

# Duty **1** First

Serving the 1st Infantry Division

Summer 2005



No Mission too Difficult  
No Sacrifice too Great

# BACK HOME



A sea of 1st Infantry Division unit guidons and colors marches into place under the direction of 1st ID Commanding General MG John R.S. Batiste at Harvey Barracks Airfield. The troops were reviewed by Secretary of the Army Honorable Francis J. Harvey, who was accompanied by V Corps Commander LTJG Robert J. ...

## On the cover

At the 1st Infantry Division welcome home ceremony May 16 at Harvey Barracks, LTG Ricardo Sanchez, V Corps commander, presents Heidi Sims with the Silver Star Medal that was awarded posthumously to her husband, CPT Sean P. Sims. Joining Sanchez is MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division commander. To Sims' right are two other Silver Star recipients, SPC Larry Underwood and SGT Christopher Rich.

Photo by SPC Joe Alger

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SPC Joe Alger

ists during the welcome home ceremony May 16 at the Harvey Barracks  
G Ricardo Sanchez. For full ceremony coverage, see pages 12-13.

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# Serving with 1st ID has been an honor

As we approach the Division change of command on 20 June 2005, Michelle and I count our many blessings. It has truly been a privilege and honor to serve the Soldiers, family members, and civilians of the Big Red One through nearly three years of incredible accomplishments and sacrifice.

Through 14 months in Kosovo, to three months in Turkey, to the recent year-long mission in North-Central Iraq, the First Infantry Division's brand of full-spectrum operations set the Army standard. Our Soldiers routinely took the fight to the enemy and were described in an insurgent signals intercept as being "ferocious". At the same time, they well understood the complexities of stability and support operations to change attitudes and give the people of Iraq alternatives to the insurgency. There are no finer Soldiers any-



where. It all came together on 30 January 2005 when 64 percent of the registered Iraqi voters in the Task Force Danger area of operations (1.6 million) defied the insurgency and cast their ballots. Indeed, the people of Iraq have achieved irreversible momentum in their struggle to achieve freedom and representative government.

Back in Germany and across the United States, our rear detachments and family members set a new standard in family readiness and self reliance. We have never seen it done better and owe much to every Family Readiness Group leader and senior advisor. Our incredible volunteers make a big difference, day in and day out. There are no finer families and volunteers anywhere. Our garrison and rear detachment chains of command are the best in the business. Through their hard work and teamwork, families were linked to the chain of command and Soldiers in Iraq were focused on the mission. It was all seamless and very well done.

All of this came at an enormous price.

One hundred and ninety three Soldiers, Airmen, or Marines attached or assigned to either the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team during OIF1 or Task Force Danger during OIF2 gave their full measure. Over 1,200 Purple Hearts were awarded. We take comfort in knowing that our fallen comrades and wounded are in God's hands. These great Americans will forever be on the Honor Roll of the Big Red One. Their families and friends are in our prayers. We will never forget.

We are also thankful for the steadfast support of both the Society of the First Division and the Cantigny First Division Foundation. We are all part of an incredible team of like-minded Americans and will always be defined by our association with the First Infantry Division.

As Michelle and I depart the active rolls of our great Division, we wish you all God Speed. We know our paths will cross again.

Duty First!

- MG John R.S. Batiste

# New DCSM sends introductory message

Big Red One Soldiers, civilians and families, it is my distinct pleasure to serve the great Soldiers and families of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division as your 19th Command Sergeant Major. I bring to this position a clear and focused mindset: "No mission too difficult – No sacrifice too great –Duty First!"

I am extremely proud of the job well done by each and every Soldier, civilian and family member of the Big Red One. You have completed your duties to the highest standards, and you should take enormous pride in your accomplishments. My personal thanks and congratulations go out to each and every one of you. Many of you deployed with little or no combat experience and came back as battle-toughened combat veterans. I couldn't be more proud of you. Thanks also goes out to the great ASGs and BSBs for the first class reception and reintegration plan. The planning and execution was undoubtedly the best I have ever seen.

Your mission now is to take your ex-



periences and first-hand knowledge and share them with the newer, less seasoned Soldiers. Training Soldiers is your mainstay. Don't ever forget it.

As we complete our reintegration processes, I want to remind everyone to stay vigilant.

Be aware of your surroundings, think safety first and obey all rules, regulations and laws. Mistakes will be made but when they are made because of carelessness or recklessness, there is no excuse. We must instill safety in everything we do.

Always use your wingman – teamwork starts with the buddy system, and we must lookout for each other at all times. Taking care of our battle buddies to the left and right is the cornerstone to our success. Looking out for one and other, both on the battlefield and off, is nonnegotiable.

The wingman also has a responsibility off duty and after duty hours. Know what your buddy is doing and be available to talk or help if necessary.

Please continue to stay active in, and support our unit FRGs as they will continue to play an important role in the weeks and months ahead. The strength and support that our FRGs and volunteers bring to the fight is

immeasurable.

We recently dedicated our memorial monument to our fallen Soldiers. Thanks to every Soldier that had a part in making the monument possible. The hard work and donations will ensure that the memorial stands in Victory Park for all to visit and remember our fallen comrades and loved ones. I charge each of you to stay in touch with, and keep the families of our fallen Soldiers in your thoughts and prayers.

Lastly, I ask that each Big Red One Soldier, family member and civilian employee remember to always treat all people with dignity and respect. The Army values aren't just a few words to memorize. They are the basic building blocks of human dignity, respect and honor. Don't allow yourself to fall short.

Again, it is a great honor and privilege for Cindy and me to continue to serve the Soldiers and families of the Big Red One. I look forward to meeting with all of you in the field, motor pool, or on the street.

Continue the mission. Continue doing the great things you do for our country each and every day. America supports you. America believes in you. Duty First!

- CSM John D. Fourhman

# Welcome home DISCOM

**Story and photos by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO**

In what COL Paul L. Wentz, Division Support Command commander, called “a significant milestone in the proud history of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division,” family members and other well-wishers welcomed home Soldiers from Division Support Command, 701<sup>st</sup> Main Support Battalion, 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion and 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Defense Artillery during a ceremony at Harvey Barracks April 15.

During his remarks, MG John R.S. Batiste, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division commander, praised not only the redeploying Soldiers but also the family members and rear detachment personnel.

“I’m proud of this great team before us today,” Batiste said. “The 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division and Task Force Danger couldn’t have completed its mission without all of you.”

While each returning unit had very different jobs and responsibilities in Iraq, Batiste said each one performed them at an extremely high level.

Batiste said one of the more notable accomplishments for the DISCOM Soldiers during their deployment to Iraq was their establishment of the largest electronic network in Army history. In addition, Batiste also praised their work in accounting for equipment.

The Soldiers from 701<sup>st</sup> MSB drove

over one million miles during the year to deliver equipment, fuel, mail and water, and the unit lost no Soldiers.

In addition to providing the division with real-time air pictures and security on Forward Operating Base Danger in Tikrit, Iraq, 4-3 ADA Soldiers were also responsible for starting “Operation I Can,” a successful program of donating toys and school supplies to Iraqi children.

The 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion provided Sol-

diers with communications and created the largest command and control network in the Iraqi theater.

Wentz said he feels an enormous amount of pride for what the Soldiers and family members from each of the units accomplished during the year-long deployment.

“This deployment shows that any challenge can be overcome by a tight-knit community,” Wentz added.



**The 1st Infantry Division Band adds a patriotic flare to the Division Support Command’s welcome home ceremony at Harvey Barracks April 15.**



**COL Paul L. Wentz, Division Support Command commander, recognizes family members for their contributions during the deployment at the DISCOM welcome home ceremony April 15 at Harvey Barracks.**



**MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division commander, welcomes home the DISCOM Soldiers. Batiste also cited the contributions of family members and Soldiers who served in DISCOM’s rear detachment during Operation Iraqi Freedom II.**

# Division CSM says goodbye

## **CSM Cory McCarty leaves after serving five years with Big Red One**

**Story and photos by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO**

The 1st Infantry Division's outgoing command sergeant major describes himself as "a man of few words."

"A lot of times, sergeants major speak a lot," CSM Cory McCarty said. "I've always been the opposite. I've spent most of my time listening. It's always worked for me."

But McCarty relented from his laconic nature long enough to sit down and reminisce about his five years plus with the 1st Infantry Division.

McCarty left the Big Red One April 7, after having served the division first as 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade command sergeant major, then moving up to the division's senior enlisted slot.

His new job will have him stationed at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., where he will help reshape the Army's NCOES program. The Big Red One will no longer be on his upper left sleeve, but it will never be far from his mind.

"The 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division is the greatest division in the United States Army," McCarty said. "It has an association involved with it, a following of veterans that you just can't believe. They expect high

standards out of us because this is their division, and they expect you to continue the great legacy of this division."

McCarty helped expand that legacy by serving with the division during four deployments.

"I got here in December of 1999 and about three days later went straight to Kosovo," he said. "The division went in there with the same attitude, the same standard that we've had throughout the years.

"After that, we had two more Kosovo rotations I got to be division command sergeant major for, and they were absolutely great rotations. Then Army Forces Turkey, and last year, combat in Iraq. So those we're definitely the highlights."

McCarty joined the Army in the nation's bicentennial year, 1976. "I didn't really have any big plans of what I was going to do in the Army," he said. "I always liked the Army...and always wanted to try it out. My dad was in the Army. My grandfather was in the Army. My mother's grandfather fought in World War I."

Continuing the family tradition paid off for McCarty, who rose through the ranks to platoon sergeant. It was then that he began setting his sights on sergeant major.

"I started to see what the first sergeant and the sergeant major did, and I started setting my goals to be like them," he said.

With that accomplished, McCarty is now the one to be emu-



**CSM Michael Gravens, USAREUR command sergeant major, discusses Soldier issues with outgoing 1st Infantry Division CSM Cory McCarty prior to McCarty's farewell ceremony April 7 at Victory Park on Leighton Barracks.**

lated, and he recommends that anyone who wants make sergeant major continue with their education.

“Continue learning, take correspondence courses, anything that’s available to you,” he said. “Get it, soak it in. The more knowledgeable you are, the more confident you are going to be. Being a confident NCO makes it a lot easier for Soldiers to follow you.”

It also helps one gain a deeper understanding of the entire Army, which McCarty cites as a requisite for being a good division command sergeant major.

“You can’t just be a great warfighter and know everything there is to know about warfighting,” he said.

“You’ve got to be able to know the maintenance guys and how their jobs work. You’ve got to be able to walk into PAC or G1 and see how those systems work ... and keep them going in a straight direction.”

McCarty feels that the division went to Iraq already toughened, but that it improved even more when downrange.

“We went in at a good level, 85-90 percent. It was a challenge to raise the bar up a little bit higher,” he said.

But everyone’s hard work paid off in the end.

“You felt good when you went to bed at night knowing that you didn’t put any Soldiers at harm because you weren’t upholding the standards,” McCarty said.

One of his most enduring memories from Operation Iraqi Freedom II was of young sergeants delivering at the most crucial times.

“One of the biggest complaints was that we were promoting sergeants too early,” McCarty said. “And I will tell you, I watched those sergeants make life and death decisions in combat everyday, and they did magnificent, and I knew they would.”

One of McCarty’s favorite memories with the division is of talking with Big Red One veterans who, like those in Iraq, proved their mettle at a young age.

“I spent four days walking up and down the beach in Normandy with seven guys who were in the initial wave on D-Day,”

McCarty said. “Listening to their preparation, what they were thinking before the boat came up, what happened as the ramp dropped, and they started getting fired at on the beach -- it was amazing.”

McCarty said it was tough saying goodbye to the division, but he’s looking forward to the next challenge.

“I’ve got a great assignment coming up,” he said. “I’m going to work a little bit at NTC and JRTC and help prepare Soldiers for their next deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan.”

But wherever he goes, McCarty will take great memories of the Big Red One with him.

“We’ve maintained the standards of this great division,” McCarty said. “I’ve been in six divisions, and this is different than all of them. It’s killing me to leave.”



**Center:** The color guard marches into place during CSM Cory McCarty’s farewell ceremony April 7 at Victory Park on Leighton Barracks.

**Above:** McCarty and his wife, Bonnie, say their final goodbyes following the ceremony.

**Right:** McCarty says auf wiedersehen to a Bundeswehr Soldier.





MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division commander, congratulates 1LT Neil Prakash, a tank platoon leader with the 2nd Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, after presenting him with the Silver Star.

# Courage under fire rewarded

Story and photo by SGT Kimberly Snow  
Staff writer, 196th Mobile Public Aff. Det.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SCUNION, BA'QUBAH, Iraq — After leading his platoon through a fierce onslaught, with enemy fire pounding them from every direction, 1LT Neil Prakash went back for more.

First Infantry Division Commander MG John R.S. Batiste, joined Soldiers from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 63<sup>rd</sup> Armor Regiment at FOB Scunion Jan. 14 to award this 24-year-old tank platoon leader one of the military's highest honors, the Silver Star.

"An incredible officer, his accomplishments on 24 June are clearly heroic," Batiste said. "He sets a very high standard for every one of us. I guarantee veterans of the past are standing very tall right now."

Although born in India and maintaining strong ties to the Indian community, Prakash was raised in Syracuse, N.Y., in what he called a very patriotic American household.

A ROTC cadet at Johns Hopkins University, he planned to follow in the footsteps of his mother, father and older brother -- all doctors -- and attend medical school. But after attending a ROTC branch orientation his senior year, he knew what he was meant to do.

"There was this colonel. He was armored cav, so he had a Stetson and spurs," Prakash said. "He was standing on his tank and

he was like 'all right listen up you if you want 72 tons of pure power underneath you ...' and he just went off."

Prakash made up his mind on the spot and has never regretted it since, he said.

And on the morning of June 24, he was ready.

After spending all night and morning patrolling and setting up observation posts around the city, first platoon pulled into FOB Scunion at about 10 a.m.

"CPT Fowler came sprinting over, all out of wind, and says 'The whole company is going in to Ba'qubah,'" Prakash said. "I've just been given the order. Ba'qubah is under siege -- the police station, the (combined military operations center) -- all have been attacked. We're going in."

The company geared up, and by 10:45 a.m. it was maneuvering south into Ba'qubah with first platoon in the lead. The company was tasked with seizing and securing a set of bridges and setting up a blocking position to prevent the enemy from reinforcing.

As they advanced toward their objective, they began receiving reports of enemy activity in the city. Four-man RPG teams had been spotted on rooftops, and there were dismounted enemy fighters in the alleyways. They were told to expect IED and RPG ambushes by a well-trained enemy who meant to stand and fight.

"This was the first time I even got a little bit nervous. I mean, ever, since I got here," Prakash said. "I just got this weird feeling.

Everything was silent. There was no movement. And then all of the sudden something blew up behind me.”

It took the crew about one hour to fight their way through the next kilometer of road. Battle reports counted 23 IEDs and 20 - 25 RPG teams in that distance, as well as multiple machine-gun nests, and enemy dismounts who came at them with with small arms and hand grenades.

Because enemy dismounts were attempting to throw hand grenades into the tank’s open hatches, Prakash ordered the tanks to enter protected mode, leaving the hatches open only a crack.

As the lead vehicle, Prakash’s tank took the brunt of the attack, sustaining blasts from multiple IEDs and at least seven standard and armor piercing RPGs.

The enemy fired mainly at the lead tanks, aiming for the few vulnerable spots. One round blew the navigation system completely off of the vehicle, while another well-aimed blast disabled the turret.

Although unable to rotate the turret, Prakash continued in the lead, navigating with a map and maneuvering his tank in order to continue engaging the enemy with the main weapon system and his .50 caliber machine gun.

He watched as men on rooftops sprayed down at his tank with machine-guns and small arms.

“I just remember thinking, ‘I hope these bullets don’t go in this one inch of space,’” said Prakash. “Looking out the hatch, I’m spraying guys, and they’re just falling. They would just drop -- no blood, no nothing. We just kept rolling, getting shot at from everywhere.”

The platoon was finally ordered to turn around and head back north in order to maintain contact with the enemy and to establish a defensive perimeter, allowing a recovery team to retrieve a downed vehicle.

Prakash moved his tank back to FOB Scunion for repairs and to provide escort for medical evacuations.

After assisting with repairs, he and his crew immediately moved back into position and requested to resume the lead.

Moving south back through the city, they encountered no resistance.

Once they neared their objective, however, Prakash identified and engaged an enemy re-supply truck , destroying the vehicle and its contents.

“We blasted it with a main round from about 100 meters away. The thing just blew to shreds,” he said. “You could see the tubes from the launchers go flying in the air.”

The men encountered no further resistance as they moved to the objective where they established a blocking position until they were relieved the following morning.

By battle’s end, the platoon was responsible for 25 confirmed destroyed enemy. Prakash was credited with the destruction of eight enemy strong-points, one enemy re-supply vehicle, and multiple enemy dismounts.

“He led the way,” said A Co. Commander CPT Paul Fowler. “He’s a pleasure to command because he doesn’t require very much direction. He uses his own judgment, and he’s simply an outstanding young lieutenant.”

## Contributions of rear detachment recognized

Story and photo by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

Soldiers and civilians with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division’s rear detachment were presented awards for their hard work during Operation Iraqi Freedom II at a ceremony at Victory Park on Leighton Barracks May 10.

During the ceremony 10 Soldiers were awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and six were awarded the Army Commendation Medal. In addition, nine civilians were presented certificates of appreciation, and Rodolfo Rodriguez was honored with the Civilian Service Award in recognition of his 30 years with the United States government.

MG John R.S. Batiste, 1<sup>st</sup> ID commander, praised the awardees’ efforts in contributing to the mission in Iraq.

“You set a new standard in rear detachment operations, and the Soldiers in Iraq couldn’t have accomplished their mission without you,” Batiste said.

Batiste also complimented the Soldiers from the rear detachment for linking the Family Readiness Groups to the chain of command, for starting events to improve morale of the family members, and for having a solid program of reintegration.



**MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division commander, presents CPT James Egan, Headquarters and Headquarters Co. rear detachment commander, with an Army Commendation Medal during a Task Force Victory awards ceremony in Victory Park on Leighton Barracks May 10. The ceremony recognized the Soldiers and civilians who had served the division on rear detachment during Operation Iraqi Freedom II.**



SSG Jerry W. Matthews of the 1st Battalion, 150th Armor Regiment uses a power washer to clean a fuel truck prior to a customs inspection at Camp Doha, Kuwait.



Above, Matthews awaits the results of a vehicle inspection being conducted by SFC Scott A. Davis, a motor sergeant. DIVARTY Soldiers departed from their normal jobs to help prepare almost 2,500 vehicles for shipping to the United States and Europe as part of the redeployment process.

## DIVARTY Soldiers shift gears for redeployment

**Story and photos by SGT Roland Walters  
Staff writer, 196th Mobile Public Aff. Det.**

CAMP DOHA, Kuwait — For many Soldiers, redeployment can never come soon enough.

So what would it be like to be the last in your division to redeploy from Operation Iraqi Freedom II?

This is something that was required from the Soldiers of Task Force Breakout II, whose mission was essential to the redeployment of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division and those attached to the Big Red One.

Soldiers from the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Artillery served as the division's command post in Kuwait for Task Force Breakout II.

"We are the interface between the units that are on their way home and the units here that are pushing them out," said MAJ Michael R. Eastman, operations officer for Task Force Breakout and a Soldier with HHB, DIVARTY.

"Normally they are coordinating fires, now they schedule the loading of ships and air flights, while simultaneously continuing operations in Iraq," said COL Richard C. Longo, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Artillery Commander.

This is not the first time HHB, DIVARTY has changed gears and adapted to a new mission.

It was tasked as a maneuver headquarters in An Najaf and participated in

the first Task Force Breakout.

There is something special about this unit right here and these Soldiers have done many missions, but this is not solely a DIVARTY mission, Longo said.

"We have representatives of almost every unit down here working with us," Eastman said.

About 450 people were involved in helping Soldiers process their equipment and get home.

With about 230 people taking care of operations at the port, the rest were scattered across different camps in Kuwait receiving units.

"We're happy to be here to help them get on their way," said Eastman.

"Everyone that comes down here is ready to go home, is excited about it and proud of what they've done," he said.

Units took about two or three days to convoy down to Navistar, Kuwait. At Navistar the convoy linked up and was escorted to Camp Victory to download different classes of supply, such as spare parts, fuel and extra food at the "Four Corners" download site.

At this point the vehicles were ready to be washed by their operators.

Wheeled-vehicles were sent to Camp Doha, with track vehicles ending up at Camp Arifjan.

Both washracks ended up as bottlenecks due to the intense cleaning and

rigorous customs inspection that vehicles must undergo.

"We do not want to bring any type of disease or anything that might be present in this area of the world," said CPT Philip M. Jorgensen, Camp Arifjan's washrack and sterile yard officer in charge and a Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 701<sup>st</sup> Main Support Battalion.

Some vehicles, such as a M113 Armored Personnel Carrier, have engines pulled in order to clean away every bit of dirt that may have ended up on the vehicle.

"They seem like they know what they are doing," said SSG Philip C. Smith, a section sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor Regiment.

"Everything is organized. We came and they gave a safety brief in the morning then just bam, bam, bam they go down the line," Smith said.

After the customs inspection, the vehicles are secured in a sterile yard until they are ready for transportation to the marshalling area at the port.

Once a ship was ready, the port detail drove the vehicles onto the ship for a two-to-three week trip home, Eastman said.

Three weeks prior to Christmas, nearly 2,500 vehicles were processed, filling four ships.

Eastman said, "No matter what shape it comes here in, we'll get it home."

# 1st MP Company honored with Griffin Award

Story and photo by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO

The 1<sup>st</sup> Military Police Co. commander said he couldn't be prouder of his Soldiers, regardless of whether they won the Griffin Award or not.

Not that CPT Tommy Kerr has any problem with his unit taking home the honor, which is awarded annually to the top Military Police Company in United States Army, Europe and the 7<sup>th</sup> Army.

USAREUR Provost Marshal COL Brian Bocklage presented the unit with the trophy it earned for Fiscal Year 2004 during a ceremony May 13 in Victory Park on Leighton Barracks.

"I want to congratulate you on an outstanding honor of winning the Griffin Award," Bocklage told the 1<sup>st</sup> MP Soldiers who stood before him. "It makes you part of a rare breed. You have been the best MP Company in United States Army Europe, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Army."

Bocklage said the unit has continually set and exceeded high standards.

"The 1<sup>st</sup> MP Company's obvious strengths are its leadership and Soldier skills," he said "All of the training led to demonstrated excellence ... in real-world situations. You were ready to take on any mission, anywhere."

"They certainly deserve the recognition that they received here today," said LTC. Rodney Morris, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Provost

Marshal. "To be labeled as the very best military police company in Europe is something that I am sure will remain with them the rest of their lives."

Kerr accepted the Griffin Award trophy from Bocklage before reflecting on what had led to the moment.

"To the Soldiers and family members of the 1<sup>st</sup> MP Co., I want to thank you for all your hard work and commitment to excellence over the last year and a half," Kerr said. "If not for all of your efforts, we would not be standing here today to be recognized with the Griffin Award."

"I am reminded of the company gunnery and how cold it was as the snow began to fall upon us," Kerr continued. "I am also reminded of how proud I was when I stood at the motor pool gates to salute you as you drove your vehicles and trailers to Kitzingen, and how proud you made me as you escorted your BCTs and separate battalions north as we advanced to Iraq.

"For all you patience with the detainees, for your bravery during Samarra, and for all of the sweat, blood and tears that you shed in Iraq, for giving your all as each of you answered your nation's call to defend freedom, I salute you."

The unit worked with Iraqi police officers and helped handle release missions from Abu Ghraib prison, while logging more than 430,000 miles driven and being part of almost 300 support missions.



COL Brian Bocklage, United States Army, Europe provost marshal, congratulates Soldiers of the 1st Military Police Co. on winning the Griffin Award during a ceremony May 13 at Victory Park on Leighton Barracks.



The 1st Infantry Division Band executes "sound off" during the Bamberg community welcome home ceremony April 28.

SPC Joe Alger

# Communities welcome back Soldiers in style

Story by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

The 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division welcomed home its warriors with festivities and fun at community welcome home ceremonies in Kitzingen, Bamberg, Katterbach, Vilseck and Schweinfurt from April 15 to May 6.

During each ceremony, MG John R.S. Batiste, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division commanding general, thanked the Soldiers and family members from the community for their hard work and sacrifices before, during and after the deployment.

In addition, Soldiers from each community were welcomed home by the local officials of each community, all of whom expressed happiness to have the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Soldiers returning to their community.

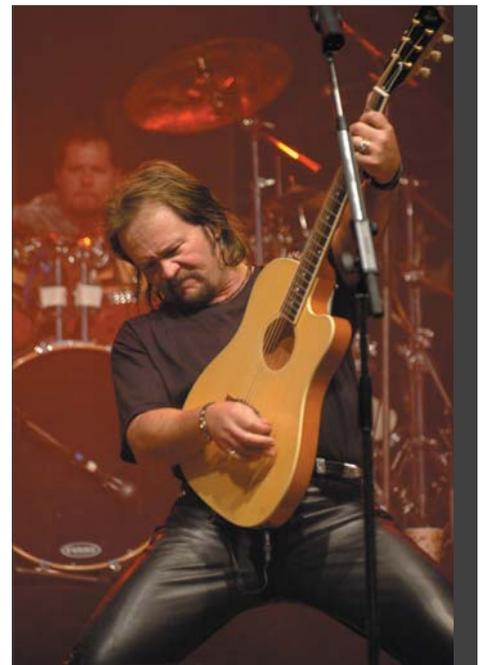
Following the ceremonies, Soldiers and family members were treated to various entertainments, including rides, games, food and music, including Travis Tritt, Chely Wright and Lit.

The ceremony gave commanders a chance to reflect on the accomplishments of their units and praise them for a job well done.



1LT Rickey Torres shares a ride with his 4-year-old daughter, Carolina, who waves to her mother, Ruth, at the Schweinfurt welcome home celebration May 6.

Kristen Chandler Toth



Alice Adler

Country music singer Travis Tritt plays during Vilseck homecoming festivities May 4 at Rose Barracks Army Airfield.



Kristen Chandler Toth  
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Curtis Sims enjoys a bratwurst with his 3-year-old son, Stephen, at Schweinfurt May 6.



Kristen Chandler Toth

Soldiers of the 299<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion march into place on the parade field before the welcome home ceremony in Schweinfurt May 6.

Below: The Color Guard lends pagentry and flavor to the Bamberg Community welcome home ceremony April 28.



SPC Joe Alger

# 1st ID welcome home ceremony

Story by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO

Wearing smiles and, for the final time this year, Desert Camouflage Uniforms, Soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division celebrated their official homecoming from Iraq during a ceremony May 16 at Harvey Barracks.

For one jam-packed day, the Harvey airfield was transformed into a carnival and parade ground, complete with marching troops, weaving rides, fireworks and energetic music.

Soldiers representing every unit in the division stood proudly on the parade field for the inspection of troops by Secretary of the Army Honorable Francis J. Harvey. Joining Harvey were LTG Ricardo Sanchez, V Corps commander, and MG John R.S. Batiste, 1<sup>st</sup> ID commander.

A short time later, Sanchez presented Silver Star Medals to nine 1<sup>st</sup> ID Soldiers: LTC Peter A. Newell, MAJ Thomas A. Johnson, CPT Paul A. Fowler, CPT Kirk A. Mayfield, CPT Sean P. Sims (posthumous, accepted by his wife, Heidi), 1LT Karl E. Gregory, 1SG Peter L. Smith, SGT Christopher G. Rich, and SPC Larry R. Underwood.

Sanchez also presented the Presidential Unit Citation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment. Another 13 units received Valorous Unit Award and 35 more picked up Meritorious Unit Commendations.

Following the award presentations, Harvey reflected on the 1<sup>st</sup> ID's accomplishments during its year in Iraq.

"Recently I had the honor of participating in a ceremony commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory in Europe Day and to honor the veterans of the greatest generation," Harvey said. "One of the other speakers there was Sen. Bob Dole, an Army veteran and hero of the Italian campaign. Sen. Dole referred to today's Soldiers as members of the new greatest generation, and I can't agree with him more."

Harvey praised the division's Soldiers for their unwavering dedication to both their mission and the Iraqi people.

"The Big Red One is known for its fighting prowess, but the division also engaged in operations that greatly supported our longer-term goals to defeat extremism and foster democratic reform in the heart of the Middle East. You changed the attitudes of

the Iraqi people and gave them alternatives to the insurgency."

Turning to the subject of those who gave their lives during the deployment, Harvey cited the examples of SPC David Mahlenbrock and PFC John Amos.

Mahlenbrock was killed Dec. 3, 2004, as the result of an attack with an improvised explosive device.

"He died a warrior and proud member of Task Force Danger, but it's important to remember that in addition to being a Soldier, David was also a husband and father," Harvey said. "His wife, Melissa, and newborn daughter, Kadence, were a very special part of David's life. David's story has been recounted many times during the Global War on Terrorism. We as a nation gain resolve from his sacrifice, and we will never forget him or the family he left behind."

Amos died on April 4, 2004, in Kirkuk, when an IED detonated near his vehicle.

"John Amos left us at the tender age of 20, but he left us with words of wisdom," Harvey said. "At his funeral, his team leader said that if PFC Amos were with us today, he would insist that we continue the mission and not focus on the fact that he is gone. He would tell us to keep our heads up and overcome any obstacles that may come in our path throughout life. Soldiers of Task Force Danger, you continued the mission and overcame many obstacles. I know PFC Amos would be very pleased."

Batiste reflected on what Operation Iraqi Freedom II had meant to the division.

"The Soldiers of this great division have once again carried on the legacy of the historic 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division," Batiste said. "From intense combat operations... to stability and support operations, you did it all, and you did it in spades. Your focus on discipline and standards at every level was apparent. Big Red One Soldiers were renowned for their warfighting tenacity and, at the same time, just as proficient in the business of changing attitudes and giving the Iraqi people alternatives to the insurgency."

Batiste also acknowledged the



1st Infantry Division Soldiers stand in formation during

division's partners during the deployment, the Iraqi people.

"Our successes over the past year were not achieved alone. They were achieved by establishing partnerships with the people of Iraq, most notably with the Iraqi Security Forces," Batiste said. "Your mentorship, training and equipping empowered Iraqi Security Forces, and it provided the foundation to help them defeat the insurgency and provide a safe and secure environment."

"Some of the most rewarding moments over the last year were defined by the courage and enthusiasm of the Iraqi people as they served their country," Batiste said.

Batiste noted the advances and improvements in education, health and public works that were the result of the partnership between the 1<sup>st</sup> ID and the Iraqis.

"You assisted Iraqi leaders in setting priorities for nearly 2,000 projects worth more than \$1 billion, creating jobs for thousands of Ira-

# ony celebrates job well done



SPC Joe Alger

ng the welcome home ceremony May 16 at Harvey Barracks. The troops were reviewed by Secretary of the Army Honorable Francis J. Harvey.

gis,” Batiste said.

The greatest proof, the general said, was that thanks in large part to the 1<sup>st</sup> ID, Iraqis held successful elections Jan. 30.

“The Iraqi people demonstrated that their future would not be held hostage,” Batiste said. “I will never forget the images of Iraqis celebrating and proudly displaying their ink-stained fingers.”

Batiste paid tribute to those who sacrificed their lives in the division’s quest to bring self-sufficiency and democracy to Iraq.

“The division’s amazing success in Iraq did not come without a cost,” Batiste said. “We will never forget the 193 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division and Task Force Danger Soldiers who gave their full measure during both OIF I and II. On behalf of all the Soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division and the people of our great nation, I want, once more, to acknowledge their service, sacrifice and the example they set for all of us.”

From Batiste on down, each 1<sup>st</sup> ID Soldier has memories of Iraq. SPC Christopher Grabowski, an M240B machine gunner with Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, took part in more than 100 combat missions in Iraq and experienced rocket-propelled grenades, improvised explosive devices and a squad-size ambush at close range.

But it was the positive interaction with Iraqis that he said he remembers most.

“I was attached to Alpha Co. (1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment) for a while and we’d do a mounted or dismounted patrol,” Grabowski said. “I had a lot of positive interaction with Iraqi people. Some of them would even thank me.”

Grabowski feels the efforts of the coalition forces could pay long-term dividends.

“When you look at other places we’ve fought – Germany and Korea, for example – those places are a lot better off,” he said.

“I’m not going to say it’s because of us or not, but it seems Iraq could become a better place because we’re there.”

PFC Jason McCoig said that he also sensed the appreciation of the Iraqi people. McCoig serves as a Stinger gunner for B Co., 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Defense Artillery.

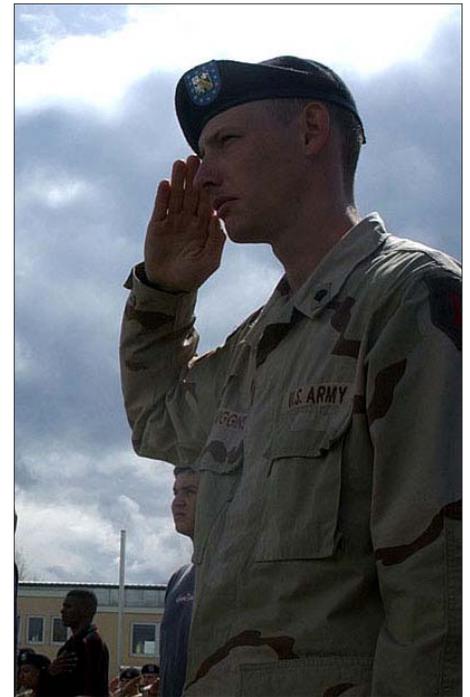
“At the beginning, I was hesitant about us going,” he said. “But once we got there I realized we were helping a lot of people. We made a big difference in the year we were down there. We would get out with the public and show them we were there to help them, such as with electricity and water. I definitely saw a change in their attitude toward us over the year.”

The end of the formal welcome-home ceremony was just the beginning of the fun. The thousands of Soldiers and family members were treated to four bands, a comedian, and all the hamburgers and chicken wings they could eat.



SPC Joe Alger

MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division commanding general, thanks family members for the volunteer work they did while their spouses were deployed, during the Bamberg welcome home ceremony April 28.



SPC Joe Alger

Honors are rendered as the 1st Infantry Division band plays the *Star Spangled Banner* at Vilseck May 4.



SPC Joe Alger

COL Walter Golden, 4th Aviation Brigade commander, gets fitted for a serving apron prior to a ceremonial keg tapping at the Katterbach welcome home ceremony April 29.



SPC Joe Alger

SMA Kenneth Preston greets Soldiers prior to the 1st Infantry Division's welcome home ceremony May 16 at Harvey Barracks. Also attending the ceremony were V Corps Commander, LTG Ricardo Sanchez, and Secretary of the Army Honorable Francis J. Harvey.



1st Infantry Division career counselors stand with 1st ID Commanding General, MG John R.S. Batiste, at the retention awards ceremony May 2 at the Cantigny Club on Leighton Barracks.

# 1st ID tops Army in retention numbers

Story and photo by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

The 1st Infantry Division retention awards ceremony for fiscal year 2004 and the first and second quarter of fiscal year 2005 was held at the Cantigny Club on Leighton Barracks May 2.

During the ceremony, MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st ID commander, handed out awards to units that exceeded their retention missions for the year.

According to SSG Scarlet King, the 1st ID had the highest reenlistment and retention percentage in the United States Army for 2004. King serves as career counselor for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Infantry Division, and 1st Military Police Company.

"We've got a great reenlistment program because we've got great career counselors," Batiste said. "All the commanders, command sergeants major and noncommissioned officers at each level have worked very hard at making this happen."

Each unit recognized achieved more than 100 percent of its retention mission for the year, which is important for several reasons, according to King,

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**"This division makes up a big part of the Army, so keeping the retention rate high is a very big deal."**

**- SSG Scarlet King  
Career counselor, HHC 1st  
ID and 1st MP Co.**

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"This division makes up a big part of the Army, so keeping the retention rate high is a very big deal because the end strength of the Army depends on career counselors completing their missions," King said. "The 1st Infantry Division has exceeded its goal tremendously and that helps not only

United States Army Europe, but the entire Army."

According to King, the division's 162 percent retention rate for 2004 included 3,422 re-enlistees, 25 percent of whom chose to stay in the division. The re-enlistees were paid a total of over \$24 million in bonuses.

The numbers are even more impressive considering that most of the Soldiers were deployed when they reenlisted, King said.

"Every individual Soldier is important," King said. "And when you look at the big picture, with what's going on in the world today, we have to keep Soldiers in the military."

While the 1st ID has helped set a new Army standard for reenlistment and retention, SFC Carol Lehman, 1st ID Command Career Counselor said keeping Soldiers in the Army is an ongoing mission.

"It's a very high standard to meet for our mission," Lehman said, "but we take great pride in keeping the good Soldiers of the Big Red One in the Division."

# Soldiers pay tribute to Signal NCO

Story and photo by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO

Soldiers who had served with SFC Charles U. "Jay" Jones remembered him as a positive, professional man during a memorial service May 12 at the Larson Barracks Theatre. Jones served with the 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion.

He died May 7 after being struck by a car as he crossed the street in front of Harvey Barracks.

SFC Walter Branyan recalled how Jones made an immediate impression on him when they met two and a half years ago.

"He was squared away, with an impeccable appearance," Branyan said "Jay had a lot of pride."

Branyan further described Jones as a man who stayed upbeat. "Jay's attitude toward life was always positive," he said.

When Jones' mother died, he went home on emergency leave, but was soon the same man his friends had always known. "When he returned, in no time at all, the smile was back," Branyan said.

Branyan recalled that Jones loved talking about the Army and also had passions for southern music and bowling.

"Jay --, you're really loved, and you will be missed but never forgotten," Branyan said.

1SG Robert Brown also had fond memories of Jones.

"No amount of words can attest to



SFC Charles U. Jones was remembered as a dedicated husband, father and Soldier during a memorial service May 12 at the Larson Barracks Theatre. Jones served with the 121<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion.

what kind of person and Soldier Jay was," Brown said. "He will be remembered as an energetic, aggressive and caring leader who always put Soldiers' needs before his own."

Brown then addressed the positive legacy Jones leaves, saying "He not only forever changed A Co., but he left his mark on the world and left it a better place."

## Just for kicks



SGT W. Wayne Marlow

Above and right, Vilseck American boys' soccer players in action during their 1-0 victory May 5 in downtown Vilseck. The match was part of the Vilseck Community Day.



SGT W. Wayne Marlow

# 1st ID officer veterans reunite

Story and photos by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

Current and former officers who have served in war with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division gathered in Washington, D.C., April 2 for their 86<sup>th</sup> annual reunion dinner.

“It’s a feeling of joy to see people here who you haven’t seen for many years,” said retired COL Beason Walker, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Rifle Co. commander during World War II. “I saw a friend here one year who had been captured during the war, and I didn’t know if he was alive or dead.”

Though the reunion is a chance for veterans to re-ignite friendships, it also gives them the opportunity to meet with officers who have served in other wars.

“There’s nothing that sets one war aside from another. We’ve all had our own identity and experienced the same thing with a great unit,” said retired LTC John Bahn, who served in Vietnam as commander of C Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery. “We’re all combat buddies at this point, and it’s important to thank each other for the work we’ve done.”

Retired LTC William Kelly said each veteran attending the reunion is proud of the accomplishments of the 1<sup>st</sup> ID in Operation Iraqi Freedom II. Kelly served in Vietnam as commander of C Co., 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.

“We’re hearing wonderful things about the Army now,” Kelly said. “The level of training, motivation and readiness is extremely high today, and we’re very proud of them.”

The retired officers hope 1<sup>st</sup> ID veterans continue to attend the reunions.

“Camaraderie is a very important thing to continue with,” Walker said. “The only thing that’s going to keep these things going is if current officers join the organization.”



Veterans who served as 1st ID officers during various wars salute the color guard during a reunion April 2 in Washington, D.C.



MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division commanding General, speaks to attendees at the reunion April 2 in Washington, D.C.

## ‘Changing of the stole’ highlights prayer breakfast



Chaplain (COL) Rodney Coleman, right, is headed back to Texas after serving as the 1st ID rear detachment chaplain. Here he is with Chaplain (COL) Kev Brown, V Corps chaplain, following a changing of the stole ceremony with Chaplain (LTC) Michael Lembke April 7 at the Cantigny Club on Leighton Barracks.

Story and photo by SPC Rebecca Sharpton  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

The 1st Infantry Division chaplain and rear detachment chaplain held a changing of the stole ceremony April 7 during the 1st ID prayer breakfast at the Cantigny Club on Leighton Barracks.

Chaplain (LTC) Michael Lembke, division chaplain, resumed his duties, while Chaplain (COL) Rodney Coleman, rear detachment chaplain, said goodbye. Coleman is returning to his church in Texas.

Chaplain (COL) Ken Brown, V Corps chaplain, presided over the ceremony and was also the guest speaker for the breakfast.

“Chaplain Coleman is a citizen Soldier. He took a leave of absence from his church and he will be back with his family soon,” Brown said.

“Chaplain Coleman has touched the lives of hundreds of Task Force Victory families,” Brown continued. “He has been a great strength and I believe that God put him here.”

“Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your challenges and joys, and ups and downs,” Coleman said.

In closing, he asked OIF Soldiers in the room to bring the same sense of desire and determination they had in Iraq to their families.



CW3 Matt Fitter and CPT Luke Mercier of 1st Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, prepare to fly a mission in their OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter at Forward Operating Base Mackenzie, Ad Duluiyah, Iraq, Jan. 12.

# 1-4 Cav air troops flying away

Story and photos by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

**ELEMENTS OF 1<sup>ST</sup> Squadron, 4<sup>th</sup> U.S. Cavalry Regiment will be inactivated now that the unit has returned from the Iraqi theater of operations to the central region.**

The Army has directed an initiative to modularize its aviation assets. As part of this plan, D, E, and F Troops of 1-4 Cavalry were inactivated May 25.

According to MAJ Michael McCurry, deputy squadron commander of 1-4 Cavalry, the inactivation of the aviation elements is part of the Army's aviation transformation plan.

The plan, which was implemented by Army Chief of Staff GEN Peter Schoomaker, is part of an Army campaign for transformation that outlines 15 different focus areas.

As a part of this Army initiative, aviation units containing OH-

50D Kiowa Warriors will be returned to stations in the continental United States, in order to enhance aviation unit modularization Army-wide. Modularization of aviation assets creates units that are adapted for missions and can also reduce the number of units needed for a particular mission, McCurry said.

Because of this new plan, two air cavalry troops and one air maintenance troop will be leaving the squadron.

There are three major areas that need to be focused on, McCurry said, in order to make a smooth transition.

The first focus area for 1-4 Cavalry is personnel moves.

"Most of the people who have been reassigned as a result of this new plan will have a permanent change of station within 120 days of our redeployment, and we have to make sure we take care of all of them," McCurry said. "The challenge after a yearlong deployment is to give people who are leaving the same support we would give any Soldier returning from a deployment."

The next focus area is the movement of equipment. The 1-4 Cavalry Soldiers started turning in their Kiowa Warrior helicopters after leaving Iraq, followed by turn-in of their generic items, such as



**“There are Soldiers who have been with this unit since Vietnam, and it’s important to make sure the memories of all the heroes who have served here are preserved.”**

*- MAJ Michael McCurry  
Deputy Squadron commander  
1st Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment*

**One of the many 1-4 Cavalry helicopters that has helped the unit achieve a rich legacy sits on an airstrip in Iraq. The unit’s aviation elements are inactivating.**

trucks and tents, to units who are short on these items.

The third focus area, according to McCurry, is to capture the history and heritage of the unit.

“There are Soldiers who have been with this unit since Vietnam, and it’s important to make sure the memories of all the heroes who have served here are preserved,” McCurry said.

McCurry also said it’s important for people living in Germany to understand that the inactivation of the 1-4 Cavalry’s aviation elements is part of an Army-wide force development initiative and is not related to the current Department of Defense Global Posturing Review or the European Command Strategic Theater Transformation.

“Some people might think that this is the beginning of that plan,” McCurry said. “It’s important for them to realize this has nothing to do with that.”

The deactivation has garnered mixed reactions from the 1-4 Cavalry Soldiers.

“I’ve been with the unit for about a year and a half,” said SPC Bryan McGoan, an armament avionics specialist with 1-4 Cavalry. “They’re a great group of people who I’ve grown very close with over the past year in Iraq, and it’s kind of sad we have to split up right when we get back to Germany, but I can handle it.”

“There’s great camaraderie between the aviation and ground troops in this unit,” McCurry said. “Anyone who’s ever been with an air cavalry unit feels like this is the end of an era. On the other hand, everybody realizes the need to go through this change to make the Army a more effective fighting force in the years to come.”



**CPT Luke Mercier of 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 4<sup>th</sup> U.S. Cavalry Regiment, prepares to fly another mission in Iraq Jan. 12.**



BG Stephen D. Mundt, outgoing 1st Infantry Division assistant division commander for support, receives a Bronze Star certificate from MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st ID commanding general, prior to Mundt's farewell ceremony March 29 at division headquarters.

# Farewell and thank you, BG Mundt

## ***Big Red One Soldiers say goodbye to longest-serving ADCS in history of the division***

Story and photo by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

A ceremony was held at Victory Park on Leighton Barracks March 29 to honor the departing 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division assistant division commander for support.

BG Stephen D. Mundt, who has been the ADCS of the 1<sup>st</sup> ID for 26 months, has had the longest ADCS tenure in Big Red One history. His time in the 1<sup>st</sup> ID included deployments to Turkey, Kosovo and Iraq.

During his remarks, MG John R.S. Batiste, 1<sup>st</sup> ID commanding general, praised Mundt's work with the division, and wished him luck in his new assignment. Mundt is moving up to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-8, with duties as the Deputy Director for Force Development.

"Brigadier General Mundt ensured the division continually set high standards and inspired all to achieve what others considered impossible," Batiste said. "The division's loss is the Army's gain."

Prior to Mundt's farewell ceremony, Batiste presented him

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**"Brigadier General Mundt ensured the division continually set high standards and inspired all to achieve what others considered impossible."**

**- MG John R.S. Batiste  
1st Infantry Division commander**

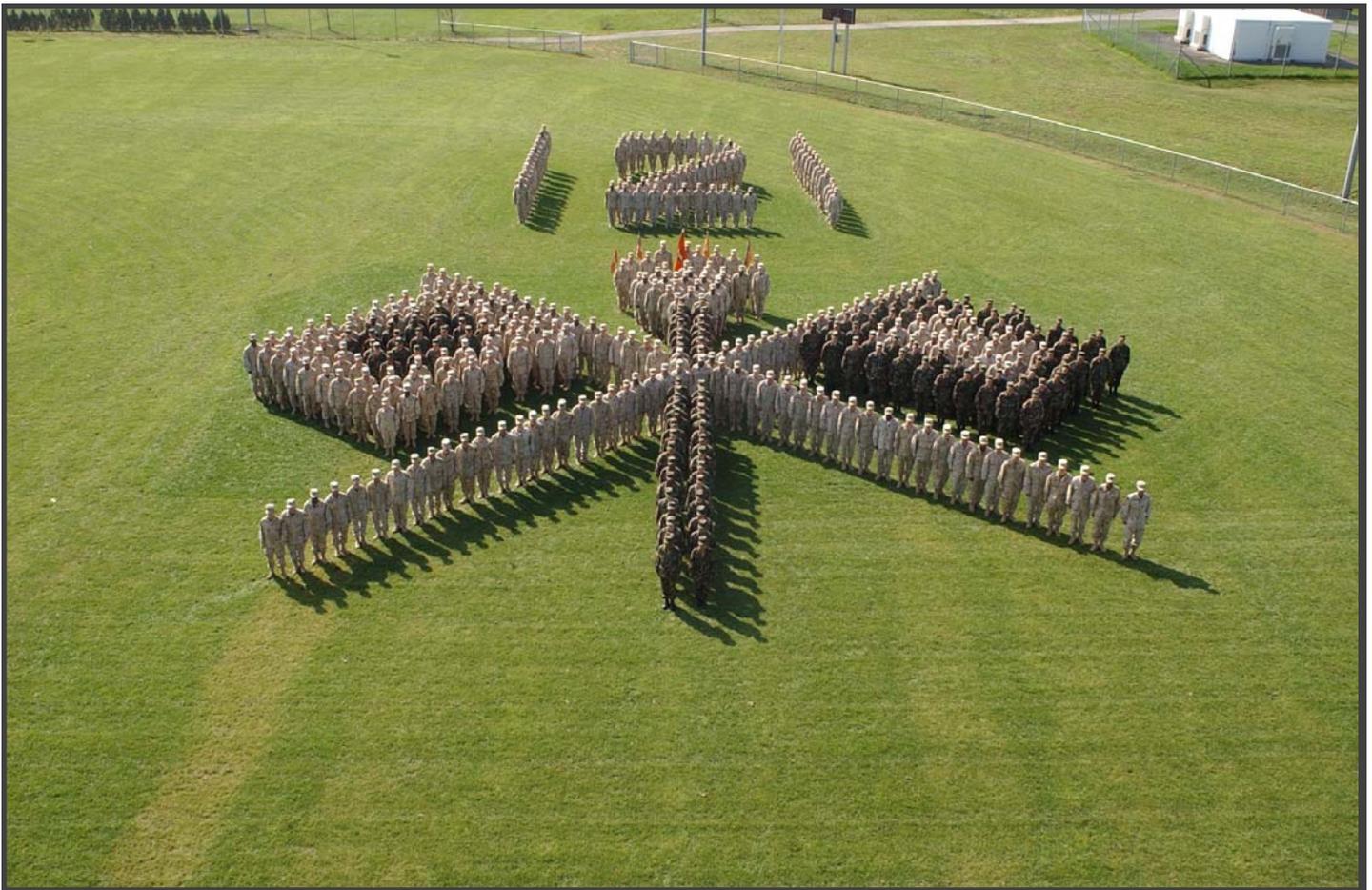
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with the Bronze Star for his service in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

During his remarks, Mundt praised the Soldiers and family members of the division, and said they were responsible for making Operation Iraqi Freedom II a success.

"I'm humbled and honored that all of you attended this ceremony today," Mundt said. "There has never been a finer group of Soldiers assembled to do our nation's business. This division left a lasting legacy in Iraq. When the world said it couldn't be done, you did it."

Mundt added he would not be able to do his job without the support of his wife, Betsy, and he said the greatest gift he was given was the chance to talk to her over an intercom during his award ceremony.



Soldiers with the 121st Signal Battalion form the unit's name and branch insignia April 11 at Larson Barracks in Kitzingen.

# Signal battalion reflects on Iraq, looks ahead

**Story and photo by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO**

With a successful year in Iraq completed, Soldiers with the 121st Signal Battalion are now switching gears.

According to the unit's senior enlisted Soldier, CSM George Butler, the battalion's current mission is twofold: tying up loose ends from Iraq and welcoming in new Soldiers.

"We're getting the battalion back together as a whole and accounting for the equipment and testing it and getting ready for our next mission," Butler said. "The second part is getting new Soldiers on the ground and making sure they're up to speed ... so they can be part of any future mission this battalion may have."

Butler said he and his Soldiers learned a lot while downrange.

"We had a lot of communication equipment added to our network. It was a challenge to get that equipment into the system because we didn't have some of it before deploying," he said. "But I could not ask any more from my Soldiers than what they did."

A year downrange was sometimes taxing,

but Butler said his Soldiers delivered.

"Spending a year in Iraq was very trying for a lot of these troops and it was a very demanding job," he said. "The area we covered was about 7,200 square miles, and it was very spread out. Soldiers within the battalion have not even seen each other for a year.

"We were on the road five or six days a week, all day. With all the roadside bombs, it keeps you on your toes. I can surely say that. Most of my Soldiers, they really stepped up to the plate. You don't know how they're going to perform until they get to that point, and I had Soldiers that simply did a tremendous job."

One of Butler's Soldiers, SGT Brooklyn Grinage, said the early months in Iraq were a bit unnerving. As the battalion commander's driver, she was on two to five convoys per week.

"After about three or four months, I got use to it," she said. "But the first couple of months, every time I went out,

my heart started beating and I thought, 'Today could be the day.'"

Friends in Iraq and back home helped her make it through the deployment, she said.

"My family and friends at home, and also the people I was around all year, my peers and co-workers, they helped a lot. Even if it was people that I didn't know, once we got to Iraq, there was a strong bond," Grinage said.

Now that the 121st is back, the focus is on more training.

"We've got a lot of training coming up this summer on weapons and prepping to go back because eventually this unit will," Grinage said.

1SG Robert Brown of C Co. said the battalion's planning is based on that premise.

"After we finish inventory, we're focusing on individual training, then collective training, then its onto Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels," Brown said. "2005 is all about rebuilding and restructuring in the event that we have to go back downrange."

# Testing, Testing ...

## Chemical Soldiers are among first in Army to try out new detection system

Story and photos by SPC Joe Alger  
Staff writer, 1st ID PAO

The Army is always updating its technology and equipment to stay with the times. And Soldiers with the 307<sup>th</sup> Chemical/Biological Detachment had a chance to test the new Biological Integrated Detection System April 18-22 on Harvey Barracks.

“We received the BIDS systems on Monday, and the rest of the week, we’ve been going through system start-up,” said 1LT David Newhouse, fourth platoon leader. “Because the systems are so brand new, we’re required to run them for about a week. We come out in the mornings, start them up, let them run all day and shut them down in the evening.”

According to Newhouse, the system works by taking a sample from the air, processing it, then analyzing it for chemical and biological agents. The samples are then sent back to a lab in the United States for further analysis.

If the sample tests positive for any banned agent, the sample can be used as evidence in a world court against whatever party or nation released the agent, Newhouse added.

While many Soldiers may not be familiar with the new system because it is so new, the Soldiers from the 307<sup>th</sup> have had no such problem.

“Every Soldier in the company is



Soldiers with the 307<sup>th</sup> Chemical/Biological Detachment test the new Biological Integrated Detection System on Harvey Barracks April 21.

BIDS qualified,” said SPC Nina Kazibwe, a BIDS specialist with fourth platoon. “Once we finish basic and advanced individual training, the top 10 percent of the Soldiers in the graduating class are selected to attend a BIDS training course.”

Newhouse said because she and other fourth platoon Soldiers graduated from the BIDS course just prior to arriving in Germany, they already had a running start with regards to knowledge of the system and were learning how to run and operate the systems very quickly.

Even so, Soldiers from third and fourth platoons were required to conduct a week of refresher training.

“The instructors from Ft. Leonard Wood are here for the net-refresher training,” Newhouse said. “Third platoon is doing the training this week while we run the new equipment. Next week, we’ll be doing it.”

While the equipment had been tested for almost a week straight, Newhouse said everything was running very smoothly.

“These are very complicated systems and so far we’ve had no maintenance issues,” he said.

The Soldiers of third and fourth Platoon aren’t the only ones testing out the new BIDS systems.

The first and second platoons from our company are Reserve platoons from Lodi, N.J., and they’re also testing the new equipment,” Newhouse said.



Soldiers with the 307<sup>th</sup> Chemical/Biological Detachment gain familiarity with the system during testing at Harvey Barracks April 21.



The Biological Integrated Detection System gets tested at Harvey Barracks on April 21.

# Liberation from Nazis remembered in Czech Republic

Story and photos by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO

CHEB, Czech Republic -- Soldiers with the 1st Infantry Division were in Cheb April 28-30 to help this town celebrate the 60th anniversary of its liberation from the Nazis.

The 1st Infantry Division played an integral role in extricating the Germans from the area during World War II, and modern-day 1st ID Soldiers provided a color guard for the festivities.

“We got to meet some of the veterans,” said SGT Wesley Jackson, with Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment. “They told us how we’re doing a good job, and that they know their legacy is continuing.”

The celebration included walking tours, battle reenactments, displays of World War II vehicles and actors in 1940s-era military uniforms.

There was also music, including a rendition of “Taps” by 1st ID trumpet player, SPC Kevin Tangney.

Jackson said the anniversary celebration was memorable. “It’s nice to see people

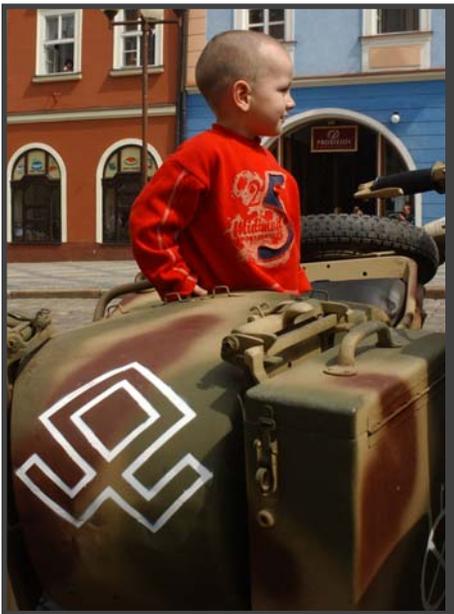


SPC Kevin Tangney, 1st Infantry Division trumpet player, greets local residents in Cheb, Czech Republic, during the town's 60th anniversary celebration commemorating liberation from the Nazis.

want to shake our hands,” he said.

SGT William Greenwood of HHC, 1-63, talked about what it meant to meet some of the liberators.

“World War II veterans have come up to us and thanked us for what we’ve done,” he said. “We haven’t done anything compared to what they did.”



Above: A Czech youngster checks out the view from a motorcycle sidecar, one of many pieces of World War II equipment on display.



Right: Actors in World War II military outfits add to the atmosphere.

# 1st ID hero returns

## Medal of Honor recipient back 60 years after end of WW II

Story and photos by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO

A noted 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division veteran returned to northern Bavaria in early May, this time in a less contentious surrounding.

"I was right here when the war ended," Walter Ehlers said during a stop at the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division museum on Leighton Barracks May 3.

Ehlers and other veterans of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment toured the museum as part of their activities during a week-long reunion. While on tour, veterans got to see profiles of 1<sup>st</sup> ID Medal of Honor recipients, which included Ehlers.

Ehlers received the nation's highest military honor in World War II for fending off an attack on his convoy and single-handedly knocking out an entrenched enemy position. He then diverted most of the remaining enemy fire to himself and carried a wounded comrade to safety.

Ehlers also received a battlefield commission, which meant a lot more saluting than before.

"I thought, 'This must be the lowest rank in the Army. When I was enlisted I didn't have to salute all those sergeants,'" he said.

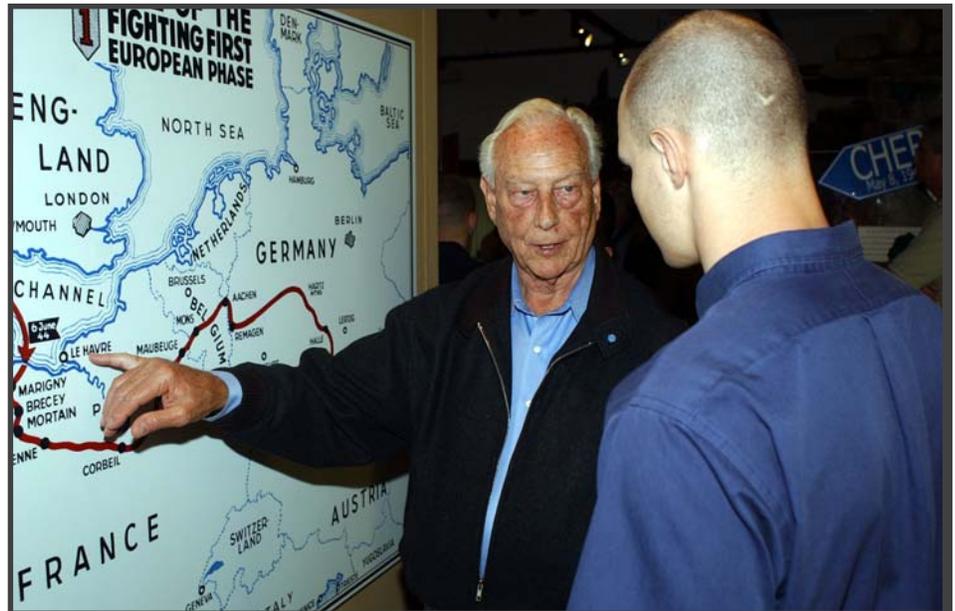
Ehlers was in Belgium when he was whisked away to receive his Medal of Honor.

"There were German troops behind our lines, and they were wearing American uniforms," Ehlers said. "They told me they wanted to get me back to Paris so I could be presented the Medal of Honor before I got killed."

But there was little time for Ehlers to enjoy the moment. It was back to fighting, including a memorable battle at Elguiton, Tunisia.

"It was tougher than D-Day," Ehlers said. "We fought for eight straight hours."

Besides seeing several Allied Soldiers die, Ehlers also lost a brother during D-Day.



Walter Ehlers, a 1st Infantry Division Medal of Honor recipient, uses a map at the 1st ID museum May 3 to explain the route his unit took to victory in World War II.

But Ehlers and his fellow Soldiers persevered, and he ended up near Schweinfurt at war's end.

"Those were our first barracks in Germany," he said.

He got the ultimate present when the war in Europe ended on his birthday, May 7, 1945.

"I have a lot of memories of the war," Ehlers said. "It's like it happened yesterday."

Ehlers has seen several reenactments of D-Day, and he said they fail to convey the full horror of the moment. He concedes *Saving Private Ryan* was more

realistic than most, but even it was somewhat off.

"It was a little bit Hollywoodish," Ehlers said. "There wasn't any blood in the water. When the waves would come in, it would wash whatever blood was there right back out. And we weren't running around on the beach yelling at each other."

With regard to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, Ehlers has high praise for today's Soldiers.

"I don't like that they have to be there, but our troops are doing a magnificent job," he said. "I'm very proud of them. To do what they've done is amazing."



Ehlers listens to the history of the 1st Infantry Division as told by SPC Frank Muniz, at the 1st ID museum May 3.

# 1st ID welcomes new CSM

Story and photo by SGT W. Wayne Marlow  
Editor, 1st ID PAO

The 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division is expected to face transformation and realignment in the next several months. But there will be one constant, according to the 1<sup>st</sup> ID's new senior enlisted Soldier.

"When the smoke clears, leaders of all units will step up to the plate like they always have and accomplish the mission," CSM John D. Fourhman said at his welcome ceremony May 13 in Victory Park on Leighton Barracks. "The Big Red One will come out of transformation ... ready to do any mission, anywhere."

Fourhman has already served with the 1<sup>st</sup> ID for almost four years, first as command sergeant major for 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Armor, then in the same position for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team.

Fourhman expressed his excitement about staying with the division.

"It's a great day to be a Big Red One Soldier and an important day for the Fourhman family," he said. He also thanked his wife, Cindy, whom he called "general manager and coach of Team Fourhman."

He acknowledged his predecessor and talked about the challenges ahead.

"Several weeks ago on this field, we said goodbye to CSM Cory McCarty. I would be remiss if I did not thank him," Fourhman said. "He was a shining example of what a division command sergeant major should be, and he will be a tough act to follow."

The welcome ceremony for Fourhman came just three days before the division celebrated its homecoming from Iraq. Fourhman touched on how the official ending of the deployment phase will lead into new territory for the 1<sup>st</sup> ID.

"Even as this chapter ends ... the Army has provided a glimpse of things to come," Fourhman said. "This is going to be an exciting, challenging, and rewarding time to be a Big Red One Soldier. There will be opportunities for new experiences and professional growth."

Fourhman was welcomed to the division by 1<sup>st</sup> ID Commander, MG John R.S. Batiste, who praised Fourhman as senior NCO who led a disciplined, effective brigade combat team at war.

"Becoming a division command sergeant major requires a thorough exam of

competence and character," Batiste said. "His record of services is an example of absolute competence and selfless service. He never asks Soldiers to do anything that he himself would not do. He is the right command sergeant major to take the Big Red One in the next chapter of our history."

Fourhman joined the Army in August, 1975.

He has previously served as a senior drill sergeant, a first sergeant, and a Mounted Maneuver Battlespace Lab Operations sergeant, among many other positions.



1st Infantry Division CSM John D. Fourhman greets well-wishers at his welcome ceremony May 13 in Victory Park on Leighton Barracks. Fourhman is the 19th DCSM in Big Red One history.



## **1st ID Medal of Honor recipient PVT Sterling Morelock**

Morelock led a small group past his company line and into enemy territory on Oct. 4, 1918 near Exermont, France. Battling incessant rifle, artillery, and machine gun fire, Morelock and three other Soldiers neutralized five machine gun nests and took control of the fight from the Germans. Morelock rendered first aid to the injured and led an evacuation of the area by employing prisoners to carry stretchers. While tending to his injured company commander, Morelock received a serious wound to the hip, but his heroism had turned the tide of the battle.