



The Challengers



*The Challengers Family Readiness Group, M-158 Aviation Maintenance Company,
Building 7016, Second Floor, HAAF, Box 81, Fort Hood, Texas 76544-5081, (877) 620-4187*

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From the Commander

You have probably already heard how hot it is getting here. It is much hotter than even a Texas summer. We continue to work hard despite the heat although it does hinder us and we have to take precautions to avoid heat injuries. The soldiers in M-Company are doing an excellent job and achieving the mission goals. I am very proud of what they are doing on a daily basis.

Every day here is like "Ground Hog Day" meaning they all seem to be the same. It is very monotonous some days and the soldiers entertain themselves through various means. We have quite a movie collection being shared among the troops and our intramural sports program is going strong. The soldiers are also beginning to take their two weeks R&R and our intent is that everyone will get to enjoy this program. I have to juggle the mission requirements with the available leave slots to make sure we still accomplish the mission.

We recently had a mortar attack here on Camp Anaconda which made the nightly news. Many of you heard this and as I understand it caused much stress in the family support group. I ask that you keep speculation and rumors to yourself. The only facts are the ones provided through official channels. In a situation where there is a soldier injured it is totally inappropriate for you or your soldier to speculate or provide information to anyone within our organization on the circumstances of the injury. This is a sensitive issue and there are protocols that must be followed to assure those affected are notified properly. You can imagine how terrible it would be to hear false information about your loved one. Therefore, I ask you to not speak about or spread information that has not come from an official source.

As always, I thank you for your support back home and ask you to continue to pray for us.

Lonnie Slade
MAJ, AV
Commanding

From the First Sergeant

By 1SG Jay Huseman

The R&R program has started to pick up and we are seeing an increase in the number of slots available for M co. Soldiers. Everyone who wanted R&R during June was able to go. We will continue working to get your Soldier home for a well deserved rest.

The Battalion is planning a 4th of July picnic. The menu will consist of burgers and hot dogs. There will be spades, basketball, and domino tournaments, and a talent show. Prizes will be awarded to the winners.

An E-5/E-6 promotion board was held 22 June and we should have the results soon.

M158 Website

M Company has a web page! 13th COSCOM has generously donated web space and is maintaining the site for our unit. The Challenger, pictures of our soldiers, FRG and unit contact information is now available online.

Visit us at:

www.hood.army.mil/13coscom
Click the FRG link , then the link to the 158th Aviation site. Submit suggestions, pictures, articles, comments, etc. to the FRG Newsletter Editor.

Fund Raising

Magnetic ribbons are still available in your choice of yellow or red, white, & blue. Contact an FRG member to purchase. If you have an idea for a fund-raiser, please forward your suggestion to your telephone tree contact or the FRG Leader. Thanks to everyone for your continued support!



From the RDO

By Cpt Steve Gambichler

Effective 1 July 2004 CPT Ed Escobedo assumes command of the Rear Detachment of M/158th.

Well my time has come to move to my next assignment. I have enjoyed my short time with M/158th and wish all the soldiers and family members the best. I depart to join my wife and kids at our new assignment with the 244th Aviation Brigade Headquarters. I will be taking on the responsibilities of the Brigade

S1. My duties will involve managing the personnel actions for the entire 244th Aviation Brigade. I leave Fort Hood and Texas with a heavy heart. I leave many good friends and great memories behind in the Lone Star State. Thanks a lot, God speed M Company, and good luck to all of the wonderful families.

Operation Hero Miles

Help our troops stationed overseas by donating your unused frequent flyer miles to allow the military to provide free transportation for families in an emergency leave situation. Additional information can be found at www.heromiles.org

Find more ways to support our troops at www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html

Home Front Reporters

Soldiers and their families like to know what's happening at home. The Challengers Newsletter needs volunteers from each of our soldier's "home units" to contribute monthly articles. Submissions would include drill schedules, post activities, family announcements, local news, etc. If you would like more information, please contact the newsletter editor at m158.frgnewsletter@us.army.mil or call (877) 620-4187.

By SFC James Kashka

M CO 158TH AVN REGT LIFE AT LSA ANACONDA

Our Soldiers Proudly Serve

MAILING ADDRESS

Our soldiers greatly appreciate all of the letters, and especially packages from home. Our mailing address is as follows:

SOLDIERS NAME
Co M 158th Aviation Regiment
LSA Anaconda (optional)
APO AE 09391

WHAT SHOULD I SEND?

Books and magazines
Hometown newspapers
CD's
DVD's
Pre-sweetened Tea, Kool-Aid, etc
Coffee
Deodorizers
Nuts

LIFE IN IRAQ—A MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE TROOPS OF CO M 158TH

Well, things here are about the same. There's a saying around here that everyday is Ground Hog day in Iraq. This statement is made in reference to a not so popular Bill Murray movie of the same title several years ago. In the movie, by some freak of nature, the character is forced to relive the same day over and over. As with life here, the day-in and day-out routine is pretty much the same.

OPERATION LAUGHLINE

A special THANK YOU to Tracy Bristol, wife of CW4 Bristol, Platoon leader for 2nd Platoon. Tracy spear-headed a campaign in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area to have comedy DVD's donated and sent to our soldiers in Iraq. Tracy called into Dew's KISS 106 FM's morning radio show and pleaded for help from radio personality, Kidd Kraddick. As a result of Tracy's initiative and hard work, over 80 movies have been donated and sent to the soldiers of Co M. These DVD's are now available to the soldiers on a sign-out basis. Pictures of the soldiers with the DVD's can be seen on the KISS 106.1 website under:

Letters to soldiers.
www.1061kissfm.com/kiddkraddick.html

RE-ENLISTMENT NEWS

Against her better judgment, SSG Zumudo recently re-enlisted for continued service within the USAR. SSG Zumudo is a full-time AGR soldier who has been with Co M for over four years. Congratulations and thanks for continuing to serve your country!!

SPORTING NEWS

In keeping with our American creativity and the drive to make the best of any situation, our soldiers have

tried to remain vigilant in performing their trained skills while trying to have fun in the process. We have played organized softball and SFC Beverly drafted a "tall" basketball team to compete with other units here on Camp Anaconda.

On June 14th, the Army celebrated it's 229th birthday and LSA Anaconda participated in the celebration. The Army sponsored a 5K fun run to commemorate the day.



1SG Huseman, MAJ Slade, and almost all of 5th Platoon carried our unit guidon through the race.

WEATHER FORECAST

For the foreseeable future, long periods of light followed by darkness. Temperatures continue to range from "Damn Hot" to "Hell on earth". Convection-oven winds containing blowing dust and sand expected throughout the month.

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Family Readiness Group
M-158 AVIM Co

Bldg 7016, Box 81
Hood Army Airfield
Fort Hood, Texas
76544-5081

PHONE:

(877) 620-4187
(24 hr answering machine)

(254) 288-6113

FAX:

(254) 288-3236

E-MAIL:

**M158.frgnewsletter@
us.army.mil**

FRG Leaders

Leader: Kelly Huseman

Secretary: Tracy Pederson

Treasurer: Tina Risenhoover

Telephone Tree: Julie Lee

Fundraising: Tammy Hench

Newsletter: Becky Cotton

Sponsorship: Jane Dennis

Historian: Need Volunteer

Events: Tracy Pederson

Database: Julie Lee
Becky Cotton

Advisor: Need Volunteer

Published by:

Becky Cotton
Editor

Approved by:

Lonnie Slade
Major, U.S Army

Resources and Contacts

Contact a Family Readiness Group member if you have questions or need information.

Your FRG contact name and phone: _____

For additional assistance, contact the unit resources below.

Rear Detachment Commander:	(254) 287-6416
Personnel Specialist:	(254) 287-8590
Unit Administrator:	(254) 287-8325
Rear Detachment Fax Number:	(254) 287-8339

TRICARE Information:	(800) 406-2832
Dental-United Concordia:	(800) 866-8499
Army One Source (www.armyonesource.com):	(800) 464-8107

**** Remember: Pay issues MUST be initiated by the soldier. ****

Internet Resources

Family Readiness

<http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/family/toolkit/>

Deployment Connections

<http://www.deploymentconnections.org>

From the Editor

Let us know how we can make the newsletter and website more useful to you!

Submit photos taken during the deployment for publication on the web page and/or newsletter! Photos must be submitted electronically and should include names of soldiers shown.

Send contributions, suggestions, and comments to:

M158.frgnewsletter@us.army.mil