort Campbell, and any changes to their flight times. Have no fear, preparation for this is already underway. Soldiers will soon be informing their chain of command who they want to be notified of their flight information. You can help your Soldier out now by letting them know you want to be added to that list.

The second part to this preparation is ensuring we have correct information for all those who should be getting called. Sixty days prior to our Soldiers' expected re-deployment date we conduct a weekly call-down using the IRIS system. We are tentatively planning to start this sometime in May. At that time, if you are not getting a weekly call, one of two things could have happened. Either we do not have your correct information, or your Soldier did not put you on the list to be called. Either way, this will give us enough time to make any adjustments. The last part of this process occurs five to seven days prior to a Soldier's anticipated flight back to Fort Campbell. You will receive a call letting you know what label your Soldier's flight has been assigned, along with their expected arrival date back to Fort Campbell. As dates or flight times change you'll receive calls updating you on those changes.

As always, thanks for all the support you provide to the White Currahee Soldiers. Keep encouraging them as we get closer to redeployment. We can't wait for them to be back and neither can they!

Moving or Going Our of Town?

Please be sure to let us know if you are moving, changing phone numbers, or emails so we will have your current contact information.

If you are traveling out of town, please send Monica your travel dates and the address where you will be located, just in case of emergency.

Have you been in to visit the White Currahee Store? We are located in the Brigade 2-Story building in room 204 (upstairs in the BN area). Come check out our gear or place an order at www.peaksale.net under White Currahee. The next order deadline is 1 April. Those who have placed their orders by that date can expect to receive their gear within three weeks.

For more information or help with ordering contact Nicci Brooks at 210-667-6676 or at nicci.brooks@yahoo.com.



Right: From hats to tee shirts, the White Currahee store has something for everyone!



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