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.
More than 20 years ago, I had the honor and privilege of wearing the Big Red One patch as I served with the 1st Infantry Division (Forward) in Germany. I learned many lessons and gained valuable experience during my time in the Big Red One as a young staff officer and company commander in the 4th Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment.

On April 15, I was thrilled to once again don that famous patch when I took command of Fort Riley and the 1st Infantry Division. This division has an illustrious history, and I am proud to be part of it. Even now, the men and women of Fort Riley and the Division are adding to the history through their courageous service.

Serving alongside such outstanding men and women is what excites me most about taking command. Carol and I are also excited to be stationed at Fort Riley. This is our first assignment here, and we've already experienced great community hospitality and met a number of wonderful people within the Central Flint Hills Region.

We're looking forward to working with community leaders and expanding upon the already strong bond between Fort Riley and our community partners. For those who were present for the ceremony on April 15th - thanks again for being there for us.

I look forward to the opportunities of service ahead as “Danger 6”, and I’m honored to pick up the torch and carry on in the footsteps of the great former leaders of this historic division and this historic Army post. We will continue to ask for - and be grateful for - your support.

No mission too difficult. No sacrifice too great. Duty First!

Maj. General Vincent Brooks

The challenges to our nation’s peace and freedom are as old as American history and as new as today’s headlines. Those challenges have taken many forms through the years, from the bitter discord in those first battles our newly-formed division endured to the aggression of tyrants around the world. The price of peace and freedom has always remained the same through the service and sacrifice of the young men and women who wear the Big Red One patch.

Tradition is a special part of the Memorial Day holiday, which dates back to the Civil War. As the battle raged, Confederate widows and grieving family members began placing wildflowers on the graves of their loved ones. They did this for the Union Soldiers buried in their states, as well. A similar custom arose in the North around the same time.

In May of 1866, just one year after the conclusion of the war, a shop owner named Henry Welles in Waterloo, N.Y., closed his store for the day in honor of the dead - Federal and Confederate alike. Other businesses followed his lead.

Two years later, on May 5, Gen. John Logan, then commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, asked fellow Civil War veterans to place flowers on the graves of fallen comrades on May 30. He thought this was an important gesture in keeping alive the memories of fallen Soldiers and sailors.

Although the date and location of the first such memorial observance is still in dispute, these acts of gratitude and appreciation became known as Decoration Day.

By 1882, Decoration Day became known as Memorial Day, and the holiday broadened to honor service members from all of America’s wars.

The renowned jurist and Civil War veteran Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., believed that this holiday was the most sacred day of the year. Memorial Day, he declared, should have meaning for all Americans. He asked people not to conclude the holiday with sad thoughts of the passing of our heroes, but rather with thoughts of their legacy, of the life that was made possible by their commitment to our pain.

Looking back across the decades, I marvel at the valor and determination of the gallant Soldiers making up the 1st Infantry Division, who, in each generation since World War I have stepped forward to preserve our freedom, defend our democracy, uphold our ideals and protect our interests.

The battles in which they fought and died - Cantigny, Sicily, Normandy, Aachen, Battle of the Bulge; Operations Hump, Market Garden, Rolling Stone, and Ait黎明; the battles of Ap Tau O, Srok Dong, and Minh Thanh road, Operations Cedar Falls, Junction City, Manhattan, Operation Desert Storm, Bosnia, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom – are a testament to uncommon courage and indomitable spirit. Those who survived were forever changed. Those who died stay forever young in the memories of their loved ones. Their final thoughts most likely were of home and family; their final actions purchased the freedom we enjoy today.

Now, on Memorial Day, our thoughts turn to them. We remember with profound gratitude, those heroes who marched through mud or rice paddies, snow or sand. They knew that true peace is only won by those willing to die for it. We remember those who came before us, those who retell the torch of freedom where tyranny once existed. The passing of time and the blessings of peace and prosperity can never make us forget what these brave Big Red One Soldiers endured and what they lost, so that right to be called Soldiers would triumph, freedom would survive, and our nation would prevail.

Now ... Get after it!
As deployment departure edges closer for transition team members trained by 1st Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade, the training tempo increases to mimic combat conditions.

For the Soldiers on team 47399, situational lanes training on Feb. 26 gave them a chance to not only gain experience in the field, but also find areas in which they could improve.

"Overall it's a great training," said Maj. Richard Collins. "Fort Riley has done a great job of replicating what we should expect to see down range." The day started at 7 a.m., as nine "Centurions" met at a mock forward operating base and received instruction on Hand Held Interagency Identification Detection Equipment – a camera-like device used for storing profile information, such as finger prints, iris scans and other physical attributes of up to 10,000 individuals. A quick coaching from Biometrics Angelo Rijo showed Soldiers what the device did, how it worked and gave them a chance to practice scanning each other into the system.

From the HIIDE lane, the team moved to Humvees to check their communications systems and mounted weapons. A Blue Force Tracker message, which utilizes a global positioning system and radio, was also sent to the mock headquarters. Once the machine guns were ready for action and the communication systems were up and running, the team took part in a crash course in combat lifesaving. Each Soldier stepped up to the dummy and reacted to a given scenario – leg and arm wounds along with a potentially fatal injury.

As the CLS part of the training exercise ended, team leaders began the planning phase of their upcoming mission. The group was to travel to a mock Iraqi village and meet with leaders about the village’s basic needs. Collins mapped out the security of the village and implemented a contingency plan in case something went wrong. Humvees were to secure adjacent corners providing the best angle for cover while the team leaders entered the village.

With plans set, the team mounted their Humvees and prepared to roll out. Their drive time was extended when the team encountered an improvised explosive device along the road. Progress toward the village was stopped, as the transition team put a call in to the explosive ordnance disposal company, notifying them of the IED. Once cleared to move on, the team made their way to the village.

"Fort Riley has done a great job of replicating what we should expect to see down range. Overall it’s a great training," said Maj. Richard Collins. "Our biggest task is to establish the squadron’s footprint here at Fort Riley," Spradlin said. "We have to sign for buildings and establish the unit’s infrastructure – phone lines and internet, setting up installation accounts and integration with Fort Riley policies and procedures."

Spradlin has also worked to establish a "shadow staff" at Fort Riley – placing incoming warrant officers in leadership slots in the forward element that currently consists of about 25 Soldiers, and is growing every week.

"It’s not easy for a warrant officer coming out of flight school at Fort Rucker to be told they are going to serve as primary staff until their respective troops arrive at Fort Riley," Spradlin said. "These Soldiers have maintained a positive attitude and have performed exceptionally well considering the circumstances. They have really stepped up to the plate to help establish the squadron here at Fort Riley."

The squadron is going through the normal amount of personnel changes that follow a deployment, Spradlin said, but the unit is expected to be full strength at Fort Riley by mid-summer.
The weather may not have been warm and clear, but the sun was definitely shining on 1st Sustainment Brigade March 9 as the brigade snipped the ribbon and officially opened the doors of a brand new headquarters and operations complex. Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins, commanding general, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley said the unveiling was one more step of a brand new headquarters and operations complex.

“They’re custom rigs,” Wiggins said. “The thought that went behind each one of these nooks and crannies was very detailed. From the lay-out of the halls, down to the individual Soldier’s personal equipment lockers, all are tailored to facilitate life and work place for Soldiers.”

The $65 million complex took 14 months to complete and was definitely shining on 1st Sustainment Brigade March 9 as the brigade snipped the ribbon and officially opened the doors of a brand new headquarters and operations complex.

The groups included the Junction City Police Department, state and national Veterans of Foreign Wars organizations and the Kansas American Legion. The packages were then shipped from Fort Riley to Camp Liberty, Iraq. “I appreciate the support from them and all of the American people; this shows that they are really looking after us,” Jacques said. “They dedicated time to label the boxes and fill them with candy, snacks, books, children's drawings and support letters.

“This truly made a difference in our Soldiers’ lives here,” Battle said. “You couldn’t ask for anything better to boost the morale.”

The participants from Washington included ministers, university students and other everyday citizens who took the time to label the boxes and fill them with candy, books, children's drawings and support letters.

“Not all Soldiers get packages or mail, so I know these packages are well appreciated. The boxes didn’t just have candy or snacks, but also letters or notes that can really give a piece of home to each Soldier.”

He added that the idea of the project showed just how much the American people care for the men and women in uniform.

“Every Soldier to have a care package from a group of people is amazing to me,” he said. “Just the thought of 7,000 Soldiers knowing that they are supported means so much to me.”

Because the boxes were shipped from Washington to Fort Riley, the home station of the “Dagger” Brigade, the shipping was funded by a variety of groups in Kansas.

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BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — The opening of a road in Konar, Afghanistan, an area overseen by Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, signals one more step toward improvement in the area.

The improved road is 11 kilometers in length and its completion allows the closure of a combat outpost in the area. The project in Deywagal Valley cost $3.9 million and took more than two years to complete. The road was built with the combined efforts of the Unique Builders Construction Company, the Konar Provincial Reconstruction Team and the provincial district governments. Two separate ceremonies in February marked the road’s opening and the removal of U.S. military units from the COP.

Navy Cmdr. Murray Tynch, commanding officer, Konar PRT, spoke of the benefits of the new road and how it will allow the ability to provide security and basic medical care to remote areas of the province. Tynch also emphasized how the road will decrease the risk of improvised explosive devices on these routes and improve trade in and out of the rural areas.

Leaders of Konar were enthusiastic about the benefits the road brings to their community.

“In the past, you were only dreaming of the road,” said Sayed Fazlullah Wahidi, Governor of Konar province. “Now we see it and drive on it. We have all sacrificed for the road and paid a high price. We paid this price for access to schools, hospitals and markets.”

The original idea of improving the road began when 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, was in the area during 2006, and has come full circle now that the unit is back in Afghanistan to see the completion of the project. The unit saw the need for development in the area and spoke with elders about what they wanted and needed. The road and COP were the result.

“We saw that it was an isolated valley and seemed to be very poor,” said Command Sgt. Maj. James Carabello, 1st Bn., 32nd Inf. Regt. “When we met with the elders, they said they wanted two things: A new road and security by coalition forces during the construction. That valley has a great deal of potential and we came through on our promise.”

The opening of the road is important because it will allow the Afghan people the ability to take a larger role in their future, Carabello added.

“Through the road we are providing the people access to the government,” Carabello said. “This is a great success for the people of Afghanistan. It will also allow them to get to markets easier.”

Now that the road going through the valley is complete, COP Seray is no longer necessary for protection and is being closed down.

“This was a huge success,” said Maj. Kendall Clarke, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. “We can hand over the road to the Afghan government and they will have to continue with security in that area, allowing us to focus on other areas.”

The completion of the road through the Deywagal Valley is not the end of road work in the province and COP Seray will not go to waste. The construction company will take over the outpost and will use it as they continue roadwork in the province.

“The UBCC will continue construction to connect the road to the Korengal Valley,” Clarke said. “Then what was once a six-hour drive will only take 30 minutes.”

Pfc. Henry Gardner, Company C, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, connects a large container to a crane for removal at Combat Outpost Seray. The COP was closed after the road opening in the valley.
By Spc. Shantelle J. Campbell
4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team PAO

Gathered on the field of the Kansas State Alumni Stadium, university lacrosse players donned the Big Red One patch March 7 to honor the memory of their first coach as well as show their support of the 1st Infantry Division.

“It’s really important to us,” said Stewart Lane, a goalie for the K-State lacrosse team. “We like having Fort Riley and the Army involved because of our background and our roots.”

In the late ‘80s, a 1st Inf. Div. officer and pilot, 1st Lt. Donaldson P. Tillar, started the Kansas State men’s lacrosse team. Tillar only coached for a year before he was deployed in support of Operation Desert Storm and was killed by enemy fire on Feb. 27, 1991.

To honor his memory, K-State hosts the Tillar Tournament every fall, and for the past five years, 1st Inf. Div. officers have coached the K-State lacrosse team. March 7, the Wildcats took on Ole’ Miss, a match they lost 10-7.

Currently, 1st Lt. Joseph Leboeuf, a civil affairs officer with 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, and 1st Lt. Phillip Cooper, a combat engineer with 1st Engineer Battalion, coach the Wildcats.

“I was actually looking to play,” said Leboeuf, “but then I realized it was an intercollegiate team, so I talked with their coach, who was also a volunteer from Fort Riley, and started coaching last year.”

The physical aspects and the bond that forms between the players on the team are the best parts of lacrosse for the former West Point lacrosse player and West Point, N.Y., native.

“It’s physical; it’s fast and requires great skill from all positions,” said Leboeuf. “It’s also a great community. Lacrosse is not a well known sport in a lot of places, so when you have lacrosse players around each other it’s a great brotherhood and the guys are a lot of fun to be around.”

Matt Herring, an attackman for the Kansas State University lacrosse team, looks to pass during a March 7 conference game inside Kansas State Alumni Stadium. The Wildcats wear the Big Red One patch in honor of the team’s first coach, 1st Lt. Donaldson P. Tillar.
In 1904, the Army Medal of Honor was modified. The words "United States of America" replaced the ring of 34 stars and "Minerva Repulsing Discord" was changed to display a simple profile of the helmeted Goddess of War. The oak clusters remained in the points of the star, now in a dark enameled green. The laurel clusters were moved to a wreath where they too were enameled in green, in the shape of an open wreath. The eagle that had once perched on cannon, saber in its talons, now perched on a bar bearing the word "valor" and the shafts of arrows.

A review of the award process occurred in 1897. The award process became more standardized after this review and established the award had to be given for "gallantry and intrepidity" above and beyond that of fellow Soldiers; required that the award nomination be made by someone other than the veteran who performed the action; and required the testimony of an eyewitness.

One of the most famous events associated with the Medal of Honor is the purge of 1917. A review convened in 1916 under Lt. Gen. Nelson Miles, himself a Medal of Honor awardee, examined each of the Army medals awarded. A report presented in February 1917 revoked the medals presented to 911 people including 864 medals awarded to Soldiers in the 27th Maine and 29 medals given to those who served as Lincoln's funeral guard. Six medals awarded to civilians were revoked as well. Included in this group were Mary Walker, the only female awardee, and Buffalo Bill Cody, a scout and technically not a Soldier during the Indian Wars.

Walker, who refused to return the medal as requested by the U. S. Army, proudly wore it every day until she died. In 1977, the award was reinstated to Walker. The medals awarded to Cody and five other scouts were also later reinstated.

Source: Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

The Medal of Honor is the highest honor given to U.S. service members and those on whom it is bestowed are true heroes. The award’s history can be traced back to the Civil War era, when a proposal endorsed by then Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles was signed by President Abraham Lincoln in December 1861.

The next year, a similar award was approved by Congress for the Army. Although the medal was first proposed only for veterans of the Civil War, Congress later made the medal a permanent decoration.

Since that time, more than 3,400 men and one woman have been awarded the medal. The original Naval Medal of Honor design consisted of an inverted five-point star. On each of the five points was a cluster of laurel leaves to represent victory, mixed with a cluster of oak leaves to represent strength. Surrounding the encircled insignia were 34 stars, equal to the number of stars on the U.S. Flag in 1862. Inside the circle of 34 stars were engraved two images. To the right was the image of Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and war. On her helmet was perched an owl, representing wisdom. In keeping with the Roman tradition, her left hand held a bundle of rods and an ax blade, symbolic of authority. The shield in her right hand represented the shield of the Union of our states, similar to the shield on our nation’s seal and other important emblems.

Recolling from Minerva was a man clutching snakes in his hands. He represented discord and the insignia came to be known as “Minerva Repulsing Discord.” Taken in the context of the Civil War, when Soldiers and Sailors were struggling to overcome the discord of the states and preserve the Union, the design was fitting.

The Army Medal of Honor was created soon after the Navy’s version. It included an eagle, symbolizing the U.S., and was perched on a cannon with a saber grasped in its talons. The eagle was placed at the top of the medal, attaching it to the ribbon.

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Source: Congressional Medal of Honor Society.
Division Welcomes New Commander

Standing on Cavalry Parade Field April 15, Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks assumed command of the 1st Infantry Division - a division which gave him his first taste of command early in his career.

"It was in the Big Red One that I learned what it was to command. It has been my foundation for command at battalion, brigade and division levels since then," Brooks said. "What a great outfit. What a distinguished history. What an incredibly humbling responsibility and what an immense honor it is to join the line of Soldiers who have served as Danger 6."

Brooks has more than 28 years experience as a commissioned officer. He came to Fort Riley from Fort Hood, Texas, where he served as deputy commanding general for III Corps and Fort Hood. Additionally, Brooks served as the deputy commanding general for support of the 1st Cavalry Division and Multi-National Division-Baghdad in Iraq from June 2006 to December 2007.

"Vince has an established, justifiable reputation within the Army as a combat leader and a warrior," said Gen. Charles Campbell, commanding general, U.S. Army Forces Command, during the assumption of command ceremony. "He is the right commander at the right time to lead Fort Riley and the 1st Infantry Division."

As commander of the 1st Inf. Div., Brooks will oversee the training and deployment of thousands of Soldiers. In an interview on April 14, Brooks said it was important Soldiers be confident in their unit and the training they received.

"First, I just want Soldiers to do their best. And I want leaders to do their best for their Soldiers and Families," Brooks said. "If we're doing that - if we're preparing ourselves for the mission ahead of us and also taking good care of our Families, then we'll be doing the right things."

Relinquishing command duties was Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins.

Wiggins became the 1st Inf. Div. assistant division commander for maneuver on July 7, 2008. In the same month, he assumed duties as the commanding general of the 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley. Wiggins has been tapped to be deputy commanding general, Fifth U.S. Army North, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

"I can without hesitation state that this post, nestled in the Central Flint Hills Region is truly one of the finest posts the Army has to offer," Wiggins said. "To the commanders, staff and Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, I want to thank you for your unwavering support. It has been a distinct honor and privilege to have served beside each one of you."
Pvt. Sterling Morelock, 28th Inf. Regt.

While his company was being held up by heavy enemy fire, Pvt. Morelock, with three other men who were acting as runners at company headquarters, voluntarily led them as a patrol in advance of his company’s frontline through an intense rifle, artillery, and machine gun fire and penetrated woods, which formed the German frontline.

Encountering a series of five hostile machine gun nests, containing one to five machine guns each, with his patrol he cleaned them all out, gained and held complete mastery of the situation until the arrival of his company commander with reinforcements, even though his entire party had become casualties. He rendered first aid to the injured and evacuated them by using as stretcher bearers 10 German prisoners whom he had captured. Soon thereafter, his company commander was wounded and while dressing his wound, Pvt. Morelock was very severely wounded in the hip, which forced his evacuation. His heroic action and devotion to duty were an inspiration to the entire regiment.

2nd Lt. Samuel L. Parker, 28th Inf. Regt.

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. During the attack the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 28th Infantry were merged, and after several hours of severe fighting, successfully established a frontal position. In so doing, a gap was left between the right flank of the French 153rd Division on their left and the left flank of the 28th Infantry Regiment, exposing it to terrific enfilade fire from several enemy machine guns located in a rock quarry on high ground. Second Lt. Parker, observing this serious situation, ordered his patrol to follow him in an attack upon the strong point. Meeting a disorganized group of French Colonials wandering leaderless about, he persuaded them to join his platoon. This consolidated group followed 2nd Lt. Parker through direct enemy rifle and machine fire to the crest of the hill and rushing forward, took the quarry by storm, capturing six machine guns and about 40 prisoners. The next day, when the enemy had recovered, 2nd Lt. Parker, in command of the merged 2nd and 3rd Battalions was in support of the 1st Battalion. Although painfully wounded in the foot, he refused to be evacuated and continued to lead his command into the objective was reached. Seeing that the assault battalion was heavily enfiladed by fire due to a gap between it and the French on its left, 2nd Lt. Parker led his battalion through this heavy fire up on the line to the left of the 1st Battalion and thereby closed the gap, remaining in command of his battalion until the newly established lines of the 28th Infantry were thoroughly consolidated.

In supervising the consolidation of the new position, 2nd Lt. Parker was compelled to crawl about on the hillside, frequently in the knowledge of being under fire. His conspicuous gallantry and spirit of self-sacrifice were a source of great inspiration to the members of the entire command.
parts and equipment, including another workable radio. On the third trip he was again hit, suffering machine gun bullet wounds in the legs. Still this valiant Soldier would not stop for rest or medical attention. Remaining exposed to heavy enemy fire, growing steadily weaker, he added in establishment of radio communication on the beach. While so engaged this dauntless Soldier was hit for the third time and killed. The indomitable courage and personal bravery of Technician 5th Grade Pinder was a magnificent inspiration to the men with whom he served.


For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty in action involving actual conflict with the enemy. When the enemy launched a counterattack which threatened the position of his company, Pvt. Reese, as the acting squad leader of a 6th millimeter mortar squad, displaying superior leadership on his own initiative, maneuvered his squad forward to a favorable position, from which, by skillfully directing the fire of his weapon, he caused many casualties in the enemy ranks, and aided materially in repulsing the counterattack. When the enemy fire became so severe as to make his position untenable, he ordered the other members of his squad to withdraw to a safer position, but declined to seek safety for himself. So as to bring more effective fire upon the enemy, Pvt. Reese, without assistance, moved his mortar to a new position and attacked an enemy machine gun nest. He had only three rounds of ammunition but secured a direct hit with his last round, completely destroying the nest and killing the occupants. Ammunition being exhausted, he abandoned the mortar, seized a rifle and continued to advance, moving into the second group, killing five, wounding two others, and forcing the enemy to withdraw. He scoured the area near his battered stronghold and captured 10 prisoners. By this time the rest of his company had begun a counterattack; he moved forward to assist another platoon to regain its position. Remaining in the lead, crawling and running in the face of heavy fire, he overtook the enemy, and liberated the American squad captured earlier in the battle. In all, single-handed and armed only with his rifle, he killed between 15 and 20 Germans, wounded at least as many more, and, displaying indomitable courage and his determination to hold his position at all costs, was responsible for stopping an enemy break-through.

 Sgt. Max Thompson, 18th Inf. Regt.

On Oct. 18, 1944, Co. K, 18th Infantry, occupying a position on a hill near Haaren, Germany, was attacked by an enemy infantry battalion supported by tanks. The attack was preceded by an artillery barrage, followed by an assault by the tanks and infantry, with the enemy being supported by heavy machine guns and a dozen antitank guns. Thompson gallantly led the men of his platoon forward until they were pinned down by murderous flanking fire from two enemy machine guns. He fearlessly crawled alone to within 30 feet of the first enemy position, killed the crew of four and silenced the gun with accurate grenade fire. He continued to crawl through intense enemy fire to within 20 feet of the second position where he leaped to his feet, made a lone, ferocious charge and captured the gun and its nine-man crew. Observing another platoon pinned down by two more German machine guns, he led a squad on a flanking approach and, rising to his knees in the face of direct fire, coolly and deliberately lobbed three grenades at the Germans, silencing one gun and killing its crew. With tenacious aggressiveness, he ran toward the other gun and knocked it out with grenade fire. He then returned to his platoon and led it in a fierce, inspired charge, forcing the enemy to fall back in confusion. 1st Lt. Will was mortally wounded in this last action, but his heroic leadership, indomitable courage, and unflinching devotion to duty live on as a perpetual inspiration to all those who witnessed his deeds.


He was in charge of a squad of the 2nd Platoon in the vicinity of Holzberg, Germany, early in the morning of Sept. 24, 1944, when two enemy companies supported by machine guns launched an attack to seize control of an important crossroads which was defended by his platoon. One American third was forced back, another captured, leaving only Staff Sgt. Schaefer’s men to defend the position. To shift his squad into a house which would afford better protection, he crawled about under heavy machine-gun and mortar fire, instructing each individual, and moved to the building. A heavy concentration of enemy artillery fire scored hits on his strong point. Staff Sgt. Schaefer assigned his men to positions and selected for himself the most dangerous position at the door. With his M-1 rifle, he broke the first wave of infantry thrown toward the house. The Germans attacked again with grenades and flame throwers but were thrown back a second time, Staff Sgt. Schaefer killing and wounding several. Regrouped for a final assault, the Germans approached from two directions. One force drove at the house from the front, while a second group advanced stealthily along a hedgerow. Recognizing the threat, Staff Sgt. Schaefer fired rapidly at the enemy before him, killing or wounding all six; then, with no cover whatever, dashed to the hedgerow and poured deadly accurate shots into the second group, killing five, wounding two others, and forcing the enemy to withdraw. He scoured the area near his battered stronghold and captured 10 prisoners. By this time the rest of his company had begun a counterattack; he moved forward to assist another platoon to regain its position. Remaining in the lead, crawling and running in the face of heavy fire, he overtook the enemy, and liberated the American squad captured earlier in the battle. In all, single-handed and armed only with his rifle, he killed between 15 and 20 Germans, wounded at least as many more, and, displaying indomitable courage and his determination to hold his position at all costs, was responsible for stopping an enemy break-through.

 Sgt. Max Thompson, 18th Inf. Regt.

On Oct. 18, 1944, Co. K, 18th Infantry, occupying a position on a hill near Haaren, Germany, was attacked by an enemy infantry battalion supported by tanks. The attack was preceded by an artillery barrage, followed by an assault by the tanks and infantry, with the enemy being supported by heavy machine guns and a dozen antitank guns. Thompson gallantly led the men of his platoon forward until they were pinned down by murderous flanking fire from two enemy machine guns. He fearlessly crawled alone to within 30 feet of the first enemy position, killed the crew of four and silenced the gun with accurate grenade fire. He continued to crawl through intense enemy fire to within 20 feet of the second position where he leaped to his feet, made a lone, ferocious charge and captured the gun and its nine-man crew. Observing another platoon pinned down by two more German machine guns, he led a squad on a flanking approach and, rising to his knees in the face of direct fire, coolly and deliberately lobbed three grenades at the Germans, silencing one gun and killing its crew. With tenacious aggressiveness, he ran toward the other gun and knocked it out with grenade fire. He then returned to his platoon and led it in a fierce, inspired charge, forcing the enemy to fall back in confusion. 1st Lt. Will was mortally wounded in this last action, but his heroic leadership, indomitable courage, and unflinching devotion to duty live on as a perpetual inspiration to all those who witnessed his deeds.
courage while constantly risking his life during a period of many hours had an inestimable effect on his comrades and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

Capt. Bobbie E. Brown, 18th Inf. Regt. He commanded Co. C, 18th Infantry Regiment, on Oct. 8, 1944, when it, with the Ranger Platoon of the 1st Battalion, attacked Crucifix Hill, a key point in the enemy’s defense of Aachen, Germany. As the leading rifle platoon assaulted the first of many pillboxes stuđing the rising ground, heavy fire from a flanking emplacement raked it. An intense artillery barrage fell on the American troops which had been pinned down in an exposed position. Seeing that the pillboxes must be neutralized to prevent the slaughter of his men, Capt. Brown obtained a pole charge and started forward alone toward the first pillbox, about 100 yards away. Hugging the ground while enemy bullets whipped around him, he crawled and then ran toward the aperture of the fortification, rammed his explosive inside and jumped back as the pillbox and its occupants were blown up. He rejoined the assault platoon, secured another pole charge, and led the way toward the next pillbox under continuous artillery fire, automatic, and small-arms fire. He again ran forward and placed his charge in the enemy fortification, knocking it out. He then found that fire from a third pillbox was pinning down his company; so he returned to his men, secured another charge, and began to creep and crawl toward the hostile emplacement. With heroic bravery he disregarded opposing fire and worked ahead in the face of bullets streaming from the pillbox. Finally reaching his objective, he stood up and inserted his explosive, silencing the enemy. He was wounded by a mortar shell but refused medical attention and, despite heavy hostile fire, moved swiftly among his troops exhorting and instructing them in subduing powerful opposition. Later, realizing the need for information of enemy activity beyond the hill, Capt. Brown went out alone to reconnoiter. He observed possible routes of enemy approach and several times deliberately drew enemy fire to locate gun emplacements. Twice more, on this self-imposed mission, he stood up and inserted his explosive, silencing the enemy. When he was wounded himself, he carried his wounded automatic rifleman to safety. Refusing aid, Staff Sgt. DeFranzo courageously moved out in the open to the aid of the wounded scout and was himself wounded but brought the man to safety. Refusing aid, Staff Sgt. DeFranzo re-entered the open field and led the advance upon the enemy. There were always at least two machine guns bringing unrelenting fire upon him, but Staff Sgt. DeFranzo kept going forward, firing into the enemy and one by one the enemy emplacements became silent. While advancing he was again wounded, but continued on until he was within 100 yards of the enemy position and even as he fell, he kept firing his rifle and waving his men forward. When his company came up behind him, Staff Sgt. DeFranzo, despite his many severe wounds, suddenly raised himself and once more moved forward in the lead of his men until he was again hit by enemy fire. In a final gesture of indomitable courage, he threw several grenades at the enemy machine gun position and completely destroyed the gun. In this action, Staff Sgt. DeFranzo lost his life, but by bearing the brunt of the enemy fire in leading the attack, he prevented a delay in the assault which would have been of considerable benefit to the foe, and he made possible his company’s advance with a minimum of casualties. The extraordinary heroism and magnificent devotion to duty displayed by Staff Sgt. DeFranzo was a great inspiration to all about him, and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the armed forces.

Staff Sgt. Walter D. Elhers, 18th Inf. Regt. For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on June 9-10, 1944, near Givville, France. Staff Sgt. Elhers, always acting as the spearhead of the attack, repeatedly led his men against heavily defended enemy strong points, exposing himself to deadly hostile fire whenever the situation required heroic and courageous leadership. Without waiting for an order, Staff Sgt. Elhers, far ahead of his men, led his squad against a strongly defended enemy strong point, personally killing four members of an enemy patrol who attacked him en route. Then, crawling forward under withering machine gun fire, he pounced upon the gun crew and put it out of action. Turning his attention to two mortars protected by the crossfire of two machine guns, Staff Sgt. Elhers led his men through this hail of bullets to kill or put to flight the enemy of the mortar section, killing three men himself. After mopping up the mortar positions, he again advanced on a machine gun, his progress being stymied by fire hurled by the squad. When he was almost on top of the gun he leaped to his feet and, although greatly outnumbered, he knocked out the position single-handed. The next day, having advanced deep into enemy territory, the platoon of which Staff Sgt. Elhers was a member, finding itself in an untenable position as the enemy brought increased mortar, machine gun, and small arms fire to bear on it, was ordered to withdraw. Staff Sgt. Elhers, after his squad had covered the withdrawal of the remainder of the platoon, stood up and by continuous fire at the semicircle of enemy placements, diverted the bulk of the heavy hostile fire on himself, thus permitting the members of his own squad to withdraw. At this point, though wounded himself, he carried his wounded automatic rifleman to safety and then returned fearlessly over the shell-swept field to retrieve the automatic rifle which he was unable to carry previously. After having his wound treated, he refused to be evacuated, and returned to lead his squad. The intrepid leadership, indomitable courage, and fearless aggressiveness displayed by Staff Sgt. Elhers in the face of overwhelming enemy forces serve as an inspiration to others.

Pfc. Robert T. Henry, 16th Inf. Regt. Near Lucches, Germany, he volunteered to attempt the destruction of a nest of five enemy machine guns located in a bunker 150 yards to the flank which had stopped the advance of his platoon. Stripping off his pack, overshoes, helmet, and overcoat, he sprinted alone with his rifle and hand grenades across the open terrain toward the enemy emplacement. Before he had gone half the distance, he was hit by a burst of machine gun fire. Dropping his rifle, he continued to stagger forward until he fell mortally wounded only 10 yards from the enemy emplacement. His single-handed attack forced the enemy to leave the machine guns. During this break in hostile fire the platoon moved forward and overran the position. Pvt. Henry, by his gallantry and intrepidity and utter disregard for his own life, enabled his company to reach its objective, capturing this key defense and 70 German prisoners.

Tech Sgt. Jake W. Lindsey, 16th Inf. Regt. For gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on Nov. 16, 1944, in Germany. Tech Sgt. Lindsey assumed, under a heavy volume of fire from the front of his platoon during an intense enemy infantry-tank counterattack, and by his unflinching courage and disregard for his own safety, enabled four machine gun nests, forced the withdrawal of two tanks, and effectively halted enemy flanking patrols. Later, although painfully wounded, he engaged eight Germans, who were reestablishing machine gun positions, in hand-to-hand combat, killing three, capturing three, and causing the other two to flee. By his gallantry, Tech Sgt. Lindsey secured his unit’s position, and reflected great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

Pfc. Francis X. McGraw, 26th Inf. Regt. He manned a heavy machine gun emplaced in a foxhole near Schwechenhutte, Germany, on Nov. 19, 1944, when the enemy launched a fierce counterattack. Braving an intense hour-long preparatory barrage, he maintained his stand and poured deadly accurate fire into the advancing foot troops until they faltered and came to a halt. The hostile forces brought up a machine gun in an effort to dislodge him but were frustrated when he lifted his gun to an exposed but advantageous position atop a log, courageously stood up in his foxhole and knocked out the enemy weapon. A rocket blasted his gun from position, but he retrieved it and continued firing. He silenced a second machine gun and then made repeated trips over fire-swept terrain to replenish his ammunition supply. Wounded painfully in this dangerous task, he disregarded his injury and hurried back to his post, where his weapon was showered with mud when another rocket barely missed him. In the midst of the battle, with enemy troops taking advantage of his predicament to press forward, he calmly cleaned his gun, put it back into action and drove off the attackers. He continued to fire until his ammunition was expended, when, with a fierce desire to close with the enemy, he picked up a carbine, killed one enemy Soldier, wounded another and engaged in a desperate firefight with a third until he was mortally wounded by a burst from a machine pistol. The extraordinary heroism and intrepidity displayed by Pvt. McGraw inspired his comrades to great
Having rejoined his men, he was leading them toward the battalion's position. Informing the commander of Viet Cong advancing along the road toward the battalion's position, Sgt. Robinson again in the leg, this time with a tracer round which set fire to his clothing, Sgt. Robinson ripped the burning clothing again in the leg, this time with a tracer round which set fire to his clothing, Sgt. Robinson ripped the burning clothing into the area of most intense action where he distributed ammunition, re-established positions and rendered aid to the wounded. Disregarding the painful wounds, he unhesitatingly assumed command when a rifle company commander was medically evacuated. Capt. Rubio was wounded a third time as he selflessly exposed himself to the devastating enemy fire to move among his men to encourage them to fight with renewed effort. While aiding the evacuation of wounded personnel, he noted that a smoke grenade which was intended to mark the Viet Cong position for air strikes had fallen dangerously close to the friendly lines. Capt. Ruby ran to reposition the grenade but was immediately struck to his knees by enemy fire. Despite his several wounds, Capt. Ruby scooped up the grenade, ran through the deadly hail offire to within 20 meters of the enemy position and hurled the already smoking grenade into the midst of the enemy before he fell for the final time. Using the repositioned grenade as a marker, friendly air strikes were directed to destroy the hostile positions. Capt. Rubio's singularly heroic act turned the tide of battle, and his extraordinary leadership and valor were a magnificent inspiration to his men. His remarkable bravery and selfless concern for his men are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on Capt. Rubio and the U.S. Army.

PSG Matthew Leonard, 1st Bn., 16th Inf. Regt.
For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Pvt. Merli slipped down beside the dead assistant gunner and feigned death. No sooner had the enemy group withdrawn then he was up and firing in all directions. Once more his position was taken and the captors found two apparently lifeless bodies. Throughout the night Pvt. Merli stayed at his weapon. By daybreak the enemy had suffered heavy losses, and as our troops launched an assault, asked for a trace. Our negotiating party, who accepted the German surrender, found Pvt. Merli still at his gun. On the battlefield lay 52 enemy dead, 19 of whom were directly in front of the gun. Pvt. Merli’s gallantry and courage, and the losses and confusion that he caused, contributed materially to our victory.

Vietnam

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. 2nd Lt. Hibbs was in command of a 15-man ambush patrol, part of the 2nd Battalion, when his squad came under intense fire from Viet Cong advancing along the road toward the battalion’s position. Informing his command post by radio of the impending attack, he prepared his men for the oncoming Viet Cong. He was serving as a machine gunner in the vicinity of Sars la Bruyere, Belgium, on the night of Sept. 4-5, 1944, when his company was attacked by a superior German force. His position was overrun and he was surrounded when our troops were driven back by overwhelming numbers and firepower. Disregarding the fury of the enemy fire concentrated on him, he maintained his position, covering the withdrawal of our riflemen and breaking the force of the enemy pressure. His assistant machine gunner was killed and the position captured; the other eight members of the section were forced to surrender. Pvt. Merli slumped down beside the dead assistant gunner and feigned death. No sooner had the enemy group withdrawn then he was up and firing in all directions. Once more his position was taken and the captors found two apparently lifeless bodies. Throughout the night Pvt. Merli stayed at his weapon. By daybreak the enemy had suffered heavy losses, and as our troops launched an assault, asked for a trace. Our negotiating party, who accepted the German surrender, found Pvt. Merli still at his gun. On the battlefield lay 52 enemy dead, 19 of whom were directly in front of the gun. Pvt. Merli’s gallantry and courage, and the losses and confusion that he caused, contributed materially to our victory.

Medal of Honor Recipients
and hand grenades. Although the platoon leader and several other key leaders were among the first wounded, Platoon Sgt. Leonard quickly rallied his men to throw back the initial enemy assaults. During the short pause that followed, he organized a defensive perimeter, redistributed ammunition, and inspired his comrades through his forceful leadership and words of encouragement.

Noticing a wounded companion outside the perimeter, the platoon leader, Platoon Sgt. Leonard, moved himself to the point to direct the fire of his men against the well-camouflaged foe. Under the cover of the main attack, the enemy moved a machine gun into a location where it could sweep the entire perimeter. This threat was magnified when the platoon machine gun in this area malfunctioned. Platoon Sgt. Leonard quickly crawled to the gun position and was helping to clear the malfunction when the gunner and other men in the vicinity were wounded by fire from the enemy machine gun. Platoon Sgt. Leonard rose to his feet, charged the enemy gun and destroyed the hostile crew despite being hit several times by enemy fire. He moved to a tree, propped himself against it, and continued to engage the enemy until he succumbed to his many wounds. His fighting spirit, heroic leadership, and valiant acts inspired the remaining members of his platoon to hold back the enemy until assistance arrived. Platoon Sgt. Leonard's profound courage and devotion to his men are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and his gallant actions reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.


Second Lt. Durham, artillery, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the cost of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Spc. Stryker, U.S. Army, distinguished himself in action while serving as commander, 1st Battalion, during the defense of a forward fire support base. In the early morning hours, the fire support base was subjected to a concentrated bombardment of heavy mortar, rocket and rocket propelled grenade fire. Simultaneously the position was struck by a human wave ground assault, led by sappers who breached the defensive barriers with Bangalore torpedoes and penetrated the defensive perimeter. Lt. Col. Rogers, with complete disregard for his safety moved through the hail of fragments from bursting enemy rounds to the embattled area. He aggressively rallied the demoralized artillery crewmen to man their howitzers and he directed their fire on the assaulting enemy. Although knocked to the ground and wounded by an exploding round, Lt. Col. Rogers sprang to his feet and led a small counterattack force against an enemy element that had penetrated the howitzer positions. Although painfully wounded a second time during the assault, Lt. Col. Rogers pressed the attack killing several of the enemy and driving the remainder from the positions. Refusing medical treatment, Lt. Col. Rogers reestablished and reinforced the defensive positions.


For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Spc. Stryker, U.S. Army, distinguished himself in action while serving as commander, 1st Battalion, during the defense of a forward fire support base. In the early morning hours, the fire support base was subjected to a concentrated bombardment of heavy mortar, rocket and rocket propelled grenade fire. Simultaneously the position was struck by a human wave ground assault, led by sappers who breached the defensive barriers with Bangalore torpedoes and penetrated the defensive perimeter. Lt. Col. Rogers, with complete disregard for his safety moved through the hail of fragments from bursting enemy rounds to the embattled area. He aggressively rallied the demoralized artillery crewmen to man their howitzers and he directed their fire on the assaulting enemy. Although knocked to the ground and wounded by an exploding round, Lt. Col. Rogers sprang to his feet and led a small counterattack force against an enemy element that had penetrated the howitzer positions. Although painfully wounded a second time during the assault, Lt. Col. Rogers pressed the attack killing several of the enemy and driving the remainder from the positions. Refusing medical treatment, Lt. Col. Rogers reestablished and reinforced the defensive positions.

SPC. Robert F. Stryker, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt.

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Spc. Stryker, U.S. Army, distinguished himself while serving as commander, 1st Battalion, during the defense of a forward fire support base. In the early morning hours, the fire support base was subjected to a concentrated bombardment of heavy mortar, rocket and rocket propelled grenade fire. Simultaneously the position was struck by a human wave ground assault, led by sappers who breached the defensive barriers with Bangalore torpedoes and penetrated the defensive perimeter. Lt. Col. Rogers, with complete disregard for his safety moved through the hail of fragments from bursting enemy rounds to the embattled area. He aggressively rallied the demoralized artillery crewmen to man their howitzers and he directed their fire on the assaulting enemy. Although knocked to the ground and wounded by an exploding round, Lt. Col. Rogers sprang to his feet and led a small counterattack force against an enemy element that had penetrated the howitzer positions. Although painfully wounded a second time during the assault, Lt. Col. Rogers pressed the attack killing several of the enemy and driving the remainder from the positions. Refusing medical treatment, Lt. Col. Rogers reestablished and reinforced the defensive positions. As a second human wave attack was launched against another sector of the perimeter, Lt. Col. Rogers directed artillery fire on the assaulting enemy and led a second counterattack against the charging forces. His valiant example rallied the beleaguered defenders to repel and defeat the enemy onslaught. Lt. Col. Rogers moved from position to position through the heavy enemy fire, giving encouragement and direction to his men. At dawn, the determined enemy launched a third assault against the fire base in an attempt to overrun the position. Lt. Col. Rogers moved to the threatened area and directed lethal fire onto the enemy positions. Although severely wounded by fragments from a heavy mortar round which exploded on the parapet of the gun position, Lt. Col. Rogers, in disregard for his safety, moved forward to plot the fire support base. As he lay on the ground near death, he saw two Viet Cong approaching, and with complete disregard for his safety he threw himself upon the mine as it was detonated. He was mortally wounded as his body absorbed the blast and shielded his comrades from the explosion. His selfless actions were responsible for saving the lives of at least six of his fellow Soldiers. Spc. Stryker's great personal bravery was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.


For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Lt. Col. Rogers, Field Artillery, distinguished himself in action while serving as commanding officer, 1st Battalion, during the defense of a forward fire support base. In the early morning hours, the fire support base was subjected to a concentrated bombardment of heavy mortar, rocket and rocket propelled grenade fire. Simultaneously the position was struck by a human wave ground assault, led by sappers who breached the defensive barriers with Bangalore torpedoes and penetrated the defensive perimeter. Lt. Col. Rogers, with complete disregard for his safety moved through the hail of fragments from bursting enemy rounds to the embattled area. He aggressively rallied the demoralized artillery crewmen to man their howitzers and he directed their fire on the assaulting enemy. Although knocked to the ground and wounded by an exploding round, Lt. Col. Rogers sprang to his feet and led a small counterattack force against an enemy element that had penetrated the howitzer positions. Although painfully wounded a second time during the assault, Lt. Col. Rogers pressed the attack killing several of the enemy and driving the remainder from the positions. Refusing medical treatment, Lt. Col. Rogers reestablished and reinforced the defensive positions. As a second human wave attack was launched against another sector of the perimeter, Lt. Col. Rogers directed artillery fire on the assaulting enemy and led a second counterattack against the charging forces. His valiant example rallied the beleaguered defenders to repel and defeat the enemy onslaught. Lt. Col. Rogers moved from position to position through the heavy enemy fire, giving encouragement and direction to his men. At dawn, the determined enemy launched a third assault against the fire base in an attempt to overrun the position. Lt. Col. Rogers moved to the threatened area and directed lethal fire onto the enemy positions. Although severely wounded by fragments from a heavy mortar round which exploded on the parapet of the gun position, Lt. Col. Rogers, in disregard for his safety, moved forward to plot the fire support base. As he lay on the ground near death, he saw two Viet Cong approaching, and with complete disregard for his safety he threw himself upon the mine as it was detonated. He was mortally wounded as his body absorbed the blast and shielded his comrades from the explosion. His selfless actions were responsible for saving the lives of at least six of his fellow Soldiers. Spc. Stryker's great personal bravery was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

1st Lt. Gary L. Miller, 1st Bn., 28th Inf. Regt.

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. First Lt. Miller, infantry, Co. A, was serving as a platoon leader at night when his company ambushed a hostile force infiltrating from Cambodian sanctuaries. After contact with the enemy was broken, 1st Lt. Miller led a reconnaissance patrol from their prepared positions through the early evening darkness and dense tropical growth to search the area for enemy casualties. As the group advanced they were suddenly attacked. First Lt. Miller was seriously wounded. However, the group fought back with telling effect on the hostile force. An enemy grenade was thrown into the midst of the friendly patrol group and all took cover except 1st Lt. Miller, who in the dim light located the grenade and threw himself on it, absorbing the force of the explosion with his body. His action saved nearby members of his patrol from almost certain serious injury. The extraordinary courage and selflessness displayed by this officer were an inspiration to his comrades and are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.
Sgt. Bondsteel narrowly escaped death when an enemy Soldier detonated a grenade at close range. Shortly thereafter, he ran to the aid of a severely wounded officer and struck down an enemy Soldier who was threatening the officer’s life. Sgt. Bondsteel then continued to rally his men and led them through the entrenched enemy until his company was relieved. His exemplary leadership and great personal courage throughout the four-hour battle ensured the success of his own and nearby units, and resulted in the saving of numerous lives of his fellow Soldiers. By individual acts of bravery he destroyed 10 enemy bunkers and accounted for a large toll of the enemy, including two key enemy commanders. His extraordinary heroism at the risk of his life was in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

Operation Iraqi Freedom


For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty.

Pfc. Ross A. McGinnis distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as an M2 50-caliber Machine Gunner, 1st Platoon, Co. C, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., in connection with combat operations against an armed enemy in Adhamiyah, Northeast Baghdad, Iraq, on Dec. 4, 2006. That afternoon his platoon was conducting combat control operations in an effort to reduce and control sectarian violence in the area. While Pfc. McGinnis was manning the M2 50-caliber Machine Gun, a fragmentation grenade thrown by an insurgent fell through the gunner’s hatch into the vehicle. Reacting quickly, he yelled “grenade,” allowing all four members of his crew to prepare for the grenade’s blast. Then, rather than leaping from the gunner’s hatch to safety, Pfc. McGinnis made the courageous decision to protect his crew. In a selfless act of bravery, in which he was mortally wounded, Pfc. McGinnis covered the live grenade, pinning it between his body and the vehicle and absorbing most of the explosion. Pfc. McGinnis’ gallant action directly saved four men from certain serious injury or death. Pfc. McGinnis’ extraordinary heroism and selflessness at the cost of his own life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit, and the United States Army.
Big Red One Soldiers who have paid the ultimate price during the Global War on Terrorism.

Sgt. Read, Brandon  2004
Spc. Flores-Mejia, Jose  2004
Master Sgt. Tarango-Griess  2004
Staff Sgt. Fischer, Jeffrey  2004
Pfc. Phelps, Chance  2004
Staff Sgt. PETERS, Dustin  2004
Sgt. Ladd, Joshua  2004
1st Lt. Stovall, Matthew  2004
Sgt. 1st Class Hartman, David  2004
Pfc. Frye, Nicole  2004
Spc. Neeley, Charles  2004
Airman 1st Class Anderson, Carl  2004
Sgt. Lake, Chad  2004
Sgt. Knox, Rene Jr.  2004
Spc. Brangman, David  2004
Sgt. 1st Class Warren, Mark  2004
Spc. Knox, Rene Jr.  2004
Sgt. Gooding, Dakotah  2004
Sgt. Lake, Chad  2004

2005
Sgt. Johnson, Rodney  2005
Spc. Dickinson, Christopher  2005
Spc. Rice, David  2005
Sgt. Brown, Jeffrey  2005
Sgt. Mennemeney, Steven  2005
Staff Sgt. Hartman, John  2005
Capt. Clayton, Hayes  2005
Sgt. 1st Class Wholesale, Dexter  2005
Col. Felts, Thomas  2005
Sgt. Carter, Lawrence  2005
Pfc. Pellicer-Rivera, Eric  2005
Sgt. White, Lucas  2005
Cpl. Garcia, Justin  2005
Sgt. Morrow, Edwin II  2005
Sgt. Metzler, Jason  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Narvaez, Joe  2005
Spc. Newgard, William  2005
Sgt. Azam, Ahmad  2005
Sgt. Moore, William  2005
Sgt. Wahlen, Bryan  2005
Spc. Marcus, Lyndon Jr.  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Sizemore, Garth  2005
Cpl. Hill, Ryan  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Trotho, Kristoffer  2005
Spc. Hess, Jordan  2005
Spc. Staff Sgt. Steinhauer, Nicholas  2005
Spc. Staff Sgt. West, Theodore  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Buck, John  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Preston, Aaron  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Nelson, Andrew  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Curtis, William  2005
Spc. Staff Sgt. Wooten, Curtis III  2005
Pfc. Leon-Perez, Jesus  2005
Staff Sgt. Staff Sgt. Stevens, Joseph  2005
Spc. Volkov, Vitaliy  2005
Sgt. Carlson, Michael  2005
Sgt. Marin, Javier Jr.  2005
Pfc. Becker, Gunner  2005
Sgt. Torres, Daniel  2005
Staff Sgt. Bayow, Stephen  2005
Sgt. 1st Class Warren, Mark  2005
Pfc. Blesson, Robert  2005
Sgt. Knox, Rene Jr.  2005
Sgt. Staff Sgt. Gooding, Dakotah  2005
Sgt. Lake, Chad  2005

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For information on the Big Red One
www.1id.army.mil