

DEMON

4-6 STORY FROM
BESTSELLING AUTHOR

Keepers of the Night

The CAB takes
charge of the star-
lit hours, bringing
peace to Balad Ruz
and Yusif Harimi

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On the cover: Photo by Spc. Michael Howard. Staff Sgt. Kevin Marshall and crew rehearse the rush from the CH-47 Chinook during Operation Sabre Tempest May 1

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This is an official Army newsletter, authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1, and published by the 1st CAB, 1st ID Public Affairs Office. Editorial views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the CAB 11D. All submissions to the Demon are subject to editing. The Demon can also be found at: www.1id.army.mil.

While all Soldiers are encouraged to reenlist, it's not the only way to advance your Army career. Why going Green-to-Gold can be another option for many Soldiers

While this issue details the whens, whys, and hows of reenlisting, it's important to note that reenlisting is not the only way to continue your army service.

The Army offers Soldiers more ways than ever before to join the ranks of its officers. Soldiers are able to choose from three Green-to-Gold scholarship programs, all of which have different deadlines and offer different benefits.

For Soldiers with sufficient time-in-service and half or more of their Bachelor's Degree completed, there is the Active Duty option.

This option gives the Soldier full pay and benefits while he continues his education.

Soldiers lacking the necessary college credits for the Active Duty option can opt for the Scholarship option. This option doesn't give the Soldier military pay, but it

does suspend the Soldier's contract and pays either tuition and fees or room and board.

While most Soldiers apply for the Active Duty option, said James Porter, the admissions officer in

There seems little reason not to complete an education and progress in the Army

the Department of Military Science at Kansas State University, the majority get the Scholarship option instead. Soldiers can

indicate if they would accept a scholarship if they're not approved for the Active Duty option.

For Soldiers who want neither of the previous options, there is a non-scholarship option, in which the Soldier is relieved from his current contract of service and is allowed to attend school on his own dime. Unlike the other options, this option is open year round.

With the level of flexibility Green-to Gold offers, there seems little reason not to complete an education and progress in the Army.

BY SPC. FRANCISCA VEGA

Demon Team, every month that goes by reinforces my deep pride in our brigade and justifies the accolades that I hear from the BCTs we support and from our division headquarters. You are all doing great!

Our Rear Detachment and FRG's are doing a magnificent job taking care of our families back home.

With the recent devastation from a tornado in Chapman, KS and Manhattan, KS, our Rear Detachment and FRG's were immediately engaged to determine who was affected and organize assistance for the families who needed it.

My sympathy goes out to those families that experienced damage to their homes and property, but thankfully none of our family members were severely injured.

I understand this will increase the strains of deployment, but I ask you to trust that our Rear Detachment and FRG's back home are there and continue to take care of our families.

Make sure that your families remain in contact with this team, and ensure that we always know how to contact your family, whether they are in the immediate area or living somewhere else.

The Rear Detachment and FRG are there to assist us, but to assist us, they must be able to contact our families.

The weather continues to have an impact on our daily operations.

The heat and dust will continue and it is an absolute necessity

Make a Difference. The families of Team Demon are coping with and overcoming the effects of the recent tornado. Meanwhile, Soldiers on the front must battle and overcome complacency. **Col. Jessie O. Farrington speaks out on disaster and discipline**



Photo by Maj. Enrique Vasquez

for leaders at all levels to properly supervise all aspects of the job: from combat operations, to maintenance on the flight line or motor pools, to physical training.

Every Soldier is important to this fight, and all leaders must properly monitor and mitigate the effects of the environment.

The brigade has experienced just a few heat-related injuries and they were all avoidable.

Leaders, you are doing a good job keeping the Brigade hydrated and well cared for. Keep it up.

As the conditions change around us, continue to evaluate your formations for vulnerabilities.

Mitigate risk all the way down to the simplest daily tasks.

At the leader and Soldier level, determine how you can maintain safe operating practices and procedures and always look to become more efficient while maintaining quality.

There is always room for improvement, and I challenge everyone to seek improvement even though we've been conducting operations for nine months. Leaders, reinforce safety daily.

I want you to start your day with a short 10 minute safety brief.

Do not become susceptible to overconfidence, complacency, or a breakdown in discipline. Stop cutting corners! Unchecked, these factors will lead to problems that we can not afford.

With all the challenges this fight presents, continue your trend of excellent work.

I know that each and everyone of you are giving your very best to ensure that our great outfit is successful.

No Mission Too Difficult; No Sacrifice Too Great. Duty First! Demons!

Col. Jessie O. Farrington is the commander of the Combat Aviation Brigade

Standards and Discipline. In the eighth month of the CAB's deployment, solid and decisive leadership is the key to maintaining the success the CAB has met with so far. **Command Sgt. Maj. Buddy Wallace speaks out on becoming a leader**

More than eight months in northern Iraq and the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division has suffered no serious combat injuries or losses. Despite the dangers of operating in a complex battlefield environment NCO leadership remains the key to success. It is the actions of first line supervisors backed by senior NCOs and officers that have kept our Soldiers out of harm's way. I cannot stress the importance of decisive leadership and what a difference it makes to the combat survival of everyone.

Decisive leadership is the substance that creates a positive can do attitude among Soldiers and Armies. American military history is filled with examples were Soldiers and junior leaders capitalized on leadership at key decisive points during combat. The Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division is no different, we too have our own leaders that are taking charge and being decisive.

During a recent operation Sgt. Timothy Wright, a crew chief with 3-1 AA, came under fire along with his crew. At the decisive moment in time when his UH-60 began to take fire, Wright took charge telling his assistant gunner to tuck his knees and maintain a low profile. He



Photo by Sgt. Scott Magee

reminded his gunner to stay calm and walk the rounds onto the enemy. Wright then talked to the pilots to ensure the helicopter was in position to return fire on the enemy below. Pilots would later commend Wright for his actions.

It is the duty of combat leaders to take charge and be decisive when making

decisions. Likewise, NCOs and leaders in support positions should respect the combat troops they are supporting by being team players and showing esprit de corps. Furthermore, there are NCOs and officers who tend to be argumentative. History has proved that leaders that argue often loose battles and wars.

During World War I Corporal Alvin York then a assistant squad leader took charge of his 7 men from his platoon after all the non-commissioned officers were either killed or wounded. York did not sit there and wait for further instructions or hesitate; he took charge and led his men. York then killed 24 German Soldiers and captured 132. For his actions York was awarded the Medal of Honor.

In the Battle of Gettysburg during the American Civil War Confederate General James Longstreet had an open disagreement (three times in three days) with his senior General Robert E. Lee. In contrast, Union Colonel Joshua Chamberlain just followed his orders and held "Little Round Top". The argumentative leadership at Gettysburg would cost the Confederates the battle and ultimately the war.

Although Longstreet was a more experienced leader than Chamberlain that did not necessarily make him more right.

Sometimes we as NCOs and leaders might know the regulations better than the next person but it does not give us the right to break unit esprit de corps.

As professionals we must learn to work together for the good of the unit. In combat it is not about who can win an argument it is about who can make decisive decisions as leaders in order to influence the outcome of the mission or battle.

Command Sgt. Maj. Buddy Wallace is the command sergeant major of the Combat Aviation Brigade

Patience. Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee talks about the importance of speaking the truth and only the truth and the consequences of lies. **The Combat Aviation Brigade chaplain speaks from the land of Jesus' birth**

Have you ever found yourself justifying your action with many words and in the process you found yourself not telling the whole truth? Or sometimes we tell a story with a little different twist so that we come out better than we really are?

There are stories in the Bible which tell about people who brought death on themselves by telling less than a whole truth.

King Saul, the first king of Israel, was severely wounded during a battle against the Philistines.

The king asked his armor bearer to kill him before uncircumcised men came and abused him. But the armor bearer was too afraid to carry out the king's request.

So King Saul took a sword and fell on it and killed himself. A young man who was an Amalekite came to David from Saul's camp and reported that Saul and his son, Jonathan were dead. When David asked him how he knew, he told a revised version of the true story.

He said, "As I happened by chance to be on Mount Gilboa, there was Saul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horseman followed hard after him.

Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me... He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me.' So I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen.

"And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord."

Perhaps, the Amalekite thought he would find favor in the eyes of the



Photo by Spc. Michael Howard

Honesty Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee talks about King Saul, an Amelkite, and why it is important to tell the truth

next king or be treated as a hero for ending the life of the man who was pursuing the life of David.

Contrary to his expectation, however, the Amalekite was executed for destroying the Lord's anointed. If he only told the truth, he might have been given the credit for what he actually did.

Another story comes from the Book of Acts in the New Testament. In the early Christian church, it was common practice that believers shared everything they owned, but not necessarily required.

A man named Ananias and his wife, Sapphira had sold their possessions and kept some part of the proceeds before Ananias brought the rest of it to the apostles, pretending it was all he had.

Peter knew what he were doing and told him, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price

of the land for yourself?

While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." When Ananias heard this, he took his last breath.

Three hours later, Sapphira came in without realizing what had happened to her husband.

When Peter asked her the amount of proceeds from the sale of their land, she lied. And she too breathed her last breath after she heard Peter's chastisement.

We may not die physically when we lie and we may even fool some people with our lies.

But the serious consequence is that we may jeopardize our relationship with God and people around us.

May God help us "walk uprightly, and work righteousness and speak the truth in" our heart. (Psalm 15:2)

Across Iraq. A Sons of Iraq leader details the trials and travails of acting as a modern day Minuteman and keeping terror out of his village. **How local volunteer groups are turning their country around**

BY SGT. DAVID TURNER

As a citizen of Bejiyah, Sadi Kalif knows his neighbors and their problems. As a former officer in the Iraqi army, he knows the importance of security for the area's citizens.

He might seem like just a prosperous businessman, dressed in neat gray slacks, loafers and a crisply ironed shirt, except for the 9 mm pistol he keeps tucked in his belt.

Kalif is the local leader of the Sons of Iraq in South Rasheed.

This area, south of Baghdad on the west bank of the Tigris River, was well known as a base for al-Qaida in Iraq activity as recently as last year, when the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, came in to take control of the area.

With a mission to stop the flow of accelerants into Baghdad, 2nd BCT Soldiers went into an area where Coalition forces had never been before.

In some cases, they air-assaulted into positions and held ground until armored vehicles could be brought in.

In order to clear routes and root out AQI from the area, they often depended on a volunteer force of local citizens, then known as Concerned Local Citizens, now called the Sons of Iraq.

"When we saw insurgents killing our families and displacing residents, then as tribes and as a community, we started forming small groups," Kalif said of the beginnings of the organization.

"When American troops came into our region, we went out to help."

The Sons of Iraq led coalition forces to the insurgents, exposing hiding places. They also gave information helpful to Coalition aircraft to target criminals, Kalif said.

Joining the volunteer organization comes with risks, Kalif said. The pre-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Mentor Sadi Kalif, a former Iraqi army officer and local Sons of Iraq leader, talks to IA Soldiers and SoI members during a visit to SoI checkpoints May 14.

vious week, an improvised explosive device exploded in Bejiyah's main road, killing one Sons of Iraq member and wounding several others.

Though the region is much safer than it once was, Sons of Iraq members know to remain alert at all times, he said.

"People know [of the dangers] when they join our group, but we need to sacrifice. We need to help people return to their lives and to their homes," Kalif said.

Kalif became the local Sons of Iraq leader in January. He said the community chose him for the leadership position due to his previous military experience.

In weekly meetings, he helps Sons of Iraq members train in searching people and vehicles, an important part of their mission, as the Sons of Iraq secure numerous checkpoints in the region to keep terrorists and weapons from flowing back into their community.

Though Kalif recognizes the Sons of Iraq are not an official security force, he sees an important role for them in the transition currently underway.

On May 14, he met with Lt. Col. Thae Jaued, commander of the Iraqi Army battalion moving into the region. Together with Lt. Col. Kenneth Adgie, commander of the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., the three toured the area, visiting Sons of Iraq checkpoints.

Kalif hopes the Sons of Iraq will be able to work with IA forces as they have with Coalition forces in keeping neighborhoods safe.

"Of course, it's different between the IA, Iraqi police and the Sons of Iraq," Kalif said. "We are civilians. We have no experience in war.

Many of the (Sons of Iraq) are farmers; that means sooner or later, they will go back to their farms."



Walkthrough

Iraqi Army soldiers and Iraqi Police perform a practice run at a remote FOB for their infiltration of Balad Ruz and Yusif Harami

JOINT OPERATIONS

Chariots of Fire

The 2-1 GSAB “Diesel” Company makes sure the biggest joint forces air assault in a year is a success. How the Fighting Eagles delivered hope to the villages of Balad Ruz and Yusif Harimi

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD



Stepping up

An Iraqi Army sergeant calls his assembled troops into formation for a mission briefing during Operation Sabre Tempest

The task in front of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division was monumental. The CAB was tasked with pulling off the Army's biggest air assault in over a year, Operation Sabre Tempest. Just as importantly, the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police were taking the leading role in this operation.

The well-being of tens of thousands of Iraqi citizens was riding on the success of this operation. The operation's intent was to strike a blow at the heart of Al-Qaeda in Iraq by helping the IA and IP flush hundreds of Al-Qaeda in Iraq from the homes of their fellow citizens, increasing the quality of life for the villages of Balad Ruz and Yusif Harami.

Thanks to the efforts of the CAB, the IA and IP were able to destabilize the AQI's foothold in the villages by combining a traditional all-out assault with an all-out effort to win the hearts and minds of the villagers.

The IA and IP that the CAB dropped off successfully purged AQI from the village, built housing and

canals for the citizens, and addressed the concerns of the villagers, restoring their faith in their ability to stand proudly on their own as a sovereign nation.

Far in advance of the operational portion of the mission, the pilots have been preparing. All have hundreds or even thousands of flight hours under their belts, but that doesn't stop them from treating each mission like it is their first.

Days before the mission, they plan, rehearse, contingency plan, and re-rehearse every facet and contingency of the mission.

"Our mission planning entails four separate briefings, beginning with the air coordination briefing conducted via the conference with ground forces, then ending with the final briefing at the PZ with all elements involved. In between those briefs, aircrews conduct tactical route planning, landing zone analysis, which includes receiving imagery from intelligence assets," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Grant Montgomery, a CH-47 Chinook pilot with company B, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment.

At last, the planning is at an end, and the moment of truth has arrived. "Once the briefs are over and the mission begins, it's on," said Staff Sgt. Kevin Marshall, a flight engineer with Company B, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment. "We go into the Vulcan mind meld, and we anticipate each other's actions. (Spc. Anthony) Hall will put down the ramp and I'll already have the lights on."

The pilots almost always fly under the cover of darkness. They fly wearing night vision goggles, which, though it allows the pilots to fly in the dark, comes with its own set of challenges.

"When you're using night vision goggles, your apparent rate of closure and ground speed are in error because you have no peripheral vision, which we fix with increased scanning of our zone. There is also a lack of depth perception, which is overcome through training, experience, and working as a team to know how far we are off the ground," said Spc. Anthony Hall, a crew chief with Company B, 2-1 GSAB.

This mission has been delayed twice because of weather that could put the pilots and their heavily armed passengers at more risk than absolutely



Into the Breach Iraqi Army soldiers and Iraqi Police rush from a CH-47 Chinook during their infiltration of Balad Ruz May 2. The air assault was an integral part of Operation Sabre Tempest, one of the largest joint air assaults in the past year.

Brainstorm Staff Sgt. Kevin Marshall and his crew make plans for the infiltration rehearsal

'Once the briefs are over and the mission begins, it's on. We go into the Vulcan mind meld.'

---STAFF SGT. KEVIN MARSHALL, 2-1 GSAB FLIGHT ENGINEER



necessary. Tonight it is clear, and the pilots pray the weather will hold.

The aircraft lift off from Contingency Operating Base Speicher at 8 p.m., right on schedule. The crew chiefs test fire their weapons, and pilots and crews check all of their equipment, running their hands across the interior of the Chinooks to check for leaks. All systems are go, and the assembly of aircraft speeds toward the remote base which serves as tonight's rendezvous point.

The birds land smoothly, and there is a momentary lull as legions of Iraqi soldiers form up and organize, working seamlessly with their American counterparts.

"One of the challenges we faced was overcoming the language barrier between us and the Iraqi army. We were able to overcome the barrier through translators, and it helped immeasurably that the IA and IP were very well briefed on the operation and already had a good idea of what to do," said Spc. Derrick Waters, a door gunner with Co B, 2-1.

As soon as the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police are formed up, the aircrews swing back into action. When the aircraft land, the troops must be off as quickly as possible.

To ensure that is the case, the flight crews break the ground troops into chalks of 30. The crew chiefs run the IAs and IPs through drills, with the Iraqis getting on and off as quickly as possible, first with lights, then in darkness. Before the mission, the crew chiefs, speaking through interpreters, give a safety brief on emergency procedures and crash landing contingencies.

With everything briefed it is time to embark. The first drop-off will be quite risky, as the CAB is dropping off their passengers right on top of the main objectives.

Even in the low light conditions aboard the Chinooks, excitement among the Soldiers is evident.

Some of the excitement may be borne of unease, as the smell of JP-8 is beginning to waft through the air.

The passengers double check that their bags are secure, brace for landing, and rush out of the aircraft to establish a perimeter the second the



Mapping the mission Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joseph Lynch confers with his flight crew to plan out the mission ahead



Cleansweep Iraqi Army soldiers rush from a CH-47 Chinook into the village of Balad Ruz

Chinooks touch down. The exit goes off without a hitch. The rehearsals before the mission have paid off.

“Our personal goal as a Chinook company is to conduct the most thorough planning sequence as possible. Therefore, when conducting a mission, it feels smooth, less stressful, because all air crews and our passengers are very familiar with all aspects of the operation,” said Montgomery.

This is normally the point where the pilots and their aircraft would head home. But tonight, the mission is just beginning.

This is an air assault of near-unprecedented scale, with the CAB’s part spanning 13 landing zones with five CH-47 Chinooks, one UH-60 Black Hawk, and two AH-64D Apache Longbows.

The pilots still have two loads of troops to go, and despite the clear weather of the early evening, a dust storm is brewing, adding one more layer of danger.

The pilots return to the pickup zone to board the next load of troops, who are shrouded in a layer of dust as they run aboard. The trip to their dropoff zone is relatively uneventful. The pilots drop the IA and IP troops off at a remote landing zone near Yusif Harami.

When the pilots return, it is about 3 am. The pilots have been on the mission for about seven hours.

The pilots and crews suppress their weariness and head back to the pickup zone. At this point, the dust is at its thickest and the odor of fuel is heavy.

The final group of Soldiers and police are carrying some of the water for the operation.

To minimize time spent on the ground, the flight crews help the Iraqis haul the water out of the helicopter and onto the landing zone.

The sun rising in the sky marks the close of the mission. As the pilots finally return to base, the morning chases away the dust, and the fuel vapors seem to dissipate entirely.

Sometimes, among the repetitiveness of the flights, it is easy to forget the scale and importance of the operations the CAB enables.

It’s a safe bet, however, that the grateful citizens of Balad Ruz and Yusif Harami do not.



Shadow Run Iraqi Army soldiers and Iraqi Police perform a practice run at a remote FOB for their infiltration of Balad Ruz and Yusif Harami



Bum Rush Iraqi Army soldiers rush from a CH-47 chinook into the village of Yusif Harami



Return Two of the CH-47 Chinooks involved in Sabre Tempest return to Contingency Operating Base Speicher



Photo by Spc. John Crosby

(more than) GUITAR HEROS

War correspondent and bestselling author Michael Yon relives his time with the 4-6 CAV's Thug Troop as a stop on his journey through the sands of Iraq.

Fire in the Hole
One of Co A, 4-6 CAV's OH-58 Kiowa helicopters fires a 17 pound rocket near the city of Mosul, Iraq, April 6

Men crept in darkness to plant a bomb. They moved in an area where last year I was helping to collect fallen American soldiers from the battlefield. Terrorists. The ones who blow up schools. The ones who have been forcibly evicted from places like Anbar Province, Baghdad and Baqubah by American and Iraqi forces. Terrorists are here now in Mosul. They call themselves al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). AQI cannot win without Baghdad, and cannot survive without Mosul. The Battle for Mosul is evolving into AQI's last great stand.

And there were the men planting the bomb. It is unknown if the men with the explosives were al Qaeda, but they were planting a bomb and that was enough. Many terrorists murder only for money. Like hit men. They might have nothing against the victim. It's just business. Although understanding enemy motivations is key to winning a war, out on the battlefield, such considerations can become secondary, as divining the motives of a would-be killer is less important than stopping him.

The bombers were being watched. Invisible to them, prowling far overhead, was a Predator.

The Predator is an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) whose eye sees through the darkness. The night sky is the jungle where it hides.

The Predator strikes with more suddenness and force than any tiger. I often watch the live feed streaming down into the Tactical Operations Centers (TOC) around Iraq, while crosshairs track the enemy, and the screen lists data such as altitude, azimuth, ground speed, and the precise grid coordinates of the target.

The Predator carries a deadly Hellfire missile, but also has other weapons, like the crosshairs on its eye, which links down to soldiers watching the video and data feed.

The soldiers have radios to other soldiers with massive arrays of weapons. With that combination, every weapon in the US arsenal can be brought into action. Unarmed spy planes, like the Shadow, often allow enemies to escape—the difference between success and failure is often measured in seconds. The Predator can launch an attack with its Hellfire, but the most devastating attacks are usually the result of closely-coordinated teamwork between soldiers on the ground and in the air, using information provided by the Predator above. Combat at this level is an elegant dance under a burning roof.

The Predator peered down on the terrorists planting the bomb. There were too many targets for one Hellfire missile, and it's better to conserve the weapon when possible, since the Predator must fly far to reload.

A group of four Kiowa Warrior pilots were only a few minutes away from the enemy, but their helicopters were on the ground and the engines were cold, while the pilots were waiting in a building near the runway, playing Guitar Hero to pass the time.

A soldier interrupted the Guitar Hero session, telling the pilots to get in the air. Orders would come over the radio. The pilots abandoned Guitar Hero and raced out the door into the cold night to their OH-58D Kiowa Warriors, economy-sized helicopters that would make a Ford Pinto seem spacious. The pilots crammed two each into the two helicopters, strapping in, cranking engines,

while radio chatter had already started. The pilots learned that the Predator had identified a target, which it would laser-designate for a Hellfire shot from a Kiowa.

Minutes after the first alert, rotors were chopping the cold air, the instrument readings looked good. The pilots changed the pitch of their rotors to bite the air and lifted slightly off the ground, backing out of their parking spaces like cars. After backing out, they stopped in a hover, and began to move forward, pulling away from the other helicopters. The Kiowa Warriors lifted into the sky over the runway, heading south, then east toward the lights of the city of Mosul only a minute away. They didn't get far.

'They call themselves al Qaeda in Iraq. They cannot win without Baghdad, and cannot survive without Mosul.'

The pilots were about a half mile away from their parking spaces when the Predator relayed coordinates and the laser code to pilot Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tom Boise, an ex-Special Forces soldier with previous experience in Iraq who seems to know a lot more about the war than most people, and the left-seater was Chief Warrant Officer 2 Carlos Lopez who, when I first met him, was wearing a uniform that said he is an Iraqi interpreter, which Lopez, with a slight afro, got made in order to play practical jokes on new soldiers who are set to arrive.

The pilots, when they aren't killing terrorists, apparently are great practical jokers. Cpt. Brad Warr, an excellent medical officer I got to know in 2005, told me how the pilots stole the adult tricycle he rides around base. What Brad failed to explain was how he had first stolen the pilots' van, and then painted it pink and put hearts all over it. They might not seem like killers. . . .

Tom Boise was piloting and Carlos Lopez was in the left seat for this attack.

The target was about three miles away.

Lopez and Boise could not see the enemy, but the Predator could, and so they set up for a "remote" Hellfire shot, meaning they would fire the weapon "blind" in the direction of the target, and the missile would "lock" onto the laser reflection as it approached.

Besides the Hellfires, each of the two Kiowas carried seven rockets, for a total between the two Kiowas of fourteen rockets. Of the seven rockets on each Kiowa, three were 2.75" flechette rockets, and the other four were HE (high explosive). Flechettes are steel nails with little fins. Darts. Each dart weighs 60 grains, and there are a total of 1,179 darts per rocket. The flechettes sound plenty lethal, and they are. Each left-seater also had an M-4 rifle and they frequently lean out and shoot at bad guys.

Lopez programmed in the Predator's laser code while Boise pointed the nose of his Kiowa Warrior in the direction of the target. With the laser code programmed into the Hellfire computer, the Predator lazed the target, invisibly marking the group of six men. Boise launched the Hellfire. . . .

VROOSSHHHH!!!!

Shaking the little helicopter, the missile-motor temporarily blinded the night vision goggles, filling the cockpit with light. From up close, the launch appeared white, but from a distance the launch was orange and illuminated the Kiowa and the ground below as the Hellfire sparked away.

The missile climbed to about eight hundred feet, its cold eye scanning the ground ahead for the laser reflection. There it was. The eye acquired laser photons, the computer verified the code, adjusted flight controls, and pointed the warhead at the target. The Predator was striking the gavel for the Hellfire to deliver justice, but the terrorists apparently realized the verdict a fraction of a second too late. The detonation appeared silently on the Predator thermal, while seconds later the sounds of the explosion rumbled over the base. The remains of the terrorists glowed hot on the infrared imagery.

But there were "squirters" trying to get away. The Predator, whose pilot was back in America flying the UAV remotely, saw the squirters, and Boise

pushed into the attack, swooping down low into the target area, launching three 2.75" flechette rockets and four HE rockets, which are plenty loud and must have been impressive to the terrorists, but not impressive enough because Boise and Lopez could see one still trying to run away in the dark. Boise pulled up close and from about 80 feet up was doing a tight counter-clockwise circle around the terrorist while shining him with the "Pink Light," an infrared light invisible to the naked eye but very bright to the night optics. Someone else from up higher also had an IR light on the bad guy, but neither Boise nor Lopez knew who was shining the other light from above. Maybe it was the laser from the Predator, they did

not know. Lopez, flipped his M-4 from SAFE to BURST, and started shooting the terrorist. Thirty rounds later, Lopez had not struck flesh, though the bad guy must have realized that things were not going well. It was dark for the terrorist as the little helicopter orbited him and Lopez rained bullets down, but the terrorist was still bathed in bright IR light when Lopez jacked in another magazine and finally shot the guy to death. Boise turned the Kiowa back to the FARP, reloaded quickly, and ended up taking another Hellfire shot, and the Predator also had fired a Hellfire.

Total time from playing Guitar Hero to getting airborne and delivering justice was an astounding twelve minutes. Apparently at least five terrorists

were killed, while at least one escaped, though he probably needs new eardrums and might ask for a raise before trying that again.

The speck in the upper left near the mushroom cloud is a Kiowa Warrior from 4-6. The mushroom cloud rose from an estimated 600lbs of explosives packed into a car that destroyed the "10 West" police station a few days ago. The explosion rocked the base here in Mosul.

The official moniker for the 4-6 ACR is "The Redcatchers," which stems from their original purpose to spot Soviets if they ever surged and knocked over beers in Germany en route to an ever-ungrateful France. While the Redcatchers never went toe-to-toe with the Soviets, they are here now, literally flying overhead as these words are written. I call them the Guitar Heroes, and I see them flying over Mosul day and night.

The commander of 4-6 is Lt. Col. Terry T.J. Jamison. Someone told me that Jamison got shot in the head recently, and when I visited his office, I noticed a helmet with two bullet holes. Needless to say, I waited for an appropriate moment to ask the commander how he managed to get shot in the head, but I had to wait to hear that story, so you will too.

First, I asked him what all the killing was about. His folks were flying like bats and banshees all over Mosul, and there was far more helicopter coverage and fighting than I was used to seeing anywhere in Iraq. Did he have an extra squadron hidden around here?

In fact, most of Jamison's helicopters are out in Tal Afar, over in Kirkuk or down at COB Speicher near Tikrit. While his headquarters are in Mosul, Jamison flies around to those areas to check on his soldiers and their gear.

He started with ten Black Hawks and thirty Kiowa Warriors, but lost one Kiowa and one Black Hawk in separate accidents. Unfortunately both crashes led to loss of life. Despite their losses—it's amazing that 4-6 has not suffered more—and the fact that Jamison is working his crews far harder than the norm, morale among the pilots seems extraordinary.

Perhaps morale is high because they are killing so many enemy, and their commander is right out there with them.



Missiles to-go OH-58 Kiowa Helicopter Pilot Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tom Boise waits in his bird as Sgt. William Grigsby of Troop E, 4-6 CAV, reloads the Kiowa with a rocket at the Forward Arming and Refueling Point on Logistical Supply Area Diamondback

(He did get shot in the head, after all.)

There is 24/7 helicopter coverage over Mosul. When they are not actually flying over Mosul, a team of four pilots stay on "RedCon 3" status, which usually means they should be able to go from initial alert to rotors turning in thirty minutes. But Jamison considers the soldiers on the ground his responsibility to protect, and so he enforces a five minute rule. The pilots who are on RedCon 3 have to wait in a room near the helicopters, and they've got only five minutes to get those blades turning after an alert. The ground-pounders here love the pilots. As for the pilots, they have three basic modes: combat, sleep, and RedCon 3. And so they have taken up playing Guitar Hero while on RedCon 3.

A hunter who doesn't hunt isn't a hunter, so the pilots fly ten days on, one day off.

During his first fourteen months out of flight school, Sickler logged about 1,065 hours, most of that at night, wearing night vision goggles. The pilots are

averaging 130-140 combat-flight hours per month, not to mention the hours in the Guitar Hero room waiting for a call. All total, the forty helicopters in the squadron logged nearly 30,000 hours in their first eight months.

But it's worth it. The Guitar Heroes in Mosul are devastating the enemy and saving many American and Iraqi lives. They got thirty-five confirmed kills in the month of December 2007, although it's believed they killed many more. From August 2007 to March 2008, their intelligence officer says they have 115 confirmed, with only one collateral fatality caused by an errant missile. Great care is taken before the permission to fire a missile is issued. Since 2005, I've seen many enemy get away because commanders were being extremely careful to avoid civilian deaths and injuries. I'm just a writer and observer,

but must say it can be frustrating even for me to see armed terrorists getting away, when I am thinking, "Take the shot for chrissakes!!!! There's not a civilian within 300 yards!!!!"

Yet, in reality, this ever-increasing willingness to let a few bad guys get away has played a huge part of turning this war around, and ultimately saving the lives of civilians and, paradoxically, Americans.

Back to the fight.

The Guitar Heroes run two kinds of fights: daytime and nighttime.

They call night the "Hunting Shift." During the Hunting Shift, pilots fly around for hours, way up high, waiting for bad guys to do bad things. The pilots stay far away from the targets so as not to spook them, and when the terrorists start laying bombs, they are given a Hellfire for their troubles.

The daytime shift is totally different. Pilots call it the "Jihad Shift."

During a Jihad Shift, the Kiowas sometimes start up high, but when the killing begins, they swoop down just



Impact Area A 17-pound rocket is fired from an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter at a small island on the Tigris River. The island, dubbed Gilligan's Island, is used by helicopter pilots as a test fire pit before executing patrols over Ninewah province



Fill 'er up Soldiers of Troop G, 4-6 CAV move out to refuel an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter at the Forward Arming and Refueling Point on Logistical Supply Area Diamondback



Moment of Truth

To see more of Michael Yon's dispatches from Iraq, or to purchase his critically acclaimed bestseller *Moment of Truth in Iraq*, visit michaelyon-online.com

above the rooftops. This results in truly close combat. One day, when Jamison had the controls and 1st Lt. Bob Sickler was in the left-seat. They were not expecting contact, and Sickler happened to be shooting some video for the kids, when suddenly machine guns opened on them. The guns were so close that it sounded like they were fighting in an alley.

During the Jihad Shift, the pilots' only real defense is to swoop low and fast, point their rockets or .50-caliber straight at the enemy and squeeze the trigger, while often the left-seater is leaning out the door shooting an M-4 rifle. This is "Red Baron" stuff.

The machine gun and rockets are locked rigidly on Kiowas, unlike an Apache where the pilot can fly a safe distance and practically just look at a target and think bad thoughts and the target bursts into flames.

For the Kiowas to draw blood during the Jihad Shift, they have to take the same chances that mosquitoes take when they land on the back of your neck. In fact, the codeword the insurgents use for Kiowas is "mosquitoes."

The Jihad Shift often results in a shootout where two people in a tiny helicopter fight an enemy who is often better armed and waiting in ambush. The enemy actively tries to draw the Kiowas into ground-based ambushes. At least sixteen Redcatcher helicopters have been hit by enemy fire in the first eight months, often causing severe damage.

But for serious luck and fancy flying, it's a wonder that Redcatchers haven't been shot down all over Mosul.

One day after a long mission, Jamison was just coming down to a hover back at the airfield when mortars exploded nearby. Before touching down, he lifted

'Siegler started patting down Jamison for blood. Jamison thought it strange because ... he didn't know he had been helmet-shot.'

straight off. The counter-battery radar gave Jamison and his left-seater, Chief Warrant Officer 2 George Siegler, a Point of Origin (POO) to the firing site about four kilometers away in the Al Uruba district of Mosul. Swooping in, Siegler spotted a mortar team through the Plexiglas under his feet, and a split second later about four enemy machine guns and two RPGs fired at once. Am-bush!

Three bullets struck the helicopter and one hit Jamison's helmet. The flight helmets have no ballistic protection because Kevlar is heavy, and when you crash it can break your neck or even snap your head off. The bullet went straight through the back of Jamison's helmet, through the Styrofoam and out the other side, missing his head by maybe an inch. Jamison told me it felt like getting whacked with a bat. "Just a little bat," he said. Last year, a helicopter pilot in Mosul was shot in the head and killed.

Just as Jamison got whacked, he felt a strong blast come in from Siegler's side. Jamison pushed the helicopter lower and started doing S-turns to break out of the kill zone.

Jamison asked Siegler if he were okay, but Siegler didn't know. Jamison started patting down Siegler for blood while still flying low because oftentimes soldiers are seriously or even mortally shot and have no idea they were even hit. When Siegler saw bullet holes in Jamison's helmet, he started patting down Jamison for blood. Jamison thought it strange because Siegler didn't bother to tell him about the holes in his helmet, and Jamison didn't know he had been helmet-shot. Meanwhile, Jamison had flying to do. The aircraft was badly damaged, almost no instruments were working. They flew back toward the base. The moment Jamison touched skids to tarmac, Siegler unstrapped and ran to another helicopter and started the engine. While those rotors were picking up speed, Jamison quickly shut down his broken helicopter, unbuckled, joined Siegler in the other helicopter and they flew back to the ambush site.

These pilots are fighting every day. They get into so many gunfights, rocket-fights (where pilots are launching rockets and the enemy is launching RPGs), and Hellfire attacks, not to



Photo by Spc. John Crosby

mention flying so low the left-seater is shooting the little M-4 out the door, that it's hard to know what fight the reader might want to hear about. It would take a book to explain half of them.

I watched video of a fight from 30 December 2007, where a Predator was tracking a black van that contained weapons and had just test-fired "a large-caliber machine gun," which turned out to be an anti-aircraft gun (it's uncommon to come across anti-aircraft here these days, and causes one to wonder where it came from). Other intelligence indicated that one of the bad guys was a High Value Target (HVT). The Predator folks handed the target to the Redcatchers for action.

Unfortunately, the HVT was driving mostly through crowded areas, so the pilots did not want to take the shot. Instead, they followed him from a distance of several miles for about two hours.

By keeping distance, they didn't spook the HVT, but this also made it

Birds-eye *The Mosul mosque, the largest mosque in Mosul, planned and funded by Saddam Hussein, can be seen from the left seat of an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter of 4-6 CAV Regiment*

extremely difficult to track the van. (It might seem easy to track a vehicle from the air, but a video from my dispatch "Shadows of Baqubah" from 2005 shows how hard it can be. Often, when a UAV or other aircraft is tracking a suspect, soldiers can nail the target from the ground, but we have fewer soldiers in Mosul now, and it's hard to do car chases in tanks, Bradleys and MRAPs, and the enemy knows all this.)

Eventually the van parked beside a car and other intelligence showed that they had planned this meeting. They also were in a perfect place for attack. DiGiorgio was pilot with Sickler in the left-seat and they were flying several miles away and higher so as not to spook the enemy. They laser-designated the van for the other Kiowa flown

by Chief Warrant Officer Tom Boise with left-seater Chief Warrant Officer 2 Susan Weathers. Susan programmed the laser code into the Hellfire as Tom dropped in low, too low for the enemy to see, and swam through the air like a crocodile toward the enemy. When they reached optimal range, VRROO-OSSHHH!, the Kiowa shook as the missile climbed and scanned for the laser reflection. The cool eye caught the glint off the van, the Hellfire computer verified the laser code, adjusted flight controls and nosed straight toward the middle of the van. The car happened to drive forward right at this moment.

BOOOM!!!

Everybody in the van was killed, but the car had moved just far enough away to escape the blast.

About twenty more enemy emerged from nearby buildings, armed with AKs and PKC machine guns, and tried to recover the blown-up anti-aircraft weapon. Apparently these guys didn't realize they were under direct attack.

The video shows them moving straight toward the impact of the first missile. The enemy used to do this often. After a missile strike, they sometimes think their cohorts had an accident (they accidentally blow themselves up all the time), and, not realizing they are under direct attack, they run toward the explosion, and then it gets worse.

Predator was still watching when Di Giogio and Sickler got a radio call to kill them. "Roger," diving in low, firing the .50-caliber, which stopped (possibly because of the bullets hitting the helicopter) and Di Giogio banked hard left. Bullets ripped through the cockpit. One bullet punched through the pedals between the pilot's feet. Another slammed into a seat. Another bullet popped a rotor. And one bullet tore through the belly of the helicopter, severing a wrist-thick skein of wires.

The last thing a lot of pilots hear before they die is the "Caution, Warning, and Advisory System." Di Giogio and Sickler heard it start blaring, reporting system failures. Electrical systems failed. Weapons failed. Engine pressure gauges failed. Radios failed, internal and external. The Kiowa was descending and there wasn't much distance between them and the ground.

There is a latch on the seat-harnesses to lock when a crash is imminent. Di Giogio and Sickler locked for crash. They were going down into extremely hostile territory, and the only immediate backup was another Kiowa. Unlike the old Pintos, Kiowas have airbags. The men prepared to crash.

But the motor kept going!

They could not communicate with the other Kiowa, and so they turned toward base. Meanwhile Sickler started tossing smoke grenades out the door to mark their path so that others could find them when they eventually crashed.

Boise pulled his Kiowa behind Sickler and Di Giogio. His left seater was Weathers, a pilot who prefers the left seat because she likes to laser targets and shoot her M-4 at bad guys (more about Susan in a minute). Sickler and Di Giogio were about to crash while Tom and Susan followed them.

The fight was far from over. The enemy might have shot Sickler and Di Giogio's Kiowa into submission, but there were more Kiowas on the runaway that were gassed-up, armed, and only

needed pilots. Bob Sickler and Pete Di Giorgio's bullet-riddled Kiowa made it to base, and no sooner did skids touch tarmac, than Sickler popped out of his harness and ran to another Kiowa and got the rotors going while Di Giorgio shut down his broken bird. Meanwhile, Tom and Susan were at the FARP gassing up and reloading weapons. While Tom and Susan reloaded, Di Giorgio flipped the last switch as the rotors kept turning, abandoned the shot-up helicopter and jumped into the one Sickler had cranked. With Tom and Susan ready to get back into the fight, Sickler and DiGiorgio led the way.

Predator had kept its eye on the HVT who by now was speeding away in his car, maybe thinking he had escaped. When the four pilots were back en route to the target, the battle captain at the TOC gave the fight back to the Kiowas.

They followed the car for about thirty minutes from a distance, and apparently the three bad guys didn't realize they were being followed. The video shows the car coming into an open area.

Susan lazed the car and launched a Hellfire. The missile barely missed, or barely hit; on the video the back tires seem to have flattened and the rear end appeared damaged. The car continued a short distance and crashed.

Three men dashed from the car, split from each other and ran away. Tom and Susan swooped low and Susan leaned out with her M-4 and shot one of the runners, who luckily for him, mixed in with a local family, so Susan stopped shooting.

The other two died by gun and rocket fire. As one man was running, Sickler dived in and squeezed off a rocket, which flew into the terrorist's back, exploded, and amputated his body.

Daily fights continued. The pilots reminded me of the circus where the man throws knives at someone who stands there smiling like everything's perfectly normal, as if in their spare time, they have the habit of standing around throwing knives by each other's heads.

On 17 February Sickler was once again giving the enemy a fierce, tight fight when he got shot in the leg. He has undergone multiple surgeries at Walter Reed, but I'm told he wants to get back

here and is upset he cannot finish his tour. Bob Sickler probably needs a guitar to remind him of home in Mosul.

Susan Weathers, from Winfield, Kansas is so soft-spoken and gentle that someone might mistake her for a librarian. Yet when I asked her about shooting her M-4 out the door, Weathers seemed disappointed in herself for having "only wounded" the terrorist.

Jamison told me that Susan already had been awarded an Air Medal with a "V" (a serious award for Valor) during a previous combat tour in Iraq. I later



Photo by Marie Shaw

Wounded hero 1st Lt. Robert Sickler of A Troop, 4-6 CAV, receives the Distinguished Flying Cross award from Gen. David McKiernan. Sickler was injured in combat in Iraq and was treated in the ICU at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

asked Susan how she got that medal. Seeming shy, even embarrassed, Susan recounted being in the left seat with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mike Zanders as pilot. They were south of Fallujah covering Marines under sniper and machine-gun attack. The Marines brought the helicopter onto the target—and apparently did a fine job because bullets started ripping past and striking the helicopter. A radio call came from the Marines: "Bountyhunter, we think you took fire." Susan responded, "Yeah, roger, one of the pilots got hit."

Susan had been a medic before learning to fly and shoot at people out the door. Mike Zanders was hit in the forearm, so Susan started bandaging

Radio-Flyer Chief Warrant Officer Tom Boise flies his OH-58 Kiowa helicopter over Mosul, Iraq, Apr. 6

him up while Mike kept flying. Luckily the bullet didn't hit bone. Meanwhile, the Marines, realizing the pilot was hit, asked if the helicopter could continue the mission. It's hard not to respect the Marines. After all, a pilot is shot and they ask the helicopter to stay on station. That's why they win. Mike and Susan were ready to continue the mission, but command guidance told them to get back to base and land the aircraft. Mike was not hurt badly and returned to duty five days later.

Sickler and Di Giorgio were recently awarded "DFCs," or Distinguished Flying Crosses, while both Tom and Susan received Air Medals with "V." It's hard to believe I get to write about You'd likely have a hard time picking a Guitar Hero out of a crowd. They might look like ordinary folks, but appearances can be deceiving.

These men and this woman are engaged in very dangerous combat, going literally eye to eye with the enemy and defeating him nearly every time. And it's important to note that the enemy is a worthy adversary and this is not a turkey shoot.

If you go to a memorial of a helicopter pilot, it will be because he or she saved us from ten other memorials. These pilots know the chances they are taking. They do it anyway, for which thousands of soldiers, and this writer, are grateful. Very, very grateful.

Sometimes I sit up on a hill and watch them in the air. The other day two Kiowas were screaming low right over the rooftops and doing hard turns.

I couldn't see the combat because they were too far away, but I knew they were toe to toe and there was plenty of shooting going on or they wouldn't have been flying so violently. It's scary watching them because I've met them and know they are mortals doing the work of immortals.

If I am down on the street and they pass overhead, I wave. In the dining facility, I step respectfully out of their way. All the time thinking, these folks are more than Guitar Heroes.



Photo by Spc. John Crosby



Horse's Mouth
Master Sgt. Dennis Anninos dishes out the facts

RETENTION

The Truth About Retention

Straight from the CAB Senior career counselor's mouth come the facts on reenlistment. How to ignore the rumors and make the right choice for your career

BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD

If you believe everything you hear, there's a bridge in Brooklyn waiting for you. Just like the barracks lawyer in the room next to you is a source of information as prolific as it is invalid, the rumor mill is the wrong place to go for reliable information on reenlistment, especially when the career counselor is always available to give out the facts.

"Reenlisting in the Army is a huge decision, and Soldiers in the process of making that decision need the best information from the most reliable source, the unit career counselors," said Staff Sgt. Sean Lyons, the career counselor for 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment.

Lyons said that one of the major reenlistment rumors floating around the Operation Iraqi Freedom theatre is about the \$15,000 tax free bonus



Photo by Spc. William Howard



Photo by Spc. William Howard



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth



Photo by Spc. William Howard

1 **The hunt** Msg. Dennis Anninos, the CAB senior career counselor, travels to 3-1 AA to reenlist a group of 3-1 Soldiers aboard a Black Hawk

2 **Keep on Serving** Sgt. Amanda Clayton and Spc. Sean Kerson, both cooks with Co E, 3-1 AA sign their contracts before their joint reenlistment ceremony

3 **The future's so bright...** Pfc. Matthew Ferguson, a radio transmission operator, takes an oath of enlistment administered by Maj. Thomas Rude, the CAB executive officer

4 **Dawn of a Career** Cpt. Matthew Landrum, the commander of Co D, 1-1 ARB, administers the oath of enlistment to Spc. Joshua Petrauskas, an Apache maintainer/repairer with Co D, 1-1

that some Soldiers qualify for.

“The rumor is that everyone will receive the \$15,000,” said Lyons.

What some soldiers don’t realize however is that not everyone qualifies for a flat \$15,000 bonus, he added. The amount of a Soldier’s bonus depends upon several factors and is determined by the amount of time the person has spent in the Army; the career stage they are in, and the number of years they are reenlisting for.

Yet monetary bonuses are not the only incentive the Army can offer a reenlisting Soldier. Potential reenlistees have a host of options to choose from:

- Current stabilization, which guarantees Soldiers can reenlist to remain at their current duty station of Fort Riley.
- The Continental U.S. station of choice option, which guarantees an assignment at various duty stations within the 48 continental U.S. states.
- The overseas option, which guarantees an overseas assignment to places like Europe or Korea.
- The Army training option, which offers Soldiers the option of going to other military occupational specialty schools if they wish to change their MOS. Or, Soldiers may choose to go to other military schools such as language training, additional skill identifier, and special qualification identifier schools.

All of these options, said Master Sgt. Dennis Anninos, the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division career counselor, depend on whether the slots are open in the respective schools or at the duty station the Soldier wishes to serve at. The soldiers must also be within two years of their estimated time of separation in order to reenlist.

“Every Soldier is an individual case, and each soldier needs to sit down with us and get the facts,” said Anninos.

The terms of reenlistment are going to be dependent on the needs of the Army and everything is going to be subject to availability, but it is worth it for a soldier to explore the possibilities, said Lyons.

Though Soldiers can find many of the material benefits a reenlistment can bring to be a nice perk, the reasons that most soldiers have for continu-



Photo by Spc. William Howard

Taking the Plunge

Clockwise from top left: Sgt. Tara Parker, an administrative specialist with HHC CAB takes the oath of reenlistment as Pvt. Paul Villalobos of HHC CAB holds the flag; Sgt. Joseph King and Sgt. Brian Busby of 3-1 AA show off their honorable discharge certificates after their reenlistment ceremony; Spc. Eran Foye and Spc. Steven Huls raise their right arms to take the oath of enlistment; Cpt. Frank Kostik, a legal officer with HHC CAB, speaks to assembled Soldiers about his non commissioned officer in charge, Staff Sgt. Manuel Ortiz, before Ortiz’s reenlistment ceremony



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

ing their military service transcend bonuses and choice of duty station.

“Ultimately, the bonuses alone influence a small percentage of soldiers who make the decision to remain,” said Anninos. “There are a lot of other factors they look at that the civilian sector doesn’t offer. Promotions, yearly pay raises, the opportunity to

travel, camaraderie, the opportunity to be a part of something that is bigger than yourself, family history, patriotism, all of those things come into play that don’t come into play in the civilian world.”

Anninos said he has spoken to individuals who left the military and regretted it, missing the camaraderie



Photo by Spc. William Howard



Photo by Spc. William Howard

and sense of purpose that went along with serving. Just as importantly, he said, is the fact that he was nearly one of those people.

“Honestly, I think I’m in a good position to talk to soldiers who are on the fence about reenlistment, because the first time I reenlisted as a young sergeant, I was not planning on staying

in the Army. I had a job lined up on the outside, but the first base realignment and closure act in the 90’s closed the naval base where I was going to go live. The economy there went south in a big hurry, and I was married with a young child, and I went ahead and reenlisted.”

Anninos doesn’t regret his decision

to stay in, but as a Soldier who never planned to make the Army a lifestyle, he can relate to Soldiers who are unsure about reenlisting.

“I can tell them what it’s like on the outside. I came in when I was 28, I held a variety of civilian jobs, so sometimes when they have unnatural expectations of what life will be like on the outside I can sort of explain it to them from a position of personal experience,” said Anninos.

So far, Anninos and Lyons’ experience and ability to relate with Soldiers. Lyons, who has reenlisted several of the very Soldiers he used to work beside, has met 108% of his year to date goal, and the unit’s overall retention mission is at 130% of its YTD goal. Anninos largely credits this to the unit’s leadership.

“You need good command support. The command has to set the tone for soldiers to stay in the unit and stay in the army,” he said.

Staff Sgt. Franklin Angelo, a command driver with Headquarters Company, CAB and a native of Illinois, said he knew all about going to the right source for the right information when it comes to reenlistment.

Angelo reenlisted indefinitely during the current OIF rotation. “Ever since I was a kid, a Soldier is the only thing I wanted to be,” said Angelo. “The Army has been great to me, and I never had a thought about reenlisting. I always knew I would for sure.”

Angelo said he never received a bonus, but that he never needed any added incentives to stay in a lifestyle he loved.

Whether Soldiers are going to reenlist or not, Anninos and Lyons agreed they shouldn’t be afraid to come and talk to their career counselors or visit their unit retention NCOs just to see what options are available to them.

“They should come see us just to look at all of their options. We can help them make the best decision for them and their families,” said Lyons.

Anninos said that in the end, taking care of the Soldiers is more important than simply reenlisting them. “If you take care of the Soldiers, their buddies will see that, and trust you and come see you and talk to you and reenlist. If you look them as a number that needs to be reenlisted, you’ll fail.”



Spc. Christina Messerschmidt of Co E, 1-1 ARB locks down a pallet of 2.75 inch rockets with a tie down strap. The rockets are destined for Kiowa Warrior helicopters in 4-6 CAV

Spc Michael Thompson and Spc. Christina Messerschmidt of Co E, 1-1 ARB, offload a pallet of rockets destined for the 4-6 CAV ammunition point

LOCK

No bullets, no fight. The 1-1 ARB Ammunition Section is the CAB's starting point in their battle to secure the skies of Iraq. How a single section put one hundred tons of ammunition in the hands of the warfighters who need it most

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. 1ST CLASS JEFF TROTH

&

LOAD





Adding it up

Spc. Christina Messerschmidt of Co E, 1-1 ARB verifies the serial numbers on a pallet of 2.75 inch rockets. Accuracy was vital in ensuring the ammunition made it to where it was needed most

Take away an AH-64 Apache gunship's Hellfire missiles, its rockets and 30mm cannon and you have a very expensive reconnaissance platform. The Apache is a lethal attack helicopter, capable of detecting and engaging targets from a distance. Without its wide range of munitions it is unable to do its job.

Ensuring that the Apaches patrolling the skies of northern Iraq still have their claws and are ready to strike at those threatening the lives of Iraqis and Coalition Forces is the mission of the Soldiers of the ammuni-

tion section, Company E, 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment.

"We are the ones that are responsible for all the ammunition needs of the battalion," said Staff Sgt. Michael Lima, noncommissioned officer in charge of the ammunition section. "We order it, receive it, store it and issue it out."

In the first eight months of their deployment Lima's team has handled about \$11 million of munitions, weighing in at almost 100 short tons. This includes rockets for the troop of OH-58 Kiowa Warriors that are at-

tached to 1-1 ARB.

"The toughest part of our job is physically loading up the ammunition and getting it where it needs to go," said Pfc. Michael Richards, an ammunition specialist. "We have to make our mission in order for the rest of the battalion to do theirs."

To guarantee that no helicopter is ever short of ammunition, a system has been set up to eliminate an immediate need.

"It doesn't go from us right into the aircraft," Lima said. "The armament specialists keep some on hand that they load onto the bird. We just keep

"It is our MOS, that is what we do – we handle ammunition," said Lima. "We have daily missions to pick up and drop off ammunition so we have to know what we are doing with it."

His section proves that they do, as they have not had a single mishap in the 250 plus days they have been open for business. And business has been so good the section is split into three shifts to cover the missions which occur around the clock.

"The job is a lot of work," said Spc. Jennifer Eason, an ammunition specialist. "We receive it, we have to load it and download it. Then it all has to be separated and stored. Then we turn around and have to load it again so we can distribute it. It is very time consuming."

Lima said that there is a lot more for his section to do in Iraq compared to when they are stateside.

"Back at (Fort) Riley we do the same tasks as here, but it is all for training," said Lima. "I kept track of what ranges were planned and what type of ammunition they needed and made sure the ammunition was out at the ranges. Here we still have to take care of training ranges, but on top of that we have combat operations we have to track."

When Richards graduated from Advanced Individual Training at the end of 2007, the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, which 1-1 falls under was already deployed to Iraq. Shortly after signing into the rear detachment in Kansas, the young private was on a plane to Iraq.

"I think it is great that I went straight from a learning environment to actually applying what I learned there," Richards said. "I think it is going to set in longer and I will be less likely to forget some of the smaller details that I am going to need on this deployment or my next deployment."

"The whole reason for me enlisting was to come out here and do my part in this war. And I am glad that I am on the ammo side of it, because I know what our ammunition does and when the birds go out I know what they are going out there to do. I am proud to do my part in supplying them with the ammunition they need to get the job done."

Bread and Circuses: Army of Occupation

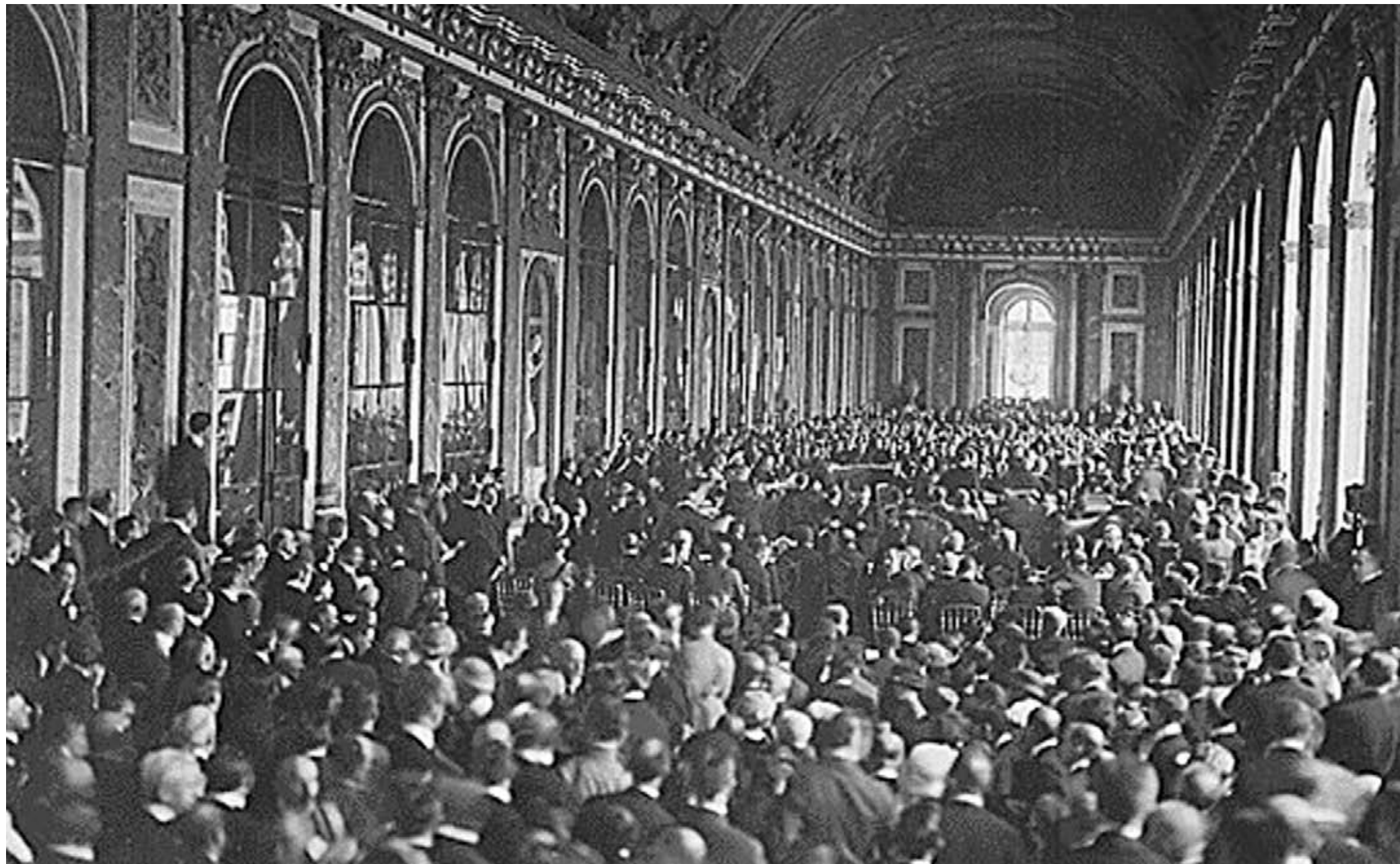
The Big Red One experiences a close shave as a vengeful France and Britain force a harsh and humiliating peace treaty upon the Germans

BY CAB PAO

After four years of fighting, the German army was in tatters, undersupplied, decimated, and outnumbered. The Germans signed a cessation of hostilities at 11 a.m. Nov. 11, 1918. They promised to evacuate all occupied territory in the west and to surrender most of their artillery, airplanes and roughly half of their machine guns. The armistice did not, however end the war between the Allies and the Central powers. Instead, an international conference was to be convened in Versailles, France, to negotiate the treaties that would end the “War to End All Wars.”

Since the war did not end on Nov. 11, 1918, one of the provisions of the armistice allowed the American and Allied armies to establish zones of occupation in Germany with bridgeheads over the Rhine at Cologne, Koblenz and Mainz. If the Germans did not accept the peace treaty that was to be dictated by the associated powers, the Allies would be able to resume the war from within Germany.

On Dec. 12, the 1st Infantry Division led the U.S. Third Army across the Rhine, putting a quarter of a million Soldiers at its banks. The same



day, the 1st Infantry Division was reassigned to III Corps. For the next eight months, the division would stand guard on the Rhine.

At 7 a.m. on Dec. 13, the U.S. Third Army crossed the Rhine on a pontoon bridge connecting Koblenz and Ehrenbreitstein, still led by the 11D. Division headquarters was established in Montabaur.

The U.S. Army lacked the training, doctrine and special organizations needed to manage a region with perhaps a million German citizens. The occupation forces' primary mission was to be prepared to resume hostilities if necessary, but their secondary mission was to manage a significant

Dictating to Germany *Germany, backed into a corner, reluctantly accepted the Treaty of Versailles, effectively sending the Big Red One home.*

piece of German territory that encompassed the Moselle Valley as well as the region around Koblenz on both sides of the Rhine.

Germany's infrastructure was highly developed, allowing the Allied armies to use established railways, warehouses and public buildings to sustain the occupation forces. The German food distribution system in the area, however, lacked the capacity to provide rations for an additional 250,000 Americans. Consequently, Brig. Gen.

Joseph T. Dickman's Army relied on the Army Supply of Services for logistical support from its warehouses, bakeries and slaughterhouses in central France. Often, due to distance and poor quality control, bread shipped from the American Expeditionary Force's bakery in Is-sur-Tille, France, arrived at the 1st Division's railhead in Montabaur moldy and unfit for human consumption. In response, a division bakery was established in Montabaur capable of baking 31,000 pounds of bread daily. In operation by Jan. 23, 1919, this facility required 600,000 pounds of flour and 34,500 pounds of other ingredients monthly. As a result, the Soldiers of the Big Red One

received fresh bread, contributing a great deal to better morale and health.

Commanders at all levels established as many wholesome recreational activities as possible. The division created a circus, and the artillery and trains units held regular horse shows. In spite of the recreational and educational opportunities available by the spring, many of the Soldiers wanted to go home. By February 1919, a steady stream of officers and men departed the 11D and returned to the States.

Following the armistice, Gen. John Pershing insisted that all the divisions remain ready for combat until the final peace treaty was signed. Once the 1st Division was established in its billets

east of the Rhine, McGrachlin initiated a training program designed to keep the troops ready for the possibility of hostilities. The training stressed drill and ceremony, marksmanship with all weapons and artillery practice.

In February, it became clear to Pershing that the leaders of the four leading victorious powers were preparing a harsh peace treaty that the German government might not accept. Consequently, the AEF's operations officer, Colonel George C. Marshall, prepared concepts for a possible advance by the Third Army into the heart of Germany. Marshall found the task daunting, especially since so many men had already been demobilized.

Marshall recommended that the zone be expanded to a 60-kilometer front along the Rhine and that an American Army of ten divisions be given a 100-kilometer-wide zone of action if an advance was launched.

Pershing and Marshall nearly got their chance to advance into Germany. On May 7, 1919 the Germans received the draft peace treaty. Its terms were harsh and humiliating. The German government was split over whether or not to accept it. The Central Powers refused to change the terms that reduced the German army to 100,000 men and eliminated any significant air and naval forces. A significant portion of the government and most of the German generals favored rejecting the treaty. On June 18, Pershing ordered Third Army, now commanded by Maj. Gen. Robert Bullard, to deploy to its battle positions and prepare to advance into Germany on June 23.

However, General Wilhelm Groener, quartermaster general of the German General Staff, convinced the other generals and the government to accept the treaty. This ended the crisis, allowing the 11D to return to its cantonments. German acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles ended the need for the United States to maintain a large army of occupation or an AEF in Europe.

In the American zone, the Third Army ended its occupation in August 1919 and turned its bridgehead over to a constabulary force. The first to arrive, the 1st Infantry Division was the last American combat division to leave Europe.

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"All men are frightened. The more intelligent they are, the more they are frightened. The courageous man is the man who forces himself, in spite of his fear to carry on."

— General George S. Patton, Jr.



U.S. ARMY
CALL TO DUTY
BOOTS ON THE GROUND



U.S. ARMY

1

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ARMY
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