



DRAGON FIRE

Vol. 1, Issue 6

November 2007

Reviving Rashid

For the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

... Parker,
... Troop
... Troop
... 4th Cav-
... 4th Infantry
... Team, 1st
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... Rashid Dis-
... and his platoon
... census and
... operations in
... region.

Success Grows In Rashid

Dragon Soldiers, families and friends- this sixth edition of DRAGON FIRE is a milestone issue that representing more than just the amount of time we've been on the ground here in Baghdad, but also the dedication, professionalism and perseverance of our Soldiers and families back home.

We are seeing unprecedented success here in the Rashid District since we arrived in March; we have Al Qaeda on the run in East Rashid, while Jaysh al-Mahdi special groups have also been feeling the pressure of our focused operations to get the thugs and criminals off the streets.

In two weeks during October, our battalions killed or captured six of the top-10 most wanted terrorists on our brigade list. In one particular incident, a Soldier in the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment put his training, discipline and situational awareness to maximum effect, earning an Army Commendation Medal for Valor in the process. Sergeant McDaniel's harrowing story is depicted in these pages, and is reflective of the entire brigade's success against those who threaten security here.

Also in this issue, we bid farewell to the Vanguard's of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, who have completed an arduous yet highly successful 15-month combat tour in West Rashid. To the Vanguard's: You've done yeoman's work in working to greatly reduce sectarian violence while

rebuilding the infrastructure and giving hope to future generations of Iraqis. The American and Iraqi peoples owe you a debt of gratitude for your service, and we humbly reflect on the sacrifices of the 20 fallen Vanguard's who died

fulfilling their duty here. The words "thank you" are not enough.

We also look closely at the economic revival in Doura, as sparked by the efforts of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment in an area that had long been a desolate no-man's land of deserted store fronts and trash-strewn streets rife with roaming death squads and criminals. Thanks to the Raiders' hard work, there are now more than 128 stores open for business, the trash is being hauled out, roads repaired and the entire neighborhood is a model for the rest of the district to follow.

I am honored to lead this great brigade of Soldiers and am reminded daily of everyone doing his and her part to carry the fight. I also deeply appreciate all of the love and support we get from the Family Readiness Groups back home- we couldn't do it without you!

Keep after it, and remember our division motto: No mission too difficult, No sacrifice too great...DUTY FIRST!

*Col. Ricky D. Gibbs
Dragon 6*



Gone Hunting



*Command Sgt. Maj.
Jim Champagne is on
leave and his column
will return next month.
Keep getting after it.*



Maj. Eric Timmerman, the operations officer of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division from Charlotte, N.C., greets an Iraqi Army soldier while on a battlefield circulation in the Saydiyah region of southern Baghdad's Rashid District, Oct. 4. The 1-18 Inf. 'Vanguards' out of Schweinfurt, Germany, are currently attached to Task Force Dragon of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. The 4th IBCT is deployed out of Fort Riley, Kan. (Smith/4th IBCT)

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On the cover

Sgt. 1st Class Damion Parker, a platoon sergeant from Troop B, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division leads his platoon on a patrol in southern Baghdad's Rashid District. Parker and his platoon were conducting census and psychological operations in the Doura region.

Shoot to thrill: Forward Operating Base

Story, photos by Spc. Nathaniel Smith
4th IBCT Public Affairs

It's not uncommon for Soldiers to bring as much of home as possible with them when they deploy. Some bring pictures of loved ones. Others bring tokens such as stuffed animals.

Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Falcon took it a step further, clearing out a dump full of 66 tons of trash and constructing a fully functional archery range where Soldiers can shoot, whether they've been hunting all their lives or they're simply looking to pick up a new hobby.

Staff Sgt. Nathan Tabor, a Joint Network Node assistant platoon sergeant with Company C, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, played a large role in the construction of the range.

For the Dickinson, N.D., native, it was the carrying on of a part of his heritage.

"My entire family hunts. Since I was a little kid, my dad's always taken me with him. I've just always done it," he said.

The carrying on of a tradition was not easy; a lot had to be done to prepare a range for something other than rifles on an Army installation. With help from several individuals and units, an idea that manifested while Tabor was on his way home for leave became a reality. He said his family, wife Marisol and son Luisito of Topeka, Kan., kept him motivated when he felt like quitting.

"It wouldn't be possible without my family. They motivated me quite a bit. There's been times when I'm like 'I don't have time for it,' he said. "They're like 'just get it done, it pays off in the long run,' and that's what's happened. We've got it done, and it's definitely going to pay off."

Tabor saw the payoff as an opportunity to not only get to practice a hobby from home, but also to generate interest in a sport that has been losing its draw.

"It's great because every year the number of hunters and fishermen are steadily declining. That's for the simple fact people not knowing about it, people not having a place to go," he said. "As long as you have something there for the Soldiers to use, people will get interested. Next thing you know, something you like, and you're teaching your kids."

Tabor said in addition to the proliferation of an activity, it also provides Soldiers a distraction from the every day stresses of a war zone.

"It's a place for the Soldiers to get away when guys are coming back from missions," he said. "It's a good way to forget some of the stuff you're doing every day and start doing the stuff you remember from back in the States."

Classes to certify Soldiers on FOB Falcon interested in taking up archery for the first time are scheduled to begin in late November.



Archers fire up Falcon

Opposite: Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, the senior noncommissioned officer of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, fires the first arrow at the Forward Operating Base Falcon Archery Range, Sep. 23. The range was made possible through the efforts of Soldiers from the 610th Brigade Support Battalion, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th IBCT.

Opposite Bottom: Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Fields, III, the senior noncommissioned officer of the 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Birmingham, Ala., examines a bow at the Forward Operating Base Falcon Archery Club Range, Sep. 23.



Above: Some of the key contributors to the construction of the Forward Operating Base Falcon Archery Club's range; from left, Staff Sgt. Christopher Fessenden, Sgt. 1st Class Rick Switzer, Maj. Kim Zimmerman, Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, Maj. Brian Derrick, Staff Sgt. Nathan Tabor.

Left: Staff Sgt. Nathan Tabor, an assistant platoon sergeant with Company C, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Dickinson, N.D., fires his first arrow at the Forward Operating Base Falcon Archery Club Range, Sep. 23. Tabor was one of the key contributors to the construction of the range.



Lawrenceville, Ga. native Pvt. David Palasek, with Troop A, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, watches as Iraqi citizens mix concrete while they renovate the road median in Doura Oct. 28. Portions of Doura have seen a recent revival after months of fighting with citizens building new sidewalks, installing street lights and cleaning up their neighborhoods.

Economic revival strikes Doura

*Story, photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons
4th IBCT Public Affairs*

BAGHDAD – Bullet holes attest to the battleground that was this two-block portion of Doura. Just a few months ago, the residents were afraid to step outside leaving their neighborhood riddled with garbage, without power and most of their shops closed.

That was until the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., made a concerted effort to weed out insurgents and put the citizens of the two neighborhoods on Doura's east side on the track to success.

"When we first arrived here there were 10 stores open on the entire street," said Lt. Col. James Crider, the squadron commander as he toured the peaceful streets with members of the Iraqi media. "There were several attacks, improvised explosive devices every day and no one wanted to cooperate. Initially we stayed on the street to protect the people 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until we became friends with the people."

On Oct. 27 there were 138 stores open, Crider added.

Staying out on the streets and erecting barriers to prevent gun-



fire from entering the area began to pay off – in more ways than one.

The citizens began to slowly come back outside and a National Police checkpoint was relocated because it was deemed unnecessary to protect that portion of town.

"This is one of the safest places in Doura," said Pvt. David Palasek, a Lawrenceville, Ga. native serving with Troop A, 1-4 Cav. as he watched Iraqis laying new concrete on the street median. "More people are coming out everyday because they feel safer."

Once the citizens began to feel more secure the insurgent threat began to ebb.

"Once we began to trust each other and share information the insurgents could no longer hide," Crider, a native of Hopkinsville, Ky.,

said. "At the same time we began to work on essential services projects such as trash pick up and street lights. Once they saw they had good power and jobs the area began to look much nicer and the insurgents began to disappear. And things got really good."

Great strides in the past few months with many projects aimed at helping the citizens were being completed.

“We suffered a lack of security and essential services in Muhallas 838, 840, and 842 until 3 months ago, when the citizens and local contractors were able to complete 22 projects together,” said Dr. Moayaad, who lives in the neighborhood.

Some of the citizens said the area hasn't been as good since before Saddam left power.

“The situation got worse after the fall (of Baghdad) until this moment,” said A'ala Eldien Salim, a butcher, whose shop was one of the few that remained open during the tough times the neighborhoods endured. “The security gradually started to return to the area because of the presence of Coalition Forces in the area. They are rescuing us from the saboteur's elements. The lighting in the area is important for the shops.”

Salim said he was able to keep in business because of monetary help.

“I had damages in my shop due to other explosions around my shop,” he said. “I received a grant which helped me to fix the windows, but I still need to buy some stuff for the shop like freezer.”

The streets were once empty but for a few stores, now they are vibrant with the activity of a garbage truck making routine rounds to pick up trash; workers placing multi-colored bricks down as a new sidewalk; men pumping iron at the Arnold Gym; children playing and people visiting the Doura Clinic for all their medical needs.



Top: A'ala Eldien Salim, a butcher, hangs meat up in his shop. He says the area is the best it has been since the fall of Saddam.

Above: Iraqis mix concrete as they prepare to fix the road medians Oct. 29. Three months before the area was a battleground between insurgents and Coalition Forces.

Left: An Iraqi man brings his daughter out to meet Hopkinsville, Ky. - native, Lt. Col. James Crider, commander of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, Oct 28.

Opposite Middle: Sgt. Kenneth Hickman, a vehicle commander with the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, plays with two local boys.

Opposite Bottom: An Iraqi i mixes concrete as he prepares to lay more of the colored bricks along the sidewalk Oct. 29. In recent months, Muhallahs 838 and 840 began showing an economic revival. Three months before the area was a battleground between insurgents and Coalition Forces.



Pop Pop 610 builds rifle range

by Spc. Nathaniel Smith
4th IBCT Public Affairs

In a small corner of Forward Operating Base Falcon, there was dry land behind a dump not being used for anything.

On a base that had been in use since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, other units saw no use for it, leaving it alone for years.

Where other units could see nothing, the 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kan., saw an opportunity to provide a much needed service to the Soldiers of Task Force Dragon, constructing a fully functional range where the troops can test-fire their weapons and conduct alternate qualification on paper targets.

Capt. Allen Hill, the 610th BSB's logistics officer from Powder Springs, Ga., was one of the key figures in the construction of the range, coordinating to have supplies and equipment necessary for the project, which lasted about 5 months from late May until late October.

Hill said the value of the range helped him when bringing all the pieces together.

"We made our point noted that this is important for the entire FOB and the entire brigade," he said. "Soldiers have to have effective weapons. This gives Soldiers the ability to re-zero and confirm their zero. They know their weapons work when they need them to."

"The collective mindset among every battalion in the brigade was that this is something that is needed."

Maj. CJ King, the executive officer of the 610th BSB from Rolla, Mo., felt the range was his unit's chance to make a lasting impact on FOB Falcon.

"I guess everybody makes their contribution; this is ours," he said. "A lot of guys are doing a lot of great things. We could have come here and sat on our hands and said this is as good as the FOB's going to get. We definitely want to leave the FOB better than we found it."

"This is one quick way to increase the value. It's going to make it better for these guys who go outside the wire."

While the importance of the site was not lost on anybody, there were still significant challenges in the way, such as finding the right location, getting the dirt necessary for a firing berm, and the actual construction of



Across: Spc. Liquanda White, a signal support specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, prepares her weapon for firing at the range on Forward Operating Base Falcon, Oct. 20.

Left: Lt. Col. Robert Weaver, the commander of the 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Oxford, Penn., fires his rifle at the new range on Forward Operating Base Falcon, Oct. 20. Weaver's battalion constructed the range for all the units on the base.

Above: The new range at Forward Operating Base Falcon in southern Baghdad opened Oct. 20.

of gravel.

Hill, who had no prior experience with

a project such as this, felt all of the unit's hard work has paid off.

"I've seen the range at Liberty and other places," he said. "I think this is one of the best ranges in the area."

King said the range is as good as it gets in Iraq.

"This is as close to a to-standard firing range as you're going to get," he said. "This is comparable to Fort Riley right now."

While the 610th BSB could sit back on its haunches and admire its handiwork, King added that the 'Phoenix' has no such intentions.

"We want to improve on that thing. Right now it's stationary targets," he said. "Every day we're here is one more opportunity to make it better."

In Sector with COMCAMA

ON SAYDIYAH'S STREETS
with *Pfc. Michael Hendrickson*
55th Combat Camera



Above: Soldiers of Company C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment conduct house clearing operations in the Saydiah district of Baghdad, Oct. 22.

Top Left: A Soldier from Co. C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment provides cover for troops entering a residence in the Saydiah district of Baghdad, Oct. 22.

Middle Left: Soldiers from Co. C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment line the streets in the Saydiah district of Baghdad, Oct. 22.

Left: Soldiers from Co. C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment take cover while preparing to exit a residence in the Saydiah district of Baghdad, Oct. 22.

Rangers master Kamiliyah

Story, photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons
41BCT, Public Affairs

(Editor's note: This story was originally published as a two-part series about life at Coalition Outpost Bushmaster in Kamiliyah, Iraq.)

KAMILIYAH, Iraq – “Welcome to EFP Airways,” Staff Sgt. Howard Weitzmann, the weapons squad leader with 1st Platoon, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, said as the patrol left Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah in southeastern Baghdad.

The patrol would be heading into one of the roughest parts of the city, known for numerous explosively-formed penetrators targeting Coalition and Iraqi forces, to replace a platoon at Coalition Outpost Bushmaster.

Zigzagging through the bustling city avoiding traffic jams, the platoon was forced to come to a halt only once that trip – traffic outside the local Iraqi Police station was in gridlock as thousands of military-aged men awaited the slim chance they may enter and apply for a job.

“Only about 50 or so will be chosen to go inside,” Weitzmann, the 32-year-old Patillion, Neb.-native said as the throng of jobless men began rushing together like high-school American boys eager to watch a fistfight.

About the same time, an American unit entered the IP compound and Weitzmann’s patrol began moving again.

Entering the small town of Kamiliyah, the pa-



Staff Sgt. Lucas Horn, 23, an infantryman from Portland, Ore., assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division based at Fort Riley, Kan. and attached to 2nd Brigade, 2nd Inf. Div., stands guard at the entrance to the Kamiliyah Neighborhood Council Hall Oct. 12.

trol was welcomed by many children waving and giving “thumbs-up” as the lumbering humvees ambled their way through the narrow litter strewn streets slowly avoiding suspicious piles of debris and the omnipresent overflowing open-air sewage trenches.

Though the troops have been up and down these streets tens, if not hundreds, of times since May when they began manning the COP, the Iraqi children seemed to pay a keen interest in the Ameri-

cans. At one point, a little girl and her sister passed the convoy multiple times as it halted briefly before beginning its journey.

Ultimately, the “EFP Airways” flight had been quiet and the sights of the smiling and cheerful children refreshing. The patrol entered COP Bushmaster will little fanfare except for the smiling faces of fellow Soldiers eager that 1st Platoon had come to relieve them.



Washington, D.C.-native 1st Lt. Edward Boland, 1st Platoon Leader, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, peers around the corner of the Kamiliyah Neighborhood Council Hall Oct. 12.

COP Bushmaster

Nestled near the town's industrial complex, camouflage netting and concertina wire signals the quiet presence of the COP. Home to at least two platoons of Rangers for almost a week at a time, the two-story building is the base of operations for the Company B, "Bushmasters" attached to the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division based at Forward Operating Base Loyalty.

The unit's parent brigade, the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division based at Fort Riley, Kan., is operating out of Forward Operating Base Falcon, in the Rashid District of the Iraqi capital.

A quiet complex, that has grown quieter yet since Moqtada Al-Sadr called a six-month cease-fire in August, has the basic needs a Soldier could ask for with few exceptions.

There are hot meals twice a day, Internet access, telephones, satellite television, a full-sized gym with free weights and wrestling mats for the Soldiers to unwind after a mission outside the relative safety of the COP's wire.

But, with all the modern amenities the COP has, the lone shower consists of a refillable bag attached to a low ceiling allowing a single Soldier a cramped chance to wash off a mission's grime. Then there are the six wooden latrines, where the contents were pulled out in barrels and with a touch of diesel fuel put to the torch.

Despite conditions that make "Fobbits" cry foul, the Bushmasters to a man stoically agreed they would take COP-life over FOB-life any day. In an era where there is no rear echelon, "Fobbits" are what Soldiers who routinely pound the Iraqi landscape call those who stay on the FOBs.

"It's not that bad," said Spc. Jonathan Turek, a gunner from Houston, slowly smoking a cigarette. "It could be a whole lot worse."

The truck commander of his vehicle agreed.

"It's much better than staying on the FOB and making that trip twice a day," said Cpl. Jacob Price, an red-haired, boyish-looking 21-year-old from Eureka, Calif. The smoke from the duo's cigarettes wafted into the air as they spoke a quiet resolve in their faces.

During the first months at the COP, the Bushmasters had to withstand triple digit temperatures while their air conditioning and electric generators sputtered and died. They said they lost at least ten AC units in the first month alone.

On Sept. 29, their platoon sergeant Sgt. 1st Class James Doster was killed by an improvised explosive device traveling the stretch of road the patrol had just traversed.

"We are rolling with the ball," said Staff Sgt. Jose Vera, a 26-year-old infantryman from Philadelphia. "That is what Doster would want us to do. We are doing the same things as before."



Children crowd the gate near the Kamiliyah Neighborhood Council to get a glimpse of American Soldiers as they guard the building during a meeting, Oct. 12.



Lt. Col. Ralph Kauzlarich, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment commander shakes the hand of the Kamiliyah Neighborhood Council chairman Oct. 12.

Though solemn in their resolve, the air is ripped apart with laughter around the same time each day. One of things that makes the Soldiers laugh heartily are the re-runs of America's Funniest Home Videos shown on Saudi Arabian television.

With the laughter is the clanking of weights as the Bushmasters strengthen their sinews before their next mission.

A meeting and a night's rest

Soon the Bushmasters would be back on the streets making their presence known to those whom they are there to protect—the Iraqi people.

A few hours after its arrival 1st Platoon was once again cautiously driving through town, this time to the Kamiliyah Neighborhood Council Hall where Capt. Jermaine Hampton was scheduled to meet with the council chairman about current issues affecting the village.

"Looks like it will be a long meeting," said 1st Lt. Edward Boland, 1st Platoon Leader as he stood guarding the front door of the bustling hall. Four sheiks in traditional dress had entered the complex, where locals arrive for everything from medical care to resolving business issues.

The troops had fanned out in their humvees outside the complex walls, while others went inside for added protection.

"There is a convoy approaching," crackled a voice on Boland's radio.

Boland said Ranger 6, or Lt. Col. Ralph Kauzlarich, 2-16 commander was arriving for face-to-face talks with the sheiks.

Inside the large, well air-conditioned room on the second floor, Kauzlarich and Hampton sat across from the sheiks, with the chairman sitting behind his desk under an Iraqi flag between the two as if a moderating a political debate.

After initial pleasantries, Kauzlarich told the sheiks bluntly, "We have captured these three individuals - they are bad men ... We have had numerous people tell us they were bad."

The tribal elders listened intently and asked small questions, but to a man they nodded in agreement when Ranger 6 said a contractor scheduled to do work in the town was fired because he failed to work in a manner timely enough to help their people.

Downstairs in local children, amused by the heavily-armed Americans began to congregate at the gate straining to get a glimpse or even maybe a treat from the strangers.

Soon the meeting would end, and the sweat-drenched Soldiers were on their way back to their base for much needed rest and some hot chow.

As the sun began to sink into the dust on the horizon, the Soldiers found out why the meeting took as long as it did – there would be no night mission that evening in order to let the sheiks maintain tighter order over their people.

October 11 started like any summer day at a beach town in Southern California – warm and overcast. It wouldn't be until afternoon when the heat of the sun would scorch the clouds away and the sand exposed brightly in golden reflection.

But there wasn't going to be any frolicking in the surf today. Instead, the Bushmasters would be patrolling the increasingly calm yet dangerous streets of this small neighborhood in southeastern Baghdad.

After an unexpected reprieve from a mission the previous night, the Bushmasters of 1st Platoon were ready and ventured out into the quiet town for a two-fold mission: check the town's water supply and check the industrial area for a reported weapons cache.

"We don't get blown up or shot at that much anymore," said Cpl. Jacob Price, an infantryman from Eureka, Calif. "The sheiks are starting to rein in their people."



Cpl. Jacob Price, an infantryman with 1st Platoon, Company B, 2nd Bn. 16th Infantry, stands guard as fellow "Bushmasters" search a home in Kamilitay, checking to see if the house had running water. It did.

Even through the eerie calm, the Bushmasters will uncoil and show the people they are still there through various day and night patrols.

Four corners and a dry hole

Schumann, t, led the platoon straight out of the semi-comforts of COP Bushmaster down a road nearly a kilometer, stopped and immediately dismounted near a school.

As the day before, the children began to gather to get a glimpse of the heavily-armed Americans bottled up in heavy armored vehicles or quite possibly be the beneficiary of a Soldier's good will.

Schumann entered the school to take a sample of the water in the area just as a flood of cheerful school girls exited.

Water samples were being taken at various points around the perimeter of town to judge the health of its water supply.

After a few minutes the patrol was weaving through the narrow streets, slowly driving through traffic and waiting for a backhoe that was digging in an intersection to move.

The convoy stopped briefly, another sample taken and the convoy moved again until the patrol stopped and Soldiers began to dismount.

"Look for a house with running water," Schumann ordered through the radio as Price, Pfc. Scott Francis Scutari, a 31-year-old infantryman from Long Island, N.Y. and others began testing the locks on nearby courtyards for entry.

"This one's locked," Scutari said just as Schumann and Price found one open across the street and entered.

Politely the Soldiers wrapped on the front door and patiently waited until a mother and child opened the door.

"Salaam Alakum," Scutari said with a smile to the mother and child, who returned the smile and quietly stepped aside as the Bushmasters stealthily searched the house.

"This one has running water," a Soldier called out somewhere in the

house and after doing a cursory check of the residence the troops left as quickly as they arrived.

The next part of the mission would last a bit longer.

The sun had finally burned off the haze as 1st Platoon drove around mountains of scraps that in another time and place would be considered abstract art; near ramshackle tan brick walls with rusted, locked gates protecting reddish-brown steel doors, parked and began searching for what intelligence said could be a sizeable cache of weapons. If it wasn't for dogs barking and new locks on the doors the place seemed deserted.

"We went looking for 30 to 300 107mm rockets," Price said afterwards. "It's a little easier to find something like that – there are not a lot of places you that can hide it."

Armed with bolt cutters, the troops began a methodical clearing of the industrial block with knock on each door then if no answer the locks would be destroyed and the troops entered.

Building after building the Bushmaster searched in vain for the cache. Unlike Alice in Wonderland they didn't find anything at the end of the rabbit hole. It was dry.

The troops kept searching even though most of the near empty buildings didn't have the space to conceal a sizeable cache. But they did find Iraqis working hard either packaging dates or powder coating hot water heaters who barely acknowledged the inspectors and kept working.

"We have been here many times," Price said. "We come here from time to time, but don't always find caches. We go places to show our presence and to let the locals know we are there."

Even though they have been to the complex many times, it doesn't make it any less stressful.

"You are always apprehensive until you finally go in the door," Price said.

"You are always apprehensive until you

With sweat dripping off the brows the temperatures inching toward 100 degrees Fahrenheit, the platoon methodically neared the end of the mission. But there was still one more shop to inspect.

When Schumann, Price and a few others stepped through the courtyard, they encountered fresh metallic scraps littering the courtyard and an grey-haired old man and his family who smiled at the Americans and shook their hands with an excitement reminiscent of meeting long lost relatives.

The Soldiers gave a cursory look over the man's tin-cutting wares and left as quickly as they arrived.

Ghosts in the darkness

Intelligence arrived that afternoon of a possible high-value target in the vicinity and the Bushmasters began planning a lightning strike to snatch him up.

With the clock striking the first few ticks of Oct. 12, the platoon doused the humvee lights and a squad led by Schumann entered the block on foot.

Like ghosts afraid of the light, the squad stealthily crept from shadow to shadow looking for the house intelligence pointed to: a two-story residence with a yellow gate with a courtyard.



Spc. Christophe Goodrich, left, an infantryman from San Diego, and Spc. Matthew Stern, a medic from Phoenix, both with 1st Platoon, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., sort through papers found in an Iraqi home, during a night raid Oct. 13.

Houselights up and down the block cast an eerie glow as the squad approached.

A few meters before the suspect house, the patrol walked past an empty vehicle on the right side of the road and met a heavy-set Iraqi leaning up against a wall taking in the night sky. Schumann immediately exchanged pleasantries with him and quickly enlisted his services.

"Do you know where this man lives?" the squad leader asked politely.

No, the man insisted.

"What about this address?" Schumann said showing the man a map. With a slight hand gesture the man indicated it was the first home on the right. As part of the squad searched a house four doors up the road, Schumann and others quickly tested the gate to find it locked.

Three Soldiers scaled the gate and knocked on the door. A middle-aged man answered and quickly went outside to unlock the gate. Soldiers inspected his house and only found the man's identity paperwork. It was the wrong man.

Schumann talked with the man and with a smile and handshake the Soldiers left.

"We had vague intel," Price said later. "People may be upset at other people for what ever reason and reported them."

No matter if it was another dry hole or not, Boland, said it helped keep his troops sharp.

"It was good practice for the guys," he said. "You might scare some people in the house; it makes them mad, but they see you are going after bad guys."

With daylight still a few hours off, the Soldiers crawled into their bunks and slept until the smell of hot breakfast and preparation for their next mission would wake them up.



Cpl. Jacob Price, an infantryman with 1st Platoon, Company B, 2nd Bn. 16th Infantry, peers out a window during clearing operations of the Kamiliyah industrial area as he looks for a cache of rockets. The Eureka, Calif. native's unit is part of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., but is attached to 2nd Brigade, 2nd Inf. Div. during its current deployment.

"I go in the door": Cpl. Jacob Price

1-18 earns tickets

By Spc. Nathaniel Smith
4th IBCT, Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – It's been 15 months since the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment entered a combat zone, answering its nation's call to serve.

In a rural area of southern Baghdad, the mechanized infantrymen set out on a mission to corral terrorism and protect the people of West Rashid.

Now the Army has one message for the Soldiers out of Schweinfurt, Germany:

Mission complete.

The Soldiers of 1-18 Inf. are set to return to their home station in November after having been deployed since August of 2006.

The challenges are not over for

the troops, as now they have to convey what they've been through here in terms that their families will understand.

While the deployment was long and full of challenges, as are all, Command Sgt. Maj. Israr Choudhri, the senior noncommissioned officer of the 'Vanguards,' said the thought of his daughter made it all worth it.

"It was worth it because every day she went to school, I never worried that someone would attack my wife's car with an (improvised explosive device) or (rocket-propelled grenade)," he said.

"In order to prevent that from happening to any one of our kids, if I was in Iraq for 15 months, it was all worth it."

Maj. Eric Timmerman, the operations officer for Task Force Vanguard, volunteered to join the unit after it had already deployed because he felt it was worth it as well.

Timmerman, who had already served as a battalion-level operations officer, actually

worked with 1-18 Inf. in training the Soldiers to deploy, and he said being with the troops was one reason he volunteered to be in the position again.

"Believe it or not once you get to a certain rank, you spend a lot of time on the staff side

despite the change of position, his job was still the same: ensuring the welfare of his troops.

"My job as a first sergeant was about taking care of Soldiers," he said. "Now, as a battalion sergeant major, the duty does not change: taking care of Soldiers."



Now that the Vanguards are returning, the question arises, how will the troops tell their families what they went through in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Timmerman learned from his father, who served in Vietnam, about how to explain to his three boys, ages 9, 11 and 13, the trials and triumphs he and his troops endured.

"I remember he never really talked a whole lot about it. With my sons, I

“War isn't like a movie. War isn't like Ba



think for each one of them I'm going to have to sort of talk about things in a different manner. That will evolve over time as they get older," he said. "I'm not going to talk about the horrors of war with them at such an early age, but they need to know that. I want to be able to paint the experience on the good and the bad side as truthfully as possible."

Timmerman said one of the most difficult things to get his family to understand will be the conflict going on in Iraq.

"When you come to enforce the nation's political decisions, there are a lot of aspects to that. There's a whole range of dimensions of things you do, from killing to handing out school books," he said. "I want them to know that we came over here, and we did some killing, some killing was done to us, and that wasn't pretty. When that had to happen, often, other people were affected immediately. The family, somebody else was hurt. It's not as clean as shoot and kill, bad guy down, done."

of things often very removed from every day combat Soldiers and you miss that because really that's kind of why I came in," the Charlotte, N.C., native said. "It was an opportunity for me, so I jumped at that opportunity."

For Choudhri, it had always been about the Soldiers. The Karachi, Pakistan, native deployed with a military intelligence company as a first sergeant to Samarra and Mosul, and

Mission.com

t home

One thing Timmerman feels is important for his kids to understand is the versatility of America's fighting forces.

"I think their country has trained an Army to be able to go and do these things that I don't think any other army in the world really does to the extent that we do or takes the amount of care we do to fix a school, to deliver school books and desks, to get packages from family members, and distribute those items to kids on the street; to try and have a positive outcome to this thing that we're doing," he said. "Hopefully, it transitions more to fixing and helping a country stand on its own as a democratic society so we have to do less killing."

Ultimately, Timmerman said his troops' ability to react to the complex set of circumstances they faced every day in the Rashid District is a point of pride.

"War isn't like a movie. War isn't like Band of Brothers. There are so many more dimensions to it. By us being here, in probably one of the most violent places in all of Iraq, we touched a lot of people and we made a difference. We always sought ways to go about helping people. Even though we had our game faces on every day and we were ready to deal death, our Soldiers are good enough nowadays they can almost turn on and off like a switch. That's an incredible testament to the guys that are wearing this uniform at all levels. We have a lot to be proud of. I attribute that to discipline and the leadership that we have in this organization. The desire to make every place we went better every time was always there."

and of Brothers."



Task Force Vanguard: by the numbers

Patrols	8,000
High Value Individuals	13
Company Clearing Ops	12
Detainees Held	274
Caches	107
IED's(found and detonated)	527
VBIED's Found	8
Iraq Security Volunteers	1,853
Barriers Emplaced	over 5,000
Bronze Stars	103
Bronze Stars w/ Valor	2
ARCOM's	599
ARCOM's w/ Valor	2
CIB's	202
CAB's	147
CMB's	23
Purple Hearts	65
Project \$ Spent	over 15 million

A New Dawn

Dragons teach policemen new ways

by Spc. Nathaniel Smith, 4IBCT Public Affairs



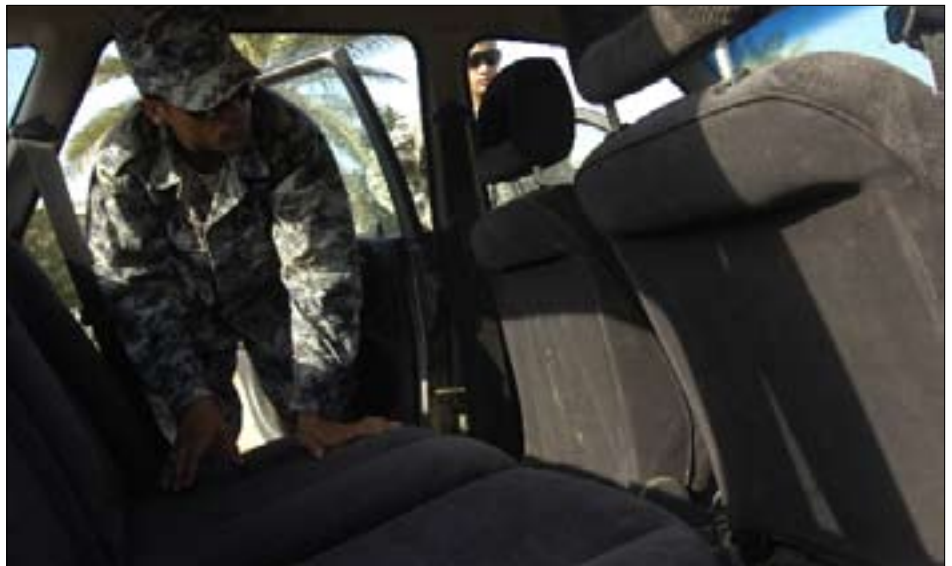
Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Enfield, a section sergeant with Troop A, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., searches an Iraqi at a National Police checkpoint in southern Baghdad's Doura region, Oct. 22. The troopers of 1-4 Cav. were conducting checkpoint operations as part of a training exercise with the 7th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division.



Ahmed Abdul Karim, an instructor for the 7th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division, watches one of his students dismantle an AK-47 at the brigade's headquarters in southern Baghdad, Oct. 23.



Sgt. 1st Class Julio Medina, the operations noncommissioned officer on the 7-2 National Police Training Team from Brawley, Calif., teaches checkpoint operations at the brigade's headquarters in southern Baghdad, Oct. 22.



An Iraqi National Policeman with the 7th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division searches a car as part of his Warrior Leader's Course training at the brigade's headquarters in southern Baghdad, Oct. 22.



A Black Lion pulls security while on patrol in southern Baghdad's Rashid District, Nov. 1. The Soldier was escorting Lt. Col. Patrick Frank, commander of 1-28 Inf., Col. Ricky Gibbs, commander of the 4th IBCF, and deputy ministers of Iraq on a battlefield circulation of the Jihad region of Northwest Rashid. (Smith/4th IBCF)

Teamwork leads to mortar team capture

1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment

Teamwork and synchronized operations were front and center on Sept. 28 as Task Force Black Lion detained an enemy indirect fire team responsible for launching mortars and rockets.

“Multiple elements of the Brigade and Division came together to empower our guys on the ground,” said Capt. Tim Wright, commander of Company D, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div. “The success we had would not have been possible without the Brigade and Battalion tactical operations centers as well as the Attack Aviators.”

Early that evening, the Brigade Fires Section detected enemy mortars being fired from Bayaa towards Saydiyah. Immediately, the Brigade Battle Major vectored a pair of Apache attack helicopters towards the suspected launch site. Based on this critical decision, the attack aviators were able to follow a suspected enemy truck from the launch position to a known enemy support area.

Second Platoon, Co. D, 1-28 Inf., was tasked as the TF Black Lion quick reaction force. Monitoring the Battalion command radio net, the platoon was already posturing to respond to the enemy activity when they received the call. They moved rapidly to intercept the enemy truck, while receiving accurate information on



Spc. Kazan Tamer, a member of the 1-28 Inf. personal security detachment from Patterson, N.J., on patrol with Lt. Col. Patrick Frank, commander of the 1-28 Inf.

the vehicles current location from the Apache crew.

“It was amazing to see how quickly the Black Lion platoon responded to the report of an enemy mortar team” said Lt. Col. Timothy Devito, commander of 4th Squadron, 227th Attack Aviation Regiment, who was flying the mission in support of 4IBCT.

The enemy truck was surrounded and four suspected insurgents detained, after the Black Lions found two large mortar systems in the truck and two tied-up Iraqi citizens. The kidnapped individuals had been beaten by the enemy fighters and appeared as if they were going to be killed.

Completing their actions on the first objective, 2nd Platoon moved to the residence near the initial mortar launch location; again under the accurate guidance of the Brigade and Battalion Tactical Operations Centers, and the Apache team.

The teamwork paid off as the Black Lions cleared the enemy residence and found 36 107mm rockets which are often used to engage the International Zone or the Baghdad International Airport complex.

“Living throughout the area of operations in Coalition Outposts enables the Task Force to move rapidly over short distances to enemy activity – it makes a dramatic difference” said

Black Lions operations officer Maj. Bill Kinsey. “The Brigade TOC and attack aviation provided the timely reports to allow us to defeat the enemy’s decision cycle. The teamwork was exceptional.”

'We caught them with the Warrior IED hunters catch insurgents

by Spc. Nathaniel Smith
4th IBCT Public Affairs

The Soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, attached to Task Force Dragon, like to avoid improvised explosive devices just as much as every other Soldier.

When they roll out the gates of Forward Operating Base Falcon in southern Baghdad, they're on the lookout for the roadside bombs like everyone else.

The difference is these Soldiers face the threat head-on, using the weapons against their enemies to create a safer Rashid District.

For this, Staff Sgt. Travis Platt, Staff Sgt. Branden Velazquez, and Staff Sgt. Gabriel Temples of Co. B, 2-12 Inf. have been nominated for the Bronze Star with Valor.

For Platt, a platoon sergeant from South River, N.J., tracking IED's down is just part of his job, and the true satisfaction comes from getting the job done.

"It's rewarding for the entire platoon. We go out there every day trying to make the area safer. The Iraqi people don't want the bombs in the ground any more than we do," he said. "It's definitely rewarding getting the IED's out of there."

"Whenever we were pulling IED's out of the ground, it was kind of like saving yourself or someone else. It was for the better good," added Temples, a platoon sergeant from Gilmer, Texas. "At the time, you don't really think of it that way. At the time, you just think of it as 'We've got this mission, and we're going to go in there and do it.'"

Velazquez, a squad leader from Tuskegee, Mich., said he just looks at it as work that has to get done, but he has fun doing it.

"I think it's just all our job. You just do it to the best of your ability," he said. "It was fun. I had a blast."

Platt, whose platoon has been attributed with 12 IED's found in a 36-hour period, added that in the beginning, he had fun also, but the excitement has given way to simply accomplishing his task.

"Initially, I got a rush from it. You get scared, obviously. You're adrenaline's pumping," he said, "but just the other day, I found one and I was talking to one of my Soldiers. It's just like every other day now. You don't really get scared of it anymore"



"It's elation more than anything," Temples added. "Everybody kind of figured we wouldn't come in there like that. We knew they wouldn't expect this."

Their success has been Velazquez's favorite part of hunting IED's. "We caught them with their pants down. That was the best part about it," he said.

To build on the success 'Baker' Company has had in countering IED's, Platt, who estimates his platoon has uncovered approximately 50 IED's, has given classes to the rest of his battalion, but he said the key element in unit's success cannot be taught.

"It's easy to know the (tactics, techniques and procedures). It's just getting out there and actually doing it; having the courage to do it," he said.

Capt. Jim Keirse, the commander of Co. B, 2-12 Inf., said these Soldiers being honored is a reflection on his entire unit.

"The whole company is proud to have leaders like Staff Sgt. Velazquez, Staff Sgt. Temples and Staff Sgt. Platt get recognized for their valorous efforts. Personally, I'm humbled by what I've seen from these guys," the Highland Falls, N.Y., native said. "Their willingness to put themselves in harm's way for their buddies is truly admirable. Everyone in Baker Company is doing an outstanding job. It's a great thing to see these humans getting awarded for going above and beyond."

ir pants down'

gents napping



Opposite: Staff Sgt. Travis Platt, a platoon sergeant with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from South River, N.J., at an improvised explosive device site in southern Baghdad's Rashid District, June 20. Platt and his platoon have found and safely detonated roughly 50 IED's over the course of their deployment.

Top: Staff Sgt. Gabriel Temples, a platoon sergeant from Gilmer, Texas, and Staff Sgt. Branden Velazquez, a squad leader from Tuskegee, Mich., of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division deployed out of Fort Carson, Colo., have been nominated for the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for their efforts in hunting and safely destroying improvised explosive devices in the Rashid District.

Below: Staff Sgt. Travis Platt taking a moment to enjoy the fruits of his labor in southern Baghdad. Platt and his platoon were responsible for the safe destruction of 12 IED's in a 36-hour period in May of 2007.



Zeroes and Ones Information and you

Internet security matters

*By Warrant Officer David Hoskins
4th IBCT Communications Shop*



Hoskins

As I finished up a run today, I saw a bullet on the ground and thought to myself "I should pick that up." I didn't because I had the (incorrect) thought that "there is trash all over the ground, why should I?" What does this have to do with the computer world? Security. Just like the bullet can be picked up by the wrong person and used against us in a very bad way, the security holes in our systems are in fact used by the wrong people to do very bad things. Since the Internet is world-wide, the attacks don't come from just Iraq in cyberspace. RCERT-CONUS reports attacks on the network from America, China, and Russia (to name a few) on a constant basis.

The NIPR net and the Internet, are they the same? No, they aren't the same thing. The main difference is security! It's easy to see that the local Internet providers don't feel that security is a big issue. A glaring example is in noticing that they fail to use any sort of encryption on the wireless connections that they provide. This does make connecting simple for us, but very open to anyone that has a computer of their own and a need to look at all of your information. Whatever is typed on a keyboard, sent out over the net (instant messaging, emails, typing in your name and password of your bank account, etc.) and encryption is not involved, it's wide open for anyone to read. The Army specifically states in AR 25-2 that wireless devices are highly restricted for good reason, war driving. Briefly, war driving is the process of someone driving around looking for an unsecure wireless connection. Some do it to get a free Internet connection; some do it to steal information from users. War driving is one of the many ways that thieves use to get your information.

Security is one of the main reasons why updates are pushed out, why we use so many different ways to protect your data, and the reason why computers are taken from users. We are pushing updates throughout the network right now to patch up these holes; but it's a never ending process. There are new ones found all the time. We realize that it is inconvenient to do these updates, but they are a necessary part of keeping us safe. There is a list of approved software that the S6 shop has from division. This list is what we have tested and proved to be safe to use and not taking up precious resources. If there are programs installed on a government computer that is not on this list, the computer stands a good chance of being wiped.

Take a cue from the military on your personal computers, get them secure. We know for a fact that there are many people out there stealing information on a regular basis, do you want to give it to them freely or make them work for it?

To finish the story, I picked up that bullet and put it in my ammo pouch until I found the amnesty box to remind me to do the right thing, especially over here.



Formed Up

Troopers of 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., line up Nov. 1 in front of the squadron headquarters for a promotion and awards ceremony. Among the awards presented were Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman's, Combat Action and Combat Medic's badges. (Smith, 4IBCT)

Aces high in Mansour security

By Pfc. John Alexander
2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery

Over the past eight months, Soldiers from 2-32 Field Artillery, "Proud Americans", have been hard at work improving the security of the community in our assigned district. Much of the focus is on improving the Iraqi Security Forces so that they will one day be able to take control of the Mansour Security District on their own. The latest improvements that the Proud Americans have made in the area are new TCP (traffic control points) located on busy streets that insurgents target through the use of VBIED (Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices).

One of the focal points in the area is a TCP located on a busy intersection in south central Mansour. The area was a hot spot for sniper activity and the Iraqi Army suffered several casualties at the location because of its lack of secure positions for its soldiers. The Iraqi Army originally constructed the TCP but, due to a lack of resources, the checkpoint failed to adequately protect the Iraqi soldiers that worked the position. Working closely with the Iraqi Army, the leadership of the Proud American Battalion devised a plan to improve the

position and make it as safe as possible for the Iraqi soldiers manning the checkpoint.

The plan called for the emplacement of a variety of different barriers to provide a search lane, bunkers for the soldiers, and a dividing wall between the two lanes. The Operations Officer, or S3, tasked 2nd Platoon, Alpha Battery to emplace the new barriers. The first part of the mission was to totally remove the old TCP. Engineers from 299th FSB would then bring in the new barriers and essentially rebuild the checkpoint. The project was scheduled to take two nights to complete.

When 2nd Platoon, Alpha Battery arrived at the scene to provide security they found that there was a large amount of debris to include old sandbags and barrels that the IA originally used to redirect traffic. To prepare for the arrival of the engineers, the Soldiers of 2nd Platoon dismounted from their vehicles and started to remove the debris. Then something remarkable occurred! The Iraqi Soldiers started working with the platoon to remove the old sandbags and improve their TCP. Iraqi Army leadership arrived and, working together, Coalition Forces and the Iraqi Army prepared the checkpoint for the engineers and made a few minor adjustments

to the plan.

The second part of the mission consisted of emplacing 69 barriers into position. The new TCP consists of barriers that create serpentine obstacles, which cause cars to weave in and out and slow down as they approach the guard shack. At that point the guards on duty can make the choice to either let the car pass or to pull the car over to a secured position to search the vehicles. Once the barriers arrived on site, Soldiers from 2nd Platoon assisted crane operators in loading the barriers and emplacing them in the right spot. The work was difficult but the Soldiers of 2nd Platoon never gave up and completed the mission ahead of schedule.

By day break a new TCP was in place as was a new sense of security for the Iraqi Soldiers. Iraqi Soldiers can now search more vehicles without risk from VBIED or a sniper attack. This operation yet again demonstrated the versatility of Field Artillerymen, the progress that the Iraqi Army makes on a daily basis, and the progress that the Proud American Battalion is making in the Mansour Security District. Congratulations to the soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Alpha Battery for a job well done. ACES...NO SLACK!

'Warrior' takes down terrorist

by *Spc. Nathaniel Smith*
4th IBCT Public Affairs

"I think the whole part of being scared and nervous actually helped it along with what the situation was, and I think it played a part in me actually being able to act on what was going on."

Sgt. Justin McDaniel had all the pre-mission jitters. It was natural. He was a little anxious, a little nervous, but he, like his fellow Soldiers in his platoon, his company and throughout Iraq, understood there was a job to be done and they were the ones on tap to do it.

What McDaniel, a team leader with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division out of Fort Carson, Colo., did not know before going into sector was that on this night, those jitters just might save his life.

In the early morning hours of Oct. 22, McDaniel and his platoon leader were clearing a room that was occupied by a terrorist.

The criminal pulled a handgun on McDaniel and fired a single round into his side before being killed by the Soldiers.

For his presence of mind, quick reactions, and actions under fire, the Rapid City, S.D., native was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with



Sgt. Justin McDaniel, a team leader with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Rapid City, S.D., the bruise from a round that struck his side while on a mission in southern Baghdad, Oct. 20.

Valor, Oct. 25.

For McDaniel, the award was reassurance he did the right thing.

"It let's me know that I did my job how it's supposed to be done. It's a statement saying that this person knew his job and was able to act under pressure.

"I think it's something that other people will strive to do as well."

As appreciative as he is of receiving the award, the Soldier was not concerned about medals at the time of the incident.

"When I first got shot, I was scared. When I actually figured out I was shot, I thought it was a whole lot more serious," he said. "There was just a burning sensation in my side. I thought the round had actually gone into my flesh. I'm really thankful it didn't."

Capt. Jim Keirse, the commander of Co. B, 2-12 Inf. from Highland Falls, N.Y., said McDaniel's actions that morning were not a surprise.

"Sgt. McDaniel is a well-trained and confident junior leader," he said. "It's comforting knowing we've got high-quality humans like him out there, positively identifying and neutralizing threats without hesitation."



5 MPH?

The posted limit on Forward Operating Base Falcon is 5 MPH. Being in a rush to drive faster on base will only lead to accidents and disciplinary action. Drive carefully and arrive alive.

Photo illustration by Sgt. 1st Robert Timmons/4IBCT Public Affairs

Sgt. Audie Murphy Club Inductees



*Staff Sgt. Juan Pepi
HHC, 4th IBCT*



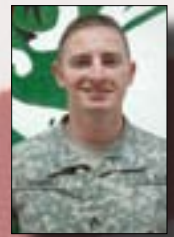
*Staff Sgt. Jordan Addison
610th BSB*



*Staff Sgt. Adam West
1-4 Cav.*



*Staff Sgt. Dawson Morse
1-40 Cav.*



*Staff Sgt. Peter Fernandez
1-40 Cav.*



*Staff Sgt. Justin Weathers
1-28 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. Edward Latta
1-28 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. Jonathan Haynsworth
1-28 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. David Breton
1-28 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. Steven Garcia
1-18 Inf.*



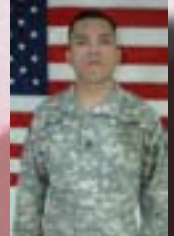
*Staff Sgt. Terry Huling
1-18 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. James Lopez
1-18 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. Joseph Mayo
1-18 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. Mark Millare
1-18 Inf.*



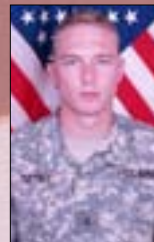
*Staff Sgt. Michael Rathbun
1-18 Inf.*



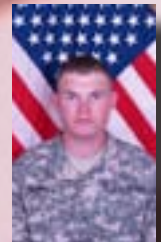
*Sgt. 1st Class Michael Smith
2-12 Inf.*



*Sgt. Jason Bolton
2-12 Inf.*



*Sgt. Jonathan Tuttell
2-12 Inf.*



*Sgt. Wayne Worrell
2-12 Inf.*



*Sgt. 1st Class Bradley Knapp
2-377th PEAR*



*Staff Sgt. Bryan Reed
2-12 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. Corey Hawkins
2-12 Inf.*



*Staff Sgt. Ryan Smith
2-12 Inf.*

Fall brings days of remembrance

Spiritual Fire by Chap (Maj) Gregory Thogearin



parts of the lower 48. Fall leaves, pumpkins, gourds, and cornucopias full of Indian corn are symbols of the season. Folks with fireplaces are cutting and stacking wood. Hunters are getting ready for the opening of the seasons on quail, pheasant, waterfowl, and deer. Shoppers are anticipating the beginning of the Christmas shopping season and preparing to go crazy at the mall.

The month of October means many different things. For some it is all about Halloween with its fun and candy, costumes, and the opportunity to having a chance to scare someone or maybe to visit a "haunted house" and to be scared. For others it is time for harvest festivals. For some it is all about "Oktoberfest". For others it is about Reformation Day.

However, when we think about the special days in November – there is a common theme. It is all about remembering.

Many Christian denominations will celebrate November 1st as "All Saints' Day." It is a day to remember those who blazed the trail of faith and faithfulness ahead of us. It is also a day to consider the meaning of the phrase from the creed: "I believe in the communion of the saints." It gives



is a day give to remember and to celebrate those relationships that have influenced and enriched our lives. It is a reminder to celebrate the connections we have and the relationships past and present that we cherish.

We commemorate Veterans' Day on November 11th. It is another day for remembering. We pause to remember ideals like service and sacrifice, honor and integrity, and courage and duty. We also pause to remember specific names and faces of our band of brothers who have exemplified the highest of our ideals. We remember friendships and camaraderie. We also remember the connection of one Army Family to another and the friendships that endure across the miles.

Finally, we celebrate Thanksgiving Day. It is a day for food, for family, for friends, for football, and for counting our blessings. When you think about it, for most people Thanksgiving Day is a day for remembering. We remember the people in our lives. We remember the good things. We share stories and laughter around our tables. Perhaps, because of this conflict we may share some tears.

I hope that the days ahead will afford you the opportunity to dust off some special memories and to savor them for a few moments. I hope too that you will not focus only on those things past, but you will be able to celebrate some good things right here and now – things about your families, your friends, and your battle buddies.

Take time to say thank you and let someone know that you appreciate them.

Steel Falcon Chapel Worship Schedule

Sunday

Contemporary Protestant Service
1030

Gospel Service
1300

Latter Day Saints Service
1600

Traditional Protestant Service
1930

Prayer Service
2100

Wednesday

Gospel Service
1900

Thursday

Catholic Mass
1900

Friday

Jewish Service
1800

Saturday

Liturgical Worship Service
2000

Bible Studies

Tuesday
1900

Thursday
1930

FALLEN DRAGONS

NO MISSION TOO DIFFICULT
NO SACRIFICE TOO GREAT

"If you are able, save them a place inside of you and save one backward glance when you are leaving for the places they can no longer go. Be not ashamed to say that you loved them, though you may or may not have always. Take what they have left and taught you with their dying and keep it with your own. And in that time when men feel safe to call the war insane, take one moment to embrace the gentle heroes you left behind."

- Maj. Michael Davis O'Donnell
Dak To, Vietnam, January 1, 1970

Spc. Avealalo Milo
2-2 SCR October 4

Cpl. Gilberto Meza
3-2 SCR October 6

Spc. Kenneth Iwasinski
2-12 Inf. October 14

Cpl. Jason Marchand
3-2 SCR October 5

Spc. Frank Cady III
4-1 BSTB October 10

Staff Sgt. Jarred Fontenot
2-12 Inf. October 18

FEAR THE MULLET



Houston native, 1st Lt. Jamie Arrington, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, Physician's Assistant, models his "redneck" costume during the Company C, 610th BSB "Charlie Med" Halloween party, Oct. 27 at the Forward Operating Base Falcon Troop Medical Clinic. (Timmons, 4IBCT Public Affairs)