



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Michael Gholston

## Support is key for Annual Training

by **Spc. Kevin Hartman**  
115th MPAD Staff

Soldiers and airmen from five different states and more than four countries are working together at Gowen Field and Orchard Training Area for Operation Bayonet Thrust II.

The main focus of the 2005 annual training is to prepare the 41st Brigade Combat Team for deployment to Afghanistan in 2006. A major support group for the exercise is soldiers from Joint Force Headquarters Oregon.

Colonel Stephen Truesdell, who leads the JFHQ, said the main mission for JFHQ is to support the 41st BCT at the forward operating bases so brigade and company commanders can focus on their team missions down range and not worry about logistical issues.

"We're just supplying the support the state (Idaho) would normally supply," Truesdell said. "We provide the overall support for the feeding and moving of rations down from [Gowen Field] and all the fuel and maintenance."

Truesdell said soldiers from Arizona, Oklahoma, Utah, Washington and Idaho are also in place to provide assistance in the training.

"The BCT has five other states that are providing some level of support as far as transportation and communications that they're providing for them this year," he said. "It is a combined effort."

In addition to Army support, Truesdell said airmen with the Air National Guard and civilians working with Blue Canopy as blue forces will help in the exercise.

The Air National Guardsmen will support the 41st BCT with air assets and communications.

The BLUEFOR will act as civilians on the battlefield to help create a realistic exercise environment as well as cultural awareness training.

"They are the ones we really learn the customs from and what makes their culture work," he said.

This year's operation will also sponsor foreign troops from Germany, Austria and the United Kingdom.

Truesdell said this year's AT is different because many soldiers training here have already served tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq. He said they have useful information that greatly enhances the training already provided by the 491st operation controllers out of Fort Lewis, Wash.

"They have more current experience and more on the ground experience than some of our trainers," the colonel said. "Everybody will be learning from each other."

Truesdell's main hope for this year's AT is to improve on the 2004 AT in Pinon Canyon; so far, everything has gone smoothly.

"There were a few areas that were anticipated (last year) that we took advantage of this year to plan ahead and we haven't had any bumps in the road," he said.

# Idaho TAG welcomes Oregon guardsmen

To the Men and Women of the Oregon National Guard:

It is indeed my sincere pleasure to welcome to Idaho the outstanding men and women of the Oregon National Guard. The Soldiers and Airmen from Idaho and Oregon have enjoyed a long and congenial relationship for many years, and when we welcome Oregon troopers to Idaho, it's like saying "welcome to your second home".

I know that your training here will be challenging and rewarding as you prepare yourselves for anything that the future may have in store. As we continue to wage this Global War on Terrorism, the National Guard has assumed a larger and larger role. Not only are we engaged with combating terror overseas, but we are also

actively preparing to support our Governors' should a need arise to protect our homeland.

Each of you can be immensely proud of your role in protecting the liberties that we all enjoy! You are part of the first team, and we're happy that Idaho has this opportunity to support the men and women of the Oregon National Guard. We hope that you enjoy your stay, and that your training sets the stage for many future successes.

Once again be safe and welcome to Idaho. We're glad you're here.

Larry Lafrenz  
Major General  
The Adjutant General, Idaho



Photo by Spc. Nick D. Wood

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## Message from 41st Brigade Combat Team Commander

Annual training 2005 “Operation Bayonet Thrust II” provides a realistic, challenging and exciting training opportunity for the soldiers and airmen assigned and attached to the 41st Brigade Combat Team.

We are fortunate to have access to a great training area in Gowen Field – a training area that replicates the harsh environment we expect to encounter in Afghanistan next year.

We also have the benefit of a wide range of role players from Blue

Canopy (our civilian contractor) and the Oregon State Defense Force who will help us make the training very realistic.

Our OPFOR comes from the 116th Cavalry Brigade of the Idaho Army National Guard. Since this is their home turf, they have a distinct advantage with knowledge of the terrain. I am sure they will prove to be a formidable foe.

We have an excellent support system in place to ensure we maximize the training time available.

Our number one priority remains safety. With over 2000 soldiers and airmen on the battlefield we need everyone to take responsibility for safety serious.

I look forward to a great training event – one that tests our skills as professional soldiers and airmen and provides a rewarding experience for all.

Douglas Pritt  
Brigadier General  
Commander, 41st BCT

## Safety Rules for Orchard Training Area -- keep it safe

General OTA safety rules

- Report all fires to Range Control Immediately! No pyrotechnics or flares without specific approval from Range Control. Fire is the biggest threat to training.
- Keep all vehicles on established roads unless ordered off-road for maneuver activities.
- No neutral steers or missile drills.
- Site assembly areas in grasses or weeds, not shrubs. Keep your sites at least 20 meters away from any shrubs.
- Contact Orchard Range Control when entering the OTA and when entering or leaving a maneuver box.
- Know where you are. Dry lake beds, fenced areas and restricted areas are off limits. Plan ahead to keep your training away from restricted areas.
- Report all POL spills to Range Control and follow cleanup instructions. All garbage must be removed from the OTA.



Photo by Spc. Nick D. Wood

Sergeant Samuel Clint Blackburn, Squad Leader for the 1/180th Infantry, Headquarters, Headquarter Company secures gear before convoy operations at Operation Bayonet Thrust 2. In his 5 years in the guard, this is his first Annual Training. He has been deployed twice, once to Egypt as part of

the Multinational Force Observers, and once to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, where he earned his Combat Infantry Badge.

Blackburn is from Durant, Okla., and does construction and plumbing full-time.

# 'BLUEFOR' makes training more real

by **Spc. Annie Baxter**  
115th MPAD Staff

Annual training operations this year will be given a dose of added realism by the employees of Blue Canopy, a company based in Reston, Va., that employs civilians native to foreign countries to play roles of Afghan people.

The foreign nationals will populate military operations in urban terrain sites on the OTA posing as civilians on the battlefield, foreign language translators and bilateral negotiators. Their mission is to replicate situations the 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team would face in Afghanistan if deployed there. They will dress up in authentic clothing and speak Dari, one of the two Afghan languages.

"We are making a more realistic scenario (similar to what) they will encounter in theater," said Marvin G. Crist, project manager for Blue Canopy.

The civilians will provide a backdrop, much like at the set of a movie, to give the soldiers an idea of what to expect on an Afghan deployment, he said.

"It's going to give it realism," explained Maj. Frank E. Flux, executive officer of the opposing forces and COB.

Some of the civilians are the non-armed equivalent of opposing forces, said Jason Ancarrow, on-site operations manager for Blue Canopy. They are put in place to cause a potential distraction to the soldiers during training, including attempts at breaching gates at forward operating bases to test the knowledge of soldiers on how to restrain unarmed civilian forces.

There are 42 role players on the ground at OTA as well as six bilateral negotiators. The role players will be operating as city residents, translators, Afghan city officials and even some friendly informants. Each battalion commander will also be assigned one Dari language translator and one translator for the Bosnian language. Two languages are being spoken to create an environment like Afghanistan's with two common languages.

Blue Canopy, the company that staged the COB during 2004 annual training at Pinon Canyon, Colo., works under contract with the Army, operating full-time at Fort Campbell, Ky., where they have permanent MOUT sites. These sites portray the most elaborate details of overseas conditions.

## Media Tips

You may be approached by media representatives who want to interview you while you're on duty or while off duty. Media may or may not be escorted by a Public Affairs person. Refer all media to a public affairs contact through your chain of command.

Guidelines for media interviews:

1. You are a representative of the military when you are in uniform.
2. Your message is going to the American public.
3. Take a moment to think before you answer a question.
4. Do not lie or shade the truth.
5. Do not argue or get mad.
6. Radio and television news crews are looking for 10-15 second sound bites.
7. Avoid jargon and acronyms when possible.
8. It is better to say "I don't know" than make up an answer.
9. Don't reinforce negative, emotional or untrue statements by repeating them.
10. Only speak about topics you have direct knowledge of.
11. Everything you say is on the record.

# Oklahoma Guard brings security to the table during Operation Bayonet Thrust II

by **Pfc. Micheal S. Gann**  
115th MPAD Staff

Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company Personnel 180th Division of the 45th Infantry Brigade based in Oklahoma set up Forward Operating Base Wyoming on the Orchard Training Area Monday.

Delta Company will begin live fire training using .50-caliber machine guns, MK-19 grenade launchers, and tube launched, optically tracked, wire command link missiles, or "TOWS", said 1st Sgt. Ernest Allen Robertson.

The training will continue at a high tempo for the next ten days.

Specialist Billy Beckett, an infantryman who will leave the guard in September after six years of service, said their tasks will vary while at the Orchard Training Center.

"The training will mostly be convoy escorts and live fire training on a few different ranges using posted targets," Beckett

said. "We're going to be training on how to react to crowds of civilians and how to work with media."

After last year's annual training in Pinon Canyon, Colo., where "A few people tried to get into our [HMMWV] and look through our stuff," Beckett said the infantrymen have disabled the back doors on the vehicles as a precautionary measure.

In preparation of their upcoming deployment, Gowen Field was an obvious choice for AT.

"We chose this site for AT based solely upon the deployment to Afghanistan next July," said Oklahoma Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Kory Wingo, an infantryman with 12 years of military service, and Beckett's half-brother. "We have about 1,000 soldiers here today ready to train. The terrain is mountainous and dry, with hot days and cold nights."

The weather is very comparable to the conditions in Afghanistan and will prepare the soldiers for their nine-month deployment, explained Wingo.

# UK, US forces share experience

by **Spc. Mary Jane Jacobsen**  
115th MPAD Staff

Anxious soldiers move around their dustless, loaded-down vehicles that sit ready for their first movement down range. Last-minute details are being disseminated by the platoon leaders as trucks begin lining up for the convoy. In the bustle of the crisp morning air, a soldier with a plumed green beret hurries across the parking lot to speak to his platoon.

This soldier does not quite fit the American soldier profile.

The Royal Irish military has sent some of their best soldiers to train with the 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team and this is one of them.

Lieutenant Feargus Rice, a 23-year-old Belfast-born soldier is a six-year veteran of the Territorial Army. Rice began with four years in the Royal Officer Training Corps and three weeks at

Sandhurst Military Academy before becoming a platoon leader for the Royal Irish Rangers. For this exercise Rice has been assigned to Delta Company, 1-186 Infantry and is a platoon leader for 4<sup>th</sup> platoon.

Rice volunteered to participate in Operation Bayonet Thrust II through the foreign troop exchange.

In 2004, he deployed with his unit to Iraq for six months and has plenty of experience with desert training.

“This place (Gowen Field) is massive.” Rice said when asked about the comparison of training sights in the UK. “We have smaller bases and garrisons where we train, so this is very realistic for Afghanistan training.”

Troops from Germany and Austria are also present for the exercise and are sharing their experiences with the brigade.

There are four others joining Rice from the UK, each with different

backgrounds and training.

The platoon traveling with Rice will spend eight days on their first rotation in the Orchard Training Area. They are a quick reaction force and will provide convoy security for Forward Operating Base Kansas. Their focus will be on clearing routes, reacting to locals and detecting improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordinance.

Rice voiced his enthusiasm on how he felt about being here.

“This is going to be a good preparation for the brigade heading to Afghanistan,” he said. “I am excited to be a part of the operation.”

Finally, the busy lieutenant jogged away to get to the business at hand. Vehicles could be seen moving out in orderly sequence down the dusty road. No longer pristine clean as they were in the cool morning air, but already smudged with dirt and grime ready for their mission in the desert.



Photo by Spec. Nick D. Wood

# Army testing new eye protection

by **Melissa House**  
Bayonet Staff

FORT BENNING, Ga. (Army News Service, June 7, 2005) – About 400 Infantry trainees and cadre are testing several different types of combat eye protection that might eventually be issued to all soldiers.

Colonel Chuck Adams, the senior optometry consultant for the Army's Office of the Surgeon General, said the goal is to achieve a "culture change" from vision correction for some soldiers, to eye protection for all.

"We're talking about putting eyewear on half a million soldiers," Adams said. "And it's not so much about which product we choose, but the training. Combat eye protection is embraced for deployed soldiers. We need to embrace it for all soldiers."

Eye injuries represent almost 16 percent of all injuries in Iraq and Afghanistan since March 2003, according to statistics from the Office of the Surgeon General.

As part of the Military Combat Eye Protection Program, the OTSG and the team from PEO-Soldier at Fort Belvoir, Va., are hoping the Soldiers in B Company, 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment, and D Co., 1st Bn., 329th Inf. Regt., will have some good feedback on three sets of spectacles.

"Eye injuries hit the radar post-1972 and the Arab-Israeli Wars," said Lt. Col. Emery Fehl, chief of optometry at Martin Army Community Hospital and the post's MCEPP liaison. In subsequent years, the Army researched and developed spectacles and goggles designed to combat a laser threat by blocking certain wavelengths. That, he said, is where the Army's current offerings, with their multiple lenses, came in. But the eyewear adopted in 1994 and issued in 1998 didn't pass muster with soldiers.

Sarah Morgan-Clyborne, who has been working the eyewear issues with PEO-soldier for about 12 years

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Photo by Melissa House

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said the second generation items, intended to provide spectacles and goggles that would share lenses, provide ballistic protection and support prescription lenses, was unsuccessful.

“We did not design a frame that was acceptable to soldiers,” Morgan-Clyborne said. “Protection was important, but not a motivating factor.”

The missing factor? “It was a great product,” Adams said, “but it doesn’t look like an Oakley and doesn’t look cool.”

So the Army entered the formal contracting process with several commercial vendors, Morgan-Clyborne said, and also receives unsolicited proposals.

“We evaluate (the eyewear) for industry safety standards and ballistic fragmentation protection, then rank the products and place them on an authorized protective eyewear list,” she said.

Individual commanders can select eyewear for their unit from that list.

Right now, the ballistic protection piece is more important than the laser threat, Fehl said. Of the 345 eye injuries evacuated from Iraq and Afghanistan after March 2003, three Soldiers are totally blind and 44 have total loss of vision in one eye.

But eye injuries aren’t limited to combat operations.

Adams said one of his first patients as a young doctor in Germany was a sergeant with a prosthetic eye because of an accident on a range.

“We want to protect soldiers’ vision,” Adams said, and one of the ways to do that is by issuing CEP to every soldier.

# Leadership tips

- Accountability:
  - Know where your soldiers are
  - Know how your soldiers are
- If soldiers are on medical hold:
  - Do they need personal items or toiletries?
  - Know what is wrong with them
  - Know when to pick them up

# Media are coming

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by **Spc. Annie Baxter**  
115th MPAD Staff

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The Bayonet Thrust II exercise here is proving to be a high-profile training event. Local civilian media has shown interest in joining the troops in the field to document the training. The media is authorized to enter the Orchard Training Area with military media escorts to speak with soldiers about their experiences in the field.

While soldiers in the OTA should be prepared to deal with hostile opposing forces media, local media has a more benign mission. Soldiers should help them spread the positive angles of the training taking place. These media representatives will always be escorted by military media personnel, while OPFOR media will not.

Civilian media is an asset to units and soldiers to help get the word out about the positive aspects of their jobs in the military. The reporters are an intricate detail in the passage of information from soldiers in the field to the public and their families at home.

Soldiers should refer to the media information tips and guidelines for dealing with civilian and legitimate military media on the battlefield on **page 4**.



Photo by Spc. Nick D. Wood

# Romanian president visits soldiers in Afghanistan

by **Spc. Jaime L. Toppe**  
113 Support Bn.

**CAMP PHOENIX, KABUL, Afghanistan** – Romanian soldiers were treated with a visit by their president, Traian Basescu, who came to Camp Phoenix Monday night. He brought an entourage of other high-ranking officials, including the chief of general staff, four-star generals, presidential advisers and state secretaries.

Basescu met with troops serving in Afghanistan after a visit with the International Security Assistance Force Turkish commander and Afghan President Hamid Karzai. He had dinner with the soldiers, laughing and joking with them as he posed for pictures. Afterwards he spoke to the Romanians, telling them he was thankful for their service and cooperation with the coalition soldiers. He also honored several soldiers with war medals.

There are about 140 Romanian soldiers serving in the Kabul area, with 25

active duty soldiers stationed at Camp Phoenix as mobile training teams for the Afghan National Army. The detachment also has 21 soldiers working as embedded training teams.

Basescu added that Romania would increase its forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, adding an infantry battalion for Afghan's parliamentary elections in the summer. They will also aid in Afghan programs of reconstruction. Romania will start a program in Iraq training the Iraqi National Army.

The president, who was recently elected before holding his post as mayor of Bucharest, is quite popular with the Romanian soldiers. Several soldiers explained how he was well liked and they would lay down their lives for him. They said he knows how to deal with hard times because of his life and work experiences. They admired him for talking freely, instead of like a politician, said Sgt. 1st Class Catalin Lemnaru.

“He was a very open person before he was elected, and he didn't change,” said Lt. Alexandru Oprean.

“That's the way a president should be.”

Brig. Gen. Richard Moorhead, the commander of Coalition Joint Task Force Phoenix, said it was a great honor for the president to take the time to visit the soldiers.

“The Romanians are playing a very important role in the task force by all they do for us,” said Moorhead. “It allowed me to personally thank the president for his involvement and allowing his troops to work over here.”

Lt. Col. Virgil Petri, the Romanian commander of the ANA Training III Detachment at Camp Phoenix, said the president's visit strengthened morale among troops. It was the president's first visit to Afghanistan, and he promised to be back again. Basescu also stressed that his feelings of pride were not just his, but every Romanians' feelings about every soldier serving in the world.



Photo by Spc. Jaime L. Toppe