



Yankee Dispatch 26th

Task Force Yankee Newsletter

Rematch Boston Vs. Canada

Scouting for the
Future

26th Signal
Getting the job done

Service after ostomy
Deployed officers prove it's
possible



Yankee Dispatch

Vol. 2 - Issue 3 - August 2011

Task Force Yankee Public Affairs Office
26th "Yankee" Brigade

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Questions, comments or submissions for the Yankee Dispatch should be directed to the Task Force Yankee Public Affairs Office ATTN: 1st Lt. Kelly Souza, kelly.s.souza@afghan.swa.army.mil

On the Cover



The Canada 1 goalie prepares to block a shot during the final game of the Camp Phoenix ball hockey tournament between the 26th Yankee Brigade Misfits and Canada 1. (Photo by Master Cpl. Rory Wilson, Canadian Forces)

In This Edition

Commander's corner

Service after ostomy

Happy birthday YD Soldiers

26th Signal getting the job done

Outstanding "Yankee" Brigade volunteers recognized

Chaplain's corner

Command Sergeant Major's corner

Scouting for the future

Commander's Corner

Greetings from Afghanistan!

Summer is in full swing, which means we have transitioned from winter to spring to summer!! This means that we are more than half way to completing this deployment and mission. Many of our Soldiers have taken or are about to take their leave. I hope you all have wonderful reunions and thoroughly enjoy yourselves. Congratulations to our comrades in the 181st Infantry, they have arrived home safe and sound, and are on their well deserved terminal leave with their loved ones.

The mission goes well here in Afghanistan. The Command Sgt. Maj. and I had great visit with Capt. Poindexter and 1st Sgt. Groulx of the 26th Signal Company down in Kandahar. Despite the temperatures that range from 115 -130 degrees in the summer, our YD Signalers are doing a tremendous job providing critical communication support in five separate sites across Afghanistan. Many of these Soldiers have taken my challenge to run 1,000 miles while in theater ("The Kabul-K") quite seriously, and the 50 Soldiers from this unit have collectively shed close to 500 pounds (one losing 65 pounds). The 182nd Infantry Soldiers have hit the ground running. They have made a significant impact here in Kabul at Camps Phoenix, Alamo, and Julien-Dubbs. In addition, their 13 Provincial Reconstruction Team Security Platoons are performing exceptionally well throughout Afghanistan responding to attacks and engaging insurgents. Fourteen Soldiers from the 182nd Infantry have already received the Purple Heart medal for wounds sustained through enemy contact.

Our Soldiers continue to perform a number of critical missions throughout Kabul. Last month, they were selected to provide sniper teams and security forces for changes of command for both Gen. Petraeus and Lt. Gen. Rodriguez. The security at our 11 bases has dramatically improved over the past six months, and the installation/ life support provided to more than 10,000 U.S. and Coalition Forces has been superb. To accomplish this near herculean task, we have completed more than 80 construction projects, and executed more than \$70 million in contracts. We now have 17 Commander's Emergency Response Program projects underway that assist the local communities. These range from water wells to schools to medical clinics. We recently visited one such project underway at an orphanage that houses 100 orphans, a number of widows, and a group of mentally handicapped people, all of whom would be left to die if it were not for this compound and the great people assisting them. We will discuss the "Yankee" Brigade's adoption of this project in more detail over the next few months.

We have now turned the corner on this deployment and are heading towards the finish line. This is great news, as there is light appearing at the end of the tunnel for our Soldiers
Page 3



and their Families. The 648th Brigade (from Georgia), our replacement unit, will be here for their Pre-Deployment Site Visit next month and they are as eager to take over this mission as we are to pass it on to them. As we complete the second half of this mission, it is extremely important to keep good communications between our Soldiers and Families, and to request any assistance that is needed to keep our Families whole and healthy. We have great support assets in place on both sides of the ocean for both Soldiers and Families. Please ensure you access these at the earliest sign of any problems or difficult challenges, we have dedicated professionals in place at your disposal! Please avail yourself of these resources.

As always, please keep our YD Soldiers and all our service members and their Families in your thoughts and prayers.

"First to Fight, Yankee Pride!"

Brig. Gen. Jack Hammond

Yankee-6



Deployed officers prove service after ostomy possible

By Sgt. 1st Class JR Williams, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs
KABUL, Afghanistan – Chief Warrant Officer 4 Robert Cuyler, began his quest nearly three years ago. He wanted people to know they could achieve a full, active life following ostomy surgery. In particular, he wanted veterans and fellow Soldiers to know that life following this type of surgery existed.

“The United Ostomy Association of America is working with Veterans’ Administration hospitals to bring support and awareness to servicemembers who need to have an ostomy,” explained the Hannibal, N.Y., native with the 10 Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Falcon. “Veterans aren’t the only ones who need to know what to expect following this kind of surgery. Some of our Soldiers injured by improvised explosive device blasts need an ostomy as a result of their injuries.”

Cuyler advocates the veterans outreach program because he knows all about living with an ostomy. In July 2007, following a seven-year battle with ulcerative colitis, doctors removed his entire colon. The surgery left him with a stoma — an opening through his abdomen with an appliance bag attached. Typically, this kind of surgery means a discharge from active duty, but Cuyler set his sights on staying in.

After 15 months of research and physical therapy, a medical
Vol. 2 Issue 3

board cleared Cuyler for active duty and a return to flight status. A 12-month deployment quickly followed and during this time, Cuyler was presented with the Tony Snow Public Service Award from the Great Comebacks program.

That’s when the pilot began to raise awareness to help others in a similar situation. Others like U.S. Army Lt. Col. William J. O’Brien, Jr., the director of Public Works for Task Force Yankee.

“I received an ostomy after being diagnosed with cancer,” said the Quincy, Mass., native. “I found out about Bob from the UOAA. They have a program called Ostomy Secrets and they linked us up,” said O’Brien. “From there, he’s taken care of me and made sure I could stay in the military.”

Cuyler’s efforts laid the foundation for O’Brien to remain in the Army.

“I clearly remember the day that I got word that (O’Brien) was a Soldier in a similar situation as I was just months before,” said Cuyler. “And when I called him it was obvious that he too was going against the grain to not only stay in the military, but to also get cleared to deploy to a combat zone.”

To remain in the service, O’Brien needed to prove precedence with his doctors. Cuyler provided a copy of his medical records,

and O'Brien's doctors cleared him for duty shortly after.

"It's a privilege to be able to stay in the military and serve," said O'Brien. "I think the last time we really spoke, I was sitting in a chair at Dana-Farber (Cancer Institute) getting chemo and I got a call from Iraq and it was Bob. From then on, one of my goals was to become fully fit for duty."

Now, just like Cuyler, O'Brien is continuing his service in the Army — to include a deployment to Afghanistan. Cuyler is stationed at Bagram Airfield with Task Force Falcon, O'Brien at Camp Phoenix with Task Force Yankee. For the first time since getting in touch, the Soldiers met in person at Camp Phoenix.

"It's great to finally meet Bob after all this time," said O'Brien. "If it weren't for Chief Cuyler, I wouldn't be here today."

Cuyler said he's helped others before, but he's never met any of them face to face.

"It's a great feeling to know that my experience has actually helped others to overcome the same hurdles," said Cuyler. "Before receiving the 'Great Comebacks Tony Snow Public Service Award' everything that I did to save my career was for me. I had no idea that it would actually help others. Several doctors told me along the way, that I was setting a new precedent, but at the time I didn't really know what that meant. After actually meeting Lt. Col. O'Brien over here, I actually felt what that meant."

While Cuyler is thrilled to help O'Brien achieve his goals, he cautioned medical boards still have a place when it comes to deciding a patient's ability to serve.

"I'll be the first to say that the military shouldn't abandon their medical restrictions when it comes to people with ostomies," he said. "Although, I am pleased to see that they are looking at Soldiers on a case-by-case basis, and if the individual has the desire, can find the right medical products ... and if they learn to deal with their condition appropriately, that they will grant exceptions to policy to allow the Soldier to continue to serve."

Now, both men advocate others to use the veterans outreach program and to pursue goals following the surgery. They say a common misconception leads ostomates and others to believe they'll never engage in rigorous activities again. Besides facing the rigors of a deployment (complete with body armor), both men continue their athletic pursuits. Chief Cuyler runs a half-marathon each week to help raise awareness for the veterans outreach program. And O'Brien still enjoys a favorite pastime when he's home in Massachusetts.

"I'm playing on the Red Leg hockey team, it's with the Massachusetts National Guard, and we go to Vegas once a year to play in tournaments, so I'm really enjoying that. I'm still kicking."

According to Cuyler, O'Brien now stands as another example to other ostomates that life isn't over after ostomy surgery.

"Unfortunately, many Soldiers and veterans (both young and old) do not continue to pursue their dreams following surgery," said Cuyler. "I have talked with nurses who care for Soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who now have permanent ostomies because of combat injuries, and a common theme I hear is that many of these young men and women are ashamed of their condition (they try to hide it from others), and they give up on pursuing many of their dreams."

Cuyler said it was his support group that helped him after the surgery.

"If it wasn't for the help that I received from the members of my local ostomy support group, I wouldn't be here today," he said. "The effect of support from others in a similar situation is powerful. UOAA acknowledges this, and therefore, they have created the VA outreach program. Our goal is to reach out to as many veterans as we can to offer both advice and support."

"Just have hope that you'll get through it. People like Chief Cuyler and myself are living proof that if you put your mind to it you can do just about anything," said O'Brien.

The UOAA is a national network for bowel and urinary diversion support groups in the United States. The veterans outreach program provides support, information, advocacy and service to veterans and active duty personnel affected by medical issues which have necessitated or may necessitate ostomy or bowel, bladder diversion surgery. The veterans outreach program came about to help military veterans, both young and old, live with their ostomies.

For more information about the veterans outreach program, go online to <http://www.ostomy.org/>.

Happy birthday YD Soldiers

By Lt. Col. James Sahady, Massachusetts National Guard Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan – Ninety-four years ago, the historic 26th Yankee Infantry Division was formed. Today, the division's heritage is carried on by the 26th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. Currently the brigade is designated as "Task Force Yankee," commanded by Brig. Gen. John A. Hammond, Massachusetts Army National Guard. Task Force Yankee is deployed to Afghanistan.

On Aug. 22, 2011, Soldiers from Task Force Yankee conducted a ceremony at Camp Phoenix celebrating the 94th birthday of the 26th Yankee Division and also conducted a combat patch ceremony complete with a YD birthday cake.

Formed in 1917, the division was activated on August 22 of that year in Boston. The division consisted of two brigades comprising of National Guard units from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine. The division's commander, Maj. Gen. C.R. Edwards, selected the nickname "Yankee Division" to highlight the division's geographic makeup.

The division approved a shoulder sleeve insignia with a blue "YD" monogram on a diamond of khaki color to depict its composition of Soldiers from New England.

The division deployed to World War I and saw extensive combat in France. The division again deployed for World War II, fought through France, advancing into Germany. The Soldiers of the Yankee Division served gallantly in both world wars and fought under Gen. George Patton's Army where he was quoted as saying to Maj. Gen. Omar Bradley: "Brad, my three best divisions are the 4th Armored, the 80th and the 26th. I'll concentrate the



Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory C. Widberg (pictured left), of the 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry Regiment, Massachusetts Army National Guard cuts the cake with 2nd Lt. Douglas B. Sulser (youngest Soldier present), 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry Regiment, during a ceremony honoring the 94th anniversary of the Yankee Brigade, on Aug. 22, 2011, Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. George Gay, Task Force America).

4th Armored at Longwy beginning tonight, I'll start the 80th on Luxembourg tomorrow morning, and I'll alert the 26th to be ready to move."

Hammond presented several 21st Century Yankee Soldiers with their YD combat patch on this historic anniversary for their service in Afghanistan.

"Our current YD Soldiers are fighting (for) and serving this Nation with the same patriotic vigor and Yankee pride," said Hammond. "They have upheld their ancient honors, kept their powder dry and maintained the high standards established by our Yankee Division forbearers nearly 100 years ago," he said.

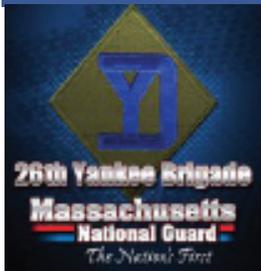
These present day Yankee Soldiers will now join two previous generations who have earned the right to proudly wear the YD patch on their right shoulder in recognition of their

wartime service. These heroic Soldiers will join the YD Soldiers of the 101st Engineer Battalion, the 101st Field Artillery Regiment, the 1st Battalion 181st Infantry Regiment, the 1st Battalion 182nd Infantry Regiment, the 26th Signal Company and the 26th Brigade Headquarters in adding a new chapter to the rich history of the 26th Yankee Division.

"They (TF Yankee) have truly earned the respect and admiration of their comrades, neighbors, elected officials back in Massachusetts and the Yankee Division Soldiers who have preceded them. I present these greetings to you with respect and admiration," Hammond said.

The lineage of the Yankee Division continues with the selfless service of our New England Soldiers providing for the defense of our Nation.

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Write something...



26th Yankee Brigade

Massachusetts Soldiers Promoted in Afghanistan
 KABUL, Afghanistan— Soldiers from Seekonk and Rockland, Massachusetts were promoted here today. Pfc. Melissa Mussig, Operations Specialist and Pfc. William Donadini, Department of Plans Training and Mobilization, movement team, stand at attention in front of a formation after being promote...

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Cait McGuire Congrats Spc. Mussig!
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Write a comment...



26th Yankee Brigade

KABUL, Afghanistan—a Saugus, Massachusetts resident and Billerica firefighter is promoted to Sgt. 1st Class. Staff Sgt. Keith McDonald, the Department of Emergency Services, Fire and Emergency Medical Services Noncommissioned Officer in Charge, was promoted by Master Sgt. Michael Almeida here today. The 26th "Yankee" Brigade provides command and control, security and support operations for the nearly 9,000 U.S. and coalition forces operating in the capital region. (U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Steven Eaton, Task Force Yankee Public Affairs)



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KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Specialist Keith M. Botschaffer of the 26th Signal Company, Massachusetts Army National Guard, was flown into Camp Nathan Smith, to help the Direct Signal Support Team with a major rewiring project of the buildings vacated by the Canadian Army. (Photo by SSG Jesse L. Medford, NCOIC of 26th Signal Co., CNS DSST)



26th Signal Company getting the job done



KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – 26th Signal Company's Camp Nathan Smith Direct Signal Support Team, Massachusetts Army National Guard, gets together with ITT Systems for a 25th Signal Battalion photo opportunity July 15, 2011 outside the CNS Mayor Cell. (Photo by Richard Haverstock, ITT Systems)

Chaplain's Corner



By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Larry Bazer

It is wonderful to be back with the 26th "Yankee" Brigade after a long six month medical recovery. As you may know, I was slated to be with the Brigade for the first part of the deployment. I had the chance to meet many of you back in Reading, during our Pre-Mob AT. Unfortunately, a week before the unit left for Fort Hood I was "attacked by a piece of ice," and broke my ankle. Well after six months I am with you again, just no dancing.

I am here for all of you. Although, I do wear another hat as the KBC Command Chaplain, overseeing all the religious and spiritual life within RC-Capital; I am first and foremost the Task Force Yankee Chaplain – your chaplain! As an ordained clergy, I have specialized in pastoral counseling and am a strong listener in issues concerning, stress, marital and family, spiritual and bereavement. Just seek me out, I'm here to help.

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Anderson will be staying on with the 26th "Yankee" Brigade and serve as my deputy Command Chaplain. We are blessed at the 26th with a strong Religious Support Team.

I want to leave you with this closing thought from the ancient sage, Tarfon (1st CE); "*You are not obliged to finish the task, neither are you free to neglect it.*" Over the brief time I've been here I witnessed the incredible work Task Force Yankee has done in RC-Capital. Many times, even short staffed, our Soldiers "have moved mountains," making a difference for USFOR-A and perhaps, more importantly, for the Afghan people. Some previous projects the "Yankee" Brigade brought up to speed, others are completely original. "Yankee Pride" has been felt!

As we go forward into the second half of our deployment, we will see some projects completed with the great satisfaction of making qualitative and quantitative differences. Other projects we will "hand off" to the next task force following us. These sagely words rings true. Just because we won't see something to fruition, you and I are not "free to neglect it." Each of us can and will make a difference. The work of our hands and heart, will be felt and blessed long after we have returned home. Keep striving and succeeding.

Again, it is wonderful to be with you again. Stop me just to say hi.

Blessings,

CH (Lt. Col.) Larry Bazer

Outstanding “Yankee” Brigade volunteers recognized for Outreach



The Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal recognizes those members of the military (Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard) who perform substantial volunteer service to the local community above and beyond the duties required as a member of the United States Armed Forces. Members of Operation Outreach Afghanistan receive the MOSVM after volunteering 80 hours of their time attending meetings, sorting donations and participating in humanitarian missions to drop the materials.



Task Force Yankee Soldiers Cpt. Steven Bonavita (above) and Maj. Ralph Pickett (left) received the award after volunteering 80 hours of their time with Operation Outreach Afghanistan.

(U.S. Army photos by 1st. Lt. Kelly Souza, Task Force Yankee Public Affairs)

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR'S CORNER

Hello from Kabul, Afghanistan.

We've had a couple of busy months for the "Yankee" Brigade. We started off July with our commander getting promoted to Brigadier General. Brig. Gen. Hammond was promoted by Gen. David H. Petraeus at International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Headquarters on July 7, 2011. All the Soldiers that were present for the ceremony not only got a picture with Gen. Petraeus, but also received his acclaimed personal coin. It was a great ceremony and we congratulate Brig. Gen. Hammond and his family for this accomplishment. On July 14th our very own Chief Warrant Officer 4 "Yankee Dog" Girard celebrated, along with his fellow Chief Warrant Officers, the 93rd birthday of the Chief Warrants in a nice ceremony. On July 28th we had a very special visit from Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill, who is the ISAF Command Sergeant Major. He is the senior noncommissioned officer for the theater of Afghanistan, and was Gen. Petraeus's command sergeant major. (Gen. Petraeus has since been replaced by Gen. John R. Allen). Command Sgt. Maj. Hill took a tour of our area and presented 15 coins to our Soldiers for the great work they have been doing. Rest assured our Soldiers are doing an outstanding job and everywhere the commander and I go we receive accolades for the job they are doing. To switch gears a little bit and give you a little YD History; many of you may not be aware that the Yankee Division had a mascot back in WWI, named Stubby. He was a Boston terrier pit bull mix and served his Soldiers well. Although Stubby died in 1926, he still has a Facebook page, so you can check it out. I pulled a short article off the internet to give you a brief history and some insight on this amazing dog.

Stubby began life as a stray on the Yale campus in 1917 and went on to become the only dog to be promoted to sergeant through combat. This highly decorated pooch served his country well!

The Boston terrier / pit bull mix joined his owner John Robert Conroy in serving with the 102nd Infantry, 26th Division in World War I. He was in the trenches in France for 18 months and participated in four offensives and 17 battles. Stubby had many duties on the front lines. He located wounded Soldiers in no man's land and woke a sleeping sentry to alert him of an attack. He let his unit know when to duck for cover since he could hear the whine of incoming artillery shells before the humans could. And after being gassed himself, he learned to warn his unit about poison gas attacks. Just as important, he provided morale-lifting visits up and down the line. He even discovered a German spy in hiding, holding onto his pants until Soldiers arrived to complete the capture.

In April 1918, Stubby was injured during a raid to take Schieprey. As the Germans withdrew, they threw a hand grenade behind them. The overly enthusiastic Stubby was on top of the trench when it went off and was injured in the foreleg. He recovered from the injury and went onto return to the front lines.

Stubby was frequently seen wearing his chamois coat which was embroidered with the flags of the allies and displayed his many medals. The garment was made for him by the grateful women of Château-Thierry after the U.S. retook the town.

By the end of his military career, Sergeant Stubby was the most



decorated war dog of World War I and the only dog to be promoted to sergeant through combat. He was honored by Presidents Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge, and Warren G. Harding. When he returned home from the war, Stubby became a celebrity. He became a lifetime member of the American Legion and marched in every legion parade and attended every legion convention from the end of the war until his death. In 1926, at age 9 or 10, Stubby died in Conroy's arms. His obituary in the New York Times was three columns wide by half a page long! His remains were presented for display purposes to the Smithsonian, where they are now featured in the Price of Freedom: Americans at War exhibit. He was also honored with a brick in the Walk of Honor at the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City. Stubby is one K9 Veteran who will never be forgotten!

Command Sgt. Maj. William Davidson

"Yankee-7"



Scouting for the future



Staff Sgt. Keith Rowe stands with a local Afghanistan scout master in front of the Afghanistan Scout National Training Center.

By: 1st Lt. Kelly Souza, Task Force Yankee Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan — Members of Task Force Yankee have found a way to give back to the local Afghan community that may surprise you, they volunteer with local Boys and Girl Scout Troops.

Staff Sgt. Keith Rowe, a movement team NCO with Task Force Yankee and an Eagle Scout spends his free time at the Marastoon Orphanage teaching Afghan boys the fundamentals of scouting and coordinating efforts back at home to support this cause.

“I am working with my old troop to get supplies,” Rowe said. “This is also a great cause for Eagle projects back home.”

The Marastoon Orphanage is an Afghan run residence for the disabled and for widow, and the scout program is one of the programs that they offer. Their scout program looks just like those found in the U.S. and Europe. This program teaches values such as trustworthiness, loyalty and helpfulness.

The Marastoon Scout Troop, whose membership includes approximately 100 boys and girls in Kabul,

gives Soldiers like Rowe an opportunity to work within the local community and take part in one of the important humanitarian assistance missions that Task Force Yankee has taken on since arriving in Kabul.

The Scouts have been a part of Afghanistan’s history for decades, and flourished in the 1970’s before the Soviet invasion. Handbooks, uniforms and badges were lost or forgotten during the occupation, and scouting disappeared from Afghan life.

More than 20 years later, in 2002, Scouting was restarted. Ministry of Education officials are in the process of writing the handbooks and making a defined program with assistance from coalition members.

Scout leaders teach the children about morality, safety, commitment to their country, and to become leaders.

“This is a great cause,” Rowe said. “I am really hopeful that I can make a difference here and also create awareness of this great program back at home.”



Left: Members of the Marastoon Scout Troop practice tying knots during an Afghan Boy Scout outing in July 2011.

Below: Members of the Marastoon Scout Troop stand in a formation prior to a scouting weekend, where they learned basic scouting skills like knot tying, pitching tents and even told stories by camp fire.



Left: Command Sgt. Maj. William M. Davidson, Command Sergeant Major, Task Force Yankee, 26th "Yankee" Brigade, Massachusetts Army National Guard and Staff Sgt. Keith Rowe, who are both Eagle Scouts, pose next to the Afghanistan Boy Scout's Flag.

Below: Marastoon Scout Troop Boy Scouts put the finishing touches on a rope bridge.



YD History

Soldier Spotlight

This Month in “Yankee” Division History

The 26th Infantry Division was activated on August 22, 1917 in Boston, Massachusetts. The division commanded two brigades comprising National Guard units from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine.

Division commander Major General C. R. Edwards called a press conference to determine a nickname for the newly formed division. Edwards decided to settle on the suggestion of “Yankee Division” since all of the subordinate units of the division were from New England. Shortly thereafter, the division approved a shoulder sleeve insignia with a “YD” monogram to reflect this.



KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Brig. Gen. John A. Hammond, commander of Task Force Yankee, 26th “Yankee” Brigade, Massachusetts Army National Guard, and Command Sgt. Maj. William M. Davidson visit the 26th Signal Company, Massachusetts Army National Guard Aug. 4, 2011. Many of these Soldiers have accepted Hammond’s challenge to run 1,000 miles while in theater (“The Kabul-K”) serious, and 50 Soldiers from this unit have collectively shed close to 500 pounds, one Soldier lost 65 pounds. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Tyler Field, Task Force Yankee)



Yankee Dispatch Submission Guidelines

Articles:

250-300 words for a half-page story;

600-800 words for a full-page article

Include first and last names and verify spelling. Spell out acronyms, abbreviations and full unit designations on first reference.

If there is a Unit Public Affairs Representative, ensure he or she reviews it.

Photographs:

Highest resolution possible

No retouched photos

Caption (what is happening, who is pictured and the date of the photo)

Credit (who took the photo)

Do not embed the photo in a Word.doc.

E-mail submissions to: james.lally@us.army.mil

Family Readiness



Members of the 26th "Yankee" Brigade, Task Force Yankee, Massachusetts Army National Guard pose for a picture in the shape of the unit's YD Patch on North Fort Hood, Texas, April 14, 2011. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Jay Baker, 1st Army West Public Affairs)

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Find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/26th-Yankee-Brigade-Family-Support-Group/146042042126165>

Around The Brigade



Above: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Brig. Gen. John A. Hammond, commander of Task Force Yankee, 26th “Yankee” Brigade, Massachusetts Army National Guard, talks with Sgt. Amanda Coleman, 26th Signal Company, Massachusetts Army National Guard after promoting her Aug. 4, 2011. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Tyler Field, Task Force Yankee)



The oldest and youngest Warrant Officers on Camp Phoenix cut the Warrant Officer Corps birthday cake here on July 9, 2011. Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Girard (left) and Warrant Officer Jean-Pierre Louis (right) cut the cake signifying the past, present and future of the Warrant Officer Corps. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Steven C. Eaton, Task Force Yankee Public Affairs)

Right: The Camp Phoenix ball hockey champions, the 26th Yankee Brigade Misfits, from left to right, Spc. Thomas Murphy, Maj. Daniel McNeill, Lt.-Col. Robert Dwan, Sgt. First Class Paul Morrissette, Sgt. First Class Gregg Yanchuk, Private First Class Michael Collard and Private Shawn Merrill August 14, 2011. With a goal from Maj. Daniel McNeill the Yankee Misfits edged out the Canadian 1, 6-5 (Photo by Master Cpl. Rory Wilson, Canadian Forces)





Members who recently completed the Unit Victim Advocate class at Camp Eggers pose for a photo. The class was set up by the Task Force Yankee Deployed Sexual Assault Prevention Coordinator, 1st Lt. Kelly Souza, and the Task Force Yankee Equal Opportunity Advisor, Sgt. 1st Class Gregg Yanchuk, to educate unit victim advocates on the newest problems and solutions facing the military. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class John R. Fischer)



Sgt. 1st Class Robert Boucher, the security noncommissioned officer for the New Kabul Compound receives a gift certificate from the AAFES staff in recognition for all of his hard work toward making their grand opening a success in the Post Exchange August 30, 2011. (U.S. Army photo courtesy Task Force Yankee)



Brig. Gen John A. Hammond, commander of Task Force Yankee, 26th "Yankee" Brigade, Massachusetts Army National Guard, presents Lt. Col. Anthony Sciaraffa, the staff judge advocate for Task Force Yankee with the Bronze Star Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal and the NATO International Security Assistance Force Medal for his service to the Kabul Base Cluster Command during an award ceremony Aug. 11, 2011. (U.S. Army photo by 1st. Lt. Kelly Souza, Task Force Yankee Public Affairs)



Lt. Col. Thomas M. Stewart, commander 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry Regiment, Massachusetts Army National Guard, thanks Sgt. 1st Class Jason A. Christian for his service during a combat patch ceremony in Patriot Square, Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan August 22, 2011. The 182nd held the ceremony to present Soldiers with their unit patches that signify wartime service. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. James Lally, Task Force Yankee Public Affairs)

26th Yankee Brigade



M&P40-309300
Caliber: .40 S&W
Capacity: 15+1
Barrel Length: 4.25"



M1911- 108482
Caliber: .45 ACP
Capacity: 8+1
Barrel Length: 5"

Commemorative Pistols

More Information to Come!!