

DUTY FIRST!

AUGUST 2011

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

FACING NEW CHALLENGES

As Big Red One salutes its outgoing Sgt. Maj.,
Champagne readies for next chapter in career

– Soldiers compete and honor comrades
during division's Victory Week activities





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.

August 2011 | www.riley.army.mil

1st Infantry Division Commander

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1st Infantry Division CSM

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1st Infantry Division PAO

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COVER: Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, stands guard during a combat patrol in the Rashid District of Baghdad.

MAJ. KIRK LUEDEKE, 4TH IBCT, 1ST INF. DIV. PAO

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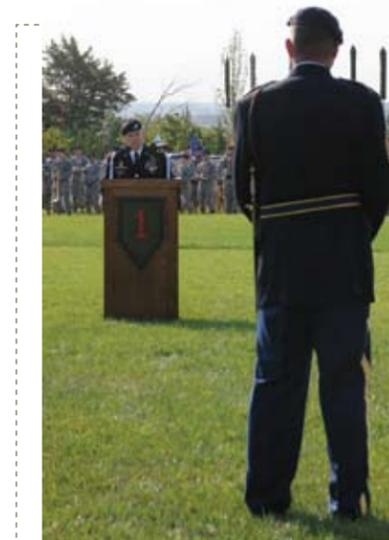
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A time for goodbyes, hellos

Maj. Gen. William Mayville

This past month we said goodbye to the 21st Division Command Sergeant Major, CSM Jim Champagne, who retired after 29 years of service to our Army. He and his wife, Lisa, have selflessly served the Soldiers and Families of the Big Red One for the past six years and their leadership will be missed at Fort Riley and within the First Infantry Division. CSM Champagne began serving the Division as the Brigade CSM for 4th IBCT, where he stood up the Brigade and later deployed with the Brigade to fight insurgent forces on the streets of Baghdad's Rashid District. Upon his return from Iraq, CSM Champagne was chosen to serve the BRO Soldiers as Danger 7 and deployed again to Iraq when the Division took command of USD-South. While CSM Champagne was deployed, Lisa served as the senior adviser to the Enlisted Spouses Club and as a volunteer supporting family readiness and



resiliency activities at Fort Riley. The Champagnes' service to our Division and the Army has been outstanding and will not be forgotten. We bid farewell to Command Sergeant Major Jim Champagne, Duty First!

It was my honor to also participate

with many BRO Soldiers and leaders in the Society of the First Infantry Division's annual reunion. The Society honors the history and accomplishments of the men and women of the Big Red One, both past and present. This year's reunion was held in Buffalo, N.Y., and brought together veterans of the Division from WWII, the Vietnam conflict, Desert Storm and Desert Shield, Afghanistan and Iraq. Throughout the reunion the BRO veterans of the past repeatedly told me how proud they are of you and your accomplishments. The reunion was a time for us to connect and to strengthen the ties of our Division's heraldry and history.

Let me conclude by once again stating how proud I am of your accomplishments and what you do every day for our Army and for our Nation. No Mission too Difficult, No Sacrifice too Great,

Duty First! 

It's been an honor

Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne

As I take a look back at Victory Week 2011, I see victory in the eyes of our Soldiers. Every day of the week was a celebration of not only the division's successes throughout its 94 year history, but a celebration of those who have paid the ultimate in support of this division, each of whom were remembered by Families, spouses and friends during this year's Victory Park ceremony.

It is the Soldiers, NCOs, Officers and Family members who make up the Big Red One that drive this division forward and make it great. As a veteran of the 1st Infantry Division I can truly say that it is the people of the division that has made this the best assignment location I have ever had the privilege to undertake and I have never been more proud to a serve a unit.

During my time as the Command



Sergeant Major for the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team I was able to see what it takes to achieve victory, and I'm still proud of everything our Soldiers are able to do, day in and day out.

My time as Division Command Sergeant Major has only heightened that appreciation and respect, and I urge each of you to continue to train hard, so when the time comes you can take care of your BRO-buddies in their greatest times of need. Never forget their value. They are your lifeline.

Along that same line, never forget to take time for the No. 1 support system in each of your lives, your Family. Duty First! Family always. Without them, I would not be where I am today.

As my retirement approaches, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has inspired and pushed me forward from the beginning. You are never forgotten.

For all of you Soldiers and NCOs, remain vigilant, focused and on point!

Now ... get after it! 



“I have served with a lot of great units, but the 1st Infantry Division is the best.”

— **Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne,**
senior NCO of the Big Red One

Stepping down from a

‘Pretty good gig’

Big Red One’s top NCO prepares for retirement, next stage of life

IN AN OFFICE ON THE THIRD FLOOR OF 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION HEADQUARTERS, the tale of a nearly 30 year Army career is told on walls filled with colorful paintings, pictures, posters and guidons.

Words like leadership, loyalty and excellence are etched into brass plaques attached to frames that surround patches from units including the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Airborne Division and the 1st Infantry Division.

Story by Mollie Miller

—More photos, quotes about Command Sgt. Maj. Champagne, pages 6–7

These collages of memories tell the Army story of a man who has blazed a path for others to follow; they tell the story of Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, the senior noncommissioned officer of the Big Red One.

“I have been fortunate throughout my career to have served with the greatest Soldiers and the greatest leaders in the greatest Army in the world,” Champagne said. “It has been a very, very good run.”

While the mountains of mementos scattered throughout his office speak volumes about Jim Champagne the Soldier, they reveal little of the 17-year-old kid from Massachusetts who joined the Army just two weeks after his high school graduation.

“When I came in, all I knew was playing sports, partying and chasing girls,” Champagne recently reflected. “I was looking for something different; I was looking for a challenge.”

The challenges and the lessons came fast in the first days of his career as Champagne quickly went from hanging around with high school kids to serving with paratroopers.

“The first day I showed up for work at the 82nd Airborne Division in 1982, my team leader, Sgt. Art Vigil, said ‘don’t move, don’t talk, don’t do anything unless I tell you to,’” Champagne said. “Every day after that was a learning experience with him, he taught me all the right things.”

Having enlisted with the sole purpose of getting money for college, Champagne never planned to spend more than four years in the Army. That plan changed, however, when Capt. Terry Callahan and 1st Sgt. Kelly pulled him in to their office 30 days before his End Term of Service date.

“They said ‘hey, you’re a pretty good Soldier and we would like for you to stay,’” Champagne said. “That’s all it took to make me realize that the Army was a pretty good gig and I reenlisted.”

That first reenlistment kicked off

an Army adventure that has taken Champagne across the country and around the world to places like Fort Bragg, N.C., Fort Polk, La., Fort Campbell, Ky., Germany and Vicenza, Italy. During his career, Champagne also has deployed four times in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

Although he said that each of his assignments has had its great points, his best time in the Army has been the six years he has spent with the Big Red One.

“I have served with a lot of great units, but the 1st Inf. Div. is the best,” he said. “There is just a sense of pride as you walk around the division footprint and watch the Soldiers put on the Big Red One patch and know they are part of something special.”

As the final seconds tick off his career and he begins to tally the scores, Champagne has found that the good days full of perfect hunting trips, great friends, successful missions, and amazing adventures with his son, Matt, and his wife, Lisa, easily outnumber the bad.

But he never forgets the bad days.

“Any day I have to attend a memorial service for a fallen Soldier is my worst day in the Army,” he said. “Every one of these Soldiers has a story and a Family and I will never forget any of them.”

Looking to the future and the days beyond his Nov. 30 retirement date, Champagne, who has accepted a job as Director of Military Affairs for Picerne Military Housing, is excited to see what adventures are waiting for him down the road.

“I am comfortable walking away right now because I feel like I have accomplished everything that I could,” he said. “I have given the Army everything I can and it’s time for the next generation to step in and bring our division and our Army to an even higher level of excellence.”

“In the long history of great Soldiers who have served wearing the Big Red 1 patch there has never been a finer Soldier/leader than Jim Champagne. We are who we are because of his leadership and his example.”

Lt. Gen. Vincent Brooks,
3rd Army Commanding General



“While your presence in our ranks will be missed, your lasting contributions will be realized in those you touched as they continue to serve.”

—**Col. Paul T. Calvert and**
Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney Lewis,
2nd “Dagger” Brigade



“In the short time I have worked for Command Sgt. Maj. Champagne, I have witnessed firsthand the professionalism required of a noncommissioned officer to maintain this responsibility ... you have lived and held yourself to the 1st Infantry Division standard.”

—**Sgt. Shelby Boaz,**
DCSM Executive
Administrative Assistant



VICTORY PARK MEMORIAL



CONTROLLED DETONATION CONCERT



1ST SUST. BDE. UNCASING



FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON IN BAGHDAD



ARMY BIRTHDAY 2010



MAKE A WISH FOUNDATION, HONORARY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. IAN FIELD



COMMAND SERGEANTS MAJOR CONFERENCE

HOMECOMING



“His very fiber epitomizes the Soldier in our Army today. As a leader he builds teams ... amongst other leaders.”

—CSM Jim Thomson, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st ID



“CSM Champagne will always be known as the TOP NCO who gave back to our Soldiers, Families and our communities.”

— Staff Sgt. Holly Burke, Audie Murphy Club President



“In the relatively short history of the K-State–Fort Riley Partnership, no man has done more to personally grow this relationship to focus on the Soldier and student. Command Sgt. Maj. Champagne’s leadership here has been epic.”

—Lt. Col. (Ret.) Art De Groat, Director of Military Affairs, Kansas State University



“(His) passion for the outdoors is seen with anyone who has spent time with him. The (FROG) wouldn’t be what it is today without Big Jim’s contributions.”

—Shawn Stratton, FROG Board

WELCOMING GEN. GEORGE W. CASEY JR., U.S. ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF





MOLLIE MILLER, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, the 1st Inf. Div.'s senior noncommissioned officer, greets Command Sgt. Maj. Wylie Hutchison, senior noncommissioned officer for the division's 4th IBCT, Aug. 25. Champagne retired after 29 years of service. He and his family plan to remain in the Junction City area.

Division bids Farewell

Outgoing NCO Champagne stresses future Soldiers hold key for Division's well-being

By Stephanie Hoff
Duty First! Magazine

FOR MORE THAN HALF A DECADE, he's been a prominent leader within the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley. The historic division and post bid farewell to its 21st Division Command Sergeant Major on Aug. 25 during a retirement ceremony conducted at the post's Victory Park.

CSM Jim Champagne, who has served as the division's command sergeant major since 2008, retired after 29 years of military service.

Champagne first arrived at Fort Riley in 2005 to serve as the command sergeant major for the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, which he helped organize and stand up. Less than 18 months after the young brigade was formed, they deployed to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

duct of the unit's enlisted Soldiers.

When Champagne took to the podium for the last time as an active duty Soldier, he took the opportunity to thank the division that has been his home for the past six years.

"The Soldiers of the 1st Division today are still at the tip of the spear. It's truly these great American Soldiers that I pay tribute to today. It has been my absolute pleasure to serve you over these last 29 years and my absolute

It's not about Jim Champagne; it's not about Jim's 29 years of service. It's about the Soldiers that are coming after Jim Champagne."

— Jim Champagne,
21st Division CSM at Fort Riley



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

LEFT: Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, presents Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne a Legion of Merit Award August 25 as Champagne's wife, Lisa, looks on at a retirement ceremony honoring Champagne's 29 years of service. Champagne most recently served as the division's command sergeant major and was recognized during a ceremony at Fort Riley's Victory Park. **RIGHT:** Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne presents Sgt. Stephen Onnen, a sniper section leader for 1st Bn., 28th Inf., 4th IBCT, his NCO sword during a retirement ceremony Aug. 25. Champagne presented the sword to Onnen in hopes his legacy will continue on through the young NCO.

"We're here to celebrate an American hero," said Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley. "His accomplishments as a Soldier and a warrior set the standard for the (noncommissioned officers) in our Army."

Upon the redeployment of the "Dragon" Brigade, Champagne assumed his most recent post as command sergeant major for the division. As the senior NCO of the Big Red One, Champagne served as the commanding general's "right arm," advising the general and his staff on all enlisted matters. He was also responsible for the performance, training, appearance and con-

pleasure to be the 21st division sergeant major, Danger 7, here in the 1st Infantry Division."

Next, Champagne presented his NCO sword to Sgt. Stephen Onnen, a sniper section leader for 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, 4th IBCT, in hopes his legacy will continue on through the young NCO. Champagne noted that he has no doubts of Onnen's leadership capabilities, that he will have a successful career and one day lead his Soldiers to greatness.

"It's not about Jim Champagne; it's not about Jim's 29 years of service. It's about the Soldiers that are coming after Jim Champagne," he said. "It's Soldiers like Sgt. Onnen that make

our future the brightest it can be."

Although he no longer will don an Army Combat Uniform in the morning, Champagne's next career will allow him to continue to support and enhance the quality of life for the post's Soldiers as the new Senior Military Advisor for Picerne Military Housing.

"(He) cared about his Soldiers. He was known for that. We see the results of his efforts everyday in the performance of this great division," Mayville said. "He embodies everything that is outstanding in our Army. He is an outstanding leader. He is a trusted ally and mentor to Soldiers. But most of all, to me, he is a dedicated friend." 



Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, pauses for a photo with some of the division's World War II veterans Aug. 20 during the 93rd Annual 1st Infantry Division Reunion in Buffalo, N.Y. Twenty 1st Inf. Div. World War II veterans attended the 2011 four-day reunion.

MOLLIE MILLER, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

TRUE STORIES

1st Infantry Division past, present reunite & share memories in N.Y.

Story by Mollie Miller, Duty First! Magazine

STORIES OF DIFFICULT MISSIONS AND GREAT SACRIFICE FLOATED LIKE SMOKE ON A BATTLEFIELD IN THE AIR AROUND THE ADAM'S MARK HOTEL IN BUFFALO, N.Y., AS HUNDREDS OF CURRENT AND FORMER SOLDIERS GATHERED THERE FOR THE 93RD ANNUAL 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION REUNION.

Although the dates on the calendar indicated the reunion took place Aug. 17 to 21, it may just as well have read June 6, 1944, Aug. 25, 1966, May 14, 2007, or May 16, 2011, as the Soldiers in attendance brought their brothers in arms back to a mist-covered field in France, to a dark path in the middle of an enemy basecamp in Vietnam, to a dusty road on the outskirts of Baghdad or to an aid station on a desolate hillside in Afghanistan.

"Every Soldier here has a story and, at this reunion, there are men who remember and understand the stories," Sgt. Maj. (ret.) Buddy Wallace, executive director of the Society of the 1st Infantry Division, said. "These men can taste the conversations because they have smelled the smoke, heard the gunfire and know the bond that comes from sharing a battlefield from home."

Five, 30, 50, even 70 years seemed to melt away as the words "so there I was" were uttered again and again over heaping bowls of peanuts and

cold bottles of beer. Men and women who served in places like Aachen, Srok Dong, Kirkuk and Kandahar laughed, shed a few tears, made new friends and renewed old bonds as they celebrated the story of the Big Red One.

"This storied division has, (during) its 94 years of history, seen more than its fair share of courage, bravery and sacrifice," said Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley. "Rest assured that the tradition of heroes past continues with the men and women who proudly wear the Big Red One patch today."

Getting to know more about the BRO Soldiers serving today seemed to be a key goal of many of the veterans in attendance at the reunion. Gathering their active duty brothers into various meeting rooms that had been turned into "command posts" for the division's regimental societies, the veterans peppered the Soldiers with questions about everything from uniforms and equipment to enemy tactics.

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MOLLIE MILLER, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Vietnam veterans with the 2nd Infantry Regiment Association salute during the posting of the colors at the formal dinner portion of the 93rd annual 1st Infantry Division Reunion in Buffalo, N.Y.



MOLLIE MILLER, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Current 2nd Infantry Regiment Soldiers Sgt. Brian Lake, Sgt. Nicholas Giggey and Sgt. Robert Curry, front row, pause for a photo with the veterans of the 2nd Infantry Regiment Association. Lake, Giggey and Curry were all wounded in Afghanistan in May and attended the 1st Infantry Division Reunion in Buffalo, New York as guests of the 2nd Infantry Regiment Association.

All in the Family

Reunion attendees welcome BRO wounded warriors

By Mollie Miller
Duty First! Magazine

Spent brass fell like rain on the dirt road surrounding Sgt. Omar Avila's Humvee. Around him a fire raged, shooting flames through the windows and up through the turret. Further out, two men were running from the humvee, smoke and flame trailing behind them.

Avila himself was still sitting in the blazing Humvee turret manning the .50 caliber machine gun, trying to push back the dozens of insurgents who had set their sights on the men of 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, who were busy trying to save those injured in the explosion.

Inside the vehicle, extra ammunition was "cooking off" and spraying shrapnel everywhere.

"It was like a movie," Avila said of the day he almost died. "I was sure that was it for me."

The date was May 14, 2007, and, during a patrol through the streets of Adhamiyah, Iraq, Avila's humvee had struck a "huge" improvised explosive device. The explosion ruptured the fuel tank and the fire started soon after. When he realized there was "incoming" following the IED, Avila used his 50 cal. to hold off the insurgents until the fire got too hot to stay. The jump from the turret he made to escape the fire broke both his legs. Laying on the ground, still burning from the fire inside the vehicle, Avila was put out by a member of his patrol and pulled into another humvee for evacuation.

(continued on page 12)



MOLLIE MILLER, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

1st Infantry Division wounded warrior retired Sgt. Jay Fain throws out the first pitch before the Buffalo Bison baseball game Aug. 19 in Buffalo, N.Y. Fain was in Buffalo attending the 93rd annual 1st Infantry Division Reunion. He joined three other division wounded warriors and one division veteran to throw out the first pitch before the AAA baseball game.

(continued from page 11)

The extent of his injuries quickly became clear and he was evacuated to Landstuhl, Germany, and then to San Antonio, Texas, to be treated for his severe burns. He remained there for almost a year as he recovered from the third and fourth degree burns that covered 75 percent of his body.

Although four years have passed since his injury and Avila is now officially “retired,” the infantry sergeant remains committed to his division—just as the Soldiers and veterans of the Big Red One remain committed to him and to the hundreds of division Soldiers like him injured while serving.

“We still think about them all the time,” Maj. Aaron Welch, 1st Inf. Div. operations research systems analyst, said. “We want them to know that they are still very much a part of us.”

We wanted to show these guys how much we love them, that we are here to help them and that ... we are going to take care of them.”

**—Bob Douglass, president,
2nd Infantry Regiment Association**

The division’s continuing commitment to BRO wounded warriors was clear Aug. 17 to 21 when several injured BRO Soldiers traveled to Buffalo, N.Y., to attend the 93rd Annual 1st Infantry Division Reunion. The Soldiers, whose trips were sponsored by the Society of the 1st Infantry Division as well as a few of the division’s regimental associations, spent the week telling their stories, making new friends and celebrating the BRO family that still welcomes them.

“We wanted to bring some of the wounded guys out here to meet us and enjoy the reunion,” Bob Douglass, president of the 2nd Infantry Regiment Association, said. “We wanted to show these guys how much we love them, that we are here to help them and that ... we are going to take care of them.”

Sgt. Brian Lake, assigned to the division’s 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, was injured by an improvised explosive device blast May 16 in Afghanistan. Lake, one of the wounded warriors sponsored by the 2nd Infantry Regiment Association, said he was excited to be back among his BRO brothers.

“This is a great opportunity to get to know the history from the guys who lived it first hand,” he said.

Luckily for Lake, “the guys” seemed more than happy to share their stories. Long tales of battles, of buddies lost, of friends made and of the struggles some faced when they returned home from war were told throughout the reunion. With every tale, though, the veterans sprinkled insights into the veteran’s affairs system, the awards process, disability payments, and retirement. Regardless of the topic of the story, however, the care and concern the veterans had for the wounded warriors was clear.

“When these guys started fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, we said they just can’t be treated the way we were treated,” Vietnam veteran John Kerins said. “We have an obligation to make sure they are treated right, treated the way we wanted to be treated.”

Though they are not currently technically “in the fight,” the 1st Inf. Div. wounded warriors present at the reunion still crave the camaraderie of the Big Red One brotherhood and are happy to know that they still have a place to the left and right of their brothers in arms.

“Don’t count us out just because we got injured,” Avila told an Army reporter in 2010. “We are still, and always will be, Family.”



MOLLIE MILLER, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

ABOVE: Veterans, Soldiers and Family members of the 1st Infantry Division get ready to watch the Buffalo Bison take on the Toledo Mud Hens during a AAA baseball game Aug. 19 at Coca Cola field in Buffalo, N.Y. Four of the division’s wounded warriors and one 1st Engineer veteran, Ron Labinski, threw out the game’s first pitches. BELOW: First Sgt. Gloria Cain, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, gives division veteran Paul Miller a kiss on the cheek Aug. 19 during the division’s 93rd Annual Reunion in Buffalo, N.Y.

(continued from page 11)

As the young Soldiers told stories of new technologies, berets, patrol caps and improvised explosive devices, an understanding seemed to emerge among the veterans and active duty Soldiers that though the places and faces are different, the heart of the BRO Soldier, the dedication to the mission and to the men and women on the left and right, hasn’t changed at all.

“Whether we shared a piece of dirt or not, we are all still brothers,” BRO Vietnam veteran Bob Douglass said.

Members of the current BRO formation agree with Douglass.

“It’s amazing to talk to these guys and realize just how much we all have in common,” Iraq veteran Maj. Aaron Welch said. “This is like being with extended Family.”

The future of the BRO appears bright to both the division’s current and past leaders and Soldiers.

“This division is blessed with some of the finest Soldiers in our Army,” May-



ville said. “I assure you, our accomplishments today reflect admirably on the history of (the Big Red One).”

The veterans agreed that the future of the 1st Inf. Div. is in very good hands.

“We all understand what it takes to

wear this patch and to march on into battle when we know it is dangerous to even stand up,” Brig. Gen. (ret.) William J. Mullen III said. “We are blessed to have people like these who stand to defend our freedoms today.”



Story & photos by Mollie Miller



Honoring the
FALLEN

1st Infantry Division remembers 22 Soldiers who gave lives

Mother Nature herself seemed to hold her breath as Sgt. 1st Class Maria Estremera pulled back the red sheet to reveal the names of 11 fallen 1st Infantry Division Soldiers June 29 at Victory Park. Across a thin sidewalk, Sgt. 1st Class Nelson Gamio pulled back an identical red sheet to reveal the names of 11 more fallen division Soldiers.

(continued on p. 16)

OPPOSITE PAGE: A memorial wreath stands at the base of the Fallen Soldier Memorial in Victory Park on Fort Riley June 29 following the Victory Park Ceremony. Twenty-two Soldiers who died while serving with the division in Iraq or Afghanistan during the past 18 months were honored during the ceremony.

RIGHT: Hannah Maher makes a rubbing of the memorial stone honoring her dad, Sgt. Brent Maher, following the Victory Park Ceremony.





Sgt. 1st Class Maria Estremera pulls back a red sheet to reveal the names of 11 fallen 1st Infantry Division Soldiers June 29 during a ceremony at Victory Park on Fort Riley. In total, 22 Soldiers who died while serving with the division in Iraq or Afghanistan during the past 18 months were honored during the ceremony.

“Each day, it is our duty to remember and honor these men and women through our deeds and actions. Make no mistake; the 22 Soldiers we honor today and their Families are forever part of the Big Red One.”

— Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general, 1st Inf. Div. & Fort Riley

(continued from page 15)

“Today, we memorialize the courage and patriotism of 22 Soldiers who gave their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, said. “(Our missions) were successful because of the dedication, selflessness and courage displayed by the men and women we honor today.”

The Victory Park Ceremony, held annually in conjunction with the division’s Victory Week, honors Soldiers who have died while assigned or attached to the 1st Infantry Division during a deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan. The 22 Soldiers honored June 29 served as advisers, as security partners, as members of the Devil, Dagger and Duke brigades, and, most

MORE VICTORY WEEK COVERAGE

- A native Kansan has made a living inscribing stones, including those at Victory Park. 18
- Check out the Victory Week winners in combatives. 23
- Pictorial spread captures winning individuals, units during Victory Week. 24-25

simply, as American Soldiers doing what they could to keep their nation safe.

“Each day, it is our duty to remember and honor these men and women through our deeds and actions,” Mayville said. “Make no mistake; the 22 Soldiers we honor today and their Families



- PFC. SCOTT G. BARNETT
- SGT. AARON M. ARTHUR
- SGT. LAKESHIA M. BAILEY
- PFC. CHARLIE ANTON
- SGT. ANTHONY O. MAGEE
- SPC. JACOB P. DOHRENWEND
- SGT. FAITH HINKLEY
- SGT. BRANDON E. MAGGART

FALLEN SOLDIERS HONORED DURING VICTORY WEEK

- SGT. JOHN F. BURNER III
- SPC. DYLAN T. REID
- PFC. DAVID R. JONES, JR.
- PFC. DAVID D. FINCH
- SPC. JOSE A. TORRE, JR.
- SGT. LASHAWN D. EVANS

- SGT. KRISTOPHER J. GOULD
- STAFF SGT. MECOLUS C. MCDANIEL
- 1ST LT. ROBERT F. WELCH III
- SGT. BRENT M. MAHER
- SPC. JOSEPH A. KENNEDY
- 1ST LT. DEMETRIUS M. FRISON
- SPC. MICHAEL T. SNELGROVE
- CAPT. JOY A. GAPUZAN

are forever part of the Big Red One.”

David and Annavee Hinkley are grateful for the Big Red One and the Army Family that has embraced them since their daughter, Sgt. Faith Hinkley, was killed in Iraq Aug. 7, 2010.

“The Army family has supported us and made things a little easier over the last 10 months,” David said.

Annavee said her daughter was always in the middle of everything, always very busy doing things including cheerleading and marching band competitions.

“It would take a long time to talk about everything she did,” David said.

A third generation Soldier, Faith enlisted in the Army following her freshmen year at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

“We tried to talk her out of it,” Annavee said. “I reminded her that there was a war going on overseas but she just looked me straight in the eyes and said, ‘mama, I’m not afraid.’”

Faith, who was assigned to the 502nd Military Intelligence Battalion at the time of her death, is now listed among the 498 Soldiers whose names are etched into mirrored black granite blocks that line the walkway in Victory Park. But she,



1st Inf. Div. Soldiers making up the 21-gun salute stand ready during the Victory Park Memorial ceremony June 29. The crowd was completely silent as they honored 22 of their fallen brethren.

like the rest of the Soldiers honored in the sacred park next to 1st Inf. Div. headquarters, is more than just an etching in stone. Faith and all the Soldiers, David

said, not only served but also lived. “We can never repay the price these kids have had to pay,” he said. “We can never forget any of them.”



ABOVE: Blank black granite stones stand ready to be etched with the names of fallen 1st Infantry Division Soldiers. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Darren Lorence, a sandblaster with Bell Memorials, prepares a 1st Infantry Division memorial stone in his workshop in Beloit, Kan. Bell Memorials was responsible for creating the 22 memorial stones recently added to the Victory Park Fallen Soldier Monument.

WRITTEN IN STONE

Story & photos by Mollie Miller

Beloit native helps memorialize fallen Soldiers

Surrounded by several black granite rectangles bearing the 1st Infantry Division patch, Jim Bell looked around and uttered a few words that perhaps had not been heard within Bell Memorials since the shop in Beloit, Kan., opened in 1946. "I wish we never had to do this," he said.

Bell has been charged with creating the stones that are being placed along the walkway in Fort Riley's Victory Park to honor 498 Big Red One Soldiers lost in Iraq and Afghanistan. The simple markers, cut from African black granite, are etched with the Soldiers' names, units, the year of their death and the division patch.

"I wish we never had to lose any Soldiers, that we never had to put together memorials like

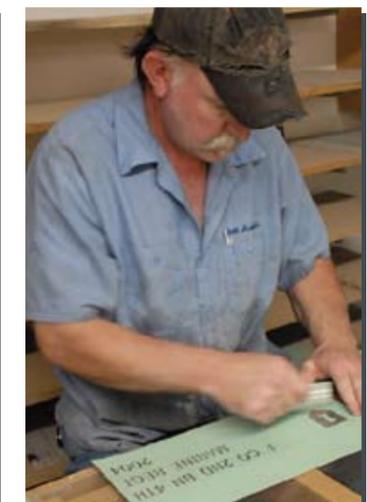
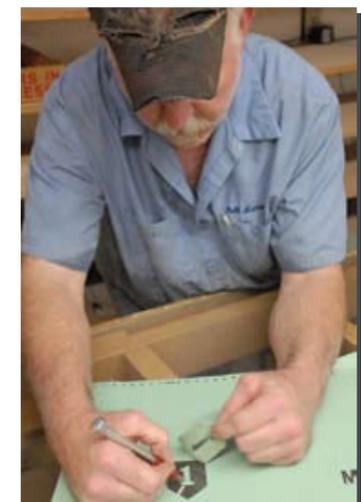
much more to the living than to the dead.

"We do this work because someone lived," Bell said. "These stones provide a place where the living can go and remember."

For those who come to visit the memorial in Victory Park, memories of the Soldiers listed on the granite markers might take them to a summer afternoon in Grand Prairie, Texas, where the four-

This testament to bravery should certainly stand the test of time according to Bell. Once the granite is sandblasted to reveal the names, dates, units and patches, the stones should be easy to read for many years to come.

"Fifty years from now, people will come to this park and look at these stones and know that their father, uncle, grandmother was a part of something important," Bell said.



this," Bell said. "But we have (lost Soldiers) and now we must honor these men and women who have fallen so that we might live in freedom."

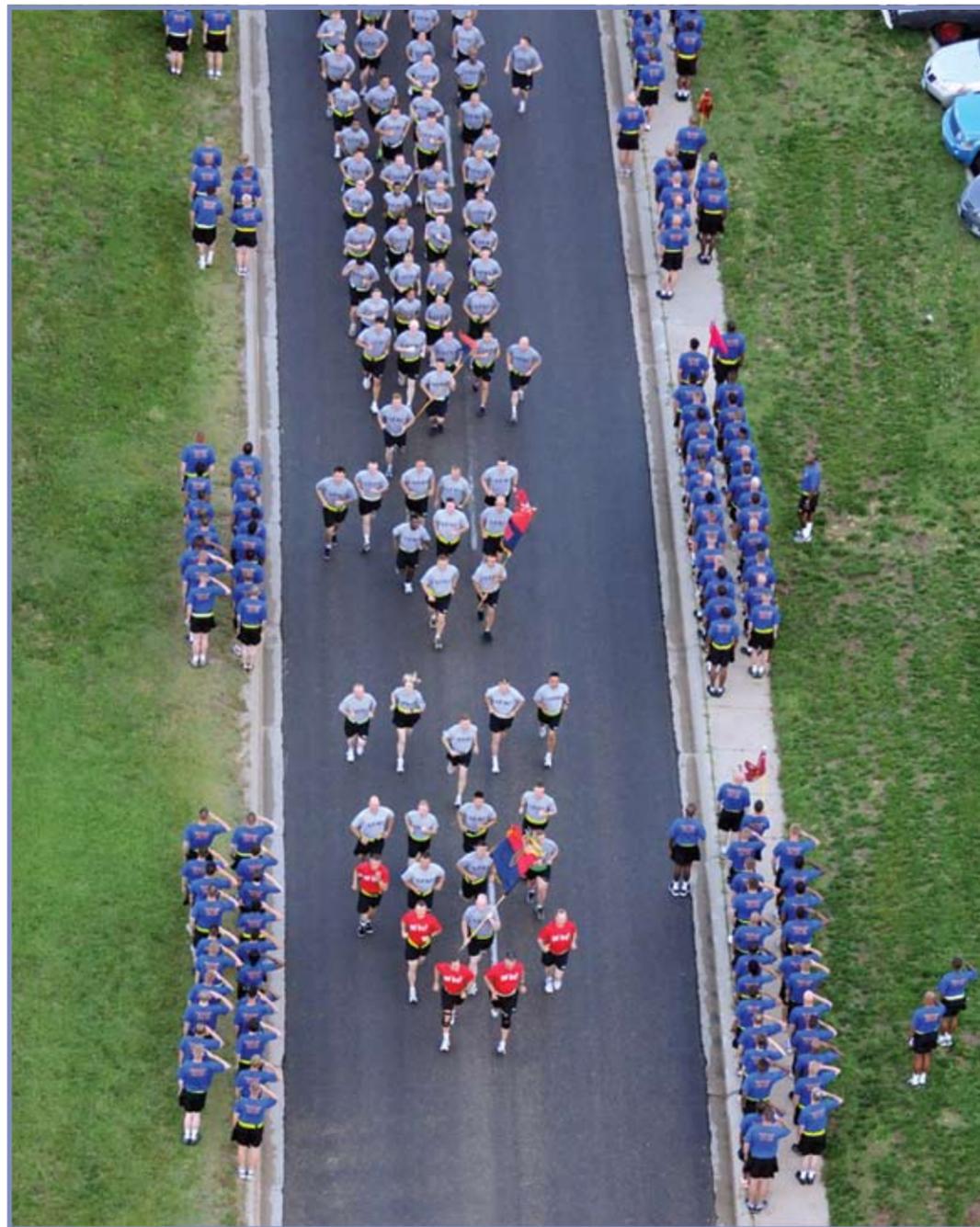
Bell is no stranger to building monuments honoring the dead. The Bell family has been in the memorial and monument business in Kansas and Oklahoma going back five generations and Jim Bell himself entered the profession in 1968. During the past 40-plus years, the stonemason has come to understand that the memorials he and his team create belong

wheelers were fast and the laughs were many or to a tubing adventure down New York's Connetquot River. Victory Park is a place rich with memory because behind each etched name there is a story — and there are people who remember those stories.

"Victory Park is a place of remembrance," Master Sgt. Jeffrey Dran, 1st Inf. Div. headquarters commandant, said. "This is a testament to the bravery and dedication of our greatest assets, the volunteer Soldiers of this great country."

While it is true Bell wishes memorials like the one in Victory Park would never have to be created, he knows that as long as there are wars to be fought, there will be fallen Soldiers who must be honored. So, for those Soldiers and for their friends and Family, he will do his best work.

"We are passionate about doing the right thing for these Soldiers and for the ones they left behind," he said. "We are proud to be able to produce these stones for the division and be a part of honoring these brave men and women."



SGT. ROLAND HALE, COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE PAO

ABOVE: The 1st Infantry Division Command team leads the Division Run to start Victory Week 2011 on June 27. **OPPOSITE PAGES:** Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley, front left, and Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, right, 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley's command sergeant major lead the 4-mile division run on Custer Hill. The Division Run kicked off Victory Week, a celebration of the Big Red One's lineage and history. **MIDDLE & BOTTOM:** Nearly 10,000 Soldiers representing each of the units assigned to the 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley, participated in the Victory Week 4-mile division run.

Blazing the Way

Division 4-mile run ushers in BRO's Victory Week

By Stephanie Hoff
Duty First! Magazine

For the second consecutive year, Fort Riley and the 1st Infantry Division started off Victory Week with a series of bangs underneath looming clouds and falling rain.

"Old Thunder," a Civil War replica cannon, was answered by clashing thunder as nearly 10,000 Soldiers began their 4-mile Victory Run around the Custer Hill roadways to kick off the weeklong 2011 Victory Week celebration.

The early morning run on June 27 took place and has been a recent tradition to the celebratory week in honor of the Big Red One's rich lineage and history.

The run was led by Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley, Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, Brig. Gen. Randall Dragon, deputy commanding general for support, and newly arrived Brig. Gen. Paul Funk, deputy commander for maneuver.

Toward the end of the run, the leading command team stepped to the side to watch cheer on and motivate the NCOs, Soldiers and officers passing by.

The run marked the first participation in Victory Week for Mayville and Funk since assuming their new leadership roles with the 1st Inf. Div.

Rear detachments from deployed 1st and 2nd heavy brigade combat teams and the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team also represented their organizations by running with the unit's cased colors.

The Victory Week celebrations continued throughout the week with various sporting events, a ceremony honoring service members of the 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley who have fallen in the past year, and culminated with the presentation of the Victory Cup; an award presented to the unit with the most accumulated points from the sporting events.



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE



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STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

Pfc. Claude Byrd of 75th Fires Brigade, top, competes against Sgt. Matthew Arrington of 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBCT, in the 170 pound division of the finals for the Victory Week Combatives Tournament on June 30 at King Field House. Arrington defeated Byrd and assisted the 'Rangers' battalion in receiving the top unit honors for the tournament.

FACE-TO-FACE

2011 Victory Week sporting events conclude with Combatives Finals

By Stephanie Hoff
Duty First! Magazine

Not many people leave for work in the morning knowing they will literally get in to a fight or two during the course of their day. Soldiers who entered in the Victory Week's 2011 Combatives Tournament woke up to that precise feeling.

It was a packed house as the 14 remaining Soldiers took to the fighting cage June 30 at Fort Riley's King Field House. The Soldiers, all representing different 1st Infantry Division units, were entering their third and final day of tournament play.



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

FROM LEFT: Spc. Steve Benjamin, top, of 601st ASB, CAB, 1st Inf. Div., competes against Sgt. Tommy Kesterson of 1st Sustainment Brigade during the Victory Week Combatives Tournament, June 30 at King Field House. Benjamin defeated Kesterson to receive the first place finish for the 140 pound category; Pvt. Joseph Sundstrom, top, of 2nd Bn., 32nd Field Artillery, 4th IBCT, pins down Pvt. Erick Ratliff of 2nd Bn., 34th Armor, 1st HCBT. Sundstrom received the first-place honors in the 155 pound division; Staff Sgt. Lonnie Kincaid, top right, of 1st Eng. Bn., 4th IBCT, defeats Pvt. John Heinen of 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBCT, to take home the first-place prize in the over-205 pounds division.

"(Competing) was really fun," said Pfc. Jason Rucker of 601st Aviation Support Battalion, Combat Aviation Brigade, who received a second place finish in his division, though it was his first time participating in the tournament. His accomplishment awarded him a spot on the 1st Inf. Div.'s Combatives team during the All-Army tournament held July 20 to 23.

Modern Army combatives is considered to be relatively new and came into existence when the Army decided it wanted to redo the way military hand-to-hand combat was taught. The current techniques instructed use experts from a variety of martial arts and wrestling disciplines.

Staff Sgt. Lonnie Kincaid has participated in combatives for nearly six years and has competed twice in the All-Army tournament. He said the self-defense and fighting skills Soldiers

COMBATIVES WINNERS

The first-place winners of the Victory Week Combatives Tournament were:

- 125 pounds—Sgt. Clancy Henderson, DHHB
- 140 pounds—Spc. Steve Benjamin, 601st ASB, CAB
- 155 pounds—Pvt. Erick Ratliff, 2nd Bn., 34th Armor, 1st HBCT
- 170 pounds—Sgt. Matthew Arrington, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBCT
- 185 pounds—Sgt. Scott Kay, 1st Bn., 4th Cavalry, 4th IBCT
- Under 205 pounds—Sgt. Jacob Temeyck, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 4th IBCT
- Over 205 pounds—Staff Sgt. Lonnie Kincaid, 1st Engineer Bn., 4th IBCT

receive from the experience is the part

that he finds most rewarding. "My favorite part is the actual fighting. I always worry about some of the guys in my unit and if they can defend themselves," Kincaid said. "They can come in with no fighting experience whatsoever and it teaches them how to fight and how to defend themselves. That actually makes me feel more comfortable if we go to war and get in that situation, I have a lot more confidence knowing my guys are combatives trained."

Kincaid would go on to win first place in the over-205-pound division for the Victory Week Combatives Tournament, a feeling that he described as "awesome."

The "Big Red One" and Fort Riley's celebration of Victory Week included numerous sporting events, which culminated with the championships for the combatives tournament.



Color Guard: Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade



10 Mile Run: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment



Bowling: USAG



Combatives: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment



Sand Volleyball: 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade



Softball: 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment



Victory Warrior Comp.: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment



Trap Shoot: 1st Engineer Battalion



Rock Climbing: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment



Weightlifting: 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment



Golf: 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade



Gaming; 9-Ball: 1st Engineer Battalion; MEDDAC

Victory Week Winners



Dodge Ball: 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment



5-on-5 Basketball: 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade



Kickball: 701st Brigade Support Battalion



'Rangers' win Victory Cup

By Mollie Miller
1st Infantry Division Public Affairs

A strong desire to celebrate the veterans of the 16th Infantry Regiment spurred the "Rangers" of 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, to victory during the 2011 Victory Cup competition.

"We wanted to honor their legacy by doing well during the events," Lt. Col. Kevin Lambert, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt. commander, said. "I think we made them proud."

The Rangers win came following a Victory Week competition highlighted by events that included swimming, wrestling, climbing, weightlifting, shooting and more. In total, the Ranger Soldiers placed first in six of the week's 19 events: the 10-mile run, the victory warrior competition, water polo, the rock climbing competition, flag football and combatives.

"It's been a great week and I want to thank everyone for coming out and giving 110 percent to this effort," Maj. Gen. William Mayville, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, said during the June 30 Victory Cup Ceremony on Custer Hill Parade Field. "I'm proud of you, I'm proud of what you have done, I'm proud of who you are and I'm proud of what you represent."

OVERALL WINNERS: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment

Victory Week is an annual event honoring the history of the Big Red One and celebrating the strength and courage of the men and women who have made the division what it is today.

Lambert said the strength and courage of the veterans of the 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt., 25 of whom were visiting during Victory Week, helped his unit focus on the things they needed to do to claim the Victory Cup.

"The commanders and 1st sergeants put a lot of effort into putting the right guys on the right rosters and made sure we built in time for everyone to practice," he said. "We wanted to ensure that we performed to our potential."

The Rangers were not the only unit honored during the ceremony. Soldiers from the 1st Engineers; 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment; 701st Brigade Support Battalion; 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion; 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade; MEDDAC; U.S. Army Garrison; 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment; and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Combat Aviation Brigade, were recognized for first place finishes in various events. Staff Sgt. Gualberto Ortiz was also recognized during the ceremony as the winner of a 2006 Kawasaki Vulcan raffled by Briggs Auto Group during Victory Week.



Tug of War: 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion



Flag Football: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment



Water Polo: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment



Runners take your

MARKS

Fort Sill hosts 32nd Annual Diamond Brigade Run

By Sgt. 1st Class Jason Kucera | 1st Inf. Div. PAO
SOLDIERS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND CITIZENS OF THE LAWTON-FORT SILL REGION ENJOYED A CHALLENGING, YET RATHER FULFILLING, SATURDAY MORNING RUN DURING THE 75TH FIRES BRIGADE'S 32ND ANNUAL DIAMOND BRIGADE RUN AT FORT SILL ON JUNE 4.

In the event's 32nd year, partnered with Fort Sill's Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, the 5K and 10K sanctioned run is more of a fundraiser for local charitable organizations than just a Saturday morning stroll. The past year alone saw the Diamond Chapter of the United States Army Field Artillery Association (USAFAA) present checks of \$2,000 and \$1,000 to the Lawton Armed Services YMCA and the Lawton Boys & Girls Club, respectively.

Despite a delay in some logistical matters, the brigade managed to sell out of the popular T-shirts for the event, guaranteeing another highly successful Diamond Brigade Run.

Lt. Col. Roderick Herron, brigade deputy

commander, has played an integral part and participated in previous runs through the years. Though this was his last year to participate, he still helped design awards given for overall winners, T-shirt designs and much of the framework which helps keep the fundraiser going strong. When presenting the donation from the 31st Annual DBR, on behalf of the Diamond Chapter of the USAFAA, he made sure the event's organizers and all the Soldiers, in addition to the countless number of anonymous donators were personally thanked.

"Without all of that support, the number of hours, planning and following up over and over with so many different contacts, this would be nothing more than an average unit run," Herron says, "but it's not. This is a huge fundraiser, in its 32nd year, and that's nothing that should go unnoticed."

Herron also said even though he will not be here for next year's run, he hopes to see the event grow ever larger.

Look for the 33rd Annual Diamond Brigade Run in May or June, 2012.

STAFF SGT. WILLIAM SALLETTE, 75TH FIRES BRIGADE PAO

FROM TOP: About 400 runners stand ready to take off for the 32nd Annual Diamond Brigade Run held at Fort Sill, Okla., June 4. The event combined a 1-mile fun run, 5K run and 10K sanctioned run. Proceeds from T-shirt and registration fees helped raise funds for local charitable organizations; Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 18th Field Artillery Regiment, participate in the unit run portion of the 32nd Annual Diamond Brigade Run; 75th Fires Brigade Command team (left to right), Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Roderick Herron, Brigade Command Sergeant Major Cmd. Sgt. Major Sam Young and Acting Brigade Commander Lt. Col. Gavin Gardner pose with overall winner's in the male bracket of the 32nd Annual Diamond Brigade Run at Fort Sill, Okla., June 4.





giving life your **BEST SHOT**

TF Duke boxer navigates life in square ring by staying in correct shape

Story by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Zumer | Task Force Duke PAO

KHOWST PROVINCE, Afghanistan—As violent as boxing can be, many participants have also spoken of its therapeutic or physical benefits upon the mind and body. For U.S. Army Sgt. Michael Lopez, a native of Los Angeles and a signal support specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, both attributes certainly hold true.



STAFF SGT. BEN K. NAVRATIL

ABOVE FROM LEFT: U.S. Army Sgt. Michael Lopez, a Los Angeles native and signal support specialist with Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, swings a sledgehammer at a tire in the Forward Operating Base Salerno gym July 7; Lopez trains on a speed bag at the Forward Operating Base Salerno gym; Lopez spars with another Soldier. Lopez has been training to be a boxer since he was in high school. **BELOW:** Sgt. Lopez practices his striking technique in a mirror. He had an amateur fight record of 12-0 before joining the Army in 2005. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Sgt. Lopez stretches after a workout in the Forward Operating Base Salerno gym July 7.

Lopez, a six-year Army veteran presently serving in eastern Afghanistan, dabbled in other sports growing up, especially running. It wasn't until his senior year in high school, however, that he discovered what would prove to be a passion for a life in the squared circle.

"I found a level of comfort in boxing that wasn't there in track and cross country," said Lopez.

An amateur fighting record of 12-0 fueled his boxing interests further, and after joining the Army in 2005, those desires continued to grow.

With an eye to his future, a duty assignment at the often-frigid Fort Wainwright, Alaska, allowed him to take care of a couple goals simultaneously.

"Going to school and boxing was pretty much all I did in Alaska," he said.

Deciding to test himself further, he entered the All-Army Boxing Competition in December 2005 and proceeded to make the team. Before being able to compete as a member of the team, however, professional duties intervened with an unexpected and most unfortunate twist.

While deployed to Iraq in 2006, Lopez suffered a leg injury caused by an



improvised explosive device that struck the vehicle he was travelling in just outside Taji. The injuries were severe enough for him to take a forced layoff from boxing-related activities for more than a year.

Now that he's fully recovered, Lopez has tailored his diet and fitness regimens toward his boxing goals. For someone who may be trying to lose weight, the 5,000 daily calories that Lopez eats might sound unbelievable.

"I eat about five or six small meals spread throughout the day," he said, with red meat eaten sparingly every couple weeks.

His main dietary staples are almonds, mixed nuts, whey protein, chicken and fish. Sodas and fried foods are avoided completely, all part of a diet that properly fuels an extensive training regiment.

"I have a routine that I go through with about three to four others," Lopez said.

His boxing-specific exercises consist of pushing and flipping heavy tires, beating on tires with a sledge hammer, and working on the speed bag and heavy bag at Forward Operating Base Salerno's specialized gym,

aply referred to as "The Dojo" by its numerous patrons.

On top of his busy work and exercise schedules, he still finds the necessary time to carry four online college courses through the University of Louisville, with the goal of earning a degree in anthropology. His Army enlistment will expire in April 2012, when he'll look forward to becoming a full-time student at the U of L campus.

A future in boxing also looms, but whether or not he succeeds in fighting professionally one day as he hopes to, his efforts have still borne much fruit. ▀



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

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