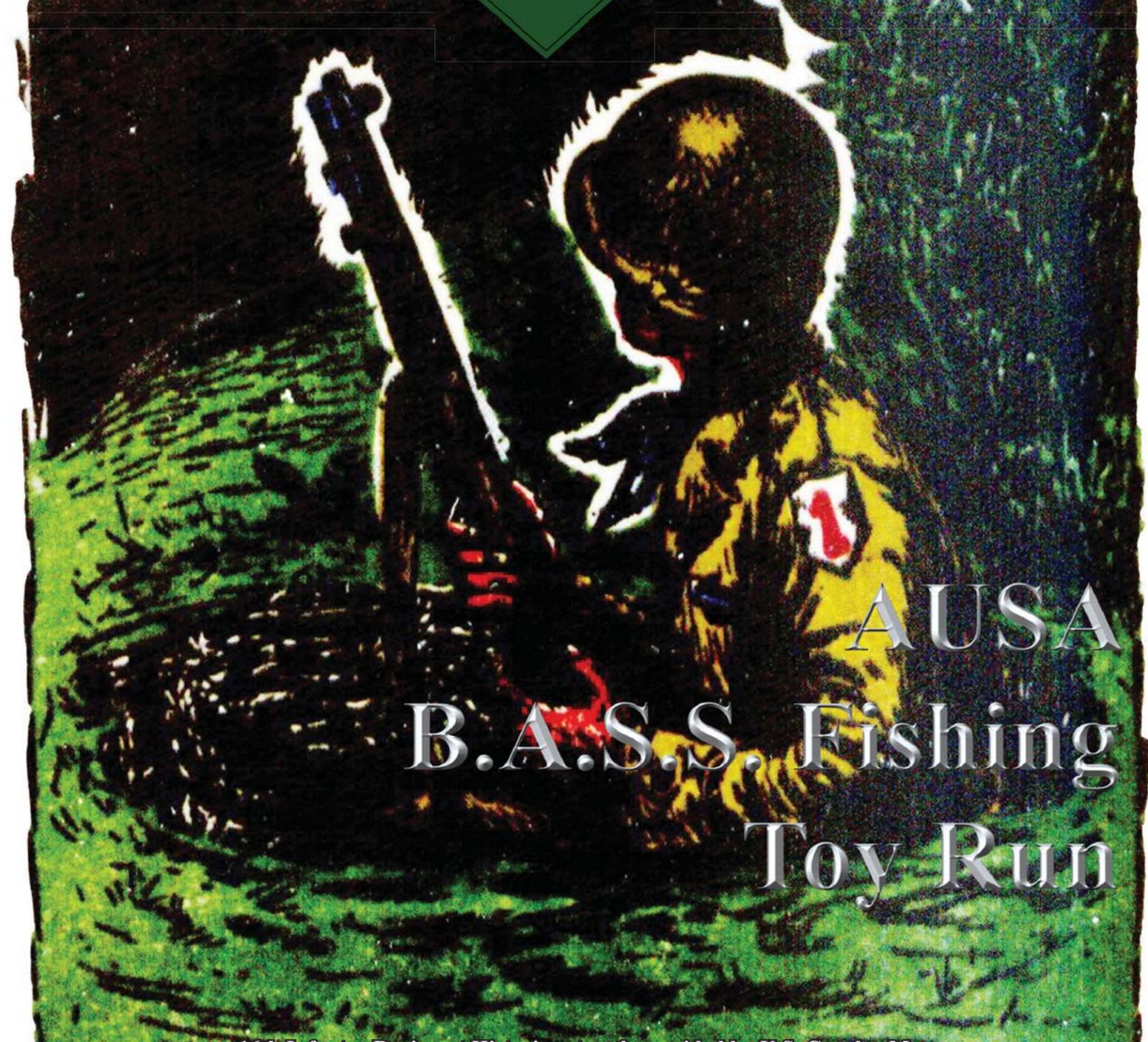


Unofficial 1st Infantry Division Magazine of Soldiers and Families

December 2008
www.lid.army.mil

Duty **1** First!



AUSA
B.A.S.S. Fishing
Toy Run

16th Infantry Regiment Historic artwork provided by U.S. Cavalry Museum.

The Big Red One Creed

TEAMWORK is the foundation of the Big Red One. I shall never fail my team, for I maintain the standard. My conduct and self-discipline sets the example for others to follow.

HONOR is what I stand for—an American Soldier on duty for my country. My loyalty is intense. I display care for my fellow Soldiers and my chain-of-command through courage, respect, integrity and compassion.

I have learned to **ENDURE** to thrive in adversity. The harsh reality of combat gives me the enthusiasm for realistic training. I am physically and mentally strong to meet the demanding situations my unit encounters.

We are one in the Big Red One. Our **BROTHERHOOD** gives us strength to fight on to any objective and accomplish the mission as our veterans have done before us. I live the legacy of my division.

READINESS is my priority. To be ready for any mission, anytime, anywhere. My business is first-class training and living high standards of care and equipment, weaponry and tactical and technical competence.

My **ORGANIZATION** is my strength. The BRD is bigger than any one individual. It gives me purpose, self-confidence, competitive spirit, intestinal fortitude and the desire to fight with all my heart.



Duty **1** First!

No Mission too Difficult. No Sacrifice too Great.
December 2008 www.1id.army.mil

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The Duty First is an unofficial publication produced under the provisions of AR 360-1, published by Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army or the 1st Infantry Division. All photos are Army photos unless otherwise noted. Circulation is 6,000 per issue, printed monthly.

Story and photos submissions are welcome and should be sent to:

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www.1id.army.mil.

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Commanding General **Danger 6**

Holidays...

Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins

With the holidays upon us, it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. It seems like once November rolls around, before you know it, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Christmas have blown past, we've celebrated a new year, and then we're back to work.

As you're rushing around from store to store trying to find the right gift, running to the supermarket to get that missing ingredient, cooking that delicious meal, or spending hours on the road driving home – don't forget to take a moment and reflect on the true reason for the holiday season - spending time with those we love and being thankful for all that we have.

As Americans, as Soldiers, as Army Families and civilians, we have much to be thankful for. Sometimes, we forget just how blessed we are. We take for granted the freedoms we enjoy, the safety of our loved ones, or the company of Family.

Our Army is approaching its eighth year at war and yet our Soldiers and

Families press on. As a U.S. Army Soldier or Army Family, time with one's Family or with the Soldier is at a premium.

With our line of work, you cannot always assume that you will be around for the holidays, so take advantage of the opportunity this holiday season, cherish the family time you do have. So, if you were thinking about avoiding the trip back home, I ask you to reconsider. And while home, don't forget to

turn away from the game for a moment to catch up with a loved one or for a quick game of catch outside. Linger around the table after everyone is done eating, talk about anything under the sun. Maybe even help your in-laws with the dishes!

Annette and I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season and I hope you enjoy the well-deserved break with those you love. Whatever it is you do, make sure you do it together. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to be Army Family Strong. 

Duty First!



Staff Sgt. Thomas Koelder, 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, and his wife Erica celebrate Christmas.



Command Sergeant Major **Danger 7**

Educational Opportunities!

Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne

Your education says a lot about you as a Soldier and you as a leader, especially in today's Army.

Every commander all the way up the line knows how hard it is for Soldiers to stay in school.

What amazes me is the number of 1st Infantry Division Soldiers who manage to complete their degree programs despite deployments, long duty days and recurring field exercises.

Demonstrating this type of initiative is hard.

If you are not in a position of leadership, you soon will be, and I expect you to pass on the same valuable discipline and traits that make you a success. We need you to mentor other Big Red One Soldiers and carry on a tradition of excellence that reaches back far into the history of our division.

One of our Army's greatest leaders, and one of our former 1st Inf. Div. commanders, Gen. Gordon Sullivan, once said, "We must be men and women of courage; men and women of integrity. We must do the best we can, we must believe in the future and in each other, and we must make decisions and move resolutely ahead."

I believe that applies to both the Soldier and the ones who support the Soldier, whether it is a Family member, squad leader, brigade commander or commanding general. Do the best you can - believe in the future and in each other.

Your military training, civilian education and the skills you brought to the Big Red One have prepared you for the challenges that lie ahead. But don't let your education stop there. Remember, also, it has been said, "the great aim of education is not knowledge, but action." Capitalize on your education and knowledge and be proactive in sharing what you learn.

Ninety percent of Soldiers enter the Armed Forces for the educational benefits. However, only 50 percent actually use their educational benefits. Here are some compelling reasons why you should seriously consider continuing your education: People with high school diplomas have a median annual income

of \$27,915; those with bachelor's degrees average an annual salary of \$51,206. A college graduate earns 45 percent more than a high school graduate.

Your military experience may have earned you college credit. The American Council on Education (ACE) has established guidelines for evaluating military credit. It is important that you find out if the college you want to attend will award military credit.

Continuing education is more flexible than ever. Thirty years ago, going to college part time was the exception, today it is the rule. More than 60 percent of today's college students are part-time students, and 10 percent of all college students take online courses. Online education is becoming the wave of the future

The U.S. Army has created one of the most innovative programs of higher education in the world – Army University Access Online (known as eArmyU).

eArmyU provides access to quality education for enlisted Soldiers, helping them further their professional and personal goals and providing the Army with top preparation for its forces.

eArmyU supports the goal of transforming the military into an objective force capable

of responding to the diverse and complex demands of the 21st century.

An online education is flexible, convenient and opens the door to more opportunities.

Most online courses permit students to attend class according to their schedule, which might include holding down a job at the same time. So make the time for school. If you are in school, stay there.

If you aren't enrolled in school, do it. Your future depends on it, the 1st Inf. Div. depends on it, and the U.S. Army depends on it.

Now ... Get after it!

Duty First! 



1ST CAB

Best Warrior

By Sgt. Michael Howard
1st CAB PAO

TIKRIT, Iraq – A supply specialist from 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment excelled at Multi-National Division-North's Warrior Competition at COB Speicher. Spc. Gavin MacKenzie tied for third in the Soldier category. He was one of 54 competitors from across Task Force Iron.

The event featured significant changes from years past to better reflect the Army's current state of training and its war on terror mission.

According to Sgt. Maj. Allen Ashton, the 1st Armored Division tactical operations sergeant major, the competition places a heavy emphasis on "the smaller building blocks that the Soldiers use for providing the tactical security and operational security for the units operating in MND-North."

The MND-N Warrior Competition brought together warriors from the ranks of private to staff sergeant who have excelled and proven themselves at the company and battalion levels.

The Soldiers faced a selection board chaired by Sgt. Maj. Darryl M. Jannone, the 1st Armored Division provost marshal sergeant major. The rest of the board was comprised of sergeants major from throughout Task Force Iron. They evaluated each warrior's appearance, military bearing and knowledge in key military areas.

This year's event consisted of several traditional events such as the Army Physical Fitness Test and weapons qualification, but it added new twists to others.

In addition to standard first-aid exercises, Soldiers had to test their proficiency in starting an intravenous drip – a common task in the Combat Life Saver Course, which became a part of basic combat training in 2007.

Every effort was made to give the Warrior Task Training stations maximum realism, said 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division Operations Sgt. Maj. Tonia Walker.

Audio clips from movies like "Black Hawk Down" were played at some stations and events were often combined into one station to increase the stress involved in completing the tasks. At the "treat severed extremity" station, the Soldiers evaluated the casualty, treated the severed limb

for bleeding and then ran the saline lock on the IV. Other events were geared toward physically pushing Soldiers to their limits. The week-long competition featured a physical fitness test and a six kilometer run in full combat gear with ammunition – on the same day.

"We had a PT test at 4 a.m., and then right behind that we have a 6K combat run with full battle rattle... it's kind of a gut check; it lets you find who you really are," said Sgt. Anthony Dozart, who represented the 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment at the competition. "We all think we're tough. We all think we're the best Soldier, but when the rubber meets the road, you find out firsthand whether you're as tough as you imagine yourself. "It's a good thing. You're going to come out of it better and stronger."

One aspect of the MND-N Warrior Competition that distinguished it from similar competitions is that it takes place in a deployed environment. With the Soldiers and NCOs studying for it already shouldering a heavy workload, preparation for the competition was even more challenging than it normally would be.

"I found out I was going to be in this competition six months ago, and even then I rushed to prepare. To prepare, we did physical training everyday, and we studied with our NCOIC whenever we had downtime. It's a tough competition. It's a lot to prepare for," said Sgt. Marvin Terlaje.

One unexpected benefit of the warrior competition is the positive stress it puts on units to keep their training rigorous. "The main way these competitions pay off is to give us a chance to evaluate our Soldiers, see where they're at on training, and go back and step up our training. I also enjoy just being here for the Soldiers, helping them out, motivating them in any way I can," said Staff Sgt. David Miller, a sponsor in the competition assigned to 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment.

More important than winning, Terlaje and Dozart both agree, is the sense of camaraderie developed during the competition, and the feeling that they are more of a team than a group of individual competitors. "What happens at the warrior competition is you get the cream of the crop, you get the people who are best at what they do, and we all get together and share stories and experiences," said Terlaje. "I think it's a good opportunity. It's a chance to foster camaraderie through the spirit of competition."

1st CAB/Vasquez

Spc. Jessica Medina of Company E, 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment rushes during the react to direct fire event.

1st CAB

Demons Come Home

By Anna Staats
Duty First! Magazine

FORT RILEY – About 2,000 Soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade have made it safely back to Fort Riley following a 15-month deployment to Iraq.

The "Demon" brigade's advance party returned to the post on Oct. 18. Most of the brigade's Soldiers returned to Fort Riley throughout November.

"I never thought I would see a day when I welcomed 'demons' to Fort Riley," joked Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, during a redeployment ceremony Oct. 18. "But Demons, welcome home. Thank you for standing point for our nation."

Soldiers in the CAB deployed from Fort Riley in September 2007. The brigade's units operated from six separate forward operating bases in northern Iraq.

Soldiers supported ground troops and operations; guarded convoys, performed medical evacuations and conducted reconnaissance operations, all part of a larger effort to assist the Iraqi government in improving internal security, fostering economic growth and improving infrastructure development. During its deployment, the brigade oversaw the operation and maintenance of 200 manned and unmanned aircraft. The brigade's Soldiers conducted nearly 18,000 missions, identifying and engaging enemy targets 300 times. CAB Soldiers were also responsible for the discovery or defeat of 56 improvised explosive devices and the destruction of more than 125 insurgent vehicles and structures. In addition, the brigade was responsible for transporting more than 91,000 personnel and about 4,000 tons of cargo around Multi-National Division North.

"I feel pretty good. It's nice to be home after a 15-month deployment," said Spc. Matthew Turnbull, a 20-year-old signal support system specialist, of 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Avn. Regt.

Turnbull's sister, Lynette Gilkey, stayed in touch with her brother through e-mail messages. She said she enjoyed spending time with him when he returned home on leave.

"When he came back on his leave, I picked him up at the airport, and we surprised our mom," Gilkey said. "She didn't know he was coming back. It's great to have him back and we're very proud."

Turnbull's mother, Katherine Turnbull of Pawnee City, Neb., embraced her son as soon as the trio reunited.

"I feel so happy, you can't even imagine," she said. "It's wonderful. It's been a long deployment."

April Fonger and her daughter, Haley, attended a redeployment to welcome Staff Sgt. Heidi Prock home. April and Haley had never met Prock before the redeployment, but learned through their family readiness group that the Soldier would not have Family present at the redeployment.

"We were linked with her through our FRG leader," April said. "We just wanted to welcome her home."

April also welcomed home her husband, Sgt. David Fonger, Co. B, 601st Aviation Support Battalion in November.

For the first time in four years, the Fonger Family will be able to spend Thanksgiving together.

"He's either been deployed or at the National Training Center, or something every year," April said. "It's kind of nerve-racking knowing he'll finally be here for Thanksgiving, but we're really excited about it."

Bill Armstrong of the Fort Riley Post contributed to this story.

Post/Armstrong

Sgt. Charles Cleghorn hugs his daughter, Teagan, 6.

1ST SB

Quiet On The Set

*Spc. Andrea Merritt
1st SB PAO*

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Soldiers are trained to be highly proficient in their jobs, but sometimes, unexpected opportunities come along and they are able to showcase other gifts and talents.

Sgt. Franshun Beard, a human resources noncommissioned officer for the 1st Sustainment Brigade, has used her deployment as a time to focus on advancing in her military career. While trying to better herself, she showed her versatility and landed another role.

“Deployments are hard for everyone,” Beard said. You’re away from family, you’re away from friends, and you’re away from the normality of everyday life. While I’m over here, I try to be positive and optimistic.

“You want to surround yourself with positive people and engage in positive activities. I miss my son a lot, but to take my mind off of missing special occasions I study for the boards and take college classes to help get me promoted,” she explained.

During the deployment, Beard has won two Soldier of the Month boards and the Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sust. Bde., NCO of the Quarter board.

While videotaping a speech for the Brigade NCO of the Quarter board, it was discovered that Beard had a knack for the camera.

Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the brigade’s public affairs office, asked her to be the new personality for the 1st Sustainment Brigade Update, a weekly roll-up of news from within the brigade.

“She came to our office to record a message for Brigade NCO of the Quarter, and the minute I heard her speak I knew she would be great. She has a very natural presence on camera and a very pleasant look,” said Maude.

Beard, who revealed she attended a performing arts school as a child and once had dreams of becoming a news broadcaster, accepted the offer. After six weeks of filming the update Beard has really grown into the anchor position and has added a little of her own flair.

“This has been a wonderful experience. It has been a learning experience. The deployment can be stressful, and it’s good to have an outlet. I can come over here and have a little fun doing something that I enjoy doing,” Beard said.



1st SB PAO/Merritt

Sgt. Franshun Beard reports on the 1st Sustainment Brigade Update, a weekly roll-up of news from within the unit.

MOS Of The Month Veterinary Technician



Veterinary Technicians serve as assistants to licensed veterinarians located on Fort Riley and other posts around the country. Fort Riley’s veterinarian cares for all privately owned animals of any Soldier and Family members, active duty or retired. The Vet Tech’s responsibilities include assistance in:

- Dental and surgical procedures
- X-rays
- Giving physical exams and vaccines
- Providing care for military police working dogs
- Providing care for the horses of the Commanding General’s Mounted Color Guard
- Any type of laboratory or blood work

2ND HBCT

Soldiers And Their Families At Christmas

By Anna Staatz
Duty First! Magazine

The holiday season, when Families and friends traditionally gather together, can often be an emotional time for military Families, especially when their service member is deployed.

With Soldiers in the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, almost through their third month of a 12-month deployment, their Families will celebrate Christmas ... minus one. But traditions and treats will wind up in boxes just the same, ready to be shipped to Iraq.

Erica Koelder found a way to send her Family's Christmas tradition all the way to her husband, Staff Sgt. Thomas Koelder, 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, in Iraq. Erica's father passed away on Dec. 17, 2003, an event that dampens the Christmas holiday for her every year. The couple was originally slated to fill a recruiting tour before coming to Fort Riley, but was placed on hold at the last minute before Christmas 2007. After finding out they wouldn't be spending the holidays packing, the couple bought a small Christmas tree and started referring to it as their Charlie Brown tree. The name stuck. They decorated it with one red bulb and put a blue blanket underneath. On Dec. 17, Thomas had Erica open some very small "Charlie Brown" presents so the anniversary of her father's death would have a happy memory as well.

"After that, he was like, 'we're going to do this every year on Dec. 17,'" Erica said.

When the couple arrived at Fort Riley, Thomas was supposed to report to 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regt., 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Instead, he was sent to the 2nd HBCT and deployed less than 60 days after arriving on post.



Willow, Hannahlee, Briar and Megan Esterline gather around the Christmas tree in 2007.

"It's the Army, we just had to roll with it," Erica said.

Erica found a licensed Charlie Brown tree while shopping one day and wasted no time picking it up to send to her husband. She also packed a few other decorations, a stocking of goodies and some small presents.

"His big present will have to wait until he gets back either on R and R or for good," she said. "It's nothing he could use over there, anyway."

Erica plans to spend Christmas with her Family in Minneapolis, Minn.

"Everything I will do is the same thing we've done before for Christmas, he just won't be here with me," Erica said. "The one tradition we've made for our Family, I found a way to make it work."

For Christiana Esterline, planning Christmas without her husband, Staff Sgt. Curtis Esterline, involves making sure four children have a day to remember. For the Esterline Family, Curtis' deployment with Special Troops Battalion, 2nd HBCT, is the third rotation they've been through.

For the first time, though, Curtis will not be home anytime close to the Christmas holiday. In previous deployments, he redeployed right before the holiday or he made it back to the states on rest and recuperation leave in early December and the Family celebrated Christmas during his time home.

Christiana said she and her children, Hannahlee, Megan, Briar and Willow, will most likely head "home" to Missouri to visit her parents and extended Family for a few days over Christmas.

"I hate to be this close to home and not go home for Christmas," she said. She is quick to admit, though, that the emotions of a deployment can make you want to stay where you are and not go anywhere.

"Deployments have such a life of their own as far as your emotions go and how you feel," she said.



Staff Sgt. Thomas Koelder and wife, Erica, in Minneapolis for Christmas.

"Yeah, I'd hate to not go see my Family, but this is home, and this is the closest I can be to him while he's gone."

Christiana and her Family teamed up with Bonnie Mendez, and her children, Christian and Cameron to send holiday boxes to their Soldiers. Curtis and Staff Sgt. Paul Mendez are roommates in Iraq.

"Our Families were good friends before the guys left, and them being roommates worked out great," Christiana said.

So the box was sent, with a small Christmas tree, some Christmas music, cookies and presents.

"We'll tell him not to open the presents until Christmas, but I don't think he'll be able to wait," Christiana said. "He's the kind of guy that says 'what'd you get me?' 'How big is it?'"

Hannahlee smiled and shook her head. "He won't wait," she said.

For Jennifer Cady and her sons, Jaden and Janzen, the Christmas

holiday will involve a trip to Chicago. The deployment is the second for the Family. Second Lt. Jason Cady has been in the Army six years, starting out as an enlisted Soldier before being commissioned as an officer. He is currently assigned to 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regt. During Jason's first deployment, he was serving as a medic in Afghanistan, and was gone over Christmas as well.

"The first time around, I tried to keep the boys busy," Jennifer said. "We took lots of trips throughout the year. At Christmas time, I found out my mother had last-stage cancer, so we made sure we went back home for Christmas."

Jennifer and her sons packed up a box to send to Jason during that first deployment, including his favorite foods and items they

had made for him.

"That deployment did not hit us, honestly, until Christmas," Jennifer said. "When we got his box in the mail and started opening the cards and gifts he had sent us, that's when we really broke down and cried. My oldest [Jaden], he was really strong for the rest of us."

Jason and Jennifer are both from Wichita, Kan., so after learning about her mother's cancer, the couple asked to be assigned to Fort Riley. Jennifer planned out holiday celebrations in the months before Jason left for Iraq, celebrating Thanksgiving in September and Christmas a few weeks later.

The couple gave Jaden and Janzen a new Xbox for Christmas. They plan to send the old one to Jason after getting some repairs.

Through Xbox live, the boys can play games against their dad during his time away. "That is the coolest thing to them," Jennifer said.

For this Christmas, Jennifer said she and her sons will go to visit her mother and Family the weekend before the holiday. Then they will take off for Chicago, where they hope to do some shopping and maybe attend a Chicago Bulls basketball game.

"You have to let your faith come into play and know that your Soldiers are defending our freedom and just be proud and support that," Jennifer said. "It's hard on everyone, including the Soldier. You have to find a way to get past the sadness and to let the sun shine on you, embrace each day and let your kids see that."

About 3,700 Soldiers are currently deployed with the 2nd HBCT as part of a 12-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The brigade is slated to return in the fall of 2009.

Duty First!/Staatz

2nd Lt. Jason Cady says goodbye to his sons, Janzen (right) and Jaden prior to his deployment with the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

3RD IBCT

Mortar Team Lives Up To Able Company Name

By Staff Sgt. Adora Medina
3rd IBCT PAO

KONAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – At a small outpost in the Konar province of Afghanistan, a team of Soldiers with Able Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, are living up to their company name, with the ability to continually seek and destroy the enemy without even leaving the perimeter.

The 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Soldiers are part of a mortar team.

The teams' pride lies in their ability to protect their comrades on the ground and put a stop to insurgent activity in and around their location.

"We react by providing timely and accurate indirect fires for not just Company A, but anyone that comes through our area of operations," said Cpl. Donald Robertson, combat main mortar team section sergeant.

From within the confines of their mortar pit, the team fights an enemy miles from their position. Despite the distance, they've been triumphant in fending off enemy attacks with deadly accuracy, giving the insurgents in their area a reason to be apprehensive.

"We know that [the Taliban terrorists are] scared," Robertson said. "They know as soon as we fire we're going to hit them."

When the call for fire comes through, the mortar teams react immediately, lobbing round after round into the barrel and sending the rockets out into suspected enemy terrain.

The mortar team's capacity to counterattack and prevail in the fight against opposing militant forces doesn't get rest until the job is done.

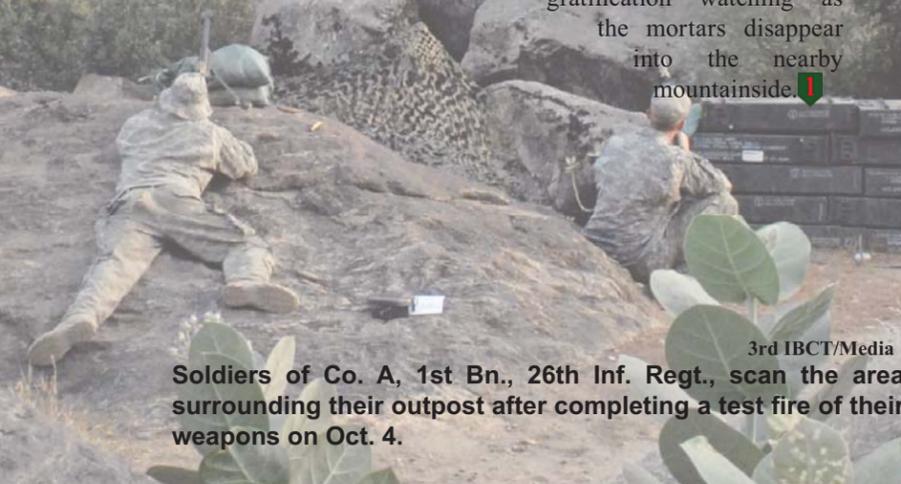
The mortarmen recall many early mornings and late nights in which they've had to endure in pursuit of the enemy.



Soldiers with Co. A, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., scan the perimeter from their mortar pit after taking indirect fire from insurgents on Oct. 4.

However, when the kinetic activity in their area dies down, as it infrequently does, the mortar team takes full advantage of the down time by refortifying their positions and building up new mortar pits throughout the outpost to prepare for expected insurgent attacks.

Regardless of the labor ahead, or the many more long days to come, the mortarmen find gratification watching as the mortars disappear into the nearby mountainside.



3rd IBCT/Media
Soldiers of Co. A, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., scan the area surrounding their outpost after completing a test fire of their weapons on Oct. 4.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

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FAMILY RELATIONS

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3RD IBCCT

Merging Cultures

By Staff Sgt. David Hopkins
3rd IBCCT PAO

JALALABAD AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – At times of international conflict and war, cultures are brought together for a common cause - to restore peace. This is apparent everywhere in Afghanistan: International Security Assistance Forces are working with Afghan National Security Forces, blending experiences and completing the joint mission.

In the mountains of the Konar province of northeastern Afghanistan, American troops with ISAF are working side-by-side with members of the Afghan National Army to complete the mission of bringing stability and democracy to the country.

From guarding the outpost walls to combined patrols through remote villages and providing medical assistance, the joint effort is a success.

“We have ANA working with our guys at many of our outposts and they really are working well together,” said Lt. Col. Brett Jenkinson, commander 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

One such situation where this joint effort is working is at the gate of Camp Blessing. American Soldiers are combining efforts with ANA to keep the installation safe from enemy threat.

There are language barriers, but through the assistance of interpreters the Soldiers are able to work together in many tasks, building bonds and sharing cultural experiences.

“I like working with them,” said Pvt. Michael Ramirez, infantryman, Co. C, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., said about working with ANA at the gate. “They are all hard workers, really hard workers.”



Tajwali Shirzai, a soldier with the Afghan National Army, searches a local national worker.

Together the Americans and ANA search vehicles and personnel who wish to enter the post. It's important that they work well together in such a violent region. If they miss anything it could mean mission failure and the loss of lives. The key to this mission's success is trust. There must be trust among the guards in order for them to work as a team, checking every possible option to keep danger away from the installation.

“It took me a couple weeks to gain their trust,” Ramirez said. “Now I trust them 100 percent. I trust them like I trust my 3rd Platoon buddies and that makes it possible to work together as a team.”

The trust between the Soldiers grows everyday on the gates, but they are learning more than trust; they are learning to speak each other's language.

“I've learned a lot of Pashto since I've been here. A lot of the ANA speak pretty good English from working with Americans, too,” Ramirez said. “When we have slow times, we teach each other words. It builds the relationships and helps us work better together.”

There are cultural differences involving religious practices, the different ways Americans and Afghans view interpersonal relationships and various other differences, but they work through the obstacles and gain respect for each other's cultures, enjoying the bond they share.

“It is a good time for me, and we have a good relationship,” Tajwali Shirzai, ANA gate guard, said with the help of an interpreter. “They are our guests here, and we always welcome them. We have growing respect and this helps us to do our jobs better.”

The American and Afghan Soldiers have developed a trust and connection that helps them fight for what they believe in, and they will continue to do the job they are tasked with, guarding the base, while building international bonds.

“We'll be out here searching people and guarding the gate together as long as it takes,” Ramirez said. “We enjoy each other's company and work hard everyday.”

Ready Army

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History Of The Big Red One

Chaplains

By Anna Staatz
Duty First! Magazine

Since the days of the Revolutionary War, Army chaplains have shouldered the task of helping maintain the spiritual preparedness and morale of Soldiers in some of the most intense moments of life.

Uniforms have changed, wars have come and gone, but the task of a chaplain is still as daunting today as it was in 1776. The first official record of a chaplain is from 1791, when George Washington recommended the establishment of four Army regiments, and included a chaplain to be assigned to each regiment. From then on, chaplains have accompanied America's Soldiers to the front lines of all our nation's conflicts.

A chaplain's duties have always included conducting spiritual services, counseling Soldiers and attending to the mental and spiritual needs of the wounded and dying. Today's chaplains also help advise leaders on the religious beliefs of whatever area a unit may be sent to, conduct Family and marriage counseling and brief Soldiers before and after deployments.

During the Civil War, an estimated 3,000 chaplains were appointed to the Union forces. Records are slim regarding chaplains serving with the Confederate Army, but it is estimated the South had about 1,000 chaplains. The Civil War also saw a large number of Roman Catholic chaplains and the first Jewish and black chaplains. Since America's earliest wars, the conflicts have grown in size and strength. Throughout both World Wars, the Korean conflict and then Vietnam, chaplains had to be inventive – vehicle hoods and ammunition crates became altars, services were



Spc. Henry Milford, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., Chap. (Maj.) Karen Meeker, Deputy 101st Chaplain, and Chap. (Capt.) Charles Marmor, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., together in Iraq.

short and often conducted in the open with congregations of dirty, tired Soldiers. Often, chaplains saw the worst of combat as well, holding the dying, praying with the wounded and counseling those who would fight the next day's battle.

Retired Col. Wes Geary served with two brigades in the 1st Infantry Division during Vietnam. Geary, a Texas native, joined the Army after learning there was a shortage of Christian Methodist Episcopal chaplains.

"I went in, and I liked it, so I stayed in," Geary said.

Geary served the 1st Inf. Div.'s 2nd Brigade in Vietnam and was later sent to 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, the "Black Lions."

When Geary remembers Vietnam, he is quick to talk about the wet jungles and the mud that was everywhere. He also remembers holding field services during search-and-destroy operations and counseling Soldiers. There were no lines separating warfare and his ministry.

"It was all one thing," Geary said. "My ministry consisted of serving troops. Sometimes it was a formal service, others it was just one or two Soldiers. Really, what I liked was just being with the Soldiers and having those times of reaching out to them. They knew I was a Soldier, just like them, and suffered through some of the same things."

In today's wars, the services of chaplains are still essential to maintaining a ready force. The first chaplains sent to Afghanistan in 2001 were with Special Forces units, supporting covert operations, according to the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School.

Because chaplains often enter the Army after they have already attended college and seminary, they are sometimes older than their peers. One former 1st Inf. Div. chaplain was 48 when he joined the Army. Chaplain (Capt.) Vincent Manuel was a



Chap. (Lt.Col.) David Waters prays with Soldiers in the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team prior to deployment.

Catholic priest for 20 years before becoming a Soldier. He chose to join after Sept. 11, 2001. He spent a year in Iraq with Soldiers, something that meant a lot to him.

"Being with the Soldiers in Iraq was something I really loved," he said. "That year was very special to me."

His deployment experiences guided him when he returned to Fort Riley, where working with Families gave him a new perspective on the American Soldier.

"I have always appreciated the men and women in uniform that were deployed, and I have begun to realize there are so many more heroes behind them," Manuel said. "There are Family members, spouses, children. There's a lot of stress they go through in trying to keep the home front."

Currently, the 1st Inf. Div. has about 45 chaplains serving its Soldiers. 



Courtesy photos

Chap. (Capt.) Charles Marmor conducts a brief communion service for Soldiers in the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team before they head out on patrol.

1st Infantry Division at War

1st Infantry Division

Oldest continuously serving division in the United States Army. Over 8,000 Soldiers in three brigades and multiple subordinate units deployed.

Primarily located in Fort Riley, Kan.; training responsibility extends to three other states: Kentucky, Oklahoma and Texas.

The Division modularized in fall 2008.

1st Brigade, Fort Riley

Trains transition teams. So far more than 8,000 servicemembers have trained and deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and more than 1,200 have redeployed. Transition Teams live and work with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Afghan National Army (ANA).

Scheduled to modularize FY09.



3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Iraq

Provide theater logistics command and control for the theater commander supporting the Army Forces (ARFOR) and Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) mission. Deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom May 2008.



75th Fires Brigade, Fort Sill

Integrates attached ground and air maneuver forces and on order functions as a maneuver headquarters in support of full spectrum operations. Separate battalions currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Fort Riley

Currently resetting at Fort Riley, Kan., the brigade is training for a second deployment to Iraq. The Department of Defense recently issued deployment orders for 2009.

2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Iraq

The brigade departed Fort Riley, Kan., in October 2008 on a scheduled 12 month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



1st Combat Aviation Brigade Combat Team, Iraq

Nearing the end of a 15 month deployment to Iraq, the brigades 2,800 Soldiers will re-deploy to Fort Riley, Kan., by early December 2008.



1st Sustainment Brigade, Iraq

Recently provided logistic, human resource and financial management for 80,000 Soldiers and 20,000 civilians and contractors throughout Multi-National Division-Baghdad and area support for Multi-National Division-Central. The brigade is scheduled to re-deploy to Fort Riley, Kan., in late 2008.



3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Afghanistan

One of the Army's newest brigades, its Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in June 2008. The deployment is scheduled to last 12 months, during which Soldiers will conduct counterinsurgency and stability operations.

4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Fort Leonard Wood

The MEB is a new concept in area operations and stability operations. The 4th MEB unique staff is composed of engineer, military police, chemical, cells and organically has a brigade support battalion and a signal company.

The brigade was activated at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., in October 2008.



4TH IBCT

PROUD AMERICANS GET BACK TO BASICS

By Tyler Abney
Duty First! Magazine

Skies were cloudy and the Autumn wind was cold, but Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment reacted quickly as orders for a firing mission come over the radio. The weather may have been bad, but orders to send a round down range make up for it. Coordinates are called out and a shell is loaded into the gun. What seems like mass chaos is well organized. Aim is adjusted and everyone stands clear. The section chief gives the order to fire and the M119 A2, a 105-millimeter Howitzer, delivers an earth-shivering bang.

"Proud American" Soldiers participated in field training Oct. 20 - 24, an exercise which took them back to the artillery missions they were designed to deliver. Before the unit deployed to Iraq in February 2007, their mission changed from an artillery unit to an infantry unit because of the close-quarters action taking place. Now that they've returned, the battalion is back to firing the big guns – something they have not done in nearly two years.

"The mindset is a lot different," said Staff Sgt. John Steele, section chief of 2nd Section, Battery B. "On the infantry side, you have to be a lot more aggressive where on the artillery side, it's more about patience and doing things safely."

Steele said the unit, equipped with six Howitzers, was firing the 35-pound shells at a range of approximately seven kilometers (four miles). The weapons are capable of a range of more than 14 kilometers. While 105-millimeter rounds may seem large, they are lighter rounds in terms of other options the Army has. Steele said because the howitzers fire a smaller shell, they are generally used against light-armored vehicles and buildings and anti-personnel missions.

Steele also said the M119 A2 is the most maneuverable piece of artillery the Army has to offer.

"You can bring us any way you want," Steele said. "Through helicopters or airborne, you can drop it in so we can get a lot closer to where they need us, rather than trying to maneuver around."

The sections can fire at a rate of eight rounds every three minutes while remaining safe and efficient. Accurate shooting is key in terms of safety for other Soldiers near the target. Steele said the sections are provided information from a forward observer who relays grid coordinates to the fire directions center, who then relays the data to the guns. From there, Steele and his men go to work.

"When the fire mission first starts off, the radio operator will call out our deflectioning quadrant and our shell fuse combination," Steele said. "At that time, my ammo team chief will put together my round and bring it up to me. I'll verify it, he'll hand it off to my number one man who then loads the round. At that time my gunner will be setting off the data. Once his data is set off, I verify all of his data and then I fire."

With today's advancements in technology, one might think human operation would be out of the picture. Not with these guns. Steele said the gunner does the aiming manually.

"He [the gunner] uses an aiming reference and sets the numbers," Steele said. "He then levels the bubbles and makes sure his sight picture is matching what is in our aiming reference and that's how we know we're shooting in the right direction."

Even though the firing mission was only for training purposes, the 40 some-odd Soldiers participating in the actual firing took it very serious. Steele said each gun can be operated with a minimum four-man crew, but is usually fired using five or six.

"Everybody has a specific job, but the important thing is to have them cross-train just in case somebody has a school appointment or something of that nature," Steele said. "They're all subject matter experts in all positions."

Steele also said the importance of the training exercise tied directly in with cross-training and getting gunners the gunnery skills necessary for completing missions.



Duty First!/Abney
Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment prepare for a live fire exercise.

COMBATIVES COMPETITION

By Anna Staats
Duty First! Magazine

When it comes to dealing with combat and deployments, it is important for a Soldier to be both physically and mentally tough. Some experience in Army combatives can go a long way toward strengthening both the mind and the body.

Army combatives combines skills from the hand-to-hand methods of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, wrestling, Judo, and Muay Thai to help Soldiers both train for combatives competitions and for combat.

"Combatives training is not going to win a major conflict," said Matheau Smith, head combatives instructor at Fort Riley.

"But the training we do breeds the ethics and the will to win that will win the Army's conflicts, regardless of a Soldier's job or MOS."

Smith said the training hones a Soldier's skills to close with the enemy and control their own fear.

"Everyone is going to have a fearful moment, no matter what your job is and especially if you're deployed," Smith said. "It's that choice you make to go to your job and aggressively do it."

Soldiers can enroll in the Fort Riley combatives academy by going through their unit's schools noncommissioned officer, completing Fort Riley Form 28 and sending it to the Fort Riley Troop School.

The Level I combatives course is one week long. The second level of training is two weeks in length. Up to 36 Soldiers can enroll in each class. Classes are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at Building 77670. Smith said about four hours of the day is hands-on training and the remainder of the day is instruction and video review.

"It's a tremendous workout," Smith said. "When they come, they should be in great shape."

The Fort Riley Combatives Academy reopened on Aug. 18, after being in limbo for awhile. Smith taught combatives at Fort Campbell, Ky., and Fort Knox, Ky., before coming to Fort Riley. He has two assistant instructors, Al Mildren and Sean Roberts. Since the re-opening of the academy, about 32 Soldiers have participated in classes at the academy, a number Smith hopes to see grow.

"I think a lot of people may not know about the courses, since it was kind of offline for awhile, so hopefully, once people know more about it, there will be more interest," he said.

Information on all courses offered through the Fort Riley Troop School can be obtained at www.riley.army.mil. Troop School is located in building 7305. Anyone interested in learning more about signing up for the combatives academy may email gerald.busing@conus.army.mil.

Courtesy Photo

Big Red One Represented Well At Annual AUSA Meeting

By Gary Skidmore
Duty First! Magazine

This year's Association of the United States Army annual meeting in Washington D.C. Oct. 6-8 had Fort Riley and the 1st Infantry Division all over it.

Fort Riley's women's team placed sixth overall in the women's category of the Army 10-miler, while the 101st Forward Support Battalion Mixed Team finished 11th overall in the largest 10-mile race in America. More than 26,000 runners registered for the race.

Fort Riley also garnered one of eight Quality of Life partnership awards. The awards were presented at the end of the second of three family forums, "Strengthening Soldiers and Families Through Community Partnership."

The award culminated efforts achieved over the past year as a result of the Army Family Covenant and the Soldier Family Action Plan.

"These two programs reflect the Army's commitment to provide Soldiers and their Families with quality of life commensurate with their service to the nation," said Secretary of the Army Pete Geren.

Fort Riley won its award for establishing monthly Community Partnership Conferences between leaders from Fort Riley and the surrounding Flint Hills region. The Fort Riley conferences were established to bring together people who have influence in the region in order to leverage resources in five areas directly related to Soldier and Family quality of life - housing, health care, recreation, education and employment.

Another big winner at the annual meeting was Sgt. 1st Class Lonnie Powell, a platoon sergeant in the Warrior Transition Battalion. Powell won the Sgt. Maj. Larry Strickland Educational Leadership Award.

The award is given annually to a noncommissioned officer who best exemplifies the Army's vision and influences others in shaping future leaders while practicing excellent stewardship of the nation's most precious resource - Soldiers.

According to Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, Powell assumed the position of 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team educational advisor in September 2005.

"Sgt. 1st Class Powell worked with Soldiers and contractors dialoguing on educational importance and career plans," said Champagne.

"Online databases, libraries and training courses were the concept of his vision to provide for every mode of learning to be the catalyst for future success in readiness of service members

and contractors so everyone could pursue lifelong learning."

Powell said more than 4,000 service members and contractors enrolled in eArmyU and other satellite institutions where more than 500 courses were taken.

"All this began because I was trying to finish my degree," said Powell. "Command Sgt. Maj. Champagne said the way I was doing it worked well, so he made me the brigade educational NCO and the rest is history.

Powell received a bronze eagle and \$4,000 to assist in covering costs that tuition assistance does not pay, such as instructional fees, laboratory fees and books. His name also will be engraved on a permanent plaque at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

Awards weren't the only accomplishment of the 1st Inf. Div. at AUSA. Col. Eric Wesley, 1st Bde, 1st Inf. Div. spoke on the floor of the Washington Convention Center about the Transition Team mission.

"We train our Transition Teams to not only teach, but to coach and mentor the Iraqi and Afghan security forces they work with," Wesley said. "The 11 and 16 man teams are not only tasked with insuring the security forces they work with are capable fighting forces, but also tasked with training these forces to become viable on their own."



IMCOM/Oertwig
Annette Wiggins, senior spouse of the 1st Inf. Div., and Lisa Champagne, spouse of the 1st Inf. Div. command sergeant major, accept the Quality of Life Partnership Award from Hon. Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army.

Army 10-Mile Race

BRO Soldiers Compete World-wide

Staff Report 1st Inf. Div. PAO

3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team

JALALABAD AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 24th Army 10-miler took place in Washington, D.C. Oct. 10; however, 7,000 miles away in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, 121 members of Task Force Duke, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, participated in the Fenty Army 10-miler shadow run.

The top three finishers for each gender were recognized with bronze, silver and gold medals. For the men, first place went to Maj. Keith E. Matiskella, from Killeen, Texas, with a time of 58 minutes 14 seconds; second place went to Richard Mangongo from Kisii, Kenya, with a time of 66:00 and third place went to David Claassen from Fredericksburg, Va., with a time of 66:05.

For the women, first place went to Sgt. Kristal Reszler from Roslyn, Wash., with a time of 79:36; second place went to 1st Lt. Jean Archer from Champaign, Ill., with a time of 86:60, and third place went to Staff Sgt. Karina Diaz from Pomona, Calif., with a time of 87:23.

The event kicked off with registration starting at 5 a.m., followed by opening remarks by Col. John Spitzer, commander, 3rd IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. Just before the run kick off at 6:30 a.m., he welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation for their participation in the day's event.

"Thank you for coming out. Thank you for what you are doing for the Army. Take care of your buddy and good luck to everyone and have a good time," Spitzer said.

Many of the participants trained up for the run in a variety of ways.

Matiskella, an avid runner, whose wife, Maj. Paty Hinshaw ran in the D.C. race emphasized the importance of preparation and setting a good pace for the run. He spoke of the many late nights running on the treadmill while listening to audio books on his iPod. "It is my way of relaxing after a days work. Running is more of a hobby than it is work for me. Over the years, I have experienced many runs and if you start off too hard, too slow or make a wrong turn it can be very challenging to complete

the race," Matiskella, said. "My biggest challenge was that the gravel was very hard to run on at times. So, I have to get the entire route paved," the engineer jokingly said.

Reszler who participated in the shadow run at Camp Liberty, Iraq, two years ago said, "My time was better here than at Liberty, because I ran 7 miles every other day, both outside and on the treadmill and I ran shorter speed workouts on the off days," Reszler said.

2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team

Kuwait - The Army 10-Miler conducted each year during the annual Association of the United States Army annual meeting is a big draw for runners from all over the armed forces. But what do you do if you are not able to make the trip to Washington, DC., due to deployment? You find a shadow race.

For a small group of "Dagger" Soldiers, the chance to participate in a shadow 10-miler race was a nice break from their busy schedules in the Kuwait desert.

"I just want to build a little camaraderie with the Soldiers that are here from all the different units," said Maj. Bryce Pringle, executive officer, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, "And what better way is there to start the deployment than to run the Army 10-Miler?"

The race, which was held on Camp Buehring, attracted service members from not just different branches of the U.S. armed forces, but there were also participants from such nations as Great Britain and Australia.

"I was definitely motivated seeing all the different services and nations represented," said Spc. James Holbrook, a driver with 299th BSB from Peoria, Ill. "I'm kind of competitive."

The race got off to an early start to help the Soldiers avoid the sweltering heat which can be a problem at Camp Buehring. After two laps around the camp, the participants had the chance to soak in the moment and reflect on what they had accomplished and what it meant to run in unison with their fellow service members in the states.

"I think it's cool how this event ties in with the event in Washington, DC. It is a great event there and it was a great event here," said Capt. Steven Veves, Assistant S-3, 2nd HBCT.

1st Inf. Div. PAO/Smith

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Connelly placed in the top one percent of runners at the Army 10-mile race



Fort Riley Teams

ARLINGTON, Va.- About 26,000 runners participated in this year's 24th Annual Army 10-Miler Oct. 6 at the Pentagon.

The Fort Riley women's 10-miler team placed sixth out of 40 teams in their category. A mixed team from the 101st Forward Support Battalion placed 11th in their category and Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Connelly (262 overall) and Lt. Col. Patrick Frank (510 overall) of the 1st Inf. Div. G-3 placed in the top two percent of all runners with times of 1:02:42 and 1:06:18, respectively.

"The Army 10-Miler represents the race for excellence. It's the Army's race," said Jim Vandak, race director. "There's a pretty large trophy that goes to the best military male and female teams, and with those come bragging rights."

"It's the best you can do," said Connelly. "It's the second largest 10-mile race in the world, and we are out running with 26,000 other runners."

Connelly, who has run the course three times said each time he runs the course, it gets better and better. "There's nothing like it," he said.

Runners came from all 50 states and Washington, D.C. There was also a foreign presence with runners from several countries including Brazil, Canada and Sweden. According to race officials, 31 percent of the runners this year were military.

"I'm ready to run it again," said Connelly. "Once you get done with the race, it's almost like you want to start preparing for next year."

Connelly said it's not all about competing for the best time, although he said he does like doing well at the race, but it's more like leaving the Big Red One mark of excellence on the race."

"We're the Big Red One," said Connelly. "And the Big Red One was in front of thousands of runners in the second largest 10-mile race in the world. That's one of the reasons I choose to run the race."

It took more than 30 minutes for the last of the 26,000 runners to cross the starting line. Bringing up the rear as he was for the last five races was Orlando Gomez, number 25,999.

"I get a whole different perspective from back here," said Gomez, who works as a civilian in the Pentagon. "I know I'm never going to win the race, and I never come in last, but I have always been the last one across the starting line. It's just what I do."

Maj. Chevelle Thomas, Sgt. Brian Tierce and Gary Skidmore contributed to this story.

Men's Team

Name	Overall place	Time
Patrick Frank	510	1:06:18
Matthew Connelly	262	1:02:42
Rogelio Renteria	Time not available	
Alejandro Montiel	1603	1:14:06

Women's Team

Susan Arnold	1359	1:12:48
Rachael Wienke	4207	1:22:53
Wendy Lu	1290	1:12:26
Elizabeth Hill	2917	1:19:05
Jenna McIntire	18:25	1:15:10
Lindsay Varnell	3593	1:21:11

Mixed Team

Robert Hafner	958	1:10:12
William Lukaskiewicz	1005	1:10:34
Phillip Hollifield	1046	1:10:49
Lisa Smith	3805	1:21:48
Marcus Reinhart	2775	1:18:40
Nathan Narnell	2836	1:18:51
David Stephenson	2909	1:19:04
Chad Sublett	3666	1:21:25



Both Fort Riley teams join CGMCG Soldiers for a group picture. Duty First/Skidmore

Big Red One Building Strong Bonds One Bird At A Time

By Sgt. Nathaniel Smith
1st Inf. Div. PAO

Soldiers often form bonds with each other through shared experiences in the face of adversity, but rarely is the opportunity presented for those same bonds to be formed between the senior leaders and the junior troops.

From Oct. 13-15, a group of leaders with upwards of 20 years experience in the Army and Soldiers with as few as two years in the service fostered relationships through a Strong Bonds Retreat to the Ringneck Ranch in Tipton, Kan.

Over the course of the three-day retreat, the 1st Infantry Division Soldiers went hunting and fishing together in a relaxed environment away from the everyday stresses of being a Soldier.

Spc. Brady Johnson, said the trip had a significant impact on him.

“The retreat was probably one of the most exciting and influential trips that the military has ever provided for me; it gave us a chance to see how the senior NCOs and officers open

up and really bond with the lower enlisted Soldiers,” Johnson said. “For me, it showed how a senior noncommissioned officer can still be professional but hang out like one of the guys.”

Hanging out as more of a group of friends instead of senior leaders and junior Soldiers was made easier thanks to the environment created by the staff at Ringneck Ranch, where the troops were treated to high quality lodging and meals on a beautiful ranch in north central Kansas.

Lisa Hake, a hostess at the Blue Hills Lodge on the ranch, said it was her pleasure to work with the troops of the Big Red One.

“What a privilege and honor it was to have our servicemen join us for a few days here at our lodge,” Hake said. “Their commitment, care and concern for our country was constantly on display for us to see.

“It was truly a joy to serve them, and we look forward to more opportunities.”

Debra Houghton, one of the owners of Ringneck Ranch, said hosting the service members was a way for her to give back.

“My family, especially my grandparents, instilled in us as children a real sense of patriotism for our country and appreciation for our military’s sacrifices to protect our lives, freedom and liberty,” Houghton said. “If in some small way I can express my gratitude to those in the service and to their families, I feel blessed and honored to be able to do so.”

In addition to the good time made better by the staff at the facility, Sgt. 1st Class Roger Matthews, an operations NCO with the 1st Inf. Div. Headquarters, said the retreat provided learning opportunities for the leaders as well.

“The event was very beneficial not only for the junior enlisted but also for the senior enlisted,” Matthews said. “I was able to talk with the junior enlisted on a more personal basis and hear their issues and concerns in a more intimate setting.

“I was able to teach, coach and mentor Soldiers and in some cases be taught, coached, and mentored myself.”

Col. Donnie Walker, the 1st Inf. Div. Assistant Chief of Staff for Commander’s Initiatives, said the atmosphere was perfect for the leaders to help the young troops appreciate the outdoors.

“The Ringneck Ranch experience provided the perfect setting for Soldiers of all ranks from the ‘Big Red One’ to share a common interest and to build camaraderie and fellowship,” Walker said. “The senior mentors were able to teach the junior

Soldiers about the positive aspects of hunting, fishing and how to appreciate what nature has to offer.”

Appreciating nature was easier thanks to the help of ranch guides eager to teach first-time hunters the fundamentals of the sport. Wayne Loy, the operations manager and one of the guides at Ringneck Ranch, said the Strong Bonds Retreat was a different kind of excursion.

“It was an enjoyable two days hunting with some of our Soldiers, made more enjoyable by seeing the good time they had outdoors,” Loy said.

By the end of the Strong Bonds Retreat, Walker said the relationships built were clearly evident.

“The times we all spent around the breakfast, lunch and dinner table were priceless, where we told war stories, shared previous hunting experiences, talked current events, military history, and talked about where we came from and grew up, our families and talked about our group experiences on the hunt we had just completed; these were some of my most enjoyable times each day during the three-day trip,” Walker said. “I also found it interesting that we all sat in the same place at each meal, just as a family would in their own home.”

The October Strong Bonds Retreat to Ringneck Ranch was the first of many the Big Red One hopes to have for its Soldiers. ↓



1st Inf. Div. PAO/Smith

Cpl. Tamer Kazan, an operations specialist with the 1st Infantry Division, shows off a few of his and his battle buddies’ birds.



1st Inf. Div. PAO/Smith

Ten members of the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters participated in the first Strong Bonds Retreat at the Ringneck Ranch. Senior leaders and junior Soldiers of the ‘Big Red One’ fostered stronger relationships while hunting and fishing.

16th Infantry Regiment Veterans Visit

By *Spc. Richard Colletta*
4 IBCT Public Affairs

FORT RILEY, Kan. – Veterans of the 16th Infantry Regiment had the opportunity to revisit life in the military during a week-long visit to Fort Riley in late October.

Veterans, spouses and friends of the regiment kicked off the week with a ceremony to present awards to the newly inducted distinguished members of the regiment.

“Who are these guys in the blue jackets?,” asked retired Col. Sydney Baker. “They do a lot of good things for a lot of people. The guys in blue coats are all members of this regiment. Most of them have served in combat. A large number of them are highly decorated veterans of more than one war. They have all gone on past their Army careers to be leaders in their

communities. They have stayed loyal and involved in what happens to this regiment and have become loyal to the Soldiers who serve with the regiment today.”

During the course of the week, the group participated in a number of activities. They piled into Humvees and embarked on a mounted combat patrol and engaged an insurgent ambush at Fort Riley’s Combat Simulator Center. The group saw demonstrations in room clearing and close-quarters marksmanship by an infantry squad and a military transition team. During a trip to the field, visitors were surprised when a demonstrator called out and snipers suddenly stood up a mere 15 feet away from the group. Previously unseen, the snipers’ ghillie suits blended in with the grass and brush. The group also saw a mortar team employ the M252 mortar system.

Janeen Thompson, wife of a 16th Inf. Regt. veteran, who had

just been awarded the title of honorary member of the regiment, said she was impressed with what she saw.

“The most important thing for me to be here is to see the concentration of young men and women working together and the technology they have,” Thompson said. “It’s a real wonderful feeling. I wish more American people could see this.”

Afterward the guests attended a gun show set up especially for them to showcase weapons currently in use by the U.S. Army and also some foreign weapons commonly used by insurgents. Later, they had the opportunity to fire some of the weapons themselves.

The group toured the 1st Infantry Division’s headquarters building and Victory Park. That stop was especially poignant for retired Maj. Moses Scheinfeld, whose donated Medal of Honor was the centerpiece for a division display.

“My father Rabbi David Scheinfeld, J.D., saw it at an auction for sale and felt that it wasn’t something that should be floating around, so he bought it for \$1,000,” Scheinfeld said. “It later came out in the New York Times that the company that originally made the medals had made twice as many as

they were contracted to and sold the extra medals illegally. We suspect that the medal my father bought was one of those. It was a real medal just not a legal one.” When Scheinfeld’s father died in November, the medal was left to him, and he decided to give it to former 1st Inf. Div. commander, Lt. Gen. Robert Durbin for display.

The tour came to a close Oct. 30, at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Junction City. New members of the regiment had the opportunity to casually socialize with the visiting veterans. Stories were swapped and experiences were shared that spanned the generational gaps.

Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Bouten, an infantryman with 2nd Battalion, 16th Inf. Regt. said it was interesting talking with the veterans.

“It gives us an idea of the things they went through,” Bouten said. “It’s strange to hear them talk about how the way we do things today they find it amazing, but you turn around and talk to them about their stories and experiences and it’s unreal. You think in reverse, you wouldn’t want to go through what they did. I’m proud of what they did for us and it’s great to see their support.”



1st Inf. Div. PAO/Coffey

Ron “Mack” Mackendanz, a veteran who served with the Company C, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment takes aim as he and other members of the 16th Regiment Association get a chance to fire weapons on a shooting range on Fort Riley.



1st Inf. Div. PAO/Coffey

Newly inducted Distinguished and Honorary Members of the 16th Infantry Regiment proudly display their awards at a ceremony at Camp Funston. Pictured from Left to Right: (Top) Dennis Schoch, Don Overkiser, Kenneth Costich, Moses Scheinfeld. (Bottom) John Lang, Alfredo Herrera, Janeen Thompson and Charles Shay.

Operation Toy Fun Run

By Sgt. Nathaniel Smith
1st Inf. Div. PAO

It's the most wonderful time of the year, and senior noncommissioned officers all over Fort Riley have already started leading from the front with Christmas spirit.

On Nov. 12, sergeants major from across post took part in "Operation Toy Fun Run" setting feet to pavement from the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters to Bldg. 261 on Main Post, where Operation Santa Claus is taking place.

Operation Santa Claus is an annual toy drive to help not only Soldiers and their families at Christmas, but families through out the Flint Hills region as well.

Sgt. Maj. J.B. Thomas, the 1st Inf. Div. G-6 sergeant major, said Operation Santa Claus is a good way for Soldiers to take care of not only their fellow Soldiers, but the families as well.

"This is not just for Fort Riley but for all our Soldiers and their dependents as well. It gives the Soldiers, especially the needy Soldiers, a place to go to get gifts for their Families," Thomas said. "Not all Soldiers come in the Army with 20 years in service and make a lot of money; a lot of Families who come into the Army already have three kids but they're E-1s, so

their budget's kind of tight. "We want their children to have a joyous Christmas."

The sergeants major ran to raise awareness of the cause, which kicked off Nov. 5, and Thomas encouraged anyone who wanted to donate to do so throughout the holiday season.

"I wouldn't worry about the cutoff date, I would donate all the way until the time it closes," he said. "If it's Dec. 24, it doesn't matter. The biggest thing is just donating."

Anyone wishing to donate toys to Operations Santa Claus can do so at Building 261, 1st and 4th Brigade headquarters, Garrison Headquarters, the Post Exchange, the Fort Riley National Bank, Credit Union 1 of Kansas, Irwin Army Community Hospital and Wal-Mart in Junction City and Manhattan. Command Sgt. Maj. Ian Mann, garrison command sergeant major, can be contacted for boxes for individual units.

Thomas stressed that even though the younger Soldiers' budgets may be tighter, everybody benefits from donating, and it gets back to the core value of taking care of one another.

"The number one thing is the Army takes care of Families, and we're one big family," he said. "We want to make sure not just the junior enlisted Soldiers but everybody is given the opportunity to feel the love from the Santa Claus house." 



1st Inf. Div. PAO/Smith

Sergeants major of the 1st Infantry Division are a blur as they depart the division's headquarters on Operation Toy Fun Run Nov. 12. Anyone wishing to donate can do so at Building 261 on Main Post, the Commissary or the Post Exchange.

LANGUAGE LAB OPENS

By Dena O'Dell
Fort Riley Post

For several members of the 1st Infantry Division G-2 staff, the recent opening of a language lab and cultural center on Custer Hill marked the moment they had been working toward for the past year, an accomplishment Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins, 1st Inf. Div. commanding general, said would pay big dividends for U.S. Soldiers nationwide in the future.

With the assistance of G-2 officers, civilian personnel and others instrumental in the facility's opening, Wiggins used an oversized pair of scissors to cut a red ribbon Oct. 3, signifying the grand opening of the 1st Infantry Division Language Lab and Cultural Awareness Center in Building 7656.

"First and foremost, it's an honor and a privilege to be here today to represent the division and this post in an initiative that's going to pay big dividends, not only for our Soldiers standing on the front lines, but our Soldiers throughout the world," Wiggins said.

The decision to establish a centralized language facility at Fort Riley came on the heels of the activation of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and the return of the Big Red One to Fort Riley, said Dan Matthews, G-2 language coordinator.

The center offers a wide range of programs and services for all Fort Riley Soldiers including language instruction with two Arabic/Iraqi dialect and cultural linguists; Lingnet DLI web-based training; Tactical Iraqi video game; Rosetta Stone and languagesurvivalkits; Headstart 80-hour Dari, Pashto and Arabic self study programs; live language television in Arabic, Korean, Chinese and Spanish; as well as iPods for linguist sustainment.

As a member of the joint staff, Wiggins said he has traveled throughout the world and found that even sharing a few words in a common language goes a long way to building trust and credibility. "Sometimes in a counterinsurgency, you cannot win through the bayonet and rifle alone. You learn through dialogue," he said. "This is our opportunity for our Soldiers who are deploying and are on point for this nation on the Global War on Terrorism, to be able to learn a few key phrases and learn a language, so they can be



Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins, 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley commanding general gets some help cutting the ribbon during the grand opening of the 1st Inf. Div. Language Lab and Cultural Center Oct. 3.

ambassadors for this nation and build credibility for our nation."

Lt. Col. Paul Norwood, 1st Inf. Div. G-2 responsible for the command and language program, began initiating plans for the establishment of the center upon his arrival at Fort Riley in September 2007, said Sgt.

Maj. Mark Borzain, the G-2 sergeant major. The extensive renovations to the building were necessary to create a premiere language lab and cultural center, which will become a role model for the rest of Forces Command, Borzain added.

"For our Soldiers, linguists have to keep up with their language as part of their (military occupational specialty), but the other Soldiers, sergeants and staff sergeants – those are the squad leaders that actually go out and meet with the people on the street," Borzain said. "This just gives them something to put in their tool kit so they know how to greet, act and react appropriately in a foreign country."

Although language skills have been taught in previous wars like Vietnam, Norwood said, they probably weren't taught to the extent of how we are teaching them now.

"The reason for that is globalization. Now we are so interconnected in a way that we weren't in the 1950s and 60s," he said. "Now, everybody is going every where, whether you're getting on an airplane and taking a vacation or whether you're in the military going overseas for a deployment.

"I think we've gotten better at it. We have leaders now who have been in theater and understand the value of having some folks in their organization and, for them personally, understand the culture a little bit better. What you want to do is treat the local populous with respect no matter what country you're in."

The language lab is open for Linguist Sustainment training until 5 p.m. Monday and Tuesday and for Arabic Familiarization and Cultural Awareness training until 5 p.m. Wednesday through Friday. To schedule training time, call 240-3544. For more information about the center, contact Dan Matthews at 240-3227. 

B.A.S.S. Fishing Tournament

By **Sgt. Nathaniel Smith**
1st Inf. Div. Public Affairs

Under blustery conditions, an armada of boats took to Milford Lake Nov. 6 and 8, all with one goal in mind: catch more fish than the next guy.

At first glance, one may have thought there were nothing but crazy people on the largest lake in Kansas, but upon further review it was the B.A.S.S. Federation Fishing Tournament with 55 amateur anglers from around the world competing for their shot at the professional tour.

What was supposed to be a three-day event was shortened to two days due to potentially dangerous winds that reached up to 40 miles per hour.

Despite having to cancel practice on Nov. 4 and postponing the tournament twice on Nov. 5 and 7, the tournament was finally completed on Nov. 8.

Outside of the tough weather conditions, the tournament was unique for another reason: Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division, all volunteers despite the bad weather, were employed as observers, ensuring that fish caught were of the proper

species and size for the event's specifications, and drivers, backing boats into the water. Sgt. Christopher Slepikis, a fire support noncommissioned officer who worked as a driver, said he enjoyed the opportunity to help with the tournament.

"I got to hang out with the guys, get out of the office and talk with somebody who has a different profession than me," Slepikis said. "They were very professional; definitely disappointed but they were just waiting for a better chance to catch some fish."

Staff Sgt. David Andrews, an operations NCO with the 1st Inf. Div.'s headquarters who helped out as an observer, said despite the weather, he relished the opportunity to get tips from semi-professional anglers.

"I enjoy fishing and any time you get the chance to fish with someone better than yourself, it's a good learning experience," Andrews said. "The weather wasn't great, but I learned a lot."

Andrews, who rode with Jeff Friedman, an amateur angler representing Virginia, added some of the things he learned were what gear to use and the best kinds and colors of lures to use under certain conditions.

Despite frustration for all the anglers involved, Slepikis said he was impressed with the professionalism of the fishermen.



1st Inf. Div. PAO/Smith

Matthew Simone of Connecticut replaces a broken rod as Pvt. Kevin Brady, an infantryman with the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment observes. Of 55 anglers competing, only 17 actually caught anything on a day many said had the most challenging conditions they had ever competed under.



"They were very cordial and loved that Soldiers wanted to help with the competition," Slepikis said. "It was a good friendship we struck up."

Bryan Schmidt of Olney, Texas, took home the top prize of a boat package valued at over \$64,000, but more importantly, he will be competing on the professional tour in early February. 🇺🇸



1st Inf. Div. PAO/Smith

Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, talks with Staff Sgt. David Andrews before Andrews takes to Milford Lake.



Duty First/Skidmore

The Commanding General's Mounted Color Guard opens the weigh in ceremony for the tournament.

Yes, It Is Cold Outside
But You Can Still Get Information
About The Big Red One On Your
Computer At

www.1id.army.mil

