

DUTY FIRST!

MAY 2010



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

TRAINING DAYS

The never-ending cycle of duty

Aviation Soldiers ready for move in Iraq

'Dragon' Brigade Soldiers put boots back on Fort Riley

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.

May 2010 | www.riley.army.mil

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Cover: Spc. Anthony Giroux and Spc. Robert Malone, both members of 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon of Warrior Leader Course Class 707-10, remain alert as they rehearse their entrance into a building before they simulated an assault on a mock IED factory.

PHOTO BY JORDAN CHAPMAN, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

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ARFORGEN meets demands

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks

In less than three years, the Army has successfully implemented the greatest transformation to its force generating system since the beginning of the Cold War. The impetus for this change was primarily driven by the complex nature of today's threat, the reality of preparing forces on compressed time lines for extended deployments and the imperative to preserve the all-volunteer force.

While we are in an era of persistent conflict, we continue to generate forces as the global demand for land forces exceeds the available supply. Despite this, our nation and the combatant commanders expect the Army to produce a sustained supply of trained and ready forces—and, since 2003, we have met those expectations.

This demand for forces, along with the conversion to modular formations and our use of the reserve components as an operational force on a recurring basis, required the Army to adapt its force generation model. In 2006, we replaced the Cold War-era linear model based on tiered readiness and sequential deployment with a 21st-century rotational model based on progressive readiness and capable of cyclical deployments. We call this force generation model and process Army force



generation (ARFORGEN), and it applies to both active and reserve component units.

In recognition of the uneven, but continuous, global demand for capabilities, the Army made the decision to adapt its force generation construct into one optimized to deploy trained and ready forces on a rotational basis. In 2005, the Chief of Staff of the Army approved the ARFORGEN model for concept development. A year later, the Secretary of the Army approved the implementation of ARFORGEN.

Since then, ARFORGEN has proved to be a flexible force generation construct.

For instance, reinforcement of Multi-National Force-Iraq in early 2007 involved readying the five brigade combat teams, a combat aviation brigade, a complement of combat support units, and a division headquarters on a greatly accelerated time line that could not have been accomplished as effectively with the legacy system. Without ARFORGEN, we would have bulled our way forward, albeit more slowly, with greater friction and with less alacrity. The success of synchronizing the Army systems to accomplish this surge of forces while simultaneously sustaining already deployed forces is without parallel in the Army's recent history.

The ARFORGEN cycle is ever present in the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley and we have specific goals laid out in the Fort Riley 2015 Campaign Plan to help us better synchronize our ARFORGEN process. This includes standardized training schedules, which ultimately results in more predictable calendars for Soldiers and Families. We are an Army at war, and though I would like to see that change, I don't anticipate it happening anytime soon. ARFORGEN is one of the necessary tools that helps us prepare for the fight.

Duty First! 

Stay in, stay home

Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne

The needs of the Army often take its Soldiers many places. Generally, following a deployment, a Soldier returns to a post long enough to help a unit begin its reset, then they pack up their Family and head to a new duty station to start all over.

That constant process isn't just hard on a Soldier—it's hard on their Family and their unit, as well. Opting to stay in the Army and re-enlist for their present duty assignment gives both the Soldier and the Army some benefits that can't be overlooked.

Soldiers work hard to establish solid reputations which can assist in building their career. Often, a successful work record will help them in finding a follow-on assignment. For many Soldiers in the Big Red One, service at the battalion level can lead to service at the brigade level, which can feed into time working at division headquarters. And that's a good thing—the Big Red One then retains quality people who continue to help the division excel. There's also something to be said for familiarity—once you get to know an installation, regardless of the assignment you receive there, you have all the necessary




knowledge to capitalize on your new position.

Staying put for longer periods of time is important for Families, as well. It allows a Soldier's spouse and children to put down roots in an area—find a church, get involved in youth programs, or discover a favorite recreational activity. Children get to stay in the same school system and develop friendships that aren't quickly torn apart by a move. When a Family stays at a duty station for more than a couple

of years, a spouse can find a job and add to their work record, finish out a educational degree, and establish a network of support in the area. A stable Family is a Family in a better position to handle their Soldier's deployment and training—because they will have had the opportunity to create a home for themselves.

When it comes to the Big Red One, history is important. The 1st Infantry Division has always been a name to reckon with when it comes to fighting on our nation's front lines. The Soldiers of today stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. That's why it's important to choose to stay with the 1st Infantry Division. The Soldiers who put the time into taking the Big Red One onward have a deeper appreciation for what they have created and what they continue to fight for.

Talk to your unit retention office about finding a way to reap the benefits of staying with the 1st Infantry Division. They will help you find a way to better your career and your division.

Now, get after it!
Duty First! 



ARFORGEN RESET



Reset Humvees and Light Medium Tactical Vehicles wait to be picked up by 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team Soldiers in Fort Riley's Vehicle Processing Yard.

Wear and tear

guarding against 'normal'

Having just returned from a deployment, a Soldier knows when and where to turn in equipment for repair. They walk in the door, drop off their items and get it back in new condition. But that's not the half of it.

When a brigade returns from a deployment, their work is long from finished. They have 180 days to reset 97 percent of their on-hand equipment. For the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, that has been 22,000 pieces to clean, inspect, fix and make ready for reliable use in the field.

As of April 2, they deemed themselves ready for the train-ready phase of the Army Forces Generation Cycle, but how

was it done? It wasn't simple.

According to Maj. Jason Mead, 2nd HBCT S4 and logistics officer, equipment reset takes the dedication of countless unsung heroes that can do their job efficiently and effectively, though he noted that the reset phase has to start before they even step foot on the plane bound for the states.

The first type of equipment reset is at a sustainment level, when the brigade turns in a portion of their equipment in Kuwait.

Story & photos by Jordan Chapman

WEAPONS SUMMARY

NUMBER OF ITEMS REPAIRED, 2HBCT:

- M16 – 296
- M4 – 3,302
- M203 – 278
- M9 – 285
- M249 – 285
- M2 – 1
- M240B – 6
- M500 – 150
- M40A1 – 2,920

OPTICS SUMMARY

NUMBER OF ITEMS REPAIRED, 2HBCT:

- M68 – 2,557
- M145 – 119
- ACOG/M150 – 188
- M22 – 159
- M24 – 205
- M25 – 27

LASERS SUMMARY

NUMBER OF ITEMS REPAIRED, 2HBCT:

- PEQ-2 – 29
- PEQ-15 – 466
- Gas Masks Repaired – 1,023

WEAPON SYSTEMS OBSERVATIONS

- * M-4: Generally good condition. Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs include failing trigger pin hole failing gagging, buffer detent hole cracked
- * M-16: Normal wear and tear. Dirty.
- * M-203: Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs include cracked receivers, QRB mount screws stripped, breech hole chipped out. Two referred to DS to have the breech glued.
- * M-9: Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs include stripped grip screw bushing, cracked lower receiver
- M240: Normal wear and tear. Dirty.
- M249: Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs include cracked receivers, Sling hole broken out, front mounting lugs cracked, rail mounting holes distorted, bent magazine well, and a bent and cracked charging handle rail.
- M500: Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs include cracked receivers.
- M68: Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs included the on/off switch broken or bent, lens scratched, an unable to install battery cap.
- M145: Normal wear and tear. Dirty.
- M150: Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs included damaged elevation/traverse turret
- M22: Normal wear and tear. Dirty.
- M24: Normal wear and tear. Dirty. Code outs included loose hinge assembly.
- M25: Normal wear and tear. Dirty.
- P2A: Normal wear and tear. Dirty.
- P15: Normal wear and tear. Dirty.

* Terms used to categorize weapon conditions

After repairs are made, the equipment comes into the brigade's Supply Support Activity, which then gets handed back to the unit. If it's a vehicle or generator to be repaired, the equipment is sent to the Vehicle Processing Yard at Camp Funston where units can pick it up.

Another option open to brigades is to have equipment sent off to Fort Hood, Texas, for repair, and then to be sent back once it is deemed ready.

Equipment is also sent to different organizations on Fort Riley to be repaired, which is a practice known as field-level reset. Soldiers within the Army Forces Field Support Battalion could receive this equipment, or Small Arms Repair and Evaluation Teams (SARET) are brought in to repair weapon systems and optics.

"They came in and set up ... the units showed up, dropped off their equipment, it went through a process where (the teams) inspected the items, replaced it, coded out parts, cleaned it, fixed it, set it down and got it back to the unit," Mead described, noting that these SARET teams completed their task in a mere three weeks, reiterating that it is in all these ways that resetting brigades are receiving repaired equipment from multiple sources.

Mead explained once equipment is returned, new "fieldings," or upgraded equipment or software; need to be added to existing equipment.

"People will come in, they take the old stuff, they give us new stuff and if there is new training with it, then (Soldiers) will be trained up on that new system. So if there is a new version or different features on a system, then they will run them through a class," he explained.

Once the brigade has repaired 97 percent of their equipment on hand, units can then begin conducting their own repairs.

"The importance of the reset phase is to ensure we can hit the train-ready phase with (the entire) mission essential equipment ready to go," Mead said. "It's been an eye opener ... there has been a lot of impressive work done by a lot of people, repair teams, Army Material Command, everyone in the brigade, 3,000 people ... it's been phenomenal," he said.



COURTESY PHOTO

ABOVE: A 1st Infantry Division Soldier tests her skills at bus driving during a course offered at Fort Riley in August of 2009. OPPOSITE: Big Red One Soldier holds his pride high after receiving his diploma at graduation in January.

Staying the Course

Army and Soldiers both reap rewards from educational opportunities

By Jordan Chapman | Duty First! Magazine

MILITARY SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED at Fort Riley have two objectives: to supplement job and unit functions by providing required training specifically designed to support current combat operations and to support unit reconstitution after returning from a deployment.

To do that, 25 instructors and support staff within Fort Riley Troop Schools who have more than 300 years of combined military experience are at the beck and call of Soldiers

who are in need of enhancing their knowledge in a desired discipline.

A plethora of courses await Soldiers and those within the Army family at the Military Schools Facility, buildings 8388, 8388A and 77692 which house 24 classrooms, each with computer stations and video tele-training capabilities.

Courses such as bus driver, fuel handler, ammunition handler, field sanitation, level one and two combatives, unit armorer, combat lifesaver and recertification, lifeguard, CPR and more can be accessed by contacting the facility.

All courses are offered free to Soldiers and could count toward college credit at Barton County Community College.

For a complete listing of all courses, individuals should visit www.riley.army.mil and look up military schools under the education and training and services tab.

Inquiries also can be directed to the program manager at (785) 239-5454.

For NCO Professional Development or off-post schools, inquiries should be directed to the training coordinator at (785) 239-1290. However, a FR Form 28 must be filled out and sent to rile.dpt-smsts@conus.army.mil for off-post



EDUCATION SERVICES

- Main Post Learning Center: 785-239-6481
- Learning Center #1: 785-239-9485
- Tutor Center: 785-240-3617
- Testing Center: 785-239-6482


PARTNERED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- Barton Community College
Phone: 785-784-6606
<http://fr.bartonccc.edu/>
- Central Texas College
Phone: 785-784-6240
www.ctcd.edu/continental/fortriley/index.htm
- Upper Iowa University
Phone: 785-784-5225
www.uiu.edu/eu_students/nationwide/fortriley.html
- Kansas State University
Phone: 785-239-0685
www.dce.k-state.edu/military/fortriley.shtml
- Central Michigan University
Phone: 785-784-4402
www.cel.cmich.edu/fortriley/
- Southwestern College
Phone: 785-784-9930
www.southwesterncollege.org/frw
- University of Mary
Phone: 785-239-6792
www.umary.edu/um/

and sustainment training. This form also can be found at the provided link.

More educational opportunities exist through Fort Riley Education Services, including scholarship and tutoring assistance as well as a testing center. To gather more information, interested persons should either visit www.riley.army.mil or contact Education Services.

Educational opportunities also extend out to surrounding colleges and universities. A partnership between Barton Community College and Fort Riley offers Soldiers the chance to earn a Certificate of Applied Science in Military Technologies (C.A.S.), which prepares students with the skills required for successful executions of duties in the fields of military leadership, logistics and dangerous material handling and response.

The partnership is not limited to just the CAS, though. Soldiers and their Families are welcome to attain any of the degrees offered through the college. Central Texas College, Upper Iowa University, Kansas State University, Central Michigan University, Southwestern College and University of Mary also partner with Fort Riley to offer Soldiers and Family members opportunities to further themselves educationally. 



Taking Aim on leadership

Warrior Leader Course
targets up-and-coming
NCOs, junior Soldiers

Jordan Chapman | Duty First! Magazine

Whether an up-and-coming junior Soldier or a young noncommissioned officer, in order to know success, a Soldier has to know how to be a leader. That's where Sgt. Maj. Steve Murphy and 17 Warrior Leader Course instructors come in.

Offered at Fort Riley now for a little more than a year through a partnership with Camp Ashland, Neb., the WLC is a 15-day course of 196 hours that trains and prepares junior-enlisted Soldiers to shoulder the responsibilities of being a NCO by teaching them basic warrior tasks such as leadership, drill and ceremony, physical fitness training, combat operations in an occupied area, how to give commands, how to lead a squad in various environments, leading a 12 to 13-man patrol, management skills and much more.

"It's the first formal training an up and coming NCO or sergeant ... gets as a noncommissioned officer," Murphy

said, explaining each student is placed in their own squad of Soldiers who each have their own background and military occupational specialty, who will then be taught by 17 instructors who also have differing backgrounds and work experiences.

Murphy said there was an extreme benefit in getting to group Soldiers and instructors with diverse histories into a cohesive unit while going through the course.

"I think you get a different perspective from all around the Army," Murphy said. He noted that some Soldiers who may do well in the situational training exercise may need assistance in teaching a class.

"We have (instructors) that have at least three deployments, sometimes four deployments, who have a little experience that they can share with those young guys just coming in to the Army," Murphy said.

What Soldiers take out of the course is all based upon their own personality, initiative and experience, Murphy said.

"Some of them gain confidence to get out in front of their peers ... teaching a class or getting up in front of their peers leading a patrol. Some haven't been given or had the opportunity before ... and they become a better leader because they took the time to learn," Murphy said. "I've never had a Soldier say they didn't learn something while they were here."

The young WLC graduates are not the only ones progressing forward. The Fort Riley WLC can handle 135 Soldiers during each training cycle, a number that has grown from 48 when the course first started last year.

For more information on the WLC, Soldiers can visit <http://www.riley.army.mil/UnitPage.aspx?unit=WLC> or check out the WLC on Facebook.com.

JORDAN CHAPMAN/DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

ABOVE: Spc. Lucas Guerrero, 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon of Warrior Leader Course Class 707-10, keeps his sight trained in front of him while his squadmates perform medevac procedures behind him March 23rd after storming a mock IED factory. **OPPOSITE (FROM LEFT):** Future and young noncommissioned officers a part of 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, of Warrior Leader Course Class 707-10, "stack" on a mock IED factory entrance before they storm inside and clear the rooms; members of 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon of Warrior Leader Course Class 707-10, make their way through a smoke grenade they threw for cover while coming upon a mock IED factory; a Soldier of 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon of Warrior Leader Course Class 707-10, keeps his sight trained on a mock IED factory while his squadmates come up behind him for the assault during a WLC test day; Spc. Richard Garrison assists a "wounded" Spc. Lucas Guerrero out of a mock IED factory.



REUNITED

And it feels so good

Fort & families celebrate return of Dragon Brigade from deployment to Iraq

Stories & photos by Stephanie Hoff | Duty First! Magazine

"The buses are here," were the words that preceded numerous cheers and claps from Family members anxiously awaiting the return of their Soldiers.

Approximately 150 Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, returned to Fort Riley in a redeployment ceremony April 26. The Soldiers were comprised of companies from the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment and elements of the "Dragon" Brigade's advance party.

"I'm ready to scream; I'm probably going to tackle him when I see him," said Jenna Mitchell, wife of Spc. Roger Mitchell of 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt. "This is the longest that we've ever been away from each other in the seven years that we've been married."

The "Dragon" brigade deployed to Iraq in September 2009 and assumed control of the Salah ad Din Province in early October; a location approximately the size of New Jersey.

While deployed, the unit's primary mission was the responsible draw-down of U.S. forces out of Iraq through partnered efforts with the 4th Iraqi Army Division, the U.S. State Department Provincial Reconstruction Team and the provincial government.

Currently, there are 100,000 service members deployed to Iraq and this is scheduled to decrease to 50,000. As part of the draw-down of U.S. forces in Iraq, the brigade

has closed or transferred 10 bases over to the Iraqi government and Iraqi Security Forces, with six remaining before the entire brigade returns to Fort Riley.

The brigade also has focused efforts on anti-corruption measures at Baiji Oil Refinery, reconstruction efforts for the Samarra Golden Mosque and joint ventures with Tikrit University and the Tikrit Women's College.

Since October 2009, the brigade has submitted 159 projects to improve local infrastructure and boost the local economy, spending more than \$18 million to support the people in the Salah ad Din Province. In many situations, U.S. funds have been matched with Iraqi funds.

The brigade previously deployed to Iraq in 2007. Forty percent of the brigade's Soldiers are preparing to complete their second tour with the unit. "Unlearning skills and adjusting themselves to a post-surge,


less violent, Iraq has been an adjustment for most Soldiers," said Col. Henry Arnold III, brigade commander, in a March 2010 video tele-conference. "Soldiers returning to Iraq can observe first-hand the improvements to the country's economy and security forces."

"The war has been won and the Dragon Brigade has played an essential part in setting the condition for a successful transition of U.S. forces out of Iraq," Arnold added.

The brigade's first redeployment ceremony was concluded by a token of appreciation to the Soldiers from Brig. Gen. David Petersen, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley deputy commanding general-rear.

"I want to thank you for your service.

I tell you what, you served in a time in Iraq where it's very historic and quite honestly, we're all proud of you," Petersen said.

The approximately 3,500 Soldiers of the Dragon Brigade are expected to redeploy to Fort Riley in phases through July, with the entire brigade scheduled to be back at Fort Riley by August. 



ABOVE: Staff Sgt. Christopher Hurd of Co. B., 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt., greets his family April 26 in building 88312 following a redeployment ceremony for approximately 130 Soldiers of the 4th Inf. Brigade Combat Team. **OPPOSITE:** Private 1st Class Roberto Vides, Co. D, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt., hugs his wife, Jenn, April 26 at building 88312 following a redeployment ceremony for approximately 130 Soldiers of the 4th IBCT.



ARFORGEN TRAIN/READY

1st HBCT back to 3,000 strong, training with tanks & paladins

After three years of training fellow Soldiers gearing up to deploy, the time has come for the Soldiers of 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, to prepare themselves.

Story by *Stephanie Hoff* | *Duty First! Magazine*



“

The essence of a Soldier is to participate in brigade operations; to be assigned to a fighting unit and carry out assigned missions in a combat environment.

”

— **Col. Eric Wesley**
1 HBCT commander

For the past three years the mission for the Soldiers of 1st HBCT was to train the Soldiers who had been assigned to a Military Transition Team. The brigade handed over a majority of its equipment and vehicles and decreased its once 3,000-Soldier-strong population to a little more than 300. The unit was then no longer an official brigade, but referred to by the Army as a Table of Distribution and Allowances. A TDA is generally a small group of Soldiers who comprise non-combat and non-deployable workload based units.

In September 2009, the MTT training mission was transitioned to Fort Polk, La., and the “Devil” Brigade began to rebuild its resources and train for an upcoming deployment, scheduled for this fall.

“This is a fundamental shift for brigade. We are no longer a cadre providing training to others; we are now a team rehearsing our own skills to carry out assigned missions as a unit,” said Col. Eric Wesley, brigade commander. “Additionally, whereas our focus during the MTT mission was solely focused on small-unit fighting skills and advisory principles, we are now training operations that integrate warfighting functions up to the battalion and brigade level to carry out full-spectrum operations.”

The first major undertaking for the brigade’s leadership was to organize the rapid arrival of Soldiers and equipment assigned to the brigade.

“It was majorly ‘whoosh.’ We had no equipment, more or less, so the Army had to bring all the stuff to us. So we went from ground zero up; building a brigade,” said Command Sgt. Major John Jones, the brigade’s sergeant major. “This is one of the last brigades to be built in the Army, more or less, from the ground up.”

The brigade now has returned to more than 3,000 Soldiers and has been busy training and preparing its Soldiers, who are returning to their original Military Occupational Specialties, Jones added.

“This build of the brigade and the associated return to our organic weapon systems is symbolic of these Soldiers’ return to their essential mission,” Wesley said. “The essence of a Soldier is to participate in brigade operations; to be assigned to a fighting unit and carry out assigned missions in a combat environment.”

The brigade’s primary focus is to successfully train its units at the platoon level, Wesley and Jones both commented.

“We’re doing all the training at the platoon level. If we know the platoons are strong; we’ll

(continued on page 14)

building from the ground UP



(continued from page 13)

know the company or battery or troop level will be strong," Jones said. "Because if we know the platoons are strong, everybody else will fall into sync and they will be strong; getting everything ready to go to (the National Training Center). That's our goal and we will meet that with no problem."

The units, Soldiers and leadership have been readily preparing for their upcoming NTC rotation and subsequent deployment. In September, the brigade's Soldiers returned to their tanks, Paladins and Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and by February, things started booming on Fort Riley.

On Feb. 10, the Soldiers of Soldiers of Company D, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment fired the brigade's first live tank round in more than five years. The brigade's Soldiers marked another milestone on March 23, when the Soldiers of Battery D, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, conducted the battalion's first live-fire exercise with a M109A6 (paladin) Howitzer in more than four years.

"Soldiers love to train; it's a known fact. The average Soldier joined because they want to train, be proud of what they do, and represent the United States Army with what they do," Jones said. "They're loving it. They're like a fat boy on a cupcake."

Following the brigade's scheduled NTC rotation in July, the unit is set to deploy in the fall for a yearlong tour. The brigade's leadership is currently reviewing and assigning its team leaders up to battalion commanders to ensure each unit is prepared and has proper leadership before heading down range, Jones said. Making sure the correct Soldiers are assigned to rear detachment details, as well as the correct leaders for the Family Readiness Group are also a current priority for the brigade, he add.

"We're bringing Soldiers to our brigade from all walks of life, so everybody brings a different piece of the pie. Everybody does it a little different everywhere. The concept is the same but how they accomplish it is always a little different," Jones said. "So you bring everybody's ideas into one and you deliver up your own as a brigade. That's what we're doing right now."



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

TOP: Soldiers of Battery, B, 1st Bn., 5th Field Art., 1st HBCT, fire a live round from a paladin howitzer March 23 at Training Area 94. The day marked the battery's first live-fire exercise in almost four years. **ABOVE:** Soldiers of Co., D, 1st Bn., 16th Inf. Regt., 1st HBCT, prepare the battalion's new tanks for the unit's first tank live firing Feb. 10 at Range 17. **PREVIOUS PAGE:** A Soldier of Co., D, 1st Bn., 16th Inf. Regt., 1st HBCT fires the first round from a tank Feb. 10 at Range 17. The event marked the brigade's first live tank firing on Fort Riley since 2005.

Veterans,
We want you ... to attend

VICTORY WEEK

Ceremonies, a festival & a concert

June 15–18, 2010



The 1st Infantry Division invites all Big Red One veterans to Fort Riley for Victory Week 2010. The Big Red One always has set the standard as a fighting force, and we continue to do so, building on the sacrifices and dedication of those who wore the Big Red One patch before now.

Victory Week is an annual event consisting of sporting events to showcase the strength of our current Soldiers, a Fallen Warriors Ceremony to remember those who have paid the ultimate price for the division in the past 12 months, and a division review, when the senior commander reviews a formation representing the entire division. Vietnam veterans—many of whom did not receive a welcome home greeting when they returned—are invited to participate and be recognized during this ceremony. The week will conclude with a festival and concert June 18 on Marshall Army Airfield.



If you are a Vietnam veteran and plan to participate, please visit www.riley.army.mil for Victory Week updates and information, or visit the 1st Infantry Division on Facebook.

HELLO.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY A GAME?

WARGAMES

SOLDIERS BENEFIT FROM SIMULATION TECHNOLOGY

By Stephanie Hoff
Duty First! Magazine

It's a new Army. A simple training mission could once take days, or even weeks to complete, but now it can be accomplished in a few hours.

With the establishment of the Battle Command Training Center and improvements to the Flight Simulator on Camp Funston, Fort Riley Soldiers now can receive top-notch training that is time-saving and cost effective.

"It's all about training. From the individual (Soldier) training where it doesn't matter about the units, to getting into small-unit training," said Randy Curry, BCTC director. "The Soldiers benefit from a facility like this because they don't have to spend all the time in the field. They can come in here and train. They're not using fuel; they're not using ammunition; they're saving resources."

The post's BCTC has been in operation for a little more than a year and in that time it has served more than 25,000 Soldiers. It is estimated to utilize more than 150 miles of communication wire for its daily operations. All the classrooms in the state-of-the-art facility are designed to be rapidly re-configured for requested training from individual classes to team and unit trainings.

"The idea in here is: nothing in here is set. We set out a room how a unit wants," Curry said. "One good thing is

the temperature is comfortable in (the BCTC). It doesn't snow in here, it doesn't rain in here. The Soldiers' training does not have to be delayed due to weather or malfunctioning vehicles."

The post's training facilities serve an array of students ranging from different military occupation specialties to civilian law enforcement agencies.

"We're MOS wide. Every MOS, we see through here," Curry said. "From morning to evening when (the Soldiers) leave, we can see units grow by 300 or 400 percent sometimes."

The individual-level training offered at the BCTC varies from courses such as the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course to training in command operation systems. The facility offers an array of individual training in Army Battle Command Training systems, such as intelligence, fire support, maneuver and logistics, Curry added.

"The whole intent of this type of learning is when Soldiers come to a unit in the ARFORGEN, they may or may not be proficient in whatever command system they are suppose to be using," said Scott Fellows, BCTC exercise planner. "We teach anywhere from a basic to an advanced operator capability for the system."

Following the completion of individual training, Soldiers and units can move into small unit and convoy training and on to final mission rehearsal exercises

without ever leaving the building.

"One thing about ARFORGEN is that units are being put together real fast," Curry said. "This allows them to come in and start building that team; to start building some cohesion."

The BCTC utilizes gaming technology for training offered to small unit. The classrooms' tables can be positioned to resemble a military vehicle, complete with a steering wheel and pedals for in the driver's 'seat' and include computers for each Soldier in the simulated vehicle. Each Soldier's monitor is programmed to display what would be seen from their position in the vehicle. Each simulated vehicle team can additionally be added to a convoy with fellow Soldiers in the same classroom.

"Almost every Soldier out there has an Xbox or some type of gaming system," Curry said. "Training doesn't have to be boring. It can be fun," Curry said. "The Soldiers seem to like it. Somebody would think that gaming is just plain fun. Well it's not. They really do get a lot of training in here."

Fellows added that the benefits of training Soldiers with the gaming system are numerous and include the completion of more missions in a decreased amount of time.

"So much can be thrown at them in a short period of time. You can't do that out on the ground," Fellows said. "You



literally waste days of training time, just worrying about getting vehicles dispatched and prepping to go out and do something for just half a day. What you can accomplish out there in a week you can accomplish in here in a day."

Different scenarios and environments can be created instantaneously while the Soldiers travel through the virtual streets of Baghdad or a simulated desert.

"We try to replicate as many different situations as they would experience in theater. You can go out in the field and go through all the training that you want but if a specific scenario never happens, then when it does in theater, you may have some confusion," Fellows said. "We have all kinds of different scenarios and they go from starting off for the novice, to something real advanced, after a squad or platoon have been in here for a while. The better a unit is; the harder we make the scenarios. We ramp it up to keep it challenging as they go along."

Fellows added that the simulations and trainings offered through the BCTC and other simulators cannot take away from the benefits Soldiers receive while training on their actual equipment and vehicles.

"The one thing that this facility really does is it sets them up to succeed at the next step. Nothing will ever replace doing live training, actually going out in the vehicle and shooting weapons. But all the procedures that they need to practice or to develop as individuals and teams is what this facility is for," he said. "They still have to experience that out there in the real world, but at least we can help them learning how to communicate as a team; kind of doing that initial training in a controlled environment."

(continued on page 18)

STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

FROM BOTTOM: Soldiers utilize personal computers and a projection to complete individual training, April 6, at the Battle Command Training Center (shown on right). The BCTC provides individual Soldier training as well as team training. Sean Casey (left) and Anthony Griffin, of Co. B., 1st Bn., 16th Inf. Regt. complete training, April 6, at the Battle Command Training Center. The BCTC utilizes personal computers and gaming technology in the training it offers to individual Soldiers and small units.



STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRSTMAGAZINE

ABOVE: Capt. William McGreer from the Nebraska National Guard, right, receives instructions from Craig Monte, flight simulator instructor before taking "flight" in the Flight Simulator on April 5 in building 724. **LEFT:** The flight simulator located in building 724 on Marshall Army Airfield simulates the controls and movements of a UH-60 (Blackhawk) helicopter.

(continued from page 17)
FLIGHT SIMULATION

Military pilots assigned to Fort Riley also can run through flight paths and scenarios from around the world, without ever leaving the ground. The Fort Riley Regional Aviation Simulation Center offers pilots a chance to gain valuable flight and maneuvering skills without having to take flight in an actual helicopter.

"The controls in our simulators are exactly the same as in the actual helicopter," said Frank Carbonneau, FRRASC lead instructor. "Our facility and devices are used to train individual, crew and collective tasks to standard in accordance with the aviators Aircrew Training Manual."

The facility's simulators are equipped with visual systems, sound, vibration, radio communication and intercom systems to simulate environmental conditions experienced in the actual helicopter.

Instructors have the capabilities to change the environment and weather conditions as well as more variables instantaneously. The aviation simulators allow aviators and crews to train

The controls in our simulators are exactly the same as in the actual helicopter. Our facility and devices are used to train individual, crew and collective tasks to standard in accordance with the aviators Aircrew Training Manual."

— Frank Carbonneau
FRRASC lead instructor

in such scenarios as emergency aircraft operations, night vision as well as learn the flight requirements for a new duty station by flying over that post, virtually.

The FRRASC currently offers the UH-60 (Blackhawk) Flight Simulator and Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (AVCATT). The AVCATT is a mobile simulator that can be easily transported and can be reconfigured to provide training on six different aircraft models that include an AH-64A Apache, OH-58D Kiowa Warrior and CH-47D Chinook.

"Train the way you fight" is taken

literally in the crew's preparation for AVCATT missions," Carbonneau said. "The crews are able to pre-plan on their unit's Aviation Mission Planning System and then use the received flight data in the AVCATT Manned Modules."

The cost savings of aviation crews training in a simulator versus an actual aircraft are estimated to be about 200 percent less than actually flying a helicopter.

"The cost savings are enormous," he said. "The cost are probably even in greater numbers than what we currently have figured."

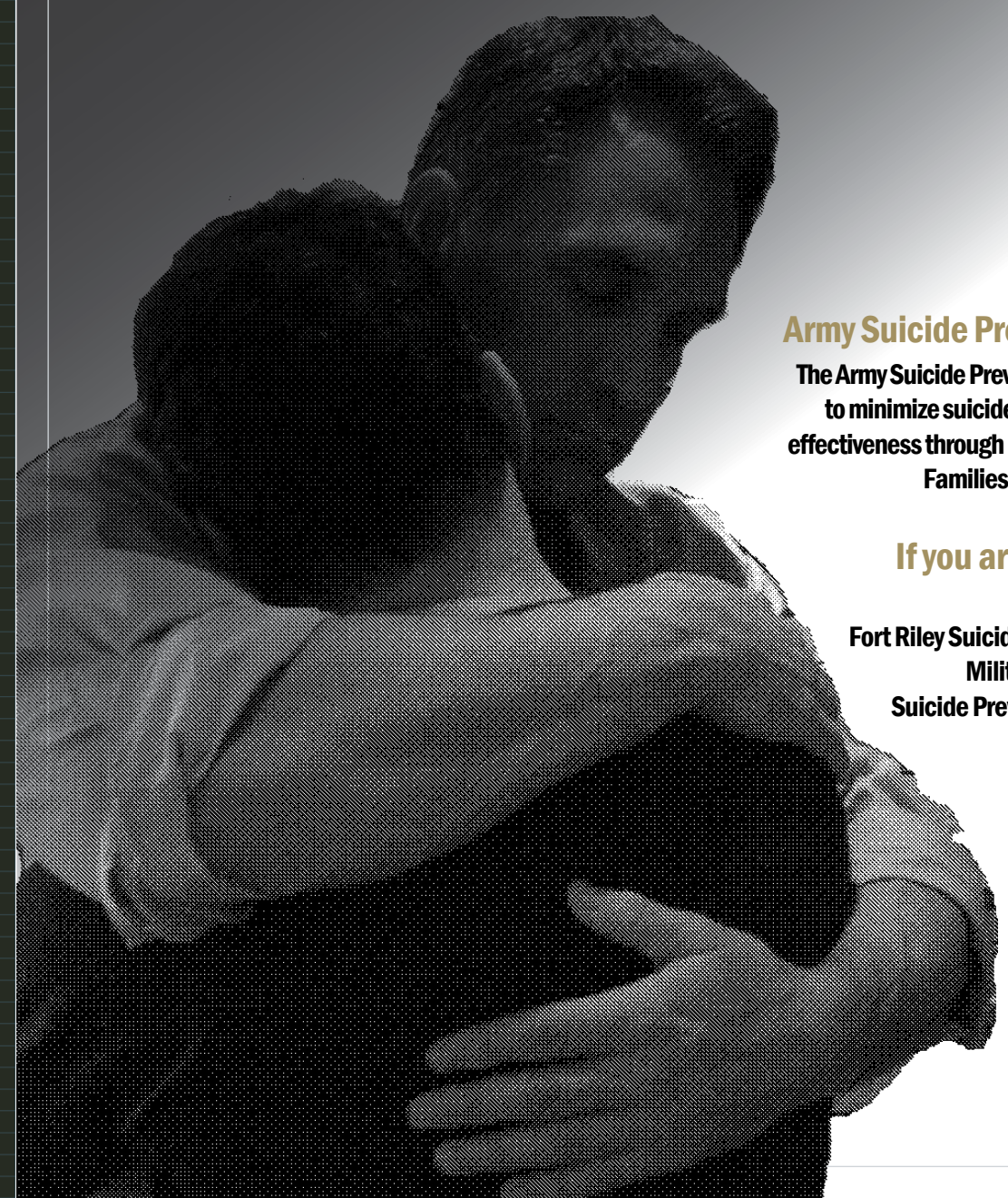
The FRRASC is scheduled to receive two additional mobile simulators in early 2011 with the redeployment of the 1st Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade.

"The Soldiers, as well as the aircrafts benefit from utilizing the flight simulator," Carbonneau said. "We are able to train our Soldiers in different environments, weather conditions and aircrafts. Anytime we can successfully train our Soldiers for their assigned mission in a way that is not only time saving and cost-effective, but can additionally save lives, we are doing our jobs successfully."

THERE'S SOMEBODY READY TO LISTEN

SUICIDE

IS NOT THE ANSWER



Army Suicide Prevention Program mission:

The Army Suicide Prevention Program policies are designed to minimize suicide behavior, thereby preserving mission effectiveness through individual readiness for Soldiers, their Families and Department of the Army civilians.

If you are in a crisis situation, call:

- Emergency, 911
- Fort Riley Suicide Prevention Hotline, 239.4357 (HELP)
- Military OneSource Crisis, 1.800.342.9647
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1.800.273.8255 (TALK)



JORDAN CHAPMAN, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE

ABOVE: Brig. Gen. David Petersen, deputy commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division-rear and Fort Riley, salutes the flag during the National Anthem during the start of the 1st Sustainment Brigade deployment ceremony March 15 in King Field House. OPPOSITE: Emma Huang, 4, holds on tight to her father, Capt. Tim Huang, Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, following the brigade's deployment ceremony. The brigade will be deployed to Kuwait for the responsible drawdown of coalition forces in Iraq.

Brigade takes a 'crawl, walk, run' approach

With nearly 70 percent new formation, 1st Sustainment Brigade deploys to act as lead brigade in Kuwait

By Jordan Chapman
Duty First! Magazine

Standing at attention and ready for what may come, the Soldiers of 1st Sustainment Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, cased their colors during a deployment ceremony March 15 in King Field House before beginning the unit's third deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"There is no doubt in my mind that the men and women before you are up to this task," said Brig. Gen. David Petersen, deputy commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division-rear and Fort Riley.

Led by 1st Sust. Bde. Commander Col. Donnie Walker Jr. and Command Sgt. Maj. Miguel Rivera, each "Durable" Soldier will have a part in driving their unit to success, which is to act as the lead brigade in Kuwait responsible for the drawdown of coalition forces in Iraq.

Such a task has not been taken lightly.

Sustainment Soldiers have been in and out of the Battle Command Training Center since last year to be sure every scenario is covered and planned for, to train each Soldier to the highest level of competence and to train in an environment that is identical to the area they will be deploying to.

"We took a crawl, walk, run approach," Walker has explained in previous interviews. "When the unit came home in 2008, we went through reset. We lost virtually 70 percent of our formation. We had to get new Soldiers in and basically build a new team," he said, noting it was important for the training to be as detailed as possible to insure mission success.

"I'm operating out of Kuwait with transportation missions supporting the entire theater," Walker said. During the training, Soldiers also were able to develop personal and working relationships with units they will be supporting while downrange—the 224th Sustainment Brigade, Army National Guard, out of Riverside, Calif., a mobile support battalion out of New Jersey, and others who were present during the exercise to understand how operations will work when they arrive in theater.

"The relationship we have developed, both personal and professional, has been beneficial," Walker said.

It is a lot of behind the scenes work that a lot of people don't read about, but it is very important," Walker emphasized during the ceremony, before which he noted that he and his Soldiers also will be supporting the surge into Afghanistan and preparing for the start of Operation New Dawn.

As 1st Sust. Bde. Soldiers go forth to complete the task at hand, likewise, Families and the community supporters left behind will continue their personal missions.

Kansas State University Women's Basketball Head Coach Deb Patterson said the partnership between her team and 1st Sust. Bde. has been more than beneficial for both organizations and hopes to continue correspondence while the Soldiers are overseas.

"This partnership we have established has been the most meaningful and significant aspect of our entire season," Patterson said. "I think it educated our student athletes and our staff about the unbelievable support and mission this unit does for our country ... anyone who cannot be fired up, cannot be inspired and cannot be humbled by what these men and women do in the military is missing everything there is."

Col. Jeffery Carra and Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Kenny will be the command team in charge of Task Force Durable and rear operations during the brigade's deployment.



The hidden costs of deployment

By Jordan Chapman
Duty First! Magazine

The road taken to prepare for a deployment is long, filled with meetings, communication and training. For 1st Infantry Division brigades that have deployed in the past few months, the plans made in preparation for their deployment to Kuwait can be summed up in one word: life.

First Sustainment Brigade is the most recent brigade to exit Fort Riley, and feel the burn of pushing men and equipment out the door and into a deployment.

Personnel training was a constant, but once the deployment date neared, it was crunch time. Ninety days out, Soldiers and civilians began attending meetings to prepare for actual movement, 50 days out Soldiers go through household briefings to understand what can be taken with them, 45 days out Soldiers receive overseas driving licensing, 36 days out the inspection and loading of equipment containers begins, 20 days out the publishing of temporary change of station orders occurs and finally, three to five days out, Soldiers receive their flight schedules.

The personnel are trained and ready to go, but the equipment takes a different route.

ITEMS SHIPPED TO MOVE 1ST SB TO KUWAIT

- 26—20-ft. 11,000 cubic feet containers with a max weight of 50,000 pounds.
- 4—Quad con sets, which, when bundled together is the equivalent of a 20-foot container.
- 16—Vehicles

WHAT IT TOOK TO GET THE EQUIPMENT IN THEATER:

- 15—Flat-bed trucks leaving Kansas Feb. 27 and traveling 1,200 miles to South Carolina in 19 hours.
- 35—days at sea.
- 2—days from the boat to the destination
- Total travel time: 37 Days.

getting the ball rolling

Games of fetch help cement lasting relationships between dog, handler



What could progress into a life-long friendship potentially begins with the simple excitement that comes from viewing a tennis ball.

The Engineer Canine Company, 5th Engineer Battalion, 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, has continuously had a handler and their military working dog deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom since 2003.

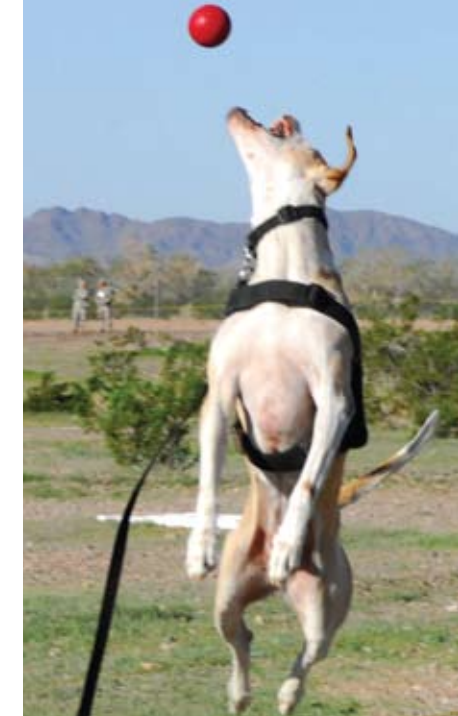
"The first mine-detection dog teams deployed in 2003. Since that original deployment, there has always been Soldiers of the Engineer Canine Company deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom," said Capt. Jennifer Smith, the company's commander. The company "is the only unit in the U.S. Army that offers this asset to maneuver commanders."

The unit's canine teams are comprised of two different types of military working dogs, each with a separate specialty. Spc. Jason Bourcier's dog, Choby, a mix-breed, is categorized as a mine-detection dog. Choby's category of military working dogs specialize in area and route clearance and mine field extraction. The dogs are trained to detect unexploded ordnances and casualty-producing devices.

"MDDs undergo a prescriptive training regimen," Smith said. "This includes various type of detection work on routes, open areas and casualty extraction. Teams must meet all requirements before they are considered for validation and certification that is conducted in Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz."

Specialized search dogs, like Staff Sgt. Jon Parsons' black Labrador retriever, Buddy, are trained to detect firearms and ammunitions and can assist with clearing buildings and vehicles. Unlike the MDDs, who conduct their searches on leashes, Buddy's occupation requires him to work off-leash and to not only understand voice

Story & photos by Stephanie Hoff
Duty First! Magazine



OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Spc. Jason Bourcier, Engineer Canine Company, 5th Eng. Bn., 4th MEB, awards his military working dog, Choby, a mix-breed, with a tennis ball after training March 17 at Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz. Choby is designated as a mine-detection dog and is utilized to provide area and route clearance and mine field extraction. **BOTTOM:** Staff Sgt. David Gerts, Engineer Canine Company, 5th Eng. Bn., 4th MEB, trains with his military working dog, Axel, a mix-breed, March 17 at Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz. Canines assigned to the unit specialize in extracting minefields as well as unexploded ordnances and casualty-producing devices. The teams are required to complete three weeks of certifications at Yuma Proving Grounds before deploying.

commands from his handler but also hand signals.

"SSD handlers are selected from a pool of combat engineer Soldiers, stationed on Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.," Smith said. "Upon selection, based on an initial interview, they are sent to Lackland Air Force Base for the Specialized Search Dog course. Once complete, they are assigned to the Engineer Canine Company, 5th Engineer Battalion."

The unit's MWD are selected from Lackland Air Force Base. The installation is located near San Antonio, Texas, and houses the Department of Defense's Military Working Dog School.

The dog selection process "is not as a scientific process as one would think is involved when selecting MWD," said Brian Nering, course manager for the Fort Leonard Wood program. "Because we are looking for family-friendly, non-aggressive dogs, the instructor will typically walk in front to the dogs' kennels with a tennis ball. If the dogs show excitement and not aggression, they will generally be a good fit for our program."

Upon the MWDs' arrival to Fort Leonard Wood, the next step is to pair the dog with the correct Soldier.

"The personality of both the Soldier and dog are very important when matching a team together. If we receive a dog who is energetic and playful, we work to team him or her with a Soldier of the same characteristics," said Staff Sgt. David Gerts, one of the unit's senior non-commissioned officers. "Forming that initial bond with your dog is critical. You are potentially walking into a live minefield with him and trusting him to let you know where the dangers are."

The company's canines are friendly and enjoy contact from their handlers and visitors. Once their harness is on them, the dogs know it is time to go to work.

The harness "is a trigger for the dog," said Sgt. 1st Class Harry Franco, non-commissioned officer in charge for the Fort Leonard Wood MDD teaching program. "It's supposed to trigger the dog's mind to go from being a dog to it's actually time to work. That's what it's there for."

The total training time for a handler and canine companion assigned to the company is a little more than 19 weeks. During that period the team is instructed on the ability to handle their dogs, maintain their dogs and react to threats in a high-threat environment.

"In preparation for deployment, the teams must undergo rigorous training standards," Smith said. "Soldiers have been training with their assigned dog from as little as six months to as long as two years."

The company is currently set to deploy six handlers and their canines along with a headquarters detachment before the end of the year. The teams will work for engineer battalions in Iraq and Afghanistan conducting area and route clearance and providing quality assurance for contractors, Smith said.

"Having a unit such as the engineer canine company greatly fits in with our battalion's efforts of enhancing the protection and efficiency of our forces," said Lt. Col. Hank Thomsen, the battalion's commander. "And the canines do just that." ♣



Teaching an old dog

STEPHANIE HOFF, DUTY FIRST! MAGAZINE



NEW TRICKS

Canine Company veteran of six deployments continues to learn new tricks of the trade

ABOVE: Sgt. Corey McCourt, Engineer Canine Company, 5th Eng. Bn., 4th MEB, poses with his military working dog, Mina, a black Labrador Retriever. The team have been paired together for nearly three years and are gearing up for their second deployment together. **OPPOSITE:** McCourt and Mina compete in the 2009 Military Working Dog Warrior Police Challenge at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. The event marked the first year the unit could compete in the predominately military police canines competition.

HE HAS HONORABLY SERVED IN THE MILITARY FOR TWO COUNTRIES AND IS CURRENTLY GEARING UP FOR HIS SIXTH DEPLOYMENT ... AND HE'S DONE IT ALL ON FOUR LEGS AND WITH A LONG, BUSHY TAIL.

Mina, a 10-year-old black Labrador retriever, is the oldest military working dog assigned to the Engineer Canine Company, 5th Engineer Battalion, 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

"He's the oldest dog we have in our kennels," said Sgt. Corey McCourt, Mina's handler. "Considering he's 10 years old and is still capable of doing this job... he's probably one of the best dogs we got."

Mina's name, when translated in Spanish, means a mine, subterranean canal or cavity in the ground. Despite being categorized as a feminine noun, often causing him to be called a female, Mina's name accurately identifies his designated occupation. Mina is categorized as a mine-detection dog and specializes in area and route clearance and mine-field extraction. The dogs are trained to detect unexploded ordnances and casualty-producing devices.

Mina began his military career with the British Army, where he deployed twice to Bosnia for support in mine detection operations. After a transfer to the United States Army in 2004, he was assigned to the Engineer Canine Company at Fort Leonard Wood, where he is now gearing up for his sixth deployment.

"He's got more deployments than I have total time in the Army," said McCourt, who joined the U.S. Army in 2005. "I've learned a lot with him. I would like to think that I've taught him a lot but being as old as he is, I doubt I have taught him as much as he's taught me."

Most MWDs generally begin their military careers around the age of 2, McCourt said, which makes Mina the company's oldest dog by nearly three years. In human years, he would be estimated to be approximately 62 years old.

"It's kind of weird. (The other dogs) can see that he's old and they just don't

like that feeling. It's a completely different aspect. There's nothing else in the world like it."

During the team's first deployment together, they successfully cleared tens of thousands of meters of land in Afghanistan.

"Busy; very busy. For a long time we were the only certified dog team out there. It was very busy," is how McCourt describes the deployment. "Some of the younger dogs would get heat exhaustion or worn out by the environment and it would just be me and the old, crusty one still trudging along."

So far, no retirement date is scheduled for Mina's foreseeable future. The military currently has no predetermined age for a MWD to be retired, although it generally occurs when the dog reaches around seven years of age, or even younger if the dog begins to show signs of no longer wanting to or being able to work, McCourt said.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ACEK9.COM.




bother with him," McCourt chuckled. "It's kind of like you have two kids and one just started college and one just got out. The one who's just gotten out of college is no longer drinking and partying; that's kind of how he is."

Before joining the Engineer Canine Co., McCourt was previously assigned to and deployed with the 5th Eng. Bn., 4th MEB. His and Mina's upcoming deployment will mark the second trip overseas for the duo, which have been paired together for nearly three years.

Deploying with Mina in 2008 "was a lot different from my first deployment. You come from doing route and building clearance to standing in a live mine-field," McCourt said. "There's nothing

"He's 10 years old. If he doesn't want to work; he's old enough to make that call. If he wants to stop working; then he'll stop working," he said. "He's good at his job. It's like me — I hope to someday be a sergeant major. I would be tremendously mad if they tried to retire me, because it's the only thing I've ever done. I think he's the same way."

Mina's undetermined retirement date set aside, his living arrangements for his "golden years" are already being prepared.

"It's kind of sad because he is the oldest dog and he's still doing this. But I'd like to see him retire and I'd like to take him home," McCourt said. "We argue sometimes, but I love him. He's my buddy. He's my dog." 



Join in the activities during Victory Week June 15-18

FLAG FOOTBALL
BASKETBALL
TUG OF WAR
SOFTBALL

VOLLEYBALL
GOLF & SOCCER
DODGEBALL
BOXING

WEIGHTLIFTING
COMBATIVES
10 MILE RUN
1 1/2 MILE RELAY



For more information about Victory Week and to register for events, contact your unit command.



'Ranger' Battalion closes base

Soldiers erase American footprints at FOB Summerall before returning to Iraqis

By Spc. Shantelle J. Campbell
4th IBCCT Public Affairs Office

BAYJI, Iraq—As the U.S. continues the responsible drawdown of troops in Iraq, the most important and considerably the biggest task for U.S. forces is returning bases to the Iraqi government.

Since the fall of 2009, Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, have been working hard at this mission. The "Ranger" Battalion already has turned over two smaller bases in its area of operation and now is concentrating on returning Forward Operating Base Summerall.

"(The Soldiers) have done everything from counting every Hesco barrier to counting T-Walls," said Capt. David Lawburgh, assistant operations officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt.

"There's been a lot of work, and it's going to be a continuing project as we draw down and start closing out the American footprint on these facilities that we're turning over," Lawburgh said.

The Soldiers of the battalion's F Company are responsible for coordinating the movement of the equipment from FOB Summerall and consolidating it at Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

Staff Sgt. Chris Hoffman, Standard Army Maintenance Systems-Enhance and Consolidated Redistribution of Supply Program noncommissioned officer in charge, said millions of dollars worth of equipment already has been recovered and turned back into the Army supply system.



SPC. SHANTELLE J. CAMPBELL, 4IBCT PAO

Soldiers of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, work to unload a Humvee on March 23 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher in Tikrit, Iraq. The Soldiers of Co. F took part in one of the largest convoys in transporting equipment from Forward Operating Base Summerall as they prepare to close that base.

— More Danger Forward stories on pages 28-29

"(We) consolidate (the equipment) into the different classes of supply and [we] load it into a connex and it gets shipped to (Joint Base Balad)," he said. "The equipment is then either put back into the supply system to be redistributed to other units that are over here or in Afghanistan or even to the States if it's needed over there. For the stuff that's unserviceable, they either ship it back to the manufacturer or destroy it."

Hoffman said that he is proud of the work of his Soldiers and is in awe of how quickly they worked to sort through and turn in equipment that had accumulated for a period of eight years.

"The Soldiers that I've had working with me have been outstanding Soldiers," Hoffman said. "We only had four and a half months to close down the entire FOB

and the Soldiers that I had, worked 100 percent and got everything turned in."

The closure of FOB Summerall and other bases like it is seen by many as an event that will be written into history books. For Spc. Ashley Jensen and Staff Sgt. Wayne K. Mathis, both motor transport specialists with Co. F, the base closures represent the accomplishments and the sacrifices that have been made since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom and both are proud to be a part of the drawdown.

"It feels awesome for me, personally, and I know it feels good for everybody else too in knowing that we're a part of something that made a change," Jensen said.

The drawdown "shows that we're making progress and good things are happening, big Army's recognizing it and we're winning," Mathis said.

CAB 'not in Kansas anymore'

Soldiers can't wait to get up North

By Spc. Roland Hale
CAB Public Affairs Office

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait—Clad in patrol caps, subdued flags and tactical gear, you'd think these Soldiers were at war. With desert sand under their boots, a bright blue sky and white sun above, covered occasionally by an impenetrable haze of thick, brown dust, you'd think they were in Iraq. But they're not. Arriving by the hundreds every few days, they're gathering in Kuwait, staging to deploy to Iraq.

After extensive preparation, planning and training, Kuwait is the last stop standing between the Combat Aviation Brigade and its mission in Iraq. Soldiers of the CAB can't wait to "get up North."

The final staging ground for units like the CAB as they deploy to Iraq, Kuwait serves to logistically assemble units and provide combat essential training before troops enter their areas of operation. In April, CAB Soldiers were in Camp Buehring, Kuwait, where they prepared their aircraft, attended training courses and adapted to the adverse conditions of a combat tour.

Duty in Kuwait consists of constant training, including courses on combat casualty care, IED warfare and vehicle rollovers, giving CAB Soldiers combat essential preparation before they enter Iraq. Soldiers also check their individual weapons, making sure they fire properly. The training does not begin, but rather culminates in Kuwait, said Sgt. Maj. Gregory Pace, the sergeant major in

(continued on page 29)

A CAB Soldier guides one of the brigade's OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter in for a landing on Camp Buehring as the brigade's aircraft begin to arrive from Kuwait City.

SGT. 1ST CLASS. JEFF TROTH, CAB PAO

Medics of 3-1 Cav apply healing hands

Soldiers come to the assistance of a young burn victim

By Spc. David Dyer
3rd Sqdn., 1st Cav. Regt. Public Affairs Liaison

COS ZULU, Iraq—The call for aid came early in the evening of March 28: an Iraqi officer needed help from U.S. Soldiers in treating a 2-year-old burn victim.

Maj. Mohammad Ghassan Mohammad, operations officer for 2nd Battalion, 32nd Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division, made the call to B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, and the U.S. Soldiers responded to help the little girl. The unit is located in the southern part of Iraq, working under the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion.

"When she arrived (at Contingency Operating Station Zulu) we thought that she was covered with third-degree burns," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Goodner, one of the medics who assisted with treating the child.

"Once inside, we found that she wasn't burned as badly as we had thought," he said. "What we initially thought were burns were actually grounds from coffee or tea."

Her family reported that the child, who is named Rqiah, was burned when she fell down and upset a kettle of scalding tea. Once Rqiah was



SPC. DAVID DYER, 3RD BN, 1ST CAV REGT PUBLIC AFFAIRS LIAISON

Sgt. David Branshaw, of Chandler, Ariz., a medic in B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, bandages the burns of Rqiah Mriosh at Contingency Operating Station Zulu.

cleaned up by the medics, they were able to identify and treat her burns.

"The burns covering her face made me concerned for her eye at first," Pfc. Skylar Humburd said. "Kids are the worst thing to see over here. When you see a kid suffering, it is terrible."

The unpleasant task of cleaning the burns was emotionally challenging for everyone involved.

"Some of the things that we have to do in treatment are not always pleasant" Spc. Daniel Conklin said. "When we treat children, it becomes a great deal more personal for us."

During the treatment, Sgt. David Branshaw sang Jimmy Buffet songs to soothe Rqiah.

"I have three children at home and I find that singing, even if they don't

understand the words, helps to distract them," he said. "I guess my father instinct kicked in."


The medics expressed the hope that their contact with Rqiah would not end with the initial treatment.

"We are going to ask that she come back every day, for the next few days, so that we can change her dressings and monitor her burns" Goodner said.

Rqiah's uncle, Sadeq Mohmoed Mriosh, said he was glad that they treated her.

"Thank you, I cannot express it enough," he said.

The medics themselves were grateful simply for the chance to help.

"I love my job, but it makes me feel especially great when I can help a child," Humburd said. 

(continued from page 28)

charge of the brigade's training and operations.

"Iraq is where the hostility is," Pace said. "We want to make sure everything works again before we get there."


In addition to the training requirements given to them by the Army, Soldiers also have a personal mission of getting adapted to the reality of a combat tour. More than four thousand miles away from home, in a drastically different time zone with an equally opposite

climate, Soldiers must begin to adapt to the conditions that they'll face during the length of their deployment. Besides obvious changes in sleeping patterns and weather, Soldiers must get used to lacking the luxuries that they have in the United States. Without a car, cell phone, independent living quarters, private hygienic facilities or many of the luxuries that most take for granted, Soldiers must settle into a new type of lifestyle.

"Some people can't just be thrown into a huge lifestyle change like this,"

said Spc. Marc Borgia, a medic assigned to the CAB. "This (Kuwait) is a good chance to prepare for the change before going to Iraq."

During such remarkable changes, Soldiers often look to Family and friends back home for support—the ease of which also has changed.

"It's hard not getting to talk to friends, Family and significant others whenever I want," Borgia said. "Online definitely helps a lot, but sometimes you just want to hear their voices." 

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