Provided below are links for this year’s fundraiser so you can review for situational awareness.

<https://2019bakerreconchallenge.us/>

<https://www.classy.org/fundraiser/1761757>

Also, I have attached the “All it takes is all you got” president of the Force Reconnaissance Foundation (FRF) message for this year’s fundraiser message. First I would like to thank all the participants who carried Todd Love (triple amputee) to the top of Mount Baker. Secondly, I want to thank all the sponsors, individuals who donated, and the followers who supported this endeavor over the past six months. If you can write something like a wrap-up article culminating the entire climb. That way I can post it on the website listed above and close out this year’s fundraiser. Thank you!

The team consists of: Damien Descant, Andrew Dyer (guide), Jake Edmondson Rope team Leader, Dave Jarvis, Darren Korthuis, Todd Love, Sam Shin, Jimmy Stare, Kyle Thompson, and myself.

Attached below is a link talking about the climb that was posted in the Greeley Tribune. This may help you understand the challenge we went through.

<https://www.greeleytribune.com/news/camaraderie-takes-on-new-meaning-for-marine-platoon-that-sticks-together-through-yearly-reunions/?fbclid=IwAR0j8PDYRE--S9e--KzRJbEdjA_yr_AfdFF7qZqV2gkpXk2z7HwewRqEG0A>

My Facebook posts that kept everyone up to date while on the mountain.

Day 1 Post:

Hello FB Friends and Family, arrived at the Baker Chalet and prepared individual equipment for the climb. In addition to preparing for the climb, we will be remembering our fallen brothers and honoring their legacy. Each team member will be carrying a set of dog tags with a specific name, of a fallen Brother, engraved on the tag. Stay tuned for more updates on our journey throughout the week.
Semper Fidelis

Day 2 Post:

Day 2 Pre-Baker Recon Challenge:

Adventure for me, is being with friends in unfamiliar places, using newly-acquired mountaineering skills, with an element of danger and challenge that adds to the overall excitement.

Today’s activities:

There is nothing better than waking up to a clear crisp 50 degree morning with the sun just rising over the mountains while providing a soft glow of a new day while the team members begin their individual priorities of work.

Breakfast, relaxation, pick team members up from airport, and gear preparation.

Tomorrow’s activities will consist of spread loading team equipment and individual food load out.

It’s amazing how the outdoors, and how mountains can invoke such awe, inner peace, and satisfaction. The joy of experiencing this challenge with friends will build lifelong friendships.

Stay tuned!

Day 3 Post:

Mount Baker stands at 10,782 feet. To test our mettle, our aspiring mountaineering team has decided to make an attempt to the top of the mountain on 7 June 2019.

The team consists of: Damien Descant, Andrew Dyer, Jake Edmondson, Dave Jarvis, Darren Korthuis, Todd Love, Sam Shin, Jimmy Stare, Kyle Thompson, and myself.

The Plan:

Tomorrow morning (4 June) the Challenge begins. The trailhead that the team will begin the climb from is the Easton Glacier trailhead. The team will travel approximately 2-2.5 miles and set up a pre base camp to stage and move additional equipment that is required for the five day journey

5 June - Set up base camp, conduct technical team rehearsals
6 June - Rope team movement, Ice axe training. cravat rescue, rope management
7 June - Summit, return to base camp
8 June - Return to trail head, gear inventory, Reunion

Let the pain begin!

Day 4 Post:

Baker Challenge update: Moving in snowshoes and hauling Todd Love, our tents, sleds, ropes, and glacier gear, we trudged up the mountain. It was cold. Our packs were heavy. The air was thin. We finally made it to camp two on the first day. The team begin mountaineering classes, self-arrest, craves rescue, sled management and transfer of Todd Love from one team member to another. Stay posted for next update.

Day 5 Post:

Baker Recon Challenge Final Update:

Summit Day – The team’s motivation and morale was at its highest as we prepared to step off at 3:45 am on 8 May to conquer Mount Baker and the infamous Roman wall. However, the mountain wasn’t going to let us conquer it that easily, unfortunately, the weather had a vote…it changed faster than we can react, causing potentially dangerous situations for the team.

With high winds, fog, sleet, and blowing snow meant we had the mountain all to ourselves (At first). We were alone and isolated and within hours of our track, a few team members developed symptoms such as headaches, light-headedness, muscle aches, and general weakness. Nonetheless, the team continued to push up the mountain by putting one foot in front of the other. We finally accomplished our mission, getting Todd Love to the top of Mount Baker.

What goes up must come down. After 14 hours and 35 minutes later, the team was back at base camp, in one piece, with its first summit under its belt as Bravo Company, 2nd Platoon.

This experience has taught everyone a lot about each other. We developed a level of trust, cohesion, and teamwork while understanding each team member’s capability. This was an extremely difficult climb, we came together once again as a team while embracing adversity and harsh weather conditions in an austere environment. We will continue this journey together and focus our attention to next year’s challenge/reunion while cherishing these memories for years to come.

Provided below are my notes of what this platoon went through in Afghanistan.

The words: Swift, Silent, Deadly rest on the Diamond of 1st Reconnaissance Battalion’s insignia. The Marines of 1st Reconnaissance Battalion (Forward), will have lived up to these words executing numerous missions and providing intelligence for the unit(s) in the Sangin valley of Afghanistan.

Sangin is considered a small town in Helmand Province of Afghanistan, with a population around 12K people. Even though Sangin was relatively small in size, it was strategically a significant piece of terrain that linked three key areas, which were the Kajaki dam that produced electricity to the north; Lashkar Gah to the West, and Kandahar to the east.

Controlling the freedom of movement of the Taliban proved to be a difficult task due to its thriving drug trade based on the opium-producing poppy plant, tribal conflict, population instability, and insurgent activity. All the while the United States military would see an increase use in the Taliban’s weapon of choice, the improvised explosive device (IED’s).

During the fall of 2010, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion would receive its next task, it was to disrupt the insurgent’s flow of operations and provide immediate relief and reconnaissance to Camp Pendleton based 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines (3/5) who just recently occupied Sangin valley and had already seen 17 Marines killed in action and another 150 wounded. (At the end of its deployment, 3/5 had 25 Marines killed in action, and another 184 wounded, 34 of those Marines returning home as single, double, and triple amputees).

1st Reconnaissance Battalion would soon undertake its most difficult mission yet and engage in some of the fiercest fighting in all of Afghanistan. The Marines arrived in Sangin prepared to do battle with the enemy. Immediately the Marines began conducting operations and were engaged at every turn. This became a daily occurrence and proved to be unnerving experience to the Marines that were conducting patrols across open fields and canals knowing the enemy was watching their every movement, just waiting to attack.

Once the platoons came under attack, the platoons JTAC (Joint Terminal Attack Controller), which is a specially trained and qualified individual who directs munitions and aircraft in close support and other offensive air operations from a forward position.  The platoons JTACs would notify the Battalions command operations center (COC) and the Battalion would assign aircraft over to the Platoons JTACs that ended up supporting the Marines on the ground.

During the many attacks, the Marines of 1st Reconnaissance Battalion established themselves as seasoned warfighters. During the fighting another nickname that was given to 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, Bravo Company from the enemy, was "Sons of Satan." It was enemy radio chatter after a particularly tough fight. The Taliban that described the Marines as the "Sons of Satan" was trying to explain to his Higher Headquarters why he didn't want to go back and fight. When asked why he wouldn't he stated: “they run toward the sound of gun fire, because they are the Sons of Satan."

On 25 (Todd Love) and 26 October 2010 (John Blank), the Battalion received the dreadful radio call for an emergency medevac, it was here that the Battalion suffered its first major causalities in Sangin, Afghanistan.

At the end of its seven-month deployment, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion produced 300+ enemy KIA, 0 Marines killed, 46 Marines/Sailor wounded, 3 of those men returning home as double and triple amputees. Thus dubbing this “the deadliest battalion” in Afghanistan in nine years by General Mattis.

Semper Fidelis