

DUTY FIRST!

MARCH 2011

Unofficial 1st Infantry Division Magazine of Soldiers and Families | www.riley.army.mil

WE'RE BACK

- Division headquarters returns to Fort Riley
- Rear command reflects on last year of service
- Fort Riley pushes efforts to give Families all possible resources

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 set 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 BRO 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.

March 2011 | www.riley.army.mil

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COVER: Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, and Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, division command sergeant major, raise the 1st Infantry Division colors during a ceremony on Jan. 20 at King Field House, Fort Riley.

PHOTO BY ANNA NEWMAN, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

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Families must remain a focus

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks

Throughout December and January, the Soldiers of Division Headquarters and Headquarter Battalion marched into formations on Fort Riley and were welcomed home. This month, Soldiers of the Combat Aviation Brigade and 1st Sustainment Brigade also returned home. For each of those Soldiers, the one thing on their minds as they return home is seeing and spending time with their Family.

To our Families: thank you. We truly could not have done what we did without you. You are our reason for doing what we do and we are forever indebted to you and joyous to be back with you again. You shouldered a heavy burden during our absence that cannot be described adequately or appreciated fully and for that you have our deepest gratitude.

As we return home, it is important that the Family remain a primary focus. The months ahead must be taken advantage of in order to build strength and resilience for the next challenge. In some cases, where extreme stress and strain may have damaged relationships, that strength may have to be rebuilt. Much like maintaining a certain level of physical fitness, Families must work to stay fit as well. Activities which draw all members of the Family into an environment



in which everyone grows together are twice as important following a deployment. Also of importance to Families is building a strong support network—whether it is other Army Families, a sports team, or a place of worship, having a system of support will help a Family strengthen internally.

Having a Family strong enough to weather military life is not just important to those of us charged with leading the 1st Infantry Division, but also to the Army as a whole. One of the five pillars of the Army Comprehensive Fitness program is strength of Family. Resilient Soldiers and Families experience a decrease in post-

traumatic stress and destructive behaviors and have a greater likelihood for post-adversity growth and success. Whenever one of those five areas—physical, emotional, social, spiritual and Family—starts to slump, it begins to effect all the others.

Within the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, we've taken Comprehensive Soldier Fitness to the next level, focusing on our Family members as well. Our Resilient Spouse Academy gives spouses the tools and coaching needed to help handle the effects of deployments. Finances, domestic violence and helping someone considering suicide are some of the areas covered through videos, guest speakers and breakout groups. Our spouses are the first line of help for our Soldiers. The Resilient Spouse Academy has drawn attendees not just from Fort Riley, but also from other installations.

It takes everyone working together to succeed, and we pledge to provide our Soldiers and our Families the best environment possible to grow, strengthen and take on challenges. Strengthening our Families is a key part of working toward our goal of making Fort Riley the premier division-level installation in the Army.

Duty First! 

Keep Families well-prepared

Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne

Often, as Soldiers, we talk about how important our Families are to our success. This is undeniable. When we deploy, we depend on our Families to take care of the business we left behind. We depend on them to take care of us as well—and look forward to their encouragement via phone calls and packages. Everything we go through as Soldiers, our Families also experience, along with all the additional complications that life in the Army can sometimes bring.

It's safe to say that for many Families, nothing is scarier than moving to a new post and saying goodbye to their loved one without knowing where to go if they need help. It's our job to make sure our Families are well-prepared for the times we are absent, and that requires some extra work on the part of the Soldier.

When you arrive at Fort Riley, visit the Army Community Service Center with your Family. ACS, located in building 7264 on Custer Hill, has a wide range of



services available to Soldiers and Families. Within this building are the contacts and some of the offices for the Family Mobilization Readiness Program—helping Families prepare for deployments and re-deployments; Employment Readiness Program—helping spouses train for and locate suitable employment; Exceptional Family Member Program—supporting

Families with special needs dependents; and the Financial Readiness Program—with resources and classes on many areas of personal finances. That's just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to what ACS offers to support Families.

Army life poses its fair share of challenges to Families. Make sure your Family is familiar with what is available to help them overcome those obstacles. A spouse and Family which readily knows all their options and knows where to get advice will make better, more well-informed decisions. And that comes back to effect you, as a Soldier, and how effective you will be.

We can't do what we do without the support of our Families. Whether it's ensuring your spouse is acquainted with available resources, or making sure your parents are plugged into your family readiness group before you deploy, do it! You and your Family both stand to benefit.

Now, get after it ... Duty First! 



ANNA NEWMAN, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE
 Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, and Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, division command sergeant major, uncase the 1st Infantry Division colors during a ceremony Jan. 20 at King Field House on Fort Riley.

INSIDE: U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts addresses 1ID Soldiers; witnesses uncasing ceremony. — Page 9
Families welcome home Soldiers with open arms. — Page 10
Brig. Gen. David Petersen reflects on time as the rear commander of Fort Riley. — Page 11



Happy to be BACK

Uncasing ceremony marks the return of 1 ID's headquarters to Fort Riley

*Story by
 Stephanie Hoff*

The Kansas weather may have not been considered very welcoming, but a historic Army division with a long lineage of victories on the battlefield faced its newest adversary with the same determination and once again achieved success.

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STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Members of the 'Victory Five' command team of the 1st Inf. Div. salute Jan. 20 at King Field House at the start of an uncasing ceremony signifying the return of the 'Big Red One' to Fort Riley following a year-long deployment to Iraq.



1ID DEPLOYMENT FACT SHEET

IRAQ NATIONAL ELECTIONS

- The 1st Infantry Division provided command and control for U.S. efforts to assist the Iraqi Security Forces in securing polling sites in southern Iraq for the historic March 7 national elections.
- The ISF provided all direct security at 2,733 polling sites in southern Iraq. U.S. Forces assisted with military working dogs, unmanned aerial surveillance, aviation and intelligence support, and other specialized assets.
- During the weeks leading up to the elections, United States Division-South forces worked hand in hand with their Iraqi counterparts, training on counterterrorism operations, rehearsing election security, and conducting site surveys of the polling sites.
- 4,128,500 voters turned out at the polls in southern Iraq on March 7 for a voter turnout rate of 59.5%.

PERIOD OF TRANSITION

- The 1st Infantry Division planned and oversaw a responsible drawdown in personnel and equipment during the first half of their deployment to help US Forces-Iraq meet the President of the United States' mandated reduction in troop strength to 50,000 by September 1st. This was an almost 50% reduction in forces from when the 1st Infantry Division arrived in Iraq in January.

- USD-S closed or handed over to the Government of Iraq 30 bases in 2010, reducing the number of bases in southern Iraq from 58 to 28.

- USD-S units provided security for thousands of tons of equipment transported to Kuwait on Main Supply Road Tampa, Iraq's major highway leading from Baghdad to Kuwait.
- USD-S moved over \$286 million worth of property out of southern Iraq between March and August, 2010, including over 1,200 vehicles and trailers, and over 14,000 pieces of other equipment.

ADVISING & ASSISTING IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

- The division placed a priority on the professionalization on the Iraqi Department of Border Enforcement. The division helped establish Border Coordination Centers and advised and assisted Department of the Border Enforcement personnel, allowing for better interoperability with the Iraqi Army and Police.
- With the ISF proficient in basic combat, law enforcement and counterterrorism skills, U.S. advisors in southern Iraq focused on developing specialized skills such as crime scene investigation, special weapons and assault teams (SWAT), intelligence gathering and joint operations between the Army, Navy,

Police and Department of Border Enforcement.

BUILDING CIVIL CAPACITY

- The 1st Infantry Division worked closely with nine provincial reconstruction teams which managed civil capacity projects.
- In October, the \$166 million Basra Children's Hospital was officially opened after six years of development and construction. The hospital is Iraq's first children's cancer hospital and is heralded one of the most modern medical facilities in the Middle East.
- In Basra Province, the division helped design the Basra Logistics City on the former Camp Bucca, the Basra Business Center, and the Basra Economic Development Zone to maximize rapidly increasing foreign investment in southern Iraq.
- Muthanna Province broke ground on the \$927,000 Muthanna Friendship Hall Project in October. The facility, which is scheduled for completion in the spring, was funded by the U.S. and is a joint venture between U.S. Division-South, the Muthanna Provincial Reconstruction Team, and the Muthanna provincial government. It will serve as a meeting place and site for community functions in the provincial capital of Samawah, and is a symbol of the enduring friendship between the U.S. and the people of Muthanna.



What we had the chance to do was see what success looks like. ... Now what we have behind us is a list of accomplishments that we can all be very proud of."

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks

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The colors of the 1st Infantry Division were uncased Jan. 20 at a ceremony on Fort Riley, signifying the return of the unit's headquarters to Fort Riley. The ceremony took place a mere few hours after the post and surrounding communities were blanketed with inches of snow that caused the post to operate on a two-hour weather delay.

"It sure seems that we can't have any post ceremonies without a snow storm in advance," chuckled Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley.

The Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion of the "Big Red One" deployed to Iraq in January 2010, where it assumed command of the United States Division-South. While deployed, the unit was responsible for providing security for the Iraqi national elections, conducted last March as well as conducting sustainment operations that included the removal of U.S. equipment from the country and the transfer of more than 30 U.S. military installations to the Iraqi forces.

"What we had the chance to do was see what success looks like. For many of us who had deployed there before, to see the progress that was made was very impressive. (The deployment) was moving Iraq forward. That's the simplest way to describe it," Brooks said. "I remember when we left here, I was asked 'How does it feel?' We were looking into the darkness

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STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, welcomes home the Soldiers and colors of the division's headquarters during an uncasing ceremony, Jan. 20 at King Field House. The ceremony signified the return of the unit's nearly 900 Soldiers following a year-long deployment to Iraq.

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of uncertainty, and frankly, (returning home) feels great. Now what we have behind us is a list of accomplishments that we can all be very proud of. We're just happy to be back."

Brooks also noted the uniqueness of the deployment itself. The 1st Inf. Div.'s headquarters deployed as a modular unit, separate from its subordinate elements. This type of deployment was the first of its kind for the historic unit, Brooks said.

"That's a very different approach. It was not easy, but it's something that we can do and we have demonstrated success on that," Brooks said. "We took units from other parts of the Army and the other joint services and other agencies of the U.S. Government and they came underneath our leadership. It was truly like being on an all-star team."

Brooks noted the efforts and success of the units and command team that remained on Fort Riley throughout the duration of the deployment. He complemented the Mission Support Element in successfully managing the Big Red One units that remained at Fort Riley and at other posts.

"The accomplishments on the home front here at Fort Riley were at least as impressive as those that occurred in southern Iraq. Nothing was normal about what you were asked to do. Nothing was routine. There was no handbook and no standing operating procedure," he said. "No matter the circumstances, no matter the curve ball pitched at you; you knocked it out of the park."

He additionally complemented Brig. Gen. David Petersen, who was assigned to command the 1st Inf. Div. units that remained at Fort Riley, Kan., as well as division elements at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., Fort Sill, Okla. and Fort Knox, Ky. During his command, Petersen assisted with the successful deployments of five brigades from the division.

"It's always nice to have the boss back. This has been a very interesting year. I was so busy, this year went by so quickly. We worked a lot of weekends and federal holidays, but that's not to complain, it's been very exciting," Petersen said. "If it wasn't for the support that we had from the local communities and community leaders, this would have almost been a mission too difficult, quite honestly."

The nearly 900 Soldiers that deployed with the unit



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Soldiers of the Commanding General's Mounted Color Guard display the flags of the United States and the 1st Infantry Division, Jan. 20 at King Field House on Fort Riley, Kan. The colors of the division were uncased during the ceremony that signified the unit's return to Fort Riley following a year-long deployment to Iraq.

last winter began redeploying to Fort Riley in November and were welcomed home by their friends and Family members.

"It's a relief. We got to spend New Year's Eve together, so it was good" said Eileen Fallin, whose husband, 1st Sgt. David Fallin, returned with the unit. "It's nice to be able to watch them uncasing the colors. This feels a lot better than watching them leave. There's no apprehension, everything is over and there are no worries now that he is home." ▀

“Do you think you made a **difference?...** **Good. Good. That's why you were there.**”

U.S. Senator Pat Roberts

Senator, Soldiers participate in open forum

Dodge City-native Roberts prompts Soldiers to share military experiences

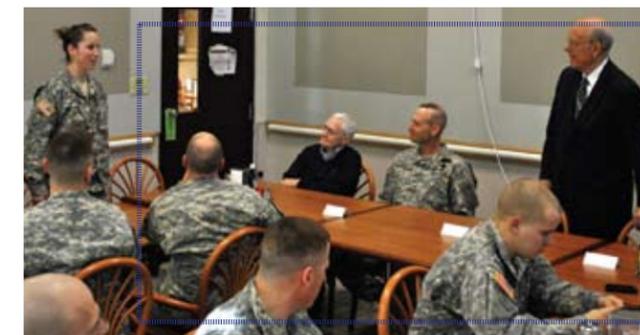
By Sgt. Keven Parry
1st Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office

FORT RILEY, Kan.—U.S. Senator Pat Roberts visited with Soldiers who are citizens of Kansas during lunch at the Cantigny Dining Facility on Jan. 20 following the 1st Infantry Division's uncasing ceremony.

Roberts, a native of Dodge City, spoke with Soldiers before sitting down and eating lunch with them. After introducing himself, he spoke of his experiences as a servicemember as well as how his experiences with the military have helped shape his decisions and efforts as a member of Congress.

"When I first came into the Senate in '96 ... there were 12 other Marines," Roberts said. "Now there's one. Me." He said that there has been a recent influx of former servicemembers into the House of Representatives lately, and that he thinks it helps give perspective when a member of Congress has served in the military.

After Roberts spoke to the Soldiers, he asked each one of them to introduce themselves and to share their experiences in the military. He also told them to ask any questions they may have and encouraged them to open and honest with him in their discussions with him. The topics of the conversations ranged from high schools in the areas where Soldiers grew up to the decision-making



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Soldiers of the Commanding General's Mounted Color Guard display the flags of the United States and the 1st Infantry Division, Jan. 20 at King Field House on Fort Riley, Kan.

process in Congress regarding the building of the Air Force's next tanker.

Each of the Soldiers in attendance had deployed in the past, with some having deployed as many as five times. Roberts asked questions about the deployments specifically asking the Soldiers opinion on whether they felt that they had made a difference during their deployment. He also asked some of the Soldiers if they saw improvements in Iraq and Afghanistan when they returned to those countries for subsequent deployments.

Spc. Conrad Seyfried of 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment said that he had recently returned from a deployment.

"Do you think you made a difference?" Roberts asked Seyfried.

"Where we were at, sir, we made a difference," replied Seyfried.

"Good. Good. That's why you were there," said Roberts.

Roberts expressed appreciation for the work and sacrifices of the Soldiers, and mentioned efforts to improve the effectiveness of the abilities Soldiers bring to the battlefield. He encouraged them to continue to dialogue with him while they ate, and to feel free to address any subject they felt they wanted to talk about. ▀

Soldiers, Families reunite

Welcome-home ceremonies range from marriage proposals to holiday gatherings

By Jordan Chapman and Stephanie Hoff
Duty First! Magazine

It was July of 2006 the last time the 1st Infantry Division colors were uncased at Fort Riley. Four and half years later, 150 proud American Defenders escorted the colors home where Families and loved ones eagerly awaited them.

About 800 Soldiers of the 1st Inf. Div. Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion returned to Fort Riley in late December and early January.

"A year goes by quickly when you have a lot to do and we had quite a bit to do," said Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley. That statement was backed up by Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, who said he was proud of his Soldiers and how they completed their missions.

"The troops did fantastic; they knew exactly what their focus was in the mission. They knew they had to advise and assist the Iraqis and they took a hold of that. It made the Iraqi Security Forces that much better and they got a lot of self-satisfaction out of it because they got to see them grown while they were training them," Champagne said. He added that he and his Soldiers feel very comfortable having left Iraq in the hands of their own government and the Iraqi Security Forces. "They're in the lead ... they're doing a great job and are ready to take control. They already have."

Capt. Tanya Rosa had a special welcome-home surprise waiting for her during the Dec. 13 ceremony, in the form of a diamond engagement ring.

Capt. Juan Roman, also of DHHB, proposed just moments after welcoming his new fiancée home from Iraq.

"I was nervous all day," he said. "I think she said yes. But in all this excitement, I may need her to clarify her answer later."

Brittnee Dicks waited patiently in the stands ahead of the Dec. 13 ceremony for the arrival of her husband, Spc. Ian Dicks. Ian deployed on Christmas Eve the previous year and Brittnee said she looked forward to having him join her for the holidays this season. She recalled the day she received the phone call informing her that her husband was on his way home. She was at work and felt ecstatic after receiving the information.

"It feels awesome. I was so scared that they weren't going to have him home in time for the holiday," she said. ▀



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE
Capt. Tanya Rosa smiles after her fiancée, Capt. Juan Roman proposed to her following a Dec. 13 redeployment ceremony welcoming home Rosa and 52 additional Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 1st Inf. Div. to Fort Riley.



ANNA NEWMAN, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE
Jessica Stiles greets her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Eric Stiles, at a redeployment ceremony in late December.

General reflects on year at Fort Riley

By 1st Inf. Div. Public Affairs Office

FORT RILEY, Kan.—Monday, Oct. 26 is not a day Brig. Gen. David Petersen will soon forget. On a day that usually earns the most complaints from the average working American, Petersen got a phone call from Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, asking him to consider stepping in as the rear commander of Fort Riley and the 1st Infantry Division as the division headquarters deployed.

"I asked if I could have some time to think about it, and he said 'how about 24 hours?'" Petersen said.

Twenty-three hours later, Petersen was at Fort Riley to talk with Brooks. After all, Petersen said, if he was going to consider such a drastic move, he should probably at least see the post. In short order, Petersen had taken the position.

"I saw this as a great opportunity that had never been done before by a traditional guardsman," Petersen said. "The most difficult part of coming here was telling my commander that I was leaving. That was really tough."

The 35th Infantry Division, of which Petersen was attached to, is a National Guard Division headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., with personnel from around the region. Before coming to the Big Red One, Petersen was an assistant division commander of the unit, and worked a civilian day job as the deputy adjutant general of the Nebraska National Guard. Even though his past military experience was extensive, Petersen said it was still a shock to the senses to lead a division and an installation from the rear.

"The sheer magnitude of what goes on at Fort Riley is enormous," Petersen said. "It's a very active FORSCOM post with units deploying and redeploying and resetting all the time."

The 1st Inf. Div. and the subordinate units that Petersen was responsible for include eight brigades, spread across three different states and is usually run by a major general who has two brigadier generals to assist him. The nearly seamless transition between Brooks and Petersen at Fort Riley is a testament to the interoperability of the Army's active and reserve forces.

In the year that the 1st Inf. Div. Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion has been deployed, the operational tempo at Fort Riley never slowed. Petersen has overseen 21,000 Soldiers and the mobilization of five brigades. In the course of 12 months, the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat returned from Iraq and began the reset process, while 1st Sustainment Brigade, the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team and 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team all trained and then deployed to either Iraq or Afghanistan.

“The sheer magnitude of what goes on at Fort Riley is enormous.”

Brig. Gen. David Petersen



Petersen said his part as a senior trainer was a new experience for him, and proved to also be a challenging responsibility as the dates for units to leave the country shifted by as many as 100 days for one and more than a month for another.

"That was my summer—spent at the National Training Center and the Joint Readiness Training Center," Petersen said. "Our first three brigades stacked up on each other back to back as far as when they had to go through the collective training cycle."

Another accomplishment that Petersen is proud of is the conception of the Resilient Spouse Academy. The thought process for the academy began after a suicide in February; one month after Petersen took over as the division's rear commander. After some sensing sessions with spouses on several levels, Petersen and the Fort Riley Garrison command began to put together a five-day course for spouses, designed to assist them in a variety of areas of Army life.

"We're training our spouses in how to do things," Petersen said. "Sometimes it's something like finances—which can be a big stressor sometimes when a spouse is deployed. There's also two days of applied suicide intervention training. It doesn't make them experts, but it gives them tools to use—maybe not necessarily for their spouse, but with others they know as well, to listen and then help guide that person to more professional help."

The journey of the past year has been rewarding, Petersen said.

"What you get back from working with Soldiers—you just can't make it up in any way," Petersen said. "And the relationship that's here between the post and the Big Red One units and those outside in the communities is absolutely remarkable."

As his time at Fort Riley draws to a close, Petersen said he's not sure what is in store for him next. He has been selected for appointment to the rank of major general. The process for National Guard general officers to obtain command is typically based more on an interview process than assignment and Petersen said he's been looking for his next "job", but nothing is set in stone.

"No matter what, I hope to get at least one more military job," Petersen said. "And I hope I'm able to use the skills I've been able to learn here, wherever the next stop is." ▀



COURTESY PHOTO

Emelina Foster and husband (center), CW2 Ruben Foster, 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, take a family stroll with sister Savanaah Moreno (left), 17, and (from left) Mariana, 11, Angel, 15, and Esteban Foster, 13.

Story by Jordan Chapman

meeting *Family* *needs*

A couple goes to a low-lit restaurant and orders the most expensive dish; a family visits their children's favorite parks all in one day before going out for ice cream; a husband and wife of two decades share a glass of wine before cuddling up on the couch to watch their favorite television shows, all on the same night before each person, be it Soldier, spouse, lover or child, has to wake up to attend a deployment ceremony. →

The stands are packed. Other Families are present, media is there, picking off those front-row individuals who look to be holding together better than others, children play, waving flags, clapping hands or cooing at their half-asleep brother or sister in their strollers while taking sidelong glances back at the formation to see if they yet have a better view of their mommy or daddy.

Amongst all the ritual of the ceremony, all the inspiring words and love of country, the duty, the honor and the victory that will swell the pride of their loved ones upon their return, they're still leaving. Fort Riley and its services are there, to be sure, but behind the smiles and hugs, there's a planted seed of sacrifice that only the Army spouse can know.

For the most part, Fort Riley does well in providing for those left behind, but in the experience of two women who know that seed and have felt it grow, some areas could be improved upon.

For Emelina Foster, who knows she isn't the only spouse who lives in Manhattan and who is a part of a Family Readiness Group that has had some trouble in leadership, that area of improvement lies within better communication from post itself.

"I'm away from everybody. I don't have any Family here, it's just me and my kids and I don't live close to post to actually get that connection, which is hard," Foster said, often finding comfort in the company of other military families to talk about her experience and feelings while her husband, CW2 Ruben Foster, 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, is gone, and though that's a help for her emotional self, it doesn't help her get information about what's happening on post.

opening on post.

Making matters worse, her husband started his career as an Air Force Reservist, so she not only feels disconnected, but lost in her husband's new active duty environment.

After some time, she found that getting in touch directly with her unit's rear detachment and her Family Readiness Service Assistant was her best option for reliable information, but only after Capt. Greg Fisher, 3rd AHB, 1st Avn. Regt. Rear Detachment commander, offered his number and help if questions should arise.

"At first, I used to have problems at the house and I'd call the FRG person and they never called me back," Foster said, explaining that she would next call Fisher and have response and help right away.

"Our FRG only lasted 3 months into the deployment and then it fell apart ... I'm still new at this, but I know the rear-d is what really helped me out," she said, feeling that a great start in prompting better communication with those spouses off post is listing all spouse oriented web sites in an easily accessible, and most importantly, obvious location.

"I know there are a lot of Web sites out there that we're not even aware of. I just stumbled across them," she said, explaining the Manhattan Military Relations office has provided her with many opportunities to meet other families, attend dinners and become aware of Fort Riley activities.



COURTESY PHOTO

Sherri Lloyd and husband, Spc. Wesley Lloyd, 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, take a picture with newborn son, Weston.



I was alone for a while. Connecting with a friend — if I didn't have that friend I would have lost my mind ... there is importance in knowing who you're going to contact and if that person doesn't answer, then to go on to your next one."

Emelina Foster, military spouse

come stay with me for a little while but other than that I was by myself and I felt so alone and scared," Lloyd said, completely grateful for the nurses at the hospital that checked in on she and her son while she was there, but wished that there was a system in place for the same kind of follow-ups after she returned home.

"It would have been a lot better," she said, recounting that except for that one area, there are many programs on base that have been great for her and Weston, including her own FRG, which has monthly meetings and occasional outings outside of meetings, advertised play groups in the Fort Riley Post, USO's "No Dough Dinners" and her church affiliations who she calls her second family.

In both Foster and Lloyd, communication with other Families and friends was key to their success when in a times of need.

"I've learned a lot in just networking with other Families that helps," Foster said, "I was alone for a while. Connecting with a friend — if I didn't have that friend I would have lost my mind ... there is importance in knowing who you're going to contact and if that person doesn't answer then to go on to your next one," she said, explaining that when there wasn't anyone around it was helpful to get herself and her kids out into the community. She recommends the parks and recreation departments of a Family's respective city.

"It's better to get out of your surroundings and not think about how sad you are. It's OK to go out and spend time with your kids and other friends." 

"Other than that, it's just knowing who you need to contact if you need something," she continued, which is worthy advice that Fort Riley resident Sherri Lloyd subscribes to.

Like Foster, Lloyd had to rely on her own intuition when in need.

After her son, 8-month-old Weston, was born, her husband, Spc. Wesley Lloyd, 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, had not yet returned home for leave and she felt alone and unaware of where to turn.

Lloyd wouldn't be home for one week after the baby's birth and during that time she had to fall back on her own church group for support.

"When I gave birth to (Weston) I didn't have my Family here and I was by myself. I had the pastor's wife

USEFUL WEB SITES FOR SPOUSES

- Army Community Service, building 7264 on Fort Riley
785-239-8430
- Manhattan Military Relations
www.manhattan.org/militaryrelations
www.facebook.com/ManhattanMRC
- Junction City Military Affairs Council
www.welcomefortriley.com
www.facebook.com/pages/Junction-City-Geary-County-Military-Affairs-Council/
- Flint Hills Veterans Coalition
<http://flinthillsveteransday.com/Contact-Veterans-Coalition/>
- Manhattan, Kan.
www.ci.manhattan.ks.us/
- Junction City, Kan.
www.junctioncity-ks.gov/



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KELSIE TUBBS

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: Children of Soldiers of 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBC, receive assistance from Soldiers in the unit's Rear Detachment while making holiday cards for their deployed parents. The card-making event was held during the battalion FRG's monthly 'chicken night' in Dec. 2009; Family members of Soldiers of 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBC are served by Soldiers of the unit's Rear Detachment during the battalion's monthly 'chicken nights' that were conducted during the battalion's deployment. The 'chicken nights' were scheduled monthly throughout the deployment and allowed the Families to gather in a social setting as well as offering an opportunity for them to address any concerns or issues with the Rear Detachment, who served as the wait staff for the evenings; Anthony Myer, FRSA for 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBC attends one of the battalion's 'chicken nights.'; Soldiers of 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBC who served on the unit's Rear Detachment during the battalion's 2009-10 deployment pose for a picture with Santa Claus; Family members of Soldiers of 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBC, make holiday decorations.

*Getting
resources
from your
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F. R. G.

*can be as
easy as
one, two
three*



SUCCESS IS MOST COMMONLY DEFINED as the "favorable or desired outcome of attempts or endeavors." When those endeavors include attempting to create cohesion amongst several hundred people from all sorts of backgrounds, during a period of heightened anxieties, the success is all that much sweeter. →

Story by Stephanie Hoff | Duty First! Magazine

STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Staff Sgt. John Sherfield, Co. B, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Reg., assists Santiago Salazar, son of deployed Staff Sgt. David Breton, with a weapons firing March 29 at the Engagement Skills Trainer. The battalion's Family Readiness Group hosted a family day that included a simulated weapons firing and the opportunity to try on body armor and ballistic helmets.



“Chicken night was always a huge turnout. It was wild, it was crazy, there were kids running everywhere and they were great. We got that adult interaction that we needed. We could just talk as friends and see how everybody was doing.”

*Jennifer Brown,
key caller for the FRG of 2nd Bn.,
16th Inf., 4th IBCT*

The Soldiers and Family members of the Family Readiness Group of 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, know firsthand the hard work it takes to achieve such success.

The “Rangers” deployed in the summer of 2009 for their second deployment in nearly five years. The deployment marked the second time for a majority of the unit’s Soldiers to deploy with the battalion; requiring them to once again say goodbye to their Families and loved ones.

A major asset the Soldiers and Families possessed during their most recent deployment was a successfully functioning FRG, said Staci Dumas, family readiness program coordinator for the division and Fort Riley.

“Communication is a key element in keeping a functioning FRG,” Dumas said. “They kept in contact with their Families.”

Strong support from the unit’s leadership, from the battalion level down to the individual companies, played a key role

in developing and maintaining a strong FRG, said Kelli Tubbs, the FRG leader for Company C. Before the Soldiers were scheduled to depart, the battalion’s then commander, Lt. Col. Paul Kreis and his wife, Kelly, invited all the unit’s Soldiers and Family members to meet for dinner and socialize in a non-formal setting. Chicken was served as the main course and the foundation that was created that night led to a succession of gatherings that would become affectionately referred to as “chicken nights.”

“It kind of gave everybody a chance to meet face to face and get more relaxed with each other before the guys left. It was a huge, huge part of what our FRG has become. I can’t say enough about it,” Tubbs said. “I know some spouses have a hard time picking up the phone and asking for anything if they’ve never met (the members of the FRG). Them coming to the chicken nights definitely helped our FRGs.”

Chicken nights were then scheduled the monthly throughout the duration of the

deployment and allowed the Families to gather in a social setting as well as offering an opportunity for them to address any concerns or issues with the rear detachment, who served as the wait staff for the evenings.

“Chicken night was always a huge turnout. It was wild, it was crazy, there were kids running everywhere and they were great,” said Jennifer Brown, who served as one of the FRG’s key callers during the deployment. “We got that adult interaction that we needed. We could just talk as friends and see how everybody was doing.”

The battalion’s chicken nights were conducted in addition to the monthly scheduled FRG meetings. Throughout the deployment, separate social groups were also formed that paired Family members with the same interests or who had children approximately the same age. Children’s play groups, coffee outings, workout groups and gatherings for the spouses without children were just some of the groups formed among the Families.

“You kind of have to see who your Families are and make sure each of them have a support group,” Tubbs said. “Nobody gets left out.”

Offering a variety of options for the spouses to socialize and connect with one another, allowed the unit’s FRG to achieve exactly what the groups are intended to do: promote a strong social network and support options for the spouses.

Brown shared one experience she personally encountered during the deployment. Due to unfortunate medical circumstances, she relocated to Tennessee to be closer to family for assistance. Three months later, she and her young daughter returned to Fort Riley.

“The support from the ladies is actually what brought me back,” she said. “I connected with them. They are so special to me. We were a pretty close-knit family. We were all like sisters and we could rely on each other.”

In addition to receiving support from those remaining stateside, the success of

the unit’s FRG was also largely due to the support and assistance the Families received from the unit’s leaders who were deployed thousands of miles, Tubbs said. She recalled how her husband’s company commander would take the time to personally respond to e-mails he received from the Families back home at Fort Riley.

“That was another thing that was huge during the last deployment—to have a commander, who was down range, that was willing to accept those e-mails and take that five minutes to respond,” she said. “He didn’t blow the Families off; normally within a 12 to 15 hour window, they had an e-mail back. Families knowing that they have the support of the company and battalion commanders and the first sergeant is a huge help.”

A strong pool of volunteers, made up of spouses, children and even parents of Soldiers played a significant role in the FRG’s success at serving the Soldiers and Families, she added.

“After I got a group established of volunteers; it has just been amazing. There’s absolutely no way that I could do any of this without them,” Tubbs said. “I hate telling people that I’m the ‘FRG Leader,’ because it was an entire group of volunteers that was amazing and not one individual person.”

With the unit’s last Soldiers returned to Fort Riley last June and since then, the FRG has been less active; allowing the Families time to reconnect with their Soldiers. Tubbs and Brown both feel confident that the FRG will remain just as strong if future deployments were to arise. Tubbs recommended that all Family members attempt to become involved with their unit’s FRG, even if they’ve had a negative experience in the past.

“Persistence. You got to be persistent. You got to reassure everybody that if they had a bad experience (with a previous FRG); to give you a chance,” she said. “Keep reassuring them that you are there for them; that it’s their FRG. It’s not mine; it’s theirs.”



SGT. JOHN ZUMER, 3/1 IBCT PAO

Diego Ruiz, 3-year-old son of Sgt. Waldemar Ruiz, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion 6th Field Artillery, is shown how to use a fire extinguisher by Jim Gambino, fire prevention specialist with Fort Knox's fire department during the battalion's Family Day on July 1st at Steeles Tank Range. The day provided an opportunity for Families to see how their Soldiers train in a field environment. Sgt. Ruiz is standing to the right of his son.

the BONDING EXPERIENCE

Military Families find common ground in preparing for the unexpected

Story by
By Stephanie Hoff

THE AGE-OLD SAYING WARNS TO "EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED." BUT FOR FAMILY MEMBERS WITH LOVED ONES SERVING IN THE MILITARY, THE SITUATIONS THAT ARE EXPECTED CAN SOMETIMES BE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO PREPARE FOR.

"I think it's good that the Family members form bonds before the Soldiers leave so that they know that they have a support group already in place for when their Soldier is deployed."

Bobbi Hanlon,
Family readiness support assistant for
'Dagger' Brigade's FRG

The Soldiers and Families of the 1st Infantry Division are no novices when it comes to having to cope with extended absences from loved ones due to impending deployments.

Most recently the "Big Red One" bid farewell to Soldiers of its 1st and 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Teams and the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Almost exactly a year after returning home to their loved ones, the Soldiers of the 2nd HBCT once again found themselves departing for a year-long tour to Iraq this past fall. The "Dagger" Brigade's Family Readiness Group once again found itself called to action in providing support and assistance to its Soldiers' Families.

"I think it's good that the Family members form bonds before the Soldiers leave so that they know that they have a support group already in place for when their Soldier is deployed," said Bobbi Hanlon the unit's family readiness support assistant. "We have to form friendships and bonds because those spouses become each others' family. They need to have someone to turn to and who is going through the same thing they are."

The unit's FRG plays a significant role in preparing the Families for their approaching separation from their Soldiers, said Jan Childs, the FRG leader for the Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, which returned to Fort Riley this winter following a year-long

(story continued on page 22)

COURTESY PHOTO



SGT. JOHN ZUMER, 3/1 IBCT PAO



COURTESY PHOTO



FROM TOP: Colette Pappal and her daughter, Meredith, play billiards April 11 at the K-State Student Union in Manhattan as part of the "Almost There" celebration for the Family members of 4th IBCT. Nearly 400 spouses and children of the 'Dragon Brigade' enjoyed complimentary bowling, movies and billiards during the event that was designed to celebrate the end of its deployment; Spc. Keith Lance, Headquarters and Headquarters Btry., 1st Bn., 6th FA Regt., 3IBCT, stands with his wife, Lauren, and children Fayelyn and Jeremiah in front of a M119 105mm howitzer during the battalion's Family Day on July 1st at Steeles Tank Range. The day provided an opportunity for Families to see how their Soldiers train in a field environment; Family members of 4th IBCT bowl April 11 at the Kansas-State Student Union during the "Almost There" celebration that celebrated the 'Dragon Brigade' nearing the end of its deployment.



SGT. JOHN ZUMER, 3/1 IBCT PAO

Jamison Rubich, wife of Spc. Charles Rubich, an artilleryman with Bravo Battery, 1st Bn., 6th FA Regt., 3IBCT, looks down the sights of an M203 Grenade Launcher during the battalion's Family Day on July 1st at Steeles Tank Range. The day provided an opportunity for Families to see how their Soldiers train in a field environment.



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Soldiers of the Forward Support and Headquarters and Headquarters companies, 1st Eng. Bn., 1st HBCT, stand attention in front of friends and Family members, Aug. 1 during a redeployment ceremony in Building 88312. The battalion deployed in November 2009 to support the 555th Engineer Brigade in Iraq.

(continued from page 21)

tour to Iraq. Before the unit deploying, the FRG's main focus revolves around uniting the Families with one another and providing them details of the unit's deployment that do not endanger the mission. Conducting pre-deployment briefings where the commanders personally meet with the Families and are available to answer any questions are a good opportunity for the unit's leadership to share the information with several Families at the same time.

"The more information people have; the more comfortable they feel about the deployment," Childs said. "Most of our FRGs had pre-deployment meetings attended by their company commander, where he or she presented a briefing specific to their company, detailing the mission, living



COURTESY PHOTO

Spouses participate in a cooking class Dec. 17 on Fort Riley as part of the 'Hearts Apart' program. The program is offered thru Army Community Services and offers support for Families whose service member is currently deployed or serving away from post for mission requirements.

conditions, etc. This was in addition to the battalion-wide pre-deployment briefings and was very well received by the families."

The briefings additionally offer an opportunity for new Families to the unit a chance to meet other Families and members of the FRG. Collecting up-to date contact information for the Family members to be reached during the deployment can also be conducted during the briefings.

Both Hanlon and Childs then rec-

ommend that the FRG establishing a communication method that works best for each Family member, whether that be a phone call, e-mail or the unit's virtual FRG site.

"Communication is a key element in keeping a functioning FRG," said Stacie Dumas, the family readiness support assistant for the division and Fort Riley. "When you lose contact with your Families, except for when you need something from them, they lose interest in being a part of the organization. Make

sure to keep communication lines open at all times."

The next undertaking a FRG will generally undergo when facing a deployment, is the establishment of a core group of volunteers. The volunteers could be asked to assist with a wide variety of tasks from serving as key-callers to aid the FRG with disseminating information to assembling care packages for the deployed Soldiers.

"Volunteers are key to helping Families during a deployment," Childs said. "(The volunteers) have Families and jobs and school and deployment stresses just like everyone else, yet were willing to step up and be there for those who needed assistance. That's something pretty special."

The 1st Inf. Div. is currently preparing to welcome home its Soldiers of the Combat Aviation and 1st Sustainment Brigades. As the redeployments approach, the FRGs generally play a vital role in not only providing current return information to the Families, but also can be heavily engaged in welcoming home the unit's single Soldiers by decorating their barracks or assembling them care packets that can include towels, beverages and laundry detergent.

From the day they are notified that their Soldier is to deploy, to the moment they welcome them back home, all the ladies agreed that the FRG's main function is to provide service and assistance to the Families.

"FRG participation goes through a cycle during the deployment; high at the beginning and end, then often low in the middle," Childs said. "I often think of the FRG as a security blanket; it makes us all feel a little better to have caring volunteers who we can turn to when needed." 



COURTESY PHOTO
A Soldier with Co. C, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th IBCT, conceals himself during a paintball event, one of many activities offered through the Warrior Adventure Quest program.

QUEST TO BE THE BEST

Warrior Adventure Quest helps Soldiers, units find 'new normal' after deployment

By Sgt. Shantelle J. Campbell
4IBCT PAO

Realizing the threats Soldiers face upon returning home from deployment, the Army created and implemented a program called Warrior Adventure Quest.

The program, which was first introduced to Soldiers in Vicenza, Italy, in September 2008, allows Soldiers to safely participate in high-adrenaline, high-adventure outdoor recreational activities like rock-climbing, kayaking, paintball, adventure racing and mountain biking, among many others.

"The Department of the Army was seeing increases in self-destructive, risky behavior in Soldiers that were re-deploying from war zones," said Travis Engle, the recreation specialist for Outdoor Recreation at Fort Riley. "In the hopes of decreasing the DUI's, accidents, marital issues and suicides, the Warrior Adventure Quest program was developed."

"In the two years since implementing the program, there have been marked improvements in Soldiers' abilities to reintegrate into garrison life," he added.

Sgt. John Hilton, a lab technician with Company C, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, said that participating in Warrior Adventure Quest was a great experience and helped establish even more cohesion within his unit.

"When we came back from Iraq, everyone came back in increments and were going different directions," Hilton said.

"Then, when we did these activities—



COURTESY PHOTO

Soldiers of Co. C, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th IBCT, harness up for rock-climbing, one of many of the high-adrenaline, high-adventure activities offered through the Warrior Adventure Quest program.

the rock-climbing and the paintball—they kind of brought everybody back together," Hilton added. "This program, I think it did just what it was supposed to do. Everyone had fun and it increased unit morale. It was just awesome."

For Spc. Andrea Perry, a medic with Co. C, 701st BSB, taking part in the WAQ activities made the integration into the unit a lot easier.

"I had just gotten to the company," Perry said.

The program "was great for me by being so new," she added, "to be able to interact with people outside of work and get to know Soldiers that I hadn't talked to yet. It really helped me feel more comfortable here in the company and after getting back from the event, just having a way to relate. When I got here, I felt kind of out of it because everybody had deployed together, and I

was kind of the outsider but ... doing programs like this helps me to kind of feel part of the company."

The activities offered through the WAQ program are designed for platoon-sized elements. Each platoon must have at least two trainers who have attended the WAQ leader lead after-action debrief training. The training is conducted Mondays at 9 a.m. at Fort Riley's Outdoor Recreation Center, 9011 Rifle Range Road. The training and activities must be scheduled in advance.

With this program, "Soldiers see each other in different circumstances and situations that would normally not happen," Engle said. "They still work and function as a unit but there is the realization that there is more to the individual than what is seen during work duties. There is growth within the group as well as growth within the individual."



ALISON KOHLER, MEDDAC PAO

Spc. Chris Burke, warrior in transition in the Warrior Transition Battalion, tries to maintain his balance on a Proprio machine during physical therapy on Dec. 17, 2010.

on the road to **Recovery**

Warrior in Transition Soldiers receive venue to focus on healing

Alison Kohler, MEDDAC Public Affairs

A SPORTING ACCIDENT THAT IMMEDIATELY PARALYZED A SOLDIER WHILE HE WAS HOME ON MID-TOUR LEAVE LEFT LITTLE HOPE FOR A GOOD OUTCOME.

Spc. Chris Burke was home from his second deployment with the Combat Aviation Brigade and jumped into a foam pit while practicing gymnastics.

Chris's mother Lynda said she didn't expect him to be injured in an accident on mid-tour leave, since he already had made it through one full and one partial tour of duty in combat.

"As a parent, I remember telling all of our kids, 'Don't do that or you will fall and break your neck.' I think most parents say that at one time or another to their children, but none of us really thinks it will happen," Lynda said.

"During his deployment, his youngest siblings both worked really hard at learning to do gymnastics like their big brother. They ask him to take them up so they could show him. While they were all working out, Chris did a back flip into the foam pit and had too much power and hit the wall inside the foam pit splitting his head open and leaving him paralyzed due to a C-6 Burst fracture when his head came into contact with the concrete wall inside the foam pit," Lynda said.

The doctors treating him predicted a bleak prognosis.

"The doctors said I probably wouldn't make it through the night, and if I did, I wouldn't walk again," Chris said.

A little more than four months into his recovery, Chris has made significant progress thanks to quality health care, a strong support system and his own positive attitude.

"Chris is a very remarkable determined young man. I believe that is reason he is doing so well is his determination not to be paralyzed for the rest of his life, along with all of the wonderful doctors, nurses and therapists that have helped," Lynda said.

Following the accident, Dr. Matthew Wills, a neurosurgeon at Stormont Vail Health Center in Topeka, Kan., performed a surgery to replace a vertebra and fuse three together. It was thought Chris would require two to three more surgeries, but the initial surgery went so well, Chris has not required any fol-



ALISON KOHLER, MEDDAC

Spc. Chris Burke, warrior in transition in the Warrior Transition Battalion, walks down the hallway with help from Jennifer Zentz, a physical therapist at the mild traumatic brain injury clinic Dec. 17.

low-up surgeries.

"The surgery went well. He did a fantastic job," Chris said. "I'm at the point where I can stand up and take a few steps. It blew the neurosurgeon away. I'm progressing way faster than he could have ever hoped," Chris said.

Doctors told Chris and his family it likely would take eight months to a year before he could possibly try to walk with prosthetics, but Chris uses a wheelchair and is progressing much more quickly than expected.

"He was strong before, but I credit the Army with making him even stronger," Lynda said.

He credits his strong support system with sustaining him in his recovery.

"The biggest thing has been family support and support of my fellow Soldiers. The upper command and (non-commissioned officers) have supported me through this whole thing. My mom has been a tremendous support asset to me. Everything—it's been spectacular," Chris said.

Keeping a positive attitude hasn't always been easy, but Chris said he has come to believe it's necessary for him.

"I wanted to just give up ... but it doesn't help feeling sorry for yourself. The only thing that helps is persistence.

Every day for me is a blessing. I shouldn't have lived past July (23)," Burke said.

"A lot of days Chris is so down and feels like giving up—like there is no hope for his future and those are the hardest days on me and his dad. I have to do everything I can to keep him motivated and to try to help him realize his life is not over. In the very beginning he was so depressed thinking his life and career were over, but with everyone's help he made remarkable progress and he saw the hope life still had," Lynda said.

Lynda, whose husband is currently deployed, takes care of Chris and oversees his recovery.

"As far as me handling this, I do because what other choice is there? Whether it is your husband, child or parent—when something horrible happens you just have to step up and do whatever is needed. I am not doing anything anyone else in my shoes would not do," Lynda said. "I know that to my son, I am doing a lot, but in reality I am only doing what anyone would do."

Chris is continuing his recovery in Fort Riley's Warrior Transition Battalion, a unit within the Fort Riley Medical Department Activity for wounded, injured and ill Soldiers to focus on healing. Chris said he is working through a medical board to determine what will happen with his career.

He hopes he can reclassify to position in the Army depending on what he can do physically, he said.

"I love the Army. I love everything it does. I'm hoping for the best. I'll just kind of have to see where this goes," Chris said.

"I try to keep him motivated every day and to reinforce that he is our child; not a burden and that with his determination and hard work, he will continue to recover. I also remind him that he is already doing a million times better than anyone ever expected and it is all due to his strength and determination. Chris is a remarkable young man, and his dad and I are proud to be his parents," Lynda said. ▀

Medics share skills

BAGHDAD—Medics with Co. C, 1st Bn., 18th Inf. Regt., 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade passed on their experience on to their Iraqi Army counterparts during a combat lifesaver course in January at the Besmaya Combat Training Center.

The three-day course focused on essential first-aid tasks that every medic must be able to perform to save lives in a combat environment.

“The Americans have passed on their experience and education and that has been a great benefit to us,” said Iraqi Army Lt. Mohammad Oday, the senior medic at the aid station on Besmaya Combat Training Center.

The training was organized and taught by Staff Sgt. Eric Ring and Pfc. Glenn Dingus both medics with Co. C, 1st Bn., 18th Inf. Regt.

Ring said one challenge has been making the training simple enough to demonstrate.



Staff Sgt. Eric Ring, third from left, a combat medic with Co. C, 1st Bn., 18th Inf. Regt., 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, explains how to treat for air in the chest cavity to Iraqi medics on Jan. 9 during a three-day course at the aid station at the Besmaya Combat Training Center.

“Translation of the medical terminology can make the training difficult,” he said. “To work through this, we planned ahead and used basic terms to describe procedures.”

Dingus, who is on his first deployment, said working with the Iraqi medics has helped him.

“Training the Iraqi medics is a way to stay sharp and improve my teaching abilities,” he said.

SPC. WILLIAM ERMATINGER, 2ND AAB

CAB pilots receive Purple Hearts

Capt. Brent Pafford and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mason McDonald, Troop A, 1st Sqdn., 6th Cav. Regt., Combat Aviation Brigade, received Purple Hearts on Jan. 6 for wounds received in action. The pilots, serving with Troop A, 1st Sqdn., 6th Cav. Regt., Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, were injured when small arms fire hit their aircraft in October of 2010.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Shown from left, following the ceremony, are Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Thomson, Capt. Brent Pafford, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mason McDonald, and Col. Frank Muth.

Around the DIVISION



Deployment ceremony marks 3IBCT departure to Afghanistan

FORT KNOX, Ky.—Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team conducted a deployment ceremony Dec. 9 at Brooks Field, Fort Knox, Ky. The brigade deployed in January to eastern Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Their mission is to assist Afghan national security forces in protecting the Afghan people, neutralizing insurgency and setting conditions necessary for successful transition of regional control to the Afghan government.

The deployment ceremony is a military tradition which acts as a farewell to departing Soldiers and recognizes the sacrifices they and their Families will make in defense of the country. During the ceremony, the brigade colors were cased in preparation for overseas travel.

Lt. Gen. Benjamin Freakley, commanding general of U.S. Army Accessions Command and Fort Knox, presided over the ceremony.

The ceremony marks the beginning of a yearlong deployment and commitment to helping the Afghan government and combating insurgency, Freakley said.

Freakley advised the Soldiers to “trust in your training, trust in your equipment, trust in your leaders, be ready, and you will prevail.”

Special Troops Battalion goes through training exercises

FORT RILEY, Kan.—Soldiers of the Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, conducted a situational training exercise designed to challenge and sharpen their basic Soldier skills.

During the training, four-man squads conducted an eight-mile ruck march, tested their skills in clearing, disassembling and reassembling the M-4 carbine assault rifle and M-249B machine gun, performed proper vehicle maintenance and treated and evacuated casualties.

Spc. Jeffrey Fuggit of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4-1 BSTB, said the training was a great opportunity for Soldiers to familiarize themselves with their equipment, vehicles and weapons.

During the final event, Soldiers responded to a scenario in a simulated urban training environment in which a local sheik alerted U.S. Forces of possible explosives in a nearby house. The Soldiers had to investigate the report by talking to the sheik and then proceed to clear and search the house.

Spc. Gilbert Macias of A Co., 4-1 BSTB, said the training was tough, but he enjoyed it.

“It was challenging, but it was also great motivation to get in better shape and

improve myself,” he said. “Overall, it was a really good training experience.”

Iron Rangers will be making history in Afghanistan

FORT RILEY, Kan.—A 1st Infantry Division unit that is well-known for its historical lineage will add another score to its long lists of achievements.

Family and friends bid farewell to more than 800 Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, during a deployment ceremony Jan. 7 at King Field House.

The Soldiers of the “Iron Rangers” are scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan during the month of January for a year-long mission. Once in theater, the unit’s mission will be to conduct village stability operations, which will require them to assist locals in defending their regions and helping them create the security required to execute further structural and economic stability.

Once the Iron Rangers touch ground in Afghanistan, they will not only be making new history for their regiment, but also their brigade. The battalion is the first unit to deploy to Afghanistan since the brigade was modularized under current Army standards. The brigade currently has its headquarters and other elements serving in Iraq. The brigade was previously set to deploy as a whole entity to Iraq before it received new orders that would then only require a portion of its Soldiers to deploy last September.





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LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE BIG **RED** ONE?

- www.riley.army.mil
- www.facebook.com/1stInfantryDivision
- twitter.com/fightingfirst
- www.flickr.com/photos/firstinfantrydivision
- www.facebook.com/FortRiley
- www.facebook.com/4thManeuverEnhancementBrigade
- www.facebook.com/2hbct1id