

# Danger

# 1

# Forward

Volume 1, Issue 8

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**INSIDE:**  
**Samarra takeover**  
**Pages 13-15**

**ALSO:**  
**Veterans Day**  
**celebrated around**  
**Task Force Danger**



# STREETS OF SAMARRA

CPT George Rodriguez, commander of Charlie Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, points down the road in Samarra Oct. 2.

## On the cover

First Infantry Division Soldiers and Iraqi National Guard members secure the Golden Mosque in Samarra while commanders tour the area Oct. 8.

Photo by SSG Klaus Baesu



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*Printed in Baghdad*



USAF TSGT Lee Harshman

## In this issue

### Deploying diabetic .....8

*Retention NCO struggles with diabetes while in combat zone. Couldn't stay behind while those he signed up served in danger.*

### How's the weather?...10

*Army weather specialists monitor conditions to help guns zero in on the enemy.*

### 1,000 missions.....11

*Aviation unit celebrates 1,000<sup>th</sup> combat mission of deployment with not one casualty during impressive run.*

### Wolfhound Fury.....12

*Task Force 1-27 raids village from the sky. Air Assault mission nets detainees, weapons and information.*

### Samarra saga .....13

*Task Force Danger Soldiers secure newly captured city and start the rebuilding. Iraqi forces are on the ground, holding their own.*

### Silver Star.....17

*Soldier from 2-2 Infantry receives medal for heroic actions during fighting in Baqubah in April.*

### Police station life.....20

*Military Police officers live, work, train and fight alongside Iraqi counterparts in Baqubah.*

### Ten Miler in Iraq .....23

*FOB Speicher observes 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Army run with its version in the combat zone.*

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# MESSAGE FROM DANGER SIX

The mission continues to an incredibly high standard. We can all be justifiably proud of the results of our full-spectrum operations. From hard-hitting, decisive combat operations throughout Task Force Danger's area of operations and Fallujah; to the important work to train, equip, and mentor the Iraqi Security Forces to achieve local control by the end of December. We should also be proud of the reconstruction efforts to improve Iraqi quality of life which put people back to work. With our continuing effort to break the cycle of violence and turn the Iraqi people against the insurgency, the Soldiers and family members of Task Force Danger are making a huge difference here.

I often remind myself that freedom is not a gift to the people of Iraq, but rather God's gift to mankind. It is an honor to be called upon to do the noble work of setting the con-



MG JOHN R. S. BATISTE

ditions for freedom and representative government in Iraq. Albert Pike also reminds us, "What we have done for ourselves dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." These are powerful thoughts which I believe capture the essence of our purpose in Iraq.

With less than three months remaining in our mission, continue to set and achieve high standards in discipline and deliberate operations. In Task Force Danger, leaders are in charge. I appreciate the hard work to prepare for the upcoming reliefs in place with the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. It is important that we get this right and that the transfers of authority are absolutely transparent to the insurgents and the good people of Iraq.

We will set the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division up for unqualified success. Keep up the great work and continue the mission.

-- Danger 6

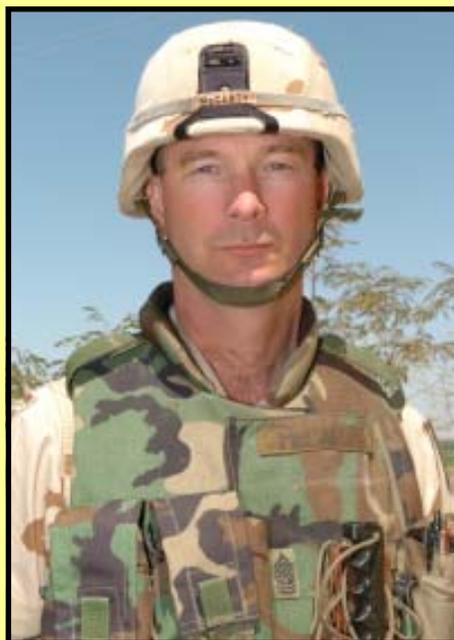
# MESSAGE FROM DANGER SEVEN

Discipline and standards are the foundation of a good unit. This foundation coupled with leadership and teamwork creates an environment for a unit to be successful. This past year in Task Force Danger, we have reached this level of proficiency. Our Soldiers remain razor sharp on combat patrols and combat-logistic patrols.

We continue to engage the enemy and cripple him each day. We do not wait for the enemy; we are aggressive and hunt for him. The enemy knows he cannot stand toe-to-toe with us; he must use cowardly techniques to fight us.

Everyday we find more improvised explosive devices than we did the day before. The enemy is running out of ways to counter our techniques. The enemy knows that his cause is becoming unpopular, and everyday he receives less help from the good people of Iraq. You have created this situation by your hard work, discipline and warrior ethos.

I challenge you to not let up. The relief in place is going on as you read this. We must train our replacements to carry on.



CSM CORY MCCARTY

Their lives are in your hands. They will notice our discipline in the way we conduct troop leading procedures, pre-combat

checks, and pre-combat inspections. They will notice that each and every one of our vehicles has a load plan and all equipment secured.

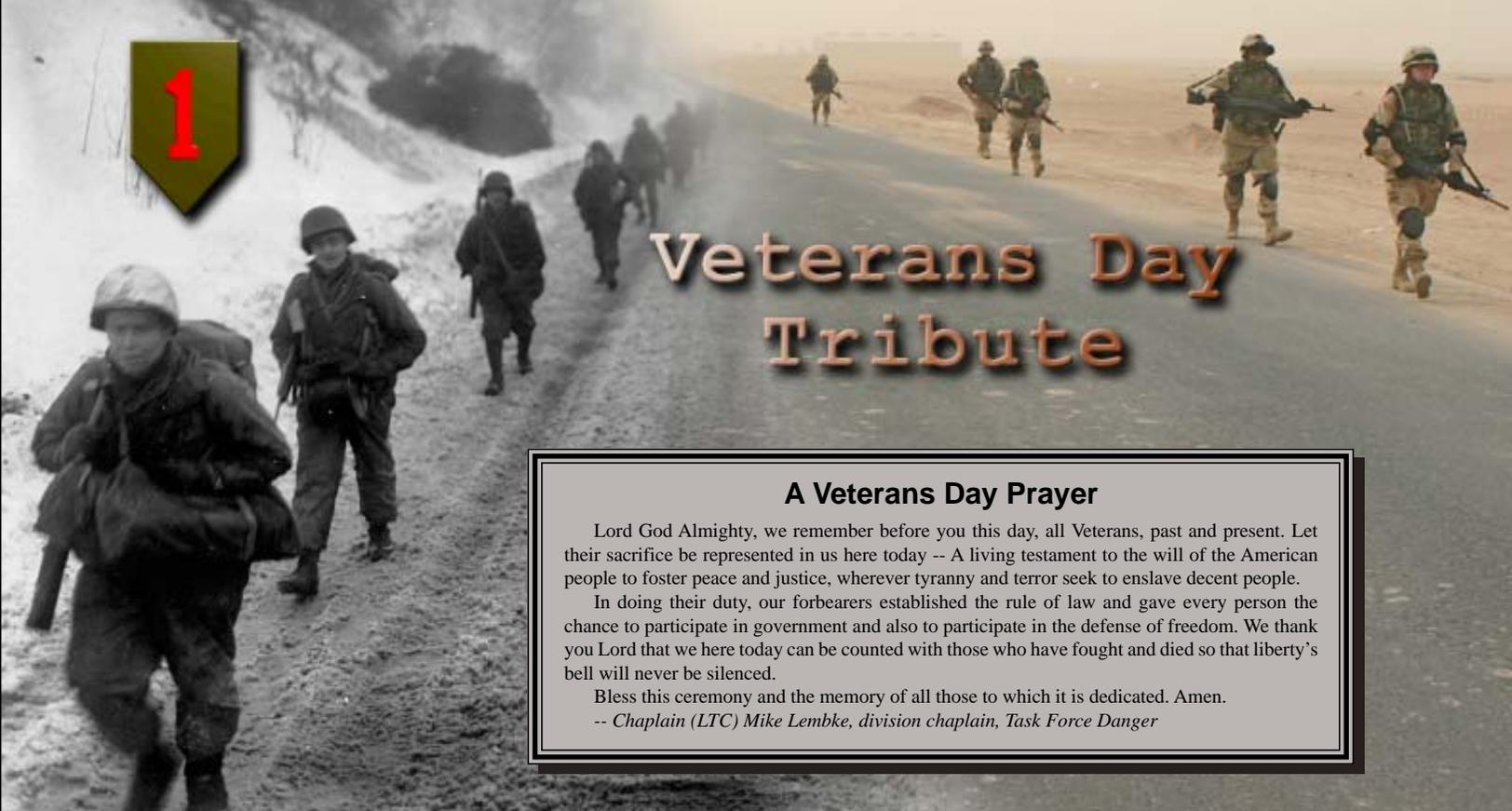
The old saying goes: "A picture is worth a thousand words." This principle applies to our relief in place. You have to show your replacement what right looks like. Their life is in your hands.

Lastly, I want to personally wish all the Soldiers of Task Force Danger a very "Happy Holidays." For many of you, this will be your first Christmas away from your loved ones. This can be a very depressing time. The best way to get through the upcoming holidays is doing the same thing we have been doing for the past 11 months. Take care of each other. Talk to your wingman/battle buddy everyday. Make this holiday season the best you can. You will be surprised at how nice the holidays can be with your extended Task Force Danger family.

DUTY FIRST

--Danger 7





# Veterans Day Tribute

## A Veterans Day Prayer

Lord God Almighty, we remember before you this day, all Veterans, past and present. Let their sacrifice be represented in us here today -- A living testament to the will of the American people to foster peace and justice, wherever tyranny and terror seek to enslave decent people.

In doing their duty, our forebearers established the rule of law and gave every person the chance to participate in government and also to participate in the defense of freedom. We thank you Lord that we here today can be counted with those who have fought and died so that liberty's bell will never be silenced.

Bless this ceremony and the memory of all those to which it is dedicated. Amen.

-- Chaplain (LTC) Mike Lembke, division chaplain, Task Force Danger

**Left side**, Troops of Company L, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, march into Murringen, Belgium Jan. 31, 1945. (Photo by T/5 Murray Shub)

**Right side**, Soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division conduct a road march during movement training at Camp Udari, Kuwait Feb. 24, 2004, before heading north for Operation Iraqi Freedom II. (Photo by SPC Joe Alger)



SPC Joe Alger

The "Dagger Choir" sings America The Beautiful during a Veterans Day ceremony on Forward Operating Base Dagger, Tikrit.



SFC Chuck Joseph

MG John R.S. Batiste, left, commander of Task Force Danger, and CSM Cory McCarty lay a wreath on Forward Operating Base Danger in memory of Task Force Danger and 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team Soldiers who died while serving in Iraq.



SPC Joe Alger

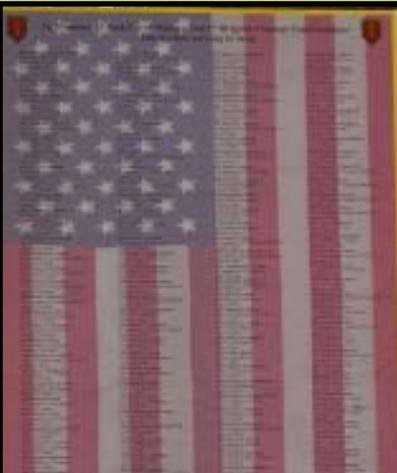
The honor guard from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team renders a salute during a Veterans Day ceremony on Forward Operating Base Dagger, Tikrit.

A poster with the names of Task Force Danger and 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team Soldiers who died serving in Iraq and a memorial wreath for them sit on display.

SFC Chuck Joseph

A team of Soldiers vie for first place in the five-ton truck pull on Nov. 12 in celebration of Veterans Day on Forward Operating Base Speicher.

SPC Nancy McMillan





SGT Kimberly Snow

CPL Samuel W. Kilpatrick, combat cameraman from the 55<sup>th</sup> Signal Company, looks at video taken enroute to Salman Pak, near Baghdad Oct. 26.



SSG Klaus Baesu

Engineers construct Patrol Base Uvanni near Samarra while Chemical Corps Soldiers create smoke in the background Oct. 5.



SGT Kimberly Snow

SPC Franco Londono, a communications specialist with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Reconnaissance Troop, pulls security in As Sadah Oct. 13.



SPC Sean Kimmons

An enemy RPG launcher, right of the building, soars through the air after a direct hit from an MK-19 grenade launcher.

Soldiers keep watch at a checkpoint in downtown Samarra on Nov. 6.

SPC Joe Alger



A sniper from the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division watches while engineers construct Patrol Base Uvanni near Samarra Oct. 5.

SSG Klaus Baesu





MSG Mike Welsh

SGT Karilyn Petrie, Alpha Company, 230<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion, pushes to the finish line during the 5K Run For The Cure, held at the Kirkush Military Training Base.

An Iraqi National Guardsman leads his unit and Soldiers from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion during a village assessment in As Sadah, near Baqubah, Oct. 13.

SGT Kimberly Snow



SPC Sean Kimmons

SPC Erik Estrada, a gunner with Task Force 1-27, raises his right hand on Forward Operating Base Speicher Oct. 8 as he re-enlists for four years. Two days prior, Estrada sustained chest injuries from an improvised explosive device.



SGT Kimberly Snow

PFC Rod P. Wright, a tanker from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team's personal security detail provides overwatch for dismounted troops in Salman Pak, near Baghdad Oct. 26.

SPC Michael D. Merrell, a cavalry scout with F Troop, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, provides overwatch during a village assessment in As Sadah Oct. 13.

SGT Kimberly Snow



# Proof positive: Medical problems don't have to interfere

## *Soldier deploys despite insulin dependence*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC SHERREE CASPER  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq -- While keeping cool in the desert's blazing heat is essential to the medical welfare of troops, it can spell the difference between life and death for one 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Soldier.

That's because SSG Mark A. Thompson must keep his MiniMed 508 insulin pump at 86 degrees or below, something that can be tricky when deployed to one of

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SSG Mark A. Thompson, re-enlistment noncommissioned officer for the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, checks the pump that supplies insulin to his body.



Thompson's MiniMed 508 insulin pump, shown front and interior, feeds the life-sustaining substance into his body through a tube and saves the trouble of daily injections - a benefit greatly appreciated in a combat zone.

the hottest regions of the world.

Thompson, who suffers from type 1 diabetes, receives a one-tenth unit dose of insulin from the \$5,000 pump every 10 minutes during the day. At night the dosage is increased.

"The pump gives you a steady flow of insulin," he said.

The Big Red One's career counselor, Thompson had to cut through mounds of red tape before being allowed to serve in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. First and foremost, he had to convince his boss, SGM Scott Kuhar, that he was up to the task and that his diabetes wouldn't hinder him in his mission.

Thompson said he couldn't see himself as a career counselor trying to get Soldiers to re-enlist when he wouldn't be able to relate to their experiences while deployed. Let alone not being able to wear a coveted combat patch.

Before he could pack his duffel bags for Iraq, however, he had to devise contingency plans should a worst case scenario occur.

Back-up plans called for a spare insulin pump and a three weeks supply of bottled insulin with syringes for emergencies. Both measures were used when his original insulin pump broke while only a few months into his deployment at Forward Operating Base Danger.

"I have had to implement both of my contingency plans and they have worked out well," Thompson said.

So after persuading the division's command career counselor and getting a blessing from the division surgeon, LTC Michael Brumage, Thompson got the green light to deploy.

"It's not as important what type of disease a person has, but what type of person has the disease," Thompson said.

That attitude has served the 27-year-old Conesville, Iowa resident well since he first learned in the fall of 2000 that he had type 1 diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes means the beta cells of the pancreas are no longer making insulin because the body's immune system has attacked and destroyed them, Brumage explained. Treatment may include the use of an insulin pump or insulin shots, diet and exercise, as well as strict control of one's blood pressure and cholesterol.

The most common form of the disease is type 2, which is known as the non-insulin-dependent diabetes, he said. Instead of insulin, an oral medication may be taken to combat the disease. As in treating type 1 diabetes, diet, exercise, and control of one's blood pressure and cholesterol are important, Brumage said.

Stationed at the time in Kitzingen, Germany, with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Defense Artillery, Thompson said he thought initially that he had a case of bronchitis, which his wife, Beth, was suffering from at the time.

On that crisp fall morning, Thompson went running with first sergeants Elmer Clayton and Brian Pinkney.

"We started at a warm up pace and I almost passed out," Thompson recalled.

Something was very out of synch for the Soldier who normally maxed his physical fitness test with a 13-minute run time.



With a drop of blood, SSG Mark Thompson is able to determine his blood sugar level. It's a routine he must perform five to 10 times a day.

"I had all the classic signs of diabetes," Thompson said. "I was drinking excessive amounts of liquid. I would be walking around with my stomach sloshing and I would still be thirsty." Adding: "I was going to the bathroom every hour."

Along with excessive thirst, frequent urination and blurry vision, the then-sergeant suffered from serious fatigue.

"I would go up a flight of stairs and felt like I had done a PT (physical training) test," Thompson said.

Then there was the rapid weight loss. He dropped 40 pounds from his 6-foot frame during the first month that he was diagnosed with the disease. Although Thompson resisted going to the aid station when he fell ill that autumn morning, Clayton and Pinkney insisted on it.

Thompson is grateful they did.

Had he not heeded their orders he might not be around today.

First Sergeant Dean Barbee, now the first sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1<sup>st</sup> ID's rear detachment, was a sergeant first class when he told medics he thought Thompson might have diabetes. Barbee's wife has type 1 diabetes.

"It wasn't even a medic who diagnosed me with having diabetes," Thompson said of Barbee. "It was a 14 Romeo, (an Air Defense Artillery Crewmember)."

Thompson was officially diagnosed with type 1 diabetes on Dec. 8, 2000.

As doctors awaited his test results, he was treated for type 2 diabetes with oral medication. He was also advised to diet and exercise. Before he began injecting himself with insulin, Thompson was forced to take six pills at breakfast, four at lunch and another six at dinner.

He also counted carbohydrates to ensure that he had a least 75 per meal.

"The main concern in the initial stages was getting your blood sugar (level) under control," Thompson said.

His was out of control.

When his blood sugar level was tested at the 67<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital in Wurzburg, Germany, it was 660, which could have sent him into a diabetic coma. He was immediately admitted to the emergency room and given several shots of insulin.

A normal blood sugar level ranges between 70 and 140. Thompson shoots for 110.

With his wife "deathly afraid of needles," Thompson said Beth had to leave the room whenever he would stick himself to test his blood sugar level.

"When they threw out the word disease, my head snapped around," he recalled when first learning that he was diabetic. "I thought, 'I'm 23-years-old, I don't have a disease.'"

A Soldier since May, 1996, Thompson wanted to make the Army a career, but the diagnosis was certainly a career-ender.

Or was it?

"I love the Army," he said. "I fought to stay in."

After going before a medical review board, Thompson was found "fit for duty" in July, 2002 by the Physical Disability Board. Five months later, the 1<sup>st</sup> ID received word that it was going to be deploying to Iraq.

Thompson did a lot of research on diabetes and heat in an effort to bolster his case to allow him to deploy.

He managed to find a Frio pouch, which is designed to keep insulin cool.

"Insulin is not supposed to go above 86 degrees Fahrenheit," Thompson said.

Carrying around about 50 pounds of "battle rattle" also wasn't ideal when wearing the insulin pump. The weight of the flak jacket broke the pump, forcing Thompson to give himself injections by hand for three weeks.

"The heat has yet to affect me medically," Thompson said.

Kuhar said the 1<sup>st</sup> ID's young career counselor has done exceptionally well during his deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

"At no time has his diabetes affected his ability to accomplish any mission he was given," Kuhar said.

He said Thompson has always "taken a proactive approach to managing his diabetes which is why I had very few reservations about his deployment to Iraq."

"We did not have to make any special provisions for Staff Sergeant Thompson," he said. "However, he was required to make contact with the medical facilities in Kuwait and Iraq to ensure they had the correct insulin for him."

The division's command career counselor also insisted Thompson get the BRO surgeon's approval for deployment. Kuhar said Thompson obtained a six-month supply of insulin and medical supplies before deploying to the Middle East.

"In addition to that I told him he could purchase whatever equipment he needed that would protect his insulin," Kuhar said.

Brumage said Thompson "is the only insulin-dependent diabetic in the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division who deployed and may be the only active duty insulin-dependent diabetic in the entire 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division."

"He is an exception, a one-in-a-million diabetic, who knows his body and how to control his diabetes as well as or better than any physician," Brumage said.

The 1<sup>st</sup> ID's surgeon said he originally told Thompson that "there was no way he could deploy" considering the extreme heat temperatures as well as irregular access to food and possible complications of his disease while deployed.

"He proved to me that he was more than capable to handle the rigors of deployment with diabetes," Brumage said. "He keeps a running log of his diet and blood sugars and has an impressive knowledge of all the complications of diabetes."

Adding: "Had he not impressed me so much with his self-care and motivation, I would have not allowed him to deploy. He has done exceptionally well."

SSG Mark Thompson holds this Glucagon Emergency Kit for low blood sugar. The kit contains a pre-filled liquid syringe with a vial of powdered glucagon. The kit is used to counteract extreme low blood sugar.



# Weather experts keep Army on target

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC SHERREE CASPER  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE NORMANDY,  
Iraq - "Okay, we're ready to fly."

With those words, one might expect a pilot to give the thumbs up for flight.

Think again.

SGT Emeka D. Watson, a Soldier with Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, uttered these words before he launched a large balloon recently into

the sky over Forward Operating Base Normandy.

And it wasn't just any rubber balloon. The price tag per launch is over \$180.

The meteorologist from Tulsa, Okla. released the weather balloon in an effort to gather an array of data - information used to determine wind direction and speed, temperature as well as humidity. The collected data will be used by Soldiers in the field who rely on the statistics in order to accurately fire on targets.

"The purpose of launching a weather balloon is basically for wind data," Watson said.

From mortar men to field artillery Soldiers, the data supplied by each balloon flight is essential to accom-

plishing their mission. He said the meteorologists' main mission is to support the field artillery assets.

Watson said the information collected from each launch is also useful to military pilots and air traffic controllers.

With five meteorologists assigned to Alpha Company, 1-6 Field Artillery, Soldiers rotate for two daily balloon launches. No matter who is tapped for duty, however, Watson said preparation is key.

"To get ready for a mission is all about preparation," he said. Without it, time and money are wasted.

And with helium a precious commodity in Iraq, lack of preparation is not an option.

Watson pointed out that when the unit arrived in country it had 17 tanks of helium from a camp in Kuwait. It ran out in April and was not able to acquire another shipment until July. Each tank contains about 650 grams of helium. It takes between 200 to 300 grams of helium to fill one rubberized nylon balloon.

One balloon costs \$35. The Vaisala Radiosonde RS80 - an atmospheric measuring device - which is attached to the balloon has a price tag of \$150. A parachute is attached to the device so it floats gently back to earth when the balloon eventually bursts.

"It will float back down and not just fall back down," Watson said, noting that a cow once got whacked in the head. Since then a parachute is employed as a safety measure with each flight.

Once airborne, the instrument panel relays data back to a meteorological measuring set in a trailer on the ground. Even if the wind is gusting at 100 knots, the sensors in the instrument can still be tracked.

Watson said the device can go as high as two miles before the balloon bursts and falls back to earth.

"I'm an expert with the equipment that I use," Watson said, but when it comes to analyzing the information he leaves that up to the "true meteorological experts."

PFC Christopher L. Smith, a meteorologist from California City, Calif., said the data collected during the balloon launches give accurate information to gunners so they can hit the right targets.

Watson said the job of an Army meteorologist appealed to him, and he has had the opportunity to launch weather balloons in Germany and Korea as well.

"I really love it," Watson said. "If they sent me to Antarctica to do my job I would go."



SGT Emeka D. Watson gathers weather information from the Vaisala Radiosonde RS80 with a meteorological measuring set in a trailer on the ground at Forward Operating Base Normandy.

SGT Emeka D. Watson, left, and PFC Christopher L. Smith, meteorologists with Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, hold a rubberized nylon weather balloon as it inflates.



SGT Emeka D. Watson inflates a rubberized nylon weather balloon.



# Apache unit flies 1,000<sup>th</sup> combat mission of deployment

## Aviation unit marks flight with celebration

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC JOE ALGER  
1<sup>ST</sup> ID PAO**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, TIKRIT, Iraq -- Much like dousing a Super Bowl-winning coach with a bucket of ice water, Soldiers from 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment celebrated their 1,000<sup>th</sup> combat mission flown in Iraq by spraying with fire hoses the Apache helicopters that participated in the mission.

Although the pilots of 1-1 Aviation are prepared for anything when flying on missions, the impromptu celebration, which took place at Forward Operating Base Speicher Oct. 7, caught them a bit off guard.

"We heard some rumors before we took off, but they were very vague," said CPT Michael Tilton, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-1 civil affairs officer, and one of the pilots of the historic mission. "I never expected anything like this."

"This was like any other mission for us," said SPC Angelica Perales, a crew chief from Alpha Company. "I had no idea we had flown so many missions until today."

The celebration had been in the making for several weeks once MAJ Charles Bowery, the battalion's operations officer, realized the Soldiers of 1-1 were approaching the magic number of 1,000 missions.

"The S-3 (operations) office is responsible for assigning mission numbers to every mission we fly," Bowery said.

"We realized about a month ago that we were coming close to 1,000 combat missions flown here in Iraq," Bowery said. "We thought that was a really significant number and it would be nice to do something for all the Soldiers who work together to make this happen."

"These Soldiers have fought through fatigue, loneliness and bad weather and still continued to do a great job," he said. "I'm proud to be part of this unit."

According to Bowery, one of the most important accomplishments the battalion has made in their 1,000 missions, which have included an estimated 8,000 hours of flight time, is the fact that there has never been a casualty on a mission that the Soldiers have flown.

The responsibilities of the 1-1 Soldiers, who have pilots on standby 24 hours a day, include a wide variety of different tasks, including convoy security, recon-

naissance for main supply routes, and air support for ground offensive operations. Flying such a variety of missions requires the Apaches to be flawlessly maintained at all times.

"The Apache is very effective, but requires maintenance," said CPT Gerald S. Thompson, commander of Delta Company. "A lot of the maintenance we do is unscheduled too, so it requires our Soldiers to do a lot of thinking on their feet. Our objective is to never have an aircraft miss a mission due to maintenance."

One important piece of maintenance that is scheduled for every Apache in the battalion is called the "phase inspection." A phase inspection is an inspection of the Apache in which almost every part of it is removed until only the frame remains. After this, each piece of the Apache is inspected extensively before it gets put back together. Phase inspections usually take several days to complete.

According to Thompson, the phase inspections were, until recently, conducted after every 250 hours of flight time for the Apaches. Now, however, they are done every 500 hours, a change which Thompson said he agrees with.

"Doing the inspections every 500 hours is better because it allows for more flight stability and gives the line commander more flexibility," Thompson said. The Soldiers of the battalion have done 29 phase inspections since arriving in Iraq.

While Thompson said the battalion Soldiers have conducted almost all of the phase inspections, Soldiers from the 601<sup>st</sup> Aviation Support Battalion have also done several of them. They also provide assistance for the 1-1 Soldiers with maintaining several parts of the Apaches, such as radios and night vision goggles.

Maintenance test pilots, such as CW3 Don Griffith of Alpha Company, 1-1 Aviation, also play an important part in making sure everything runs smoothly up in the air.

"The Apache has many different integrated computer systems," Griffith said. "It's my job to try to pin-



CW3 Don Griffith, a maintenance test pilot from A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment, gives the thumbs up at Forward Operating Base Speicher Oct. 7 after successfully completing the unit's 1,000<sup>th</sup> combat mission in Iraq.

point specific faults in the Apaches by troubleshooting and test flying them. It's not always easy though because it's such a complicated aircraft."

In addition to the large amount of specialized Soldiers who have to work together to keep the Apaches properly maintained, there are many other Soldiers who played important roles in ensuring success on the 1,000 missions 1-1 has flown. The crew chiefs, who check the fluid levels, radios, and many other aspects of the Apache and the flight operations team, who write up briefs for each mission and track the Apaches flight route, are two such groups of soldiers.

"It's a great team effort," Bowery said. "Everyone from the pilot to the crew chief to the flight operations team to the maintenance team to the pilots plays an equally important role in successfully completing each mission."

The pilots of the 1,000<sup>th</sup> mission also gave credit to the entire 1-1 Aviation team.

"This is an outstanding, very mission-oriented unit," Tilton said. "The fact that we've flown all of these missions is a testament to all these great Soldiers out here today."

An AH-64A Apache helicopter is sprayed down with fire hoses at Forward Operating Base Speicher in celebration of the completion of the 1,000<sup>th</sup> combat mission in Iraq by the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment.



CW3 Don Griffith, maintenance test pilot, Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment, is congratulated by fellow Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Speicher after completing the 1,000<sup>th</sup> combat mission in Iraq for the unit.



# Wolfhounds conduct largest 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT air assault mission

## *Air entrance enhances stealth in Operation Wolfhound Fury*



Task Force 1-27 Soldiers get situated on board one of three CH-47 Chinook helicopters used during Operation Wolfhound Fury on Oct. 4.



The uniform of a Soldier from Alpha Company, Task Force 1-27, reflects off a mirror as he searches a closet for illegal contraband as part of Operation Wolfhound Fury in the town of Hegneh Oct. 5.

### STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC SEAN KIMMONS 25<sup>TH</sup> ID PAO

HEGNEH, Iraq -- On Oct. 5, roughly 200 Task Force 1-27 Infantry Soldiers, flying on eight UH-60 Blackhawk and three CH-47 Chinook helicopters, carried out the largest air assault mission that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division has conducted thus far in Iraq.

The air assault, dubbed Operation Wolfhound Fury, was TF 1-27's first battalion-sized military operation. The idea behind the large-scale air assault was to conduct a movement of troops without alerting anti-Iraqi forces (AIF) within their two objectives.

MAJ Mario Diaz, operations officer, Task Force 1-27, goes over Operation Wolfhound Fury on Forward Operating Base McHenry Oct. 3.



In past operations, enemy lookouts have alerted AIF leaders of approaching U.S. military convoys, giving them ample time to flee.

AH-64 Apache helicopters from 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division traveled along with the other helicopters for extra protection and to ensure no terrorists fled when troops landed at their objectives. They then hovered around troop positions to provide overhead security and surveillance.

The main objective of Wolfhound Fury was Hegneh, a farming town lining the Tigris River that TF 1-27 has never operated in before. Prior to the operation, TF 1-27 received intelligence that Hegneh was a safe haven for terrorist activity.

"Today's mission was planned based on recent intelligence tips that anti-Iraqi forces were operating in the Hegneh region," said 2LT Chris Trombetta, a platoon leader with Alpha Company, TF 1-27. "The plan was to search every single structure to identify all male inhabitants and also to look for contraband."

The Hegneh objective, similar to the secondary objective in Zab, consisted of a two-tier strategy where the main body arrived via air assault and a significant following force arrived via convoy with additional supplies to sustain the battalion, Trombetta said.

Before ground forces arrived at Hegneh, troops took up cordon positions and set up traffic control points to prevent anyone from entering or leaving the town.

Also, Apache helicopters prevented a suspected terrorist from fleeing when he tried to swim across the Tigris River under the moonlight.

Once the ground convoys entered the objective areas, air assaulted troops jumped in the vehicles to commence the clearance of both objectives.

"In Zab, the focus was on a couple of specific buildings, where AIF leaders were known to reside," said CPT Victor Olshansky, assistant operations officer for TF 1-27. "In Hegneh, which is much smaller, we actually cordon and searched the entire town as part of gathering additional information and confirming the information we had on terrorist activities there."

Throughout the 14-hour mission in Hegneh, troops searched more than 50 structures and gathered information on most of its male residents.

PFC Michael Hammer, a radio transmission operator for Alpha Company, TF 1-27, helped record per-

sonal data for his platoon.

"We're not looking to keep a record on the general public," Hammer said. "We're looking to find people who are repeatedly committing terrorist acts."

The personal data and photos of the males and their vehicles will help TF 1-27 gain intelligence on suspected terrorists in the area, Hammer said.

In fact, it has already become helpful to TF 1-27 and the local Iraqi Security Forces.

"The operation has let us refine some of our key targets that we can address through a combination of Iraqi civic engagement and the use of the Iraqi Security Forces," Olshansky said.

Hammer said this operation was more in-depth on paperwork, which is something he thinks should continue.

"A description of a vehicle or a photo of a person could really help us in future operations," Hammer said. "So, the information [gathered] today is really a success even though we didn't find any large weapons."

The demonstration of U.S. combat power was what Trombetta thought was an important aspect of the mission.

Operation Wolfhound Fury "shows the Iraqi people that we can arrive at any time and put about 500 troops on the ground within 30 minutes in the middle of the night," Trombetta said. "Secondly, it shows that we are here for them, and we operate in all different parts of our area of operations to support their stability."

Trombetta also thought highly of his Soldiers' performance during the operation.

"My platoon did awesome and maintained high standards. They proved that once again under adverse conditions in an unfriendly environment they were able push themselves past the limits of human capacity," he said.

At the end of Operation Wolfhound Fury, TF 1-27 detained several persons of interest, as well as a significant amount of weapons and ammunition.

"I think our presence alone in that area should significantly deter quite a bit of enemy activity for the next couple of months, Olshansky said.

"We already received reports that the terrorist cells who have been working up there are now looking to move their operations elsewhere. We denied them the sanctuary they found there previously."

# Samarra adjusts to life after insurgents

**STORY BY  
SGT W. WAYNE MARLOW  
1<sup>ST</sup> ID PAO**

SAMARRA, Iraq -- Soldiers with Bravo Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment walk through the streets, accompanied by two gun trucks.

During the early-October mission, time is made to speak with members of a youth soccer team and buy ice cream cones for grateful children. Company leaders speak with merchants offering everything from watermelon to hub caps. Virtually every resident stops and stares at the passing group, most of them smiling and waving. After an hour on patrol, the Soldiers turn and head back to their forward operating base.

The situation would be unremarkable, if not for the location. Less than two weeks prior, anti-Iraq forces controlled Samarra and most of the residents stayed inside out of fear.

"We couldn't have walked through this area a week ago without being shot up with RPGs," said Calumet, Mich. native 1LT Greg Longo, a platoon leader with Bravo Company, 1-14 Infantry.

But one impressive offensive and 125 dead insurgents later, the streets of Samarra were reclaimed. Daily missions by 1-14 Infantry Soldiers help maintain security and win over residents. Claims have been paid for

damage to homes, and uniforms have been bought for a local youth soccer team.

"We're winning over those folks that may have been borderline before," Longo said. "It's night and day as far as their reception toward us now and before."

SGT Anthony San Luis, a team leader from Dededo, Guam, noted that barely a week prior to this patrol, Samarra residents were in fear of the Soldiers. After the main thrust of Operation Baton Rouge ended, Soldiers went scouring for remaining insurgents and many of the residents misunderstood the U.S. intent.

"When we were going into their houses, they thought we were going to kill everybody," San Luis said. "We explained that we were just there to get the bad guys. We started passing out candy, playing with the kids. When they realized we're not there to hurt, but to help, you could see the relief."

And now, the Soldiers are welcomed.

"We patrol, keep security, and we make sure any problems the civilians want to address, we solve or point them in the right direction," San Luis said.

"You see a big difference. They're happy, giving us the thumbs-up, like in other places where we've established ourselves. It makes me really happy that I can help these people. This is a big step in changing how things are in Iraq," he said.

PFC Jim Torres, a squad automatic weapon gunner from Tacoma, Wash., said the security and the claims payments doled out by the U.S. have made a huge difference.

"The people seem to be a lot more receptive to us," he said. "We get up, do a patrol in the morning and talk with the people, see how they're doing, and ask if they've seen any insurgents. Once the fighting was done, the normal population started coming back. Before, everyone you saw was shooting at you. Now the people are glad to see you. I feel good about coming in and making the people better off."

Torres said Iraqi National Guard members are also helping keep the new-found peace. "It looks like they've got it under control," he said admiringly.

SPC Robert King said he gets a lift from being able to make things safer for the people of Samarra.

"We know the average Iraqi hates terrorists as much

as we do," said King, a grenadier from Denver.

"It's better here now, and the people are coming back. The little kids are happy to see us," he said. "We're just going out, talking to the people, handing out money to those with claims. We're changing from fighting to winning hearts and minds."

Besides bringing safety to the streets, there's also the matter of rebuilding the dilapidated city. That's where the civil affairs teams come in.

Local contractors are now bringing electricity and water to Samarra, providing supplies to schools and hospitals, and cleaning up streets, mosques, and playgrounds. The contractors provide updates to the 415<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs unit on their progress and also bring up any needs.

"We also meet with the mayor and see what his needs are," said LTC Kirk Fernitz, a team commander with the 415<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion. "We support the mayor and the city council. This is the go-to place for the mayor and contractors." The civil affairs team took just three days to get electricity to all of Samarra, and got running water to all but the outlying areas.

"We have lots of different projects, from life-sustaining ones to recreation," the Lancaster, Pa. resident said. "We want to get the city back to normal." The office also handles claims, including cars crushed by tanks.

"We drove out to the site, asked 'Whose car is this?'" Fernitz said. "They would hold up the keys. We asked them how much they thought it was worth." Not every disbursement is as dramatic, but all are helpful.

"People come if they have any damages," Fernitz said. "They tell us about them, show us proof, and tell us what they think the proper amount is. If everything is legitimate, we give them payment right on the spot."

With projects on tap for schools, hospitals, roads, and mosques, about the only thing not seen in Samarra these days are the insurgents.

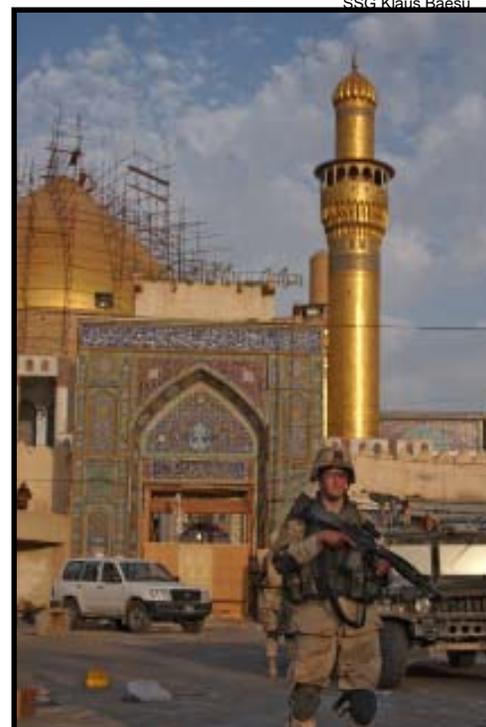


SSG Klaus Baesu

An Iraqi National Guard soldier mans a vehicle check point near Samarra Oct. 5.

A pair of modified armored personnel carriers bellow plumes of smoke near Samarra to provide concealment for engineers while they construct Patrol Base Uvanni Oct. 5.

SSG Klaus Baesu



SSG Klaus Baesu

A 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team Soldier provides security while the BCT commander visits the site of the Golden Mosque in Samarra Oct. 5.



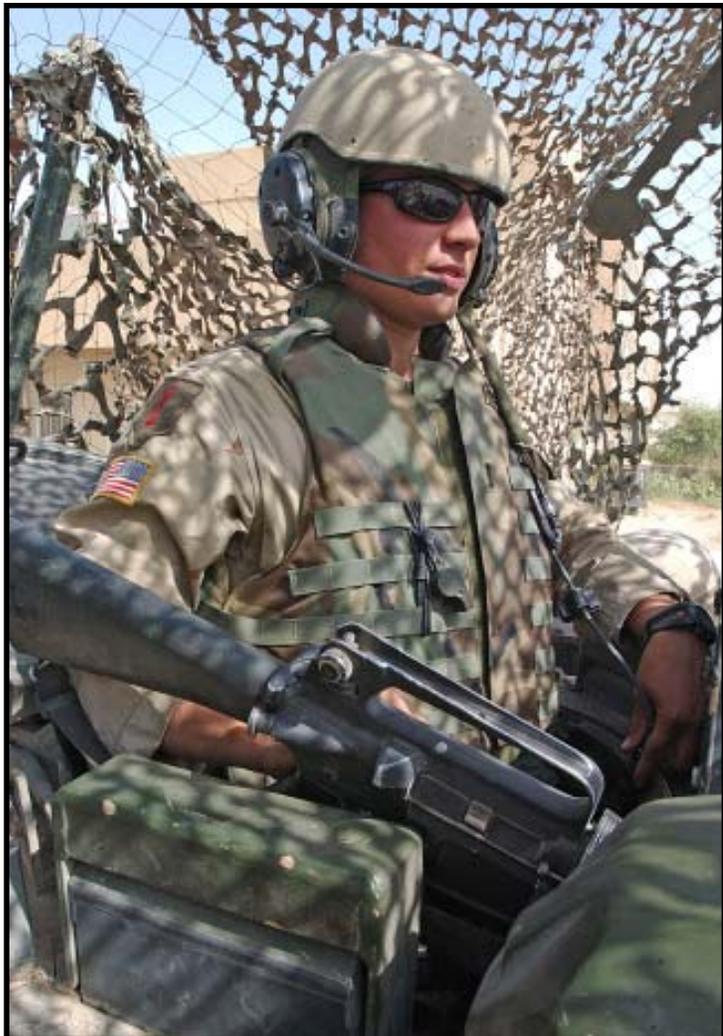
USN JO1 Jeremy L. Wood

SPC William Pasiechnik, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, launches a Raven, an unmanned aerial vehicle used for reconnaissance, at Patrol Base Uvanni Nov. 6 after the base came under attack in Samarra.



SSG Klaus Baesu

On Oct. 5, COL Randal A. Dragon, left, commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, meets with military leadership concentrating on the reconstruction of the city of Samarra.



USAF TSGT Lee Harshman

Bradley commander, 1LT Curtis Brooker, Bravo Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, provides security at a new base in the city Oct. 5.

# SAMARRA...

Three Soldiers from Charlie Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, New York National Guard, cross a street in Samarra Oct. 2.

USAF TSGT Lee Harshman

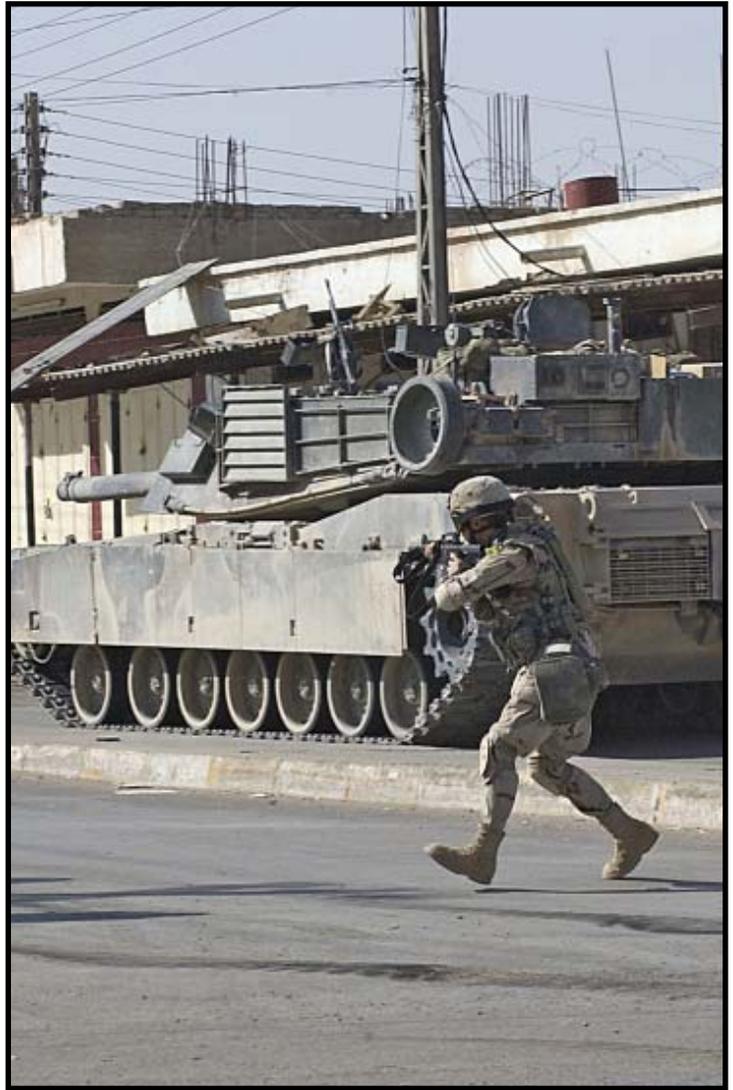




USAF TSGT Lee Harshman

Members of the Iraqi National Guard pull security around the Golden Mosque in Samarra Oct. 2.

An unidentified Soldier crosses a Samarra street during action Oct. 2.



USAF TSGT Lee Harshman

# ...REVISITED

Two Soldiers from the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division take positions during action in Samarra Oct. 2.

USAF TSGT Lee Harshman

PFC William Attig, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, uses a thermal imaging system to find insurgents, as Patrol Base Uvanni came under attack in Samarra Nov. 6.

USN JO1 Jeremy L. Wood



# Unit earns combat awards

**STORY BY  
CPT L. PAULA SYDENSTRICKER  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE OMAHA, TIKRIT, Iraq -- The Combat Infantryman Badge and Combat Medical Badge are honors reserved for infantry Soldiers and medics who have fought or served in combat.

In two separate ceremonies Aug. 26 and 29, members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division's 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment were awarded Combat Infantryman and Combat Medical Badges.

Troops from Alpha and Bravo companies gathered in a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Omaha to receive the award. A small number of medics attached to the battalion received the Combat Medical Badge.

Two hundred fifty Soldiers received the CIB and 20 received the CMB award at FOB Omaha for their actions in securing the Tikrit area.

"These are two of the most revered badges that a Soldier can obtain, and I have the honor today to watch so many infantrymen and medics get recognized for their efforts," said COL Randal Dragon, commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team.

On Aug. 29, Charlie Company, 1-18 Infantry received these prestigious awards at FOB Danger. More than 170 Soldiers received their CIB, and 14 medics received the CMB.

"A silver and enamel badge 1 inch in height and 3 inches in width, consisting of an infantry musket on a light blue background with a silver border, on and over an elliptical oak wreath," said LTC Jeffrey Sinclair, battalion commander, as he recited the military's description of the awards during his speech.

"Although it meets the requirements for a novice who seeks descriptions of wartime awards, it falls incredibly short of understanding the merit of this recognition," said Sinclair, a native of Morgantown, W. Va.

The three requirements for the CIB are: first, to be an infantryman; second, to have been actively engaged in ground combat; and third, to be assigned to a unit, brigade-sized or smaller, engaged in combat.

Task Force 1-18 has been engaged in numerous patrols, tactical operations, raids, ambushes, and escort missions and has acted as quick reaction forces since arriving here in February. Along with all this they have helped train the Iraqi National Guard and are involved in helping the local schools and numerous work projects to help the local community.

According to Army Regulation 600-8-22, this award, established in Oct. 1943, was designed to enhance morale and to recognize the unique role of the Army infantrymen.

During World War II, the infantry was suffering the most casualties while operating in some of the worst conditions.

Even though the nature of conflict has changed over time and measures have been taken to mitigate the exposure of the infantryman and combat medics, close-quarters combat still remains the same, Sinclair said.

"Soldiers will always be required to walk where few choose to go," he said.

"Only a rare few can call themselves experts," Sinclair said. "We don't wear our badge to say that we are better, we wear our badge to demonstrate to our fellow service members that we are masters of armed conflict in our specialty and will not fail."

"You'll be expected to do more, but no more than your fellow Soldier," Dragon said.

First Sergeant Lorenzo D. Farrow with Charlie Company recalls receiving his first CIB during Desert Storm, but states that this one means more because, as a first sergeant, he is in charge of more Soldiers and his responsibility is greater.

"It is not so much what a guy does, but what he is willing to do," said Farrow who hails from Dallas, Texas.

The CIB "is considered one of the most respected awards a Soldier can receive and most honored, even more so than the Medal of Honor. It has been said that the CIB is the only award worn above the ribbon of the Medal of Honor on the army uniform," according to published reports.

"The award does not make the man, the man makes

the award," Dragon said.

"We also carry a family heirloom, a treasure, a symbol of your life's work and service to our country. Wear the mark with pride and continue the legacy," Sinclair added.

--SGT Roland G. Walters contributed to this report from FOB Danger.



CPT L. Paula Sydenstricker

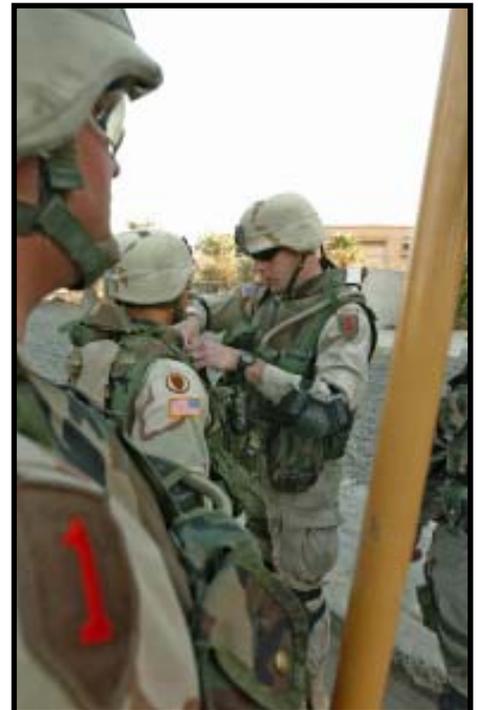
SPC William Albright stands as the guidon bearer of Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, after receiving his Combat Infantryman Badge on Aug. 26 at Forward Operating Base Omaha in Tikrit.

LTC Jeffrey A. Sinclair, commander of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, pins the Combat Infantryman Badge on 1SG Lorenzo D. Farrow, Charlie Company's first sergeant Aug. 29 in Tikrit.

SGT Roland G. Walters

COL Randal Dragon, left, commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, gives CPT Tim Crowe, a staff officer with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, a congratulatory handshake during a Combat Infantryman Badge ceremony on Aug. 29 in Tikrit.

SGT Roland G. Walters



# Third BCT Soldier awarded Silver Star

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT KIMBERLY SNOW  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE GABE, BAQUBAH, Iraq -- He didn't see that he had a choice that day. It was simple, really. It was his duty.

The commander of Bradley Fighting Vehicle C38, had only one concern - that he might have to drive himself back in. Soldiers were still out there, still engaged, and they needed support. He would provide it.

On July 20, SSG Raymond Bittinger, an infantryman from 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Charlie Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, was awarded the Silver Star - one of the military's highest decorations - for his actions that day.

"Staff Sergeant Bittinger's personal bravery, fearless leadership and heroism under fire contributed directly to saving the lives of friendly forces and the destruction of a platoon-sized force in a high-intensity urban warfare environment," MG John R. S. Batiste said at the ceremony held to honor him.

Fighting began around 10 a.m. April 9, when insurgents armed with rifles and rocket-propelled grenades attacked the provincial government building and police station in downtown Baqubah, according to official accounts of the battle. At 11 a.m., 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon received orders to secure both sites.

The platoon reported no enemy contact, and at 1:45 p.m., Bittinger's section, Bradley Fighting Vehicles C36 and C38, were redirected to the small town of Buhritz, south of Baqubah, where reports of activity in the area indicated that 15-20 insurgents were preparing to attack Coalition Forces. The other section, C37 and HQ41, remained to guard the government buildings.

"They sent us out to investigate," said Bittinger. "It turned into a movement to contact. I was the point man and we received contact right away with RPGs and small arms."

Shortly after dismounting, the first squad dismounts were pinned down by enemy fire.

"Staff Sergeant Bittinger, without orders, moved C38 to protect his comrades," said LTC Steven Bullimore, Task Force 1-6 commander. "Staff Sergeant Bittinger deliberately placed his vehicle in between his squad and the enemy fire. He also had the insight to pick up reinforcements."

Bittinger then used his vehicle to crush a hole in a brick wall, creating a breach for the dismounts and directed his gunner to cover their movement into a house.

After six to seven hours of fighting, the platoon was ordered to break contact, Bittinger said. At that time, the 25mm main gun on C36 malfunctioned. He volunteered to suppress the enemy while C36 moved out. Bittinger and his crew then began taking increased fire.

"We just got obliterated with RPGs and small arms for about 45 minutes," he said. "That's when (SPC Allen J. Vandayburg) got killed. I was kind of knocked out myself."

Despite being injured, disoriented and losing his gunner, he continued to fight while moving north to evacuate Vandayburg to FOB Warhorse. He assumed control of the 25mm main gun and once out of immediate danger, began attempts to treat his gunner's wounds. Upon arrival, medical personnel told Bittinger that Vandayburg had died immediately, he said.

Bittinger was then moved to FOB Scunion and recruited volunteers to rejoin the fight.

"It was great, they all volunteered," Bittinger said. "They were really shocked about what happened to Vandayburg, but once I asked for volunteers, I was wor-

ried I might have to drive myself, they all stepped up."

PFC Samuel Plata, who had no previous experience with the 25 mm main gun, volunteered as gunner. Bittinger instructed him on the weapon system and combat certified him. PFC Joshua Bridges, who hadn't driven a BFV in about a year, volunteered to drive.

"I was a little nervous because I hadn't driven in a while," Bridges said. "But Sergeant B asked me to go. He needed a driver, so I did it. It's the least I could do."

The second crew of C38 returned to Baqubah to the Mufrek traffic circle, where there were reports of up to 200 enemy personnel. En route, the vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device but continued.

They were again engaged by enemy forces. Despite his inexperience, Plata killed five enemy personnel and wounded four others. The crew was then ordered to secure a bridge over the Diyala River and remained there until they were relieved at 5:30 a.m. the next day.

In all, 3<sup>rd</sup> platoon destroyed at least 21 enemy personnel and wounded many more during the fighting. Plata was awarded the Bronze Star medal with Valor for his actions that day.

"Every one of the Soldiers was extremely heroic," said Charlie Company Commander, CPT Daniel H. Edwan. "His (Bittinger's) actions just floored everyone. But he'd be the first to tell you that it was the platoon. It was the greater good that brought him back."

Edwan said that Bittinger, even before the battle, has had a great impact on his Soldiers and fellow NCOs.

"It's contagious, they all want to be like him," he said. "He's the (NCO) creed in living form."

As for Bittinger, he shies from the attention and seems embarrassed to be called a hero.

"I consider myself a Soldier not a hero," said Bittinger. "I'm an infantryman. It's my job. It's my duty."



MG John R.S. Batiste, commander, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, presents a Silver Star certificate to SSG Raymond Bittinger, an infantryman from 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment July 20.

COL Dana J.H. Pittard, commander, 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, exchanges salutes with SSG Raymond Bittinger during a July 20 ceremony held in Bittinger's honor. Bittinger was awarded the Silver Star for his actions under fire in Baqubah April 9.



# Civil affairs unit heads home, new teams at work

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT KIMBERLY SNOW  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, BAQUBAH, Iraq -- It was like saying good-bye to an old friend, said 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team Commander, COL Dana J.H. Pittard.

Soldiers from the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division's 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team gathered here Oct. 10 to extend thanks and best wishes to their friends and colleagues from Alpha Company, 415<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion and to witness the transfer of authority to Alpha Company, 411<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT and Kalamazoo, Michigan-based 415<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion had steadily built a solid working relationship prior to coming to Iraq. The units had worked together during deployments to Kosovo in support of Operation Joint Guardian and participated in a series of training exercises together prior to deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

The unit got off to a rough start, however. Within days of arriving in Iraq, the team stationed at FOB Warhorse was hit by an improvised explosive device, killing SPC Nichole Frye and wounding four others. At that point, Alpha and Charlie companies combined forces to support both the 30<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> BCTs.

"After Alpha and Charlie companies were combined, especially after what happened with SPC Frye, the 415<sup>th</sup> did an excellent job of getting people in place and basically combining two companies," said SFC Michael S. McGregor, enlisted supervisor of 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT Civil Military Operations. "And I can't say enough about the teams out in sector."

The combined companies oversaw and facilitated more than \$7 million in projects, including school renovations, improvements to water treatment facilities, irrigation canal improvements and road repairs - all aimed at improving the lives of the Iraqi citizens.

They also worked to help get the local governments established and seen as legitimate by the Iraqi people, said CPT Jeff Hoose, Task Force 2-2 Infantry civil affairs team chief.

"It was Government 101, that's what we had to teach them," Hoose said. "When we first got here, we helped them assign a director for the city council meetings, somebody that would be proctor."

They explained the importance and the process of creating a schedule for meetings, recording the minutes of the meeting, and other basics of organizing a local government, he said. Another big issue was project nomination.

"We wanted to put an Iraqi face on all the projects," he said. "Yes, it was money coming from us, but we were trying to make this government legitimate. So we would go to the meetings, and ask them 'Okay, what are your top five priorities?' And we got some wild and crazy ideas."

The civil affairs teams would steer the council members away from beautification projects - like building an archway into the city and a fountain in the park - and toward projects aimed at building and improving basic infrastructure.

"Community service was something they had no concept of," said Hoose. "They were more concerned with PR than what the people really needed. It took a while to get them to understand that. It was a struggle, but they understand that now."

In Muqdadiyah and its surrounding area, the Task Force 2-2 Infantry CA Team facilitated around \$4 million in projects. In and around the Baqubah area, the

amount was around \$3 million.

The Soldiers of the 411<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion have their work cut out for them, with the initial hurdle of simply integrating into the various task forces, Hoose said. Because Alpha Company, 415<sup>th</sup> arrived with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, they went through the learning curve together.

"They've got some extremely experienced Soldiers. I had three specialists come to replace our team, and those guys could do it on their own. They really could," he said. "They're smart guys. They're very well-edu-

cated, and it's those kinds of things that they bring to the table that's going to help them."

The transition between the two units went extremely smoothly, McGregor said. They are already set up in the Civil Military Operations Center in Baqubah and came equipped with all the tools they need to succeed. They have also begun conducting realistic battle drills for all types of scenarios.

"These guys are city planners in their civilian jobs and they're really excited," McGregor said. "I've never seen anyone as motivated as these guys."



SGT Kaziah M. McKendry, a civil affairs specialist from Alpha Company, 415<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion, prepares to case the company's colors during a transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 10 at Forward Operating Base Warhorse. The Kalamazoo, Michigan-based 415<sup>th</sup> was replaced by the 411<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion from Danbury, Conn.



MAJ Teresa Wolfgang, left, and SFC James Ryan, center, of Alpha Company, 411<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion, unfurl the unit colors during the transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 10 at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Baqubah.

# Signal Soldiers bring smiles to school

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC ISMAIL TURAY JR.  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD**

AD DAWR, Iraq -- In a brief ceremony held here Oct. 16, the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division's 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion presented a new auditorium to the all-girls Nashiba Primary School. Soldiers also distributed school supplies, toys and clothing to the students.

The building, which seats more than 100 people,

will be used for school assemblies, parent-teacher conferences and town hall meetings, said LTC Jim Garrison, commander of the 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion.

"This building is presented to you for your benefit and for the future of Iraq," he told a handful of students and faculty members during the ceremony.

Aside from the auditorium, the 121<sup>st</sup> has also made numerous other improvements to the school, Garrison said. The unit repaired classrooms, bought furniture, computers and air conditioners and replaced windows.

"We are benefiting an all-girls school in a country where women have not fared well," he said.

After the ceremony, Soldiers distributed about 40 boxes of stuffed animals and other toys, as well as school supplies and clothing. Many of the students cheered when they were given the toys.

The majority of the school supplies and clothing the 121<sup>st</sup> has given the school have come from churches and family readiness groups in Germany and the United States, Garrison said.

There are plans in the works, he said, to build the school a kindergarten classroom and playground and to purchase bookshelves and curtains.



Students at the Nashiba Primary School hold up their thumbs in approval of 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion Soldiers Oct. 16.



LTC Jim Garrison, commander of the 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion, helps distribute toys and supplies at the all-girls Nashiba Primary School Oct. 16.

# Engineers, hometown deliver socks, shoes, school supplies to Iraqi village

**STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC JOE ALGER  
1<sup>ST</sup> ID PAO**

KAARIMIYAH, Iraq -- The terrain in Iraq can sometimes be difficult to walk across for even the most hardened Soldier. Now, imagine walking across it barefoot.

For many children here, that nightmare is a reality.

Thanks to Soldiers from the 216<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, many children in the village of Kaarimiyah no longer have this problem. That's because the Soldiers handed out hundreds of pairs of shoes, along with socks and school supplies in late August.

"We don't get a lot of opportunities like this to get out and interact with the people, so this was a nice change of pace," said Chaplain (1LT) James Sizemore.

"It was a chance to do something positive for the Iraqi people," Sizemore said.

While the Soldiers of the 216<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion had volunteers from all four of its companies to help with the mission, they also received help from a few other sources.

"The unit that we replaced here, the 244<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, used to do missions like this and after they left they continued sending shoes to us so we could continue doing it," Sizemore said.

To go along with the 1,500 pairs of shoes, the Youngstown, Ohio-based unit also received socks sent from home.

"One of our soldiers, SSG Paul Bronthaver, was injured here in Iraq and sent back home to Cincinnati, where he appeared on a few of the news stations there," Sizemore said. "In one of his interviews, he asked people to donate socks to us for our shoe drive. We received over 15,000 pairs."

Since this was the first time the Soldiers from the 216<sup>th</sup> had conducted a mission of this nature, some of the Soldiers were somewhat surprised by the amount of Iraqi children who showed up to receive shoes.

"It was a bit hectic," said SSG Patrick McCarty, a squad leader with Alpha Company, 216<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion.

"It was a good learning experience on how hard it is to control a big crowd of people and we eventually ran out of shoes," McCarty said.

While not everyone received a pair of shoes, the Soldiers of the 216<sup>th</sup> felt they made a difference and helped out a lot of people.

"We handed out a lot of shoes, which was the main mission," McCarty said. "I don't think I saw any kids with shoes on when we first got there."



SGT William Stone, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 216<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, makes balloon hats for Iraqi children in the village of Kaarimiyah Aug. 28.

# U.S. military police live, work, train with Iraqi officers

## *Share common experience, dangers*

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT KIMBERLY SNOW  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD**

BAQUBAH, Iraq -- SGT Jon H. Fouts sat talking on the telephone from a small desk on the second floor of the Diyala Province Police Headquarters, having placed a morale call home to his wife, when an explosion rocked the building.

"I quickly told my wife 'Gotta go!' and hung up, which left her in a panic," he said. "I jumped up and took about two steps toward the hallway, I guess out of curiosity to see what the explosion was," he said. "Right at that point the round came out of the ceiling and literally was doing a spinning dance and bouncing against the wall at my feet." Although that day will be one neither he nor his wife will ever forget, there have been other dangerous and exciting moments protecting a vital joint U.S.-Iraqi operation in the heart of Baqubah.

Fouts, an artilleryman from the New Hampshire Army National Guard's 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 197<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, lives and works at the provincial police headquarters - a building scarred from numerous rocket propelled grenade and rocket attacks - along with the rest of his unit.

They were retrained at their mobilization station at Fort Dix, N.J., and re-designated the 2-197<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company before deploying to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

The artillerymen-turned-military police officers share their duties, as well as their living space, with active duty MPs from 4<sup>th</sup> platoon, 293<sup>rd</sup> MP Company, out of Ft. Stewart, Ga.



SPC Jesse D. Greene, a military police officer with the 293<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Company of Ft. Stewart, Ga., guards the Diyala Province Police Headquarters in Baqubah from a rooftop observation post.

Their primary focus is maintaining and protecting the Diyala Province Joint Coordination Center co-located there. They also run a police academy, which includes a police basic training course and Transitional Integration Program (TIP); provide oversight for the police station and jail as well as work together with Iraqi investigators in the CID (Criminal Investigations Diyala) to aid in solving crimes.

Although a field artillery unit might seem an unlikely choice for retraining to become MPs, this particular unit was remarkably well-suited for the task.

"We have a strangely disproportionate amount of law enforcement officers in our unit," said Fouts, himself a captain in the New Hampshire Department of Corrections. "I think that was a big part of the reason they took a look at us."

Fouts brought with him a wealth of knowledge from his civilian occupation and put it to use here as the pri-

mary instructor for the TIP academy, a department within the police academy designed to retrain Iraqis who had already worked as police officers under the Baath regime.

The focus of the TIP academy is the de-Baathification of the officers as well as the teaching of democracy, human rights, policing and investigative techniques, said CPT Christian H. Solinsky, the Diyala Province police coordinator.

"SGT Fouts is a great instructor. He's the man!" said Solinsky. "He's very, very animated and he keeps them on their toes. He'll make an impression on every Iraqi he teaches."

Although Fouts said his experience has not been at all what he thought it would be, and that they've been exposed to a lot more than he ever thought they would be, he feels good about what they're doing here.

"I wouldn't call it bad per se, it's just more than we expected," he said. "Sometimes you question whether you make a difference, but we've done some good things here. I like the feeling of being able to teach these people something for their future. I feel awesome about that."

One of the experiences Fouts could have done without, however, was the rocket attack on Oct. 16.

Like most servicemembers serving in combat zones, Fouts has attempted to shield his loved ones - his wife of 17 years, Candy, and 16-year-old son, Jacob - from the sometimes harsh realities of his day-to-day life. But on that day, he no longer had that luxury.

The round, a 107mm Chinese-made rocket, had impacted the east side of the building, blasting through an air conditioning unit on the wall of a small, two-man barracks room, continuing through the far wall and up into the ceiling over the hallway, only a few feet from where he was sitting.

"I got very, very excited," he said. "My good buddy walked up behind me and we both saw it at the same time and he grabbed me and we both ran the other way yelling 'Get out of the building, get out of the building!'"

When the explosive ordnance team arrived and removed the round, they told the MPs that although it wasn't fused, the round did have the potential to explode.

-- See MPs, Page 24

A 107mm Chinese-made rocket blasted through the wall of the military police barracks at the Diyala Province Police Headquarters in Baqubah Oct. 16. No one was in the room at the time of the attack and there were no injuries.



# Historic ceremony held in Baghdad

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT KIMBERLY SNOW  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD

CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD, -- For 34 servicemembers deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II, Oct. 3 was a day they will likely never forget.

The 31 Soldiers and three Marines became United States citizens in one of the first naturalization ceremonies to be conducted outside of the U.S. The first, held Oct. 1 in Bagram, Afghanistan, naturalized 17 Soldiers from the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"This is one of the most memorable days of my life, especially being down here in a war zone," said SPC Hugens Exilus, a cannon crew member from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment. "For me and the other guys, it is a great day to remember."

Recent amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act, signed into effect by President George W. Bush in November 2003, made the overseas ceremony possible. The changes require all aspects of the naturalization process to be available to permanent residents serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, including applications, interviews, filings, oaths and ceremonies.

Before, naturalizations could only be conducted while physically in the United States.

Other changes to the INA designed to make it easier for servicemembers to become citizens include waiving the application fee, streamlining the process, and reducing the service requirement from three years to one.

And on July 3, 2002, President Bush signed into effect the Expedited Naturalization Executive Order. The order waives the one-year requirement, allowing servicemembers serving on active duty after Sept. 11, 2001, to immediately file for citizenship.

An expedited process for granting posthumous citizenship to servicemembers who die while serving, as

well as granting special consideration to their family members, was also included in changes to the INA. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has so far granted posthumous citizenship to 36 servicemembers who died while serving in the Global War on Terrorism.

"Today, we welcomed as new citizens men and women who had pledged to protect America's freedom," said USCIS Director Eduardo Aguirre. "Thousands of immigrant troops are making extraordinary sacrifices for America. There is no more fitting way for a grateful nation to demonstrate its appreciation than through granting qualified servicemembers the privilege of U.S. citizenship as quickly as possible, to carry out their dream of becoming Americans."

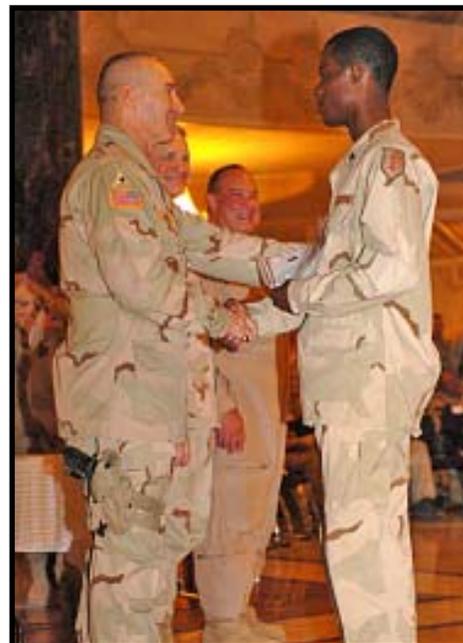
While the new citizens each had their own ideas as to what constitutes the "American Dream," all said they left their native countries in search of a better life for themselves and their families. And U.S. citizenship makes those dreams possible.

"It means everything," said SGT Evrod D. Folkes. "To me, being an American citizen means being free, having the power to agree or disagree, being heard. It means I can choose the government. It means I can't just complain; I can do something about it."

For Folkes, a supply sergeant who is also serving with 1-6 Field Artillery, the chance to become a U.S. citizen was worth the price of giving up citizenship in his native Jamaica. He said the opportunities gained for his family and him made it an easy decision.

And while each of the Soldiers and Marines had his or her own reasons for joining the U.S. Armed Forces, for most, an advantage over the millions who apply for citizenship every year played a role. But for some, service in the U.S. Armed Forces was a calling.

"It's something I really wanted to do, watching movies back in Africa," said PFC Mamadou K. Diallo, 28, a petroleum supply specialist with 368<sup>th</sup> Cargo Transfer Company, who is originally from Conakry, French Guinea. "I always wanted to join the U.S. Army. It's the best Army in the world, so I feel like I'm part of



SGT Evrod D. Folkes, a supply sergeant from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, is congratulated by Multi-National Force-Iraq sergeant major, CSM William J. Gainey, during the citizenship ceremony held Oct. 3 at the Al-Faw Palace in Baghdad. Folkes, a resident of Brooklyn, is originally from Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

the best team in the world."

For others, the events of Sept. 11, 2001, played a direct role in their decisions to enlist or reenlist in the U.S. Armed Services. Folkes and Exilus were two of those Soldiers. Folkes decided to reenlist, saying he wanted to stay and do more.

Exilus, who immigrated to Brooklyn in 1996, made the decision to enlist for the first time following the attacks on America. A student at Queensborough Community College, he earned an associate degree in Liberal Arts before transferring to Baruch College in New York City. He was working toward a Bachelor of Science degree in economics when he said the events of Sept. 11 prompted him to suspend his studies and join the U.S. Army.

Although one of his main goals is to complete his education, he said he does not regret the decision. He cited his service in Iraq as one of his proudest achievements.

"I'd like to tell my grandkids - when I have kids someday - 'Your granddaddy did that,'" he said. "So serving America in a time of war - that would be it."

Following this deployment, Exilus said he will continue his education with online classes while he fulfills his service commitment. Although he is undecided on how long he will serve in the Army, he said he would at least like to continue to work for the U.S. government in some capacity.

Folkes also has his sights set on completing his education, but not quite yet.

"My goal is to excel in the military. Give it as much as I've got for as long as I've got," he said. "Then venture off to college and do something interesting. Don't know what it's going to be yet, I'm still working on that. But watch out world!"



Thirty-four U.S. servicemembers recite the Oath of Citizenship of the United States of America during a naturalization ceremony Oct. 3 at the Al-Faw Palace in Baghdad. An Oct. 1 ceremony in Afghanistan naturalized 17 servicemembers. The two ceremonies marked the first-ever naturalizations of U.S. citizens off of U.S. soil.

# Getting boarded

*Soldiers from 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT compete for honors while in combat zone*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT KIMBERLY SNOW  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, BAQUBAH, Iraq — As they awaited their turn, some of them paced back and forth to ease their nervous tension. Others sat talking and joking, seeming relaxed.

The Noncommissioned Officers and Soldiers (Specialist and below)- one each from the six individual task forces within the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team - were gathered to compete with one another Sept. 23 for the honor of being named Soldier of the Quarter and NCO of the Quarter. All had previously won their company-level boards - a prerequisite for all competitors wishing to compete for the brigade title.

"Is he singing the Army song?" asked one with a laugh as they strained their ears to listen.

"Yeah, he is. Oh, man, I hope I don't have to sing," said another.

By midday, the Soldier of the Quarter board had concluded. The winner was SPC Jolene Narr, a signals interceptor from 101<sup>st</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion, representing HHC, 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT.

In the late afternoon, the title of NCO of the Quarter was awarded to SSG Travis Snook, a tanker assigned to the brigade commander's personal security detachment, also representing HHC, 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT.

With help from a senior NCO, Snook and Narr studied together for two hours every night during the week leading up to the competition.

"I feel really excited, I've studied really hard," Snook said. "But I thought I could have done a lot better."

Professional development boards are very important in developing a Soldier's career and helping them to more fully understand their role in the Army, said Snook, who insists that all of his Soldiers attend a board at least once.

"My gunner, SPC (Robert R.) Link will be going to the Soldier of the Month for the company and then the month after will be going to the promotion board," he said. "So I'm preparing him right now, and I'm hoping that he will do very well. I'm teaching him all my tricks."

The competing Soldiers face a board of five Senior NCOs, including the board president, 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team CSM John D. Fourhman. Board members 1SG Vincent Hendrix from HHC, 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT; 1SG Alfredo Bonilla from Service Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery; CSM Steven Faulkenburg from 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment; and CSM Eric Frey from the 201<sup>st</sup> Forward Support Battalion rounded out the most recent five-member board.

"This was an extremely competitive board," said Fourhman. "In the instance of the Soldier of the Quarter, four Soldiers were separated by one point. (Narr) won by one point, the other three were just a point below her."

The competitors are scored in several categories. Before they even enter the room, the competitors are awarded up to 15 points for APFT scores and up to 10 points for rifle marksmanship scores.

Once they enter the room, the competitors report to the president of the board

CSM Steven Faulkenburg quizzes a competitor during the NCO of the Quarter board Sept. 23 at Forward Operating Base Warhorse.



Board president and 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team command sergeant major, CSM John D. Fourhman, addresses the NCO of the Quarter competitors before announcing the winner.

and are asked to deliver a brief personal biography. They are given up to 25 points for personal appearance, bearing, and uniform wear.

Competitors are then asked questions by each board member covering topics including Army doctrine, policies and procedures, basic Soldier skills, current events and military programs. Each individual board member scores them based on the Soldiers' knowledge of their areas of evaluation.

A final category, self-confidence, oral expression and conversational skill, is scored by all board members. Once the evaluations are compiled, the scores are tallied and the winner is announced.

As the board president, Fourhman decided what categories would be covered and how many questions each board member would ask. To maintain consistency for the participants, the questions from company level on up were based on the division memorandums covering quarterly and yearly boards, he said.

Fourhman believes the Soldier boards are extremely important to a Soldier's professional development. They also give Soldiers a chance to practice for their actual promotion boards, he said.

"(Soldier boards) came about really to increase the professionalism of Soldiers and give them, in a competitive spirit, a chance to excel," said Fourhman. "It's a testament to our success here in theatre that the Soldiers have time to study for the board and that we find the time and place the importance on continuing the board process."

So what's next for the winners?

First, they will attend an awards ceremony where they will be awarded the Army Commendation Medal, said Fourhman. If a division level board is convened - the risks of travel must be balanced - he hopes to send them to attend.

The winners themselves are already looking forward to the next level.

"Hopefully division," said Narr. "It'll take a lot of studying, but we'll be ready."

-- *The Soldiers, NCOs, and officers of the Big Red One extend their heartfelt sympathies to the Faulkenburg family. CSM Faulkenburg died of wounds received in Fallujah on Nov. 9.*

Board president and 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT CSM John D. Fourhman congratulates NCO of the Quarter winner SSG Travis W. Snook.



# Army tradition continues in Iraqi combat zone

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC JACY D. WELCH  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, TIKRIT, Iraq -- The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "Army 10-Miler" run was held here Oct. 24.

The yearly run in Washington, D.C. was held the same day, about seven hours later than the one at FOB Speicher. Many may wonder why Soldiers would willingly run 10 miles in the desert and push themselves to such extremes in a combat zone.

To many it may seem crazy.

But CPT Dean Rasmussen, a Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Division Support Command, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, said it's a way to forget about being in Iraq.

In Germany, many units put together a team to send to Washington for the annual event. However, being deployed to Iraq prevents sending a team this year.

With that in mind, Rasmussen thought it would be a good idea to hold an "Army 10-Miler" here.

Rasmussen had the backing and support of the units on FOB Speicher. He also had help from Kellogg, Brown and Root to chart out and verify the course. With operations and fragmentary orders for other FOBs, Rasmussen began signing up people for the run. Posters advertising the event were put up around FOB Speicher. The plan was to register 500 soldiers. More than 365 were

## ARMY TEN MILER



on hand at the starting line.

As the Soldiers started the race, many sported the t-shirts given to them when they signed up. Fifty-eight minutes, 55 seconds later, SPC Joshua Quinn crossed the finish line. The 24-year-old Soldier is assigned to Charlie Company, 230<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion at FOB Speicher.

"The (1<sup>st</sup> ID) band was real motivation the last portion of the run," said CPT John Broam, commander of Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation, who ran in the "Army 10-Miler."

When asked why he took on the challenge, Broam said, "It reminds me of home, one of the things you normally can't do here."

PFC Jonathan Rodriguez, a Soldier from Bravo Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery, stationed at FOB Summerall, said he didn't think he would finish.

Rodriguez surprised himself. He came in third out of 12 men from his unit. His motivation was to beat his first sergeant, Lorenzo Wallace.

"Not bad for an old man," said Wallace, who is 44.

He smiled, noting all his men ran well. Some Soldiers ran for different reasons.

Take 1LT Andrea Twitchell. She ran so she could have something to call home about. Her father ran a similar race in D.C., and she planned to call home and see how he did.

SFC Rodney Boatwright participates in Task Force Danger's version of the Army Ten Miler held on Forward Operating Base Speicher Oct. 24.



A group of runners traverses the middle portion of the 10-mile course of Task Force Danger's version of the Army Ten Miler held on Forward Operating Base Speicher Oct. 24. More than 365 runners took part in the event.



# Body armor saves Soldier from serious injury

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC SHERREE CASPER  
196<sup>TH</sup> MPAD**

It may be cumbersome, but at least one 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Soldier gladly shoulders the weight of his Interceptor Body Armor.

After all, it's credited with saving the 26-year-old from serious injury.

SPC William P. Sheppard, a Bradley Stinger crew member with 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Bravo Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Defense Artillery Regiment, sustained minor lacerations and burns from a small arms round which penetrated his IBA on the backside of his left shoulder.

"All of a sudden there was a pop next to my ear," said the Bullhead, Ariz., resident who was pulling se-

curity in a guard post at Forward Operating Base Danger in Tikrit, on the afternoon of Sept. 18.

Sheppard said he initially thought it was a bottle rocket going off "because I saw a dust cloud come up in front of my face."

"As soon as I turned to the right I felt my left shoulder burning," he said.

SGT Joshua Binns immediately pulled Sheppard down to the ground, stripped his IBA off, and searched him to see where he was wounded and if it was life threatening. At the time of the incident, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the guard duty was about three feet behind Sheppard.

Binns found burn marks and lacerations on Sheppard's left back shoulder.

"Maybe the round skimmed over his skin very



A small tear in SPC William P. Sheppard's IBA shows where a round tore through.



Platoon leader 1LT Patrick B. Murphy, left, Bravo Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Defense Artillery, points to where a round entered the Interceptor Body Armor of SPC William P. Sheppard, right.

quick, we don't really know," said 1LT Patrick B. Murphy, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon's leader.

Murphy said SFC Gilbert G. Tracy, platoon sergeant, was the one who determined it was a round. He said Tracy examined the body armor and made the conclusion. A small hole in the cloth covering of the IBA lends no clue to the caliber of the round.

"All I heard was one shot," Sheppard said. "I didn't really realize what had happened."

The round apparently hit the bottom button of the neck protector and traveled laterally through the body armor to the back of the IBA.

"It was pretty much over before it began," Sheppard said.

As he listened to his radio, Murphy was alerted to the incident and on the scene within five minutes. Sheppard was taken to the Troop Medical Clinic on FOB Danger for treatment of his injury. A medic there determined he had been burned on the left shoulder a couple of inches from the shoulder blade.

"It was a little tender, but nothing too serious," Sheppard said, who was given some ointment to salve over the burn.

The 1<sup>st</sup> ID Soldier returned to duty the next day.

"This has been the first time a tower has been directly fired at in my experience," Murphy said.

Murphy has put Sheppard in for a Purple Heart.

**-- MPs, from Page 20**

Fortunately for Fouts and the others in the building that day, it did not, and no one was injured.

Fouts emailed his wife later that evening to let her know that he and the others were okay, and phoned her the following day. He said the timing of the event was particularly difficult, because only the day before, a Soldier from the unit's platoon stationed in Mosul had been killed in action. And at the time of the call, his wife was getting ready for a family support group meeting to deal with the loss.

Although that day will stay with him, he said there have been others equally memorable. One that stands out in the minds of everyone there was an attack mounted by insurgents on April 9, when insurgent activity spiked in Baqubah and throughout the country.

On that day, the MPs received intelligence that there would be an attack on the police station. They were prepared for the attack, having brought in additional troops to aid in force protection.

"A lot of heroes were made that day," said Solinsky. "SPC (Jesse D.) Greene was blown off his OP (Observation Post) a couple of times, but kept getting back up and in the fight."

At about 2:30 p.m., the attack began when a Rocket

Propelled Grenade was fired at the compound. Greene, a 20-year-old MP from Douglas, Mass., serving with the 293<sup>rd</sup> MP Company, was on the roof posted at OP 1 with SGT Stanley Nixon Jr.

Over the course of the next hour, they and the others posted on the rooftop fought through a series of 25-30 RPGs fired at the building along with small arms and machine gun fire.

"I was firing the SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon) and an RPG hit an antenna behind me and blew up, threw shrapnel in my left calf," said Greene. "SGT Nixon wrapped up my leg as I was firing. Then an RPG hit the wall in front of us and threw me and SGT Nixon back."

At that point, Nixon tossed Greene an AT-4, (shoulder-fired anti-tank weapon). Greene took a well-aimed shot at the window the insurgents were firing from and struck a direct hit.

"I was thinking 'I gotta shoot back; get them before they get me,'" he said. "They didn't fire from that window anymore."

The pair then moved to the opposite side of the OP, to deal with fire coming in that direction. Another RPG hit the sandbags in front of them, throwing them back once again.

"(Nixon) told me to get on the Mark-19, (a belt-fed automatic 40mm grenade launcher) so I went running for it back on the other side of the OP and then I just fired the Mark-19," he said. "Everybody up here fought hard that day. I didn't do anything that anyone else wouldn't have done."

The troops have endured about a dozen attacks on the station, although none as intense as the firefight April 9, said Fouts, who also fought from the roof.

The Soldiers spent up to 18 hours on the roof that day, protecting the police station and helping to cover the movement of coalition troops in the city.

"My childhood friend, SSG (Donald H.) Smialak took shrapnel and was gone three to four months," he said. "That was kind of tough on me; we've had several people wounded. This platoon has had somewhere in the neighborhood of 12 to 15 Purple Hearts."

Although the deployment has been tough, it has also been positive, said Fouts. Through their experiences, the men have become even closer and he feels he will now always have a group of brothers back home.

He said he even learned a little about his wife here.

"She's done a great job. She's very strong," he said with a chuckle. "That's good for me though, because it proves she doesn't need me, she just likes me."

# A Meditation given on the occasion of the Memorial Ceremony for SSG Michael S. Voss

WRITTEN BY  
CHAPLAIN (CPT) WALTER GRAVES

In John 14, Jesus is telling His disciples about His coming death and departure. In it He uses some strange words to offer comfort to them.

He says, "I am going away, rejoice that I am going to the Father."

How could Jesus expect His disciples to be comforted with these hard and lonely words: "I leave - I go away."

They had shared so many meals together, and had so many intimate moments. So many times they had walked together, slept in the same house, prayed the same prayer and sang the same song. They could see Him in every familiar place.

How could Jesus expect a word of peace to replace His physical presence?

It is the question asked today, "How can some words bring peace and comfort when we know that when all is said and done SSG Voss is still gone?"

We have shared so many of the same hardships as we mobilized for this mission. We shared the same training at the MRE (Mission Readiness Exercise) and the NTC (National Training Center.)

We have shared the same struggles fighting to maintain our civilian jobs and support our families while trying to maintain a military career part-time.

We will miss his presence, his positive attitude, his motivating spirit.

How do words replace all that?

One thing that Christ was saying is that today's experience with each other is tomorrow's memory.

He indicates that we had better make every moment count, because soon, sooner than we want, we go "away." We leave.

Everybody must die; we know that. It is a blessing that we do not know when our time is, but we know it is coming.

When Jesus talked with his disciples, He told them about the future and His coming departure. It was enough to fill them with dread. It made them revolt.

"No, Jesus, Not you. Things are going well. You must tell us more about the way to live. A lot more people need your touch of healing. Think of all the good you can do here yet. You can't leave us now."

These same sorts of things we want to say about SSG Voss.

No, you can't be gone now, we need you yet, your knowledge, your can-do spirit, your ability to motivate.

Jesus says, "Hush. Peace. I must be going, (SSG Voss must be going,) I must leave." He must leave. He then adds the strangest rebuke.

"You should rejoice. I go to the Father." We go to the Father.

Those words were the haunting words: "You should rejoice."

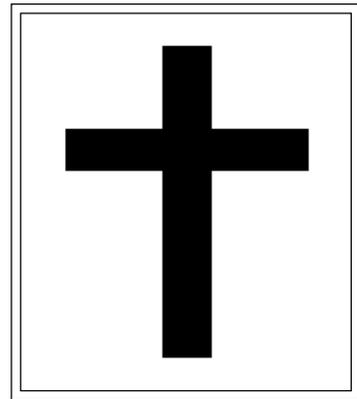
Rejoice and remember go together. Remembering is the first step in moving towards rejoicing.

The poet, Cheri' C. Brown in her poem, *A Soldier's Question*, helps us gain meaning from SSG Voss's death:

I lay here reddening foreign soil  
Whispering my last breath  
I've said my prayers, my last good-byes  
I've just one question left  
Why did I come here and fight?  
Why was I willing to die?  
Was it for honor, glory or fame  
The question I ask of I  
As I lay here wondering all at once I knew  
For through the rain I see a rise  
Of 50 stars on blue  
I did this not for glory for medals nor for fame  
I did this for a little boy with my face who bears my name  
And for every other boy like him and ever little girl who cries  
and every man who dreams of peace but can't speak it else he dies  
I die for every mother praying  
It matters not to whom she prays  
For all she wants is for her kids  
Better and peaceful days  
I slip now from this earthen bond  
Watching my flag fly in the rain  
Knowing as my eyes now close  
I didn't die in vain.  
(copyright May 20, 2003, used with permission)

Our memory of SSG Voss is one of a Soldier committed to his duty. Our memory of SSG Voss is one of a Soldier who accepts what answering the call of our country requires and does so with a can-do spirit.

This remembering moves us from remembering to



rejoicing. For this is about more than sentiment, it is about faith -- faith in our nation, its creeds and all it stands for, faith in one another as we serve together, and faith that there is something bigger than any of us that is worth risking death for death is not the final answer, it is but a passing from this life we cannot keep to one we cannot lose.

Christ gave us good news with the bad. "I go away, yes. Remember every beautiful moment we've had together, and especially remember this: I will return to revive you. I will come to you again," He said.

Christ was proof that there is more than this life, that what matters is not who we are or what our rank or status is, what matters is relationships and what we stand for.

That is what will never die and that is the legacy we are seeking to leave and that is the legacy that SSG Voss left.

His earthly life is gone, but not what he stood for. Remember this life is like a deployment, only a temporary thing. Yet, we can never overstate the importance of our service here.

SSG Voss faithfully finished the course assigned him; the baton is now passed to us.

Let us live our lives so that we can stand with honor with the Lord when He comes back for us.

Let us also do our duty to God and country in the manner exemplified by SSG Voss' service that we may stand with him and all those who have faithfully served that the world may be a better place.

It now falls to us to continue the tradition, to stay the course. With the example of SSG Voss and the Almighty's blessing, we will.

Tusk Hogs

## 30<sup>th</sup> BCT chaplain shares thoughts about unit

STORY BY CHAPLAIN  
(LTC) DENNIS M. GOODWIN  
30<sup>TH</sup> BCT

Greetings from the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT! The 30<sup>th</sup> was created in 1917. From its beginnings, it was known as "Old Hickory" in honor of MG Andrew Jackson.

Its most notable achievement in WWI was the cracking of the Hindenburg Line. It was reactivated in September 1940. In the summer of 1944, the 30<sup>th</sup> toiled through Normandy in the St. Lo breakthrough, one of the most publicized battles of WWII. Later, the 30<sup>th</sup> played a vital role in the assault of the Siegfried Line and the Battle of the Bulge.

Now fast-forward to the summer of 2002, when the 30<sup>th</sup> conducted a Mission Readiness Exercise at Ft. Riley, Kan. and was reconstituted as a Heavy Separate Brigade in the same year. The next year, we went to the National Training Center at Ft. Irwin, Calif.; mobi-

lized to active duty on Oct. 1, 2003; and went to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Ft. Polk, La. in January of 2004 before deploying to Iraq in February.

We are unique in that we were the first enhanced National Guard Brigade to be pushed so hard in such a short period of time. Our citizen Soldiers rose to the challenge and now we find ourselves privileged to be a part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. This is who we are, and the following is what we believe.

In Luke 3:14 some Soldiers asked John the Baptist, "What should we do?" He answered, "Be satisfied with your pay." What does this mean to the deployed soldier? Maybe it means, "Don't be a whiner. Be loyal to your fellow soldiers and your unit and serve your country without reproach."

John 3:17 (CEV) reads, "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn its people. He sent him to save them!"

We are instruments in the Master's hands who are

sometimes sent to perform that which is difficult, dangerous and, frankly, disagreeable. Yet, we are the ones whose duty it is to confront evil. In this war against terrorism, the line is drawn in the sand and our objectives are fixed. The issue for this generation and the next is whether God and His children will indeed inherit the earth or whether we will forever live as slaves to terrorism.

Believers in God have a right to feel that we are fighting on God's side. The battle is to keep the ideals of Jesus alive, ideals worth fighting for and that will in the end prevail.

Our lives are to be lived to glorify God, and our battleground is Iraq. There is nothing that can separate us from that blessed assurance that God cares for us, even here.

In fact, the Bible says, "He will give His angels charge over you," so we have no need to fear.

The qualities of life that we bring to Iraq and that we offer to the Iraqi people are both honorable. And even here, we can exercise our faith in the service of our country. Praise be to God!

# Fallen Soldier remembered

**STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT W. WAYNE MARLOW  
1<sup>ST</sup> ID PAO**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE BRASSFIELD-MORA, Iraq -- A childhood friend of SGT Michael Angelo Uvanni remembered him as a tough Soldier, Marine, and football player who was never afraid to stand up for what he believed in.

Uvanni died Oct. 1 while securing Samarra with the mortar section of Bravo Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.

"I first met Mike in the seventh grade when we were trying out for the football team at Staley Junior High in Rome, N.Y.," SGT John White recalled at a memorial ceremony on Oct. 7. "He was a tough street kid from the south side. He was cocky, cool. Mike had a passion for football that consumed him. He was hard-working and a devoted student of the game."

White said Uvanni brought that same passion to the military. Uvanni served four years in the Marines, followed by two in the Marine Reserve, serving a year in Operation Enduring Freedom.

"When we walked into the recruiter's office, Mike was instantly drawn to the Marine brochures and pamphlets," White recalled. "He wanted to be a ground-pounding, hard-charging Marine."

After his time in the Marine Reserves, Uvanni joined the New York Army National Guard in January 2004 and arrived in Iraq on Sept. 8, 2004.

"I could see it in Mike's eyes when he stared at the pictures of the decorated Soldiers on the walls that he visualized himself in their place, a decorated war hero," White said. "Mike joined the military for the most unselfish reason there is: honor."

With Uvanni joining the Marines after high school graduation in 1996 and White signing up for the Army, the two friends went their separate ways. But they saw each other for the first time in seven years when they unexpectedly bumped into each other at Forward Operating Base O'Ryan.

"I didn't recognize him at first and he didn't recognize me," White said.

"But when he heard my voice, he instantly knew that he had run into an old friend."

That chance encounter gave White a last opportunity to see an old friend.

"Mike is gone, but not forgotten," White said. "I will always remember the legacy he left and the standard he set for us. I know that Mike would not want us to mourn over his death, but rather honor his memory. I hurt today over the loss of a good friend. Men like Mike Uvanni are special; he made an impact on everyone he met."

He also gave his all to the military, said CPT Chris Jensen, who also spoke at the ceremony.



Two Soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment serve as honor guard Oct. 7 at a memorial service for SGT Michael Uvanni.

"SGT Uvanni was a leader whom all subordinates respected and a Soldier whom all leaders wanted," Jensen said. "When he first arrived in Iraq he made sure he was proficient in every weapon system. His attitude never wavered when we had a mission. He even insisted on being in the turret whenever we went out the gate. He was a Soldier through-and-through."

Chaplain (CPT) Edward Choi of the 299<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion delivered the meditation.

"Though his life was short and his death premature, he was able to leave his mark on many of us," Choi said.

"With the firm determination to serve in the Marine Corps and United States Army, his pride in his work and his dedication to his country are lasting contributions to us who knew him. Even though he is gone, these qualities will remain and live on as an example and challenge to each of us."

Uvanni's company commander, CPT George Rodriguez, remembered him as a trustworthy Soldier.

"He was one of the best," Rodriguez said. "Although his time in Iraq had been short, his example had become one to follow. He was a man to be counted on and to be trusted. SGT Uvanni was someone you wanted with you in the toughest of times."

Because of Uvanni's actions, others were saved, Rodriguez said.

Uvanni and others were manning a post at the Shal Al Arab Hotel near the Golden Mosque during the offensive.

"On the day of his death, SGT Uvanni's dedication shone through. He made many trips up five flights of stairs to bring gear and ammunition where it was needed," Rodriguez said. "He helped spot and suppress enemy troops from that rooftop. The Soldiers on that rooftop prevented Iraqi forces from maneuvering on the Soldiers of Charlie Company. Because of SGT Uvanni's efforts, he prevented additional casualties."



**SSG Christopher E. Cutchall**

D Troop, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry  
September 29, 2003

**2LT Todd J. Bryant**

C Company, 1-34 Armor  
October 31, 2003

**SSG Gary L. Collins**

A Company, 1-16 Infantry  
November 8, 2003

**SSG Mark D. Vasquez**

A Company, 1-16 Infantry  
November 8, 2003

**SPC Josph L. Lister**

B Company, 1-34 Armor  
November 20, 2003

**SPC Thomas J. Sweet II**

Service Battery, 1-5 Field Artillery  
November 27, 2003

**SPC Uday Singh**

C Company, 1-34 Armor  
December 1, 2003

**SGT Ryan C. Young**

A Company, 1-16 Infantry  
December 2, 2003

**SGT Jarrod W. Black**

B Company, 1-34 Armor  
December 12, 2004

**SGT Dennis A. Corral**

C Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
January 1, 2004

**SFC Gregory B. Hicks**

B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry  
January 8, 2004

**SPC William R. Sturges Jr.**

B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry  
January 24, 2004

**SPC Jason K. Chappell**

B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry  
January 24, 2004

**SGT Randy S. Rosenberg**

B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry  
January 24, 2004

**CPT Matthew J. August**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
January 27, 2004

**SFC James T. Hoffman**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
January 27, 2004

**SGT Travis A. Moothart**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
January 27, 2004

**SSG Sean G. Landrus**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
January 29, 2004

**PFC Nichole M. Frye**

415<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion  
February 16, 2004

**2LT Jeffrey C. Graham**

C Company, 1-34 Armor  
February 19, 2004

**SPC Roger G. Ling**

C Company, 1-34 Armor  
February 19, 2004

**SFC Richard S. Gottfried**

HHC, Division Support Command  
March 9, 2004

**SSG Joe L. Dunigan Jr.**

B Company, 1-16 Infantry  
March 11, 2004

**SPC Christopher K. Hill**

B Company, 1-16 Infantry  
March 11, 2004

**CPT John F. Kurth**

B Company, 1-18 Infantry  
March 13, 2004

**SPC Jason C. Ford**

B Company, 1-18 Infantry  
March 13, 2004

**SPC Jocelyn L. Carrasquillo**

HHC, 1-120 Infantry  
March 13, 2004

**SPC Tracy L. Laramore**

B Company, 1-18 Infantry  
March 17, 2004

**SPC Clint R. Matthews**

B Company, 1-18 Infantry  
March 19, 2004

**PFC Ernest H. Sutphin**

B Battery, 2-11 Field Artillery  
March 19, 2004

**PFC Jason C. Ludlam**

HHC, 2-2 Infantry  
March 19, 2004

**PFC Dustin L. Kreider**

B Company, 1-26 Infantry  
March 21, 2004

**SPC Adam D. Froehlich**

C Battery, 1-6 Field Artillery  
March 25, 2004

**1LT Doyle M. Hufstедler**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
March 31, 2004

**SPC Sean R. Mitchell**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
March 31, 2004

**SPC Michael G. Karr Jr.**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
March 31, 2004

**PFC Cleston C. Raney**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
March 31, 2004

**PVT Brandon L. Davis**

B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
March 31, 2004

**PFC John D. Amos II**

C Company, 1-21 Infantry  
April 4, 2004

**SGT Lee D. Todachene**

HHC, 1-77 Armor  
April 6, 2004

**SFC Marvin L. Miller**

C Troop, 1-4 Cavalry  
April 7, 2004

**SPC Isaac M. Nieves**

A Company, 82<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion  
April 8, 2004

**SFC Raymond E. Jones**

C Company, 1-7 Field Artillery  
April 9, 2004

**SSG Toby W. Mallet**

C Company, 1-7 Field Artillery  
April 9, 2004

**SPC Allen J. Vandayburg**

C Company, 2-2 Infantry  
April 9, 2004

**SPC Peter G. Enos**

HHC, 1-7 Field Artillery  
April 9, 2004

**SGT William C. Eckhart**

F Troop, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry  
April 10, 2004

**PFC Nathan P. Brown**

C Company, 2-108 Infantry  
April 11, 2004

# In Memory of Task Force Danger and 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team Soldiers killed while serving in Iraq through November 20, 2004

**SSG Victor A. Rosaleslomeli**

A Company, 2-2 Infantry  
April 13, 2004

**SGT Christopher Ramirez**

B Company, 1-16 Infantry  
April 14, 2004

**SPC Richard K. Trevithick**

C Company, 9<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
April 14, 2004

**SGT Brian M. Wood**

A Company, 9<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
April 16, 2004

**SPC Marvin A. Camposiles**

HHC, 1-26 Infantry  
April 17, 2004

**PFC Shawn C. Edwards**

B Company, 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion  
April 23, 2004

**SPC Martin W. Kondor**

A Company, 1-63 Armor  
April 29, 2004

**SGT Joshua S. Ladd**

367<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company  
April 30, 2004

**SPC Trevor A. Win'e**

24<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company  
May 1, 2004

**CPT John E. Tipton**

HHC, 1-16 Infantry  
May 2, 2004

**SSG Todd E. Nunes**

A Company, 1-21 Infantry  
May 2, 2004

**CPT Christopher J. Kenny**

F Troop, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry  
May 3, 2004

**SSG Marvin R. Sprayberry III**

HHC, 2-2 Infantry  
May 3, 2004

**SGT Gregory L. Wahl**

F Troop, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry  
May 3, 2004

**PFC Lyndon A. Marcus**

F Troop, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry  
May 3, 2004

**SPC James J. Holmes**

C Company, 141<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
May 8, 2004

**SPC Phillip D. Brown**

B Company, 141<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
May 8, 2004

**SPC Marcos O. Nolasco**

B Company, 1-33 Field Artillery  
May 18, 2004

**SSG Joseph P. Garyantes**

B Company, 1-63 Armor  
May 18, 2004

**SPC Michael C. Campbell**

HHT, 1-4 Cavalry  
May 19, 2004

**SPC Owen D. Witt**

B Troop, 1-4 Cavalry  
May 23, 2004

**PFC Richard H. Rosas**

3-62 Air Defense Artillery, 10<sup>th</sup> Mt. Div.  
May 25, 2004

**PFC James P. Lambert**

3-63 Air Defense Artillery, 10<sup>th</sup> Mt. Div.  
May 25, 2004

**PFC Jeremiah D. Smith**

A Company, 1-34 Armor  
May 26, 2004

**PFC Marcus J. Johnson**

D Battery, 4-3 Air Defense Artillery  
June 1, 2004

**LCPL Todd J. Bolding**

2-4-5 Marine Regiment  
June 3, 2004

**CPT Humayun S. M. Khan**

HHC, 201<sup>st</sup> Forward Support Bn.  
June 8, 2004

**PFC Jason N. Lynch**

C Company, 1-6 Field Artillery  
June 18, 2004

**CPL Tommy L. Parker Jr.**

2-4-5 Marine Regiment  
June 21, 2004

**LCPL Deshon E. Otey**

2-4-5 Marine Regiment  
June 21, 2004

**LCPL Pedro Contreras**

2-4-5 Marine Regiment  
June 21, 2004

**LCPL Juan Lopez**

2-4-5 Marine Regiment  
June 21, 2004

**2LT Andre D. Tyson**

A Company, 579<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
June 22, 2004

**SPC Patrick R. McCaffrey Sr.**

A Company, 579<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
June 22, 2004

**CPT Christopher S. Cash**

A Company, 1-120 Infantry  
June 24, 2004

**SPC Daniel A. Desens**

A Company, 1-120 Infantry  
June 24, 2004

**2LT Brian D. Smith**

A Company, 1-34 Armor  
July 2, 2004

**SPC Samuel R. Bowen**

HSC, 216<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
July 7, 2004

**SGT Robert E. Colvill**

HHC, 1-26 Infantry  
July 8, 2004

**SPC Sonny G. Sampler**

HHC, 1-26 Infantry  
July 8, 2004

**SPC Collier Barcus**

HHC, 1-26 Infantry  
July 8, 2004

**SPC William R. Emanuel**

HHC, 1-26 Infantry  
July 8, 2004

**SPC Joseph M. Garmback Jr.**

HHC, 1-26 Infantry  
July 8, 2004

**MSG Linda A. Tarango-Griess**

267<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Company  
July 11, 2004

**SGT Jeremy J. Fischer**

267<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Company  
July 11, 2004

**SGT Dustin W. Peters**

314<sup>th</sup> Logistics Readiness Squadron  
July 11, 2004

**PFC Torry D. Harris**

12<sup>th</sup> Chemical Company  
July 13, 2004

**SFC David A. Hartman**

401<sup>st</sup> Transportation Company  
July 17, 2004

**PFC Nicholas H. Blodgett**

A Troop, 1-4 Cavalry  
July 21, 2004

**SGT Tatijana Reed**

66<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company  
July 22, 2004

**PFC Torey J. Dantzler**

66<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company  
July 22, 2004

**SPC Nicholas Zangara**

C Company, 1-7 Field Artillery  
July 24, 2004

**SGT Deforest L. Talbert**

C Company, 1-150 Armor  
July 27, 2004

**PFC Joseph F. Herndon**

A Company, 1-27 Infantry  
July 29, 2004

**SPC Anthony J. Dixon**

B Troop, 1-4 Cavalry  
August 1, 2004

**SGT Armando Hernandez**

B Troop, 1-4 Cavalry  
August 1, 2004

**SPC Donald R. McCune II**

1-161 Infantry, 81<sup>st</sup> BCT  
August 5, 2004

**CPT Andrew R. Houghton**

A Troop, 1-4 Cavalry  
August 9, 2004

**1LT Neil Anthony Santoriello**

1-34 Armor, 1<sup>st</sup> BCT  
August 13, 2004

**SGT Daniel M. Shepherd**

1-16 Infantry Regiment  
August 15, 2004

**1LT Charles L. Wilkins III**

A Company, 216<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
August 20, 2004

**SPC Ryan A. Martin**

A Company, 216<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
August 20, 2004

**2LT Matthew R. Stovall**

401<sup>st</sup> Transportation Company, 167<sup>th</sup> CSG  
August 22, 2004

**SPC Charles L. Neeley**

454<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, 232<sup>nd</sup> CSG  
August 25, 2004

**A1C Carl L. Anderson**

494<sup>th</sup> AEF, 835<sup>th</sup> CSG  
August 29, 2004

**SPC Joseph C. Thibodeaux**

HHC, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> ID  
September 1, 2004

**SPC Brandon M. Read**

125<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, 167<sup>th</sup> CSG  
September 6, 2004

**SPC Michael Martinez**

A Company, 1-6 Field Artillery  
September 8, 2004

**SPC Edgar P. Daclan Jr.**

HHC, 1-18 Infantry  
September 10, 2004

**SPC Marva I. Gomez**

A Company, 828<sup>th</sup> Finance Detachment  
September 11, 2004

**SPC Joshua J. Henry**

A Company, 1-7 Field Artillery  
September 20, 2004

**SSG Lance J. Koenig**

B Company, 141<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
September 22, 2004

**SPC Gregory A. Cox**

C Company, 1-77 Armor  
September 27, 2004

**SFC Joselito Villanueva**

C Company, 9<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
September 27, 2004

**SGT Tyler D. Prewitt**

HHC, 2-2 Infantry  
September 28, 2004

**SSG Mike A. Deenie**

106<sup>th</sup> Finance Battalion  
September 29, 2004

**SGT Michael Uvanni**

B Company, 2-108 Infantry  
October 1, 2004

**PFC Mackenzie F. Callahan**

E Company, 196<sup>th</sup> Cavalry  
October 1, 2004

**SPC Morgen N. Jacobs**

B Company, 1-18 Infantry  
October 6, 2004

**SSG Michael S. Voss**

HHC, 1-120 Infantry  
October 8, 2004

**SPC Andrew C. Ehrlich**

C Company, 2-2 Infantry  
October 18, 2004

**SPC Segun F. Akintade**

A Company, 2-108<sup>th</sup> Infantry  
October 28, 2004

**SGT Charles J. Webb**

A Company, 82<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion  
November 3, 2004

**SPC Cody L. Wentz**

A Company, 141<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion  
November 4, 2004

**CSM Steven W. Faulkenburg**

HHC, 2-2 Infantry  
November 9, 2004

**SSG Michael C. Ottolini**

A Company, 579<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion  
November 10, 2004

**SGT James C. Matteson**

HHC, 2-2 Infantry  
November 12, 2004

**1LT Edward D. Iwan**

A Company, 2-2 Infantry  
November 12, 2004

**CPT Sean P. Sims**

A Company, 2-2 Infantry  
November 13, 2004

**SPC Daniel J. McConnell**

C Company, 1-27 Infantry  
November 16, 2004

**PFC Jose R. Flores-Mejia**

25<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company  
November 16, 2004

**SGT Jack Bryant Jr.**

A Company, 1-6 Field Artillery  
November 20, 2004

A Soldier pulls security outside the Golden Mosque Oct. 20 as the division and Multi National Force-Iraq sergeants major tour downtown Samarra. (Photo by SPC Joe Alger)

