



VFW NATIONAL MILITARY SERVICES

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UPDATE

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A Call to the 'Pen = A Call Home for America's Troops

Eaton is a small community in northern Colorado. The town is close, and baseball is life. High school baseball, that is.

The Eaton Reds have positioned themselves as one of the best high school programs in the United States, winning over 85% of their games over the past 25 years to go along with eight state championships. With stats like these, it's no wonder the 3,000 citizens embrace this team so much.

But, they're not their only fans.

So too, are America's troops fighting overseas. They cheer on every Reds victory ... but for a different reason. They know every call to the bullpen means a call home for them.

"For this spring season, every time our boys forced the opposing team to change pitchers, we donated \$50 to **VFW Operation Uplink™**," explained Summer Coach Kirk Danley.

The team successfully knocked the opposing team's pitcher out of the game 20 times on the way to their state championship victory, raising an impressive \$1,000 for **VFW Operation Uplink**. Eaton hopes their example can lead the way for other teams to follow suit.

"We think it's an important thing for our young ballplayers to appreciate these heroes and to get in the habit of giving back," continued Danley. "Last year, we had a similar fundraiser based on strikeouts, but we saw this as an opportunity to set a team-oriented goal."



The Eaton Reds, Eaton, Colorado



Two of the many Eaton graduates—Jim Reeman (1988) and Riley Haythorn (1994)—who now serve honorably in the Armed Forces

We're Here to **Help.** The selfless quality of team resonates throughout Eaton's community. In addition to its fundraising achievements, Eaton is one of only a few Colorado teams to wear the U.S. flag on its uniform.

“Our players are very proud to be doing something that not only rewards them with victory, but also helps out our real heroes serving overseas.”

Patriotism and selflessness remains with the players well after graduation, as demonstrated by former Reds Jim Reeman, Riley Haythorn, Cade Anderson and Chris Swain. The four enlisted in the military after leaving Eaton. All four are now highly decorated officers in their respective branches.

Not surprisingly, the small town still remembers—and honors—their hometown heroes.

“By supporting the troops, it's like we're supporting our own,” concluded Danley.

National Military Services is a department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW). If you have questions about this Update, please contact Michael Penney, National Military Services Director, at mpenney@vfw.org or 816-756-3390.