



## UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

EMBEDDED TRAINING TEAM 2-4  
3D MARINE DIVISION (-) (REIN)  
UNIT 3611  
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Governor Otter

I apologize for this somewhat unusual letter, but I feel it's important to let you know about the selfless courage and exceptional performance of one of Idaho's National Guard units.

I'm currently deployed to a Forward Operating Base located on the Afghanistan's border with Pakistan. Our mission is to mentor the Afghan National Army battalion responsible for the Bermel District of Paktika Province in one of Afghanistan's most restive and remote regions. Within days of our arrival last October we found ourselves in a four hour running gun fight through the mountains in response to an insurgent attack on an American convoy. We had less than a full company of Afghan soldiers but managed a significant victory largely due to the brave men of Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> BN, 183<sup>rd</sup> Aviation out of Boise, Idaho. Despite heavy ground fire and a chaotic battlefield they provided precise and timely fires against the enemy, killing many and saving the lives of Afghans and US forces alike. On November 7<sup>th</sup> we found ourselves in another serious fight, this time with a wounded Marine and Afghan soldiers pinned down by enemy fire. Once again the men from Boise came to our aide – staying on station and working with the Marines on the ground to suppress the enemy and save the wounded. Lesser men would have declared the area too dangerous and flown away leaving us to fend for ourselves, but not Company B. They stuck with the troops in the fight and as a direct result of their heroic efforts a Marine is now at home with his family, healing and thankful to be alive.

There were numerous other occasions when the Afghans were apprehensive about venturing into steep valleys or mountain passes. I only had to mention to the Afghan Commander that the Apaches from Boise would be there and his response would inevitably be, "The helicopters that saved my life? We will win then. Come, we go now." This respect did not stop with the Afghans, the US Army and Special Forces were also imbued with confidence knowing that your unit had their back. In my time on the border, I have not witnessed any other single unit that had the amount of respect and whose mere presence boosted morale like that of Company B.

Company B is now on its way back to Boise. I'm sure the awards have been written, welcomes planned and everyone is just eager to see their families and loved ones. I would only ask that if you have the opportunity, please thank them and let the citizens of Idaho know that they should be proud of these brave warriors. As a state rich in natural resources I thank you and the people of Idaho for sending your most precious resource, its citizens, to serve here in Afghanistan. I hope that you are as proud of them as I am for having served along side them.

Thank you.

S.G. Fosdal  
LtCol USMC  
FOB Bermel