

AUG 2008

The Sustainment Times

FORWARD

Camp Taji, Iraq

Brigade Public Affairs Office

"MAKE IT HAPPEN"

Inside the mind of a Battalion Commander



ARMY STRONG.

Commander's Corner

Col. Kevin G. O'Connell, Commander

IN GOOD COMPANY

Dear 1st Sustainment Brigade Soldiers and Families,

This month's newsletter focuses on the Brigade's five Battalion Commanders. They are all unique, but come together to form a team and perform a crucial mission at a critical time in our nation's history.

Lt. Col. Rob Brem, is from Maryland's eastern shore, and took command of the Special Troops Battalion at Fort Riley, Kan., on Feb. 15, 2007. He hit the ground running by beginning to deploy several subordinate transportation and finance units in a very short period of time. In addition to deploying the HHC and Signal Company, he has embraced the financial management and human resources missions as an opportunity to better support Multi-National Division-Baghdad and Multi-National Division-Central. He has invested the time in these areas to become the resident expert in theater.

Lt. Col. Bob Burke, commands the Indiana Army National Guard's 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry Regiment, and even though I didn't know him before he got to the Brigade, his great reputation preceded him from his recent deployment to Afghanistan. He sought out the mission to come to Taji and conduct area defense operations and provide more than 50 percent of the force protection, via guard towers and entry control points, to Camp Taji. Lt. Col. Burke is an Indiana State Trooper in his civilian capacity.

Lt. Col. Beau Bradford is with the Louisiana Army National Guard and commands the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. He always proudly points out that he has the largest Battalion in the

Brigade, with nine Companies. He is a full-time employee of the Louisiana Army National Guard, and is the son-in-law of the state's Adjutant General. He is a native of Alexandria, Louisiana, and is an actual descendant of General Beauregard, a well-known Civil War General.

Lt. Col. Todd Heussner is a former baseball pitcher from Florida. He commands the 168th Brigade Support Battalion from Fort Sill, Okla. In addition to operating a multi-class Supply Support Activity and direct support maintenance operations, the 168th BSB has an enormous distribution mission of all supplies and equipment throughout MND-B and the units we support in MND-C. His aggressive approach of "offensive logistics" and asking units, "What else can I do to help?" has had a great impact on all the units we support.

Lt. Col. Greg Koller commands the 553d Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Fort Hood, Texas. He is the only Commander I had previously served with; we were together at the National Training Center in 2003 to 2004. The 553d CSSB operates the Liberty Ammunition Supply Point, Fuel Farm, Class I Point, Central Receiving and Shipping Point, Arrival / Departure Airfield Control Group, and has Shower, Laundry, and Clothing Renovation sites in nine different locations.

As you can see, their missions are diverse, but each Commander and each unit is integral to the Brigade's overall success. Each one paints a target for their units to aim at to be the best Battalion in the Army, which ultimately makes the Brigade great.

One common thread is that they are all proud to serve the Nation, the



Col. Kevin O'Connell at FOB Falcon Army, and most importantly Soldiers. They see their jobs as working for you and are proud to do so, especially when you are deployed in combat.

All are married and have Families and understand that Families are important and probably have a tougher job than we do. None of them got to where they are today without the support of their wives and Families. We all need to take care of our Families.

I'm proud to be associated with this team of Commanders and the entire 1st SB team. It is amazing to watch the world-class sustainment support being given to our Coalition Forces; the support of, and partnership with, the Iraqi Security Forces; and the capacity building and economic growth we see in theater-wide sustainment functions such as Iraqi trucking and railroad. Continue what you're doing to help make the 1st SB the best team you've ever been on.

Durable 6
Col. Kevin G. O'Connell
Commander, 1st Sustainment Brigade

CSM Time

CSM Frank G. Cardoza

FROM MY VIEW

By Command Sgt. Major Miguel Rivera

Just imagine activating a new support battalion and five months later being notified of an upcoming deployment, in six months. You might argue that it is almost impossible and that many reasons could be given to justify getting the unit off ramped but, not for a little support battalion from Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

With about 60% strength we understood that our success was dependent on key positions; we needed to get the right personnel on the bus and assign them to the right seat. We understood that our support operations office would be the driving force during combat logistic operations and our operations office would be the center of the critical training required prior to deployment. Both sections are the nerve center of any support battalion, and hold the key to mission success.

Prior to activation we identified key personnel and sent them to critical skills school such as Support Operations and Battle Staff courses. Simultaneously, sections were signing for property, receiving new equipment and personnel, planning, training, and ensuring Soldiers were cared for; all this, and still providing unmatched support to our Brigade.

Training needed to be realistic and we knew we needed to get comfortable being uncomfortable. "Train me for the elements, Sergeant; for I must learn to fight and win in the cold, the wet, and the desert. Those who would be enemies will use these elements. I must be prepared." These words out of the Soldiers Request were our



"Heroes of the week," brings out the best in Soldiers

center of gravity.

Staff sections needed to learn to work with each other and understand how critical information flow was to their success. Simulation exercises proved to be effective to their development and the Brigade and Battalion certification exercises validated their proficiency.

Junior Soldiers started to demonstrate outstanding leadership skills and were immediately given leadership responsibilities. So as we empowered our Soldiers we also gave them access to key leaders. Our battalion commander does not have an open door policy, he has an open sidewalk policy; approach him where you see him and he will talk to you.

Trusting in the NCO Corps was imperative to our success. Many Staff Sergeants found themselves in Platoon Sergeant positions and Specialists in Squad Leader positions. Continuous mentorship and guidance was provided by the few senior leaders, ensuring critical tasks were accomplished to standard and in a timely manner.

Deployment preparation is always a complex task so discipline must be enforced from the bottom up. You need to ensure your Soldiers understand that you will support them when they make proper corrections. Standards must be embedded in them to the point that they become a normal habit. It has to be so natural to them that they subconsciously adhere and enforce them to the point that it becomes their discipline. Disciplined Soldiers will always do the right thing, even when no one is looking. Our battalion commander, Lt. Col Todd Heussner, always says, "Standards lead to habits, habits lead to discipline, and through discipline all things are possible."

Leaders need to be receptive to change, if the change will benefit the organization and the customer. You will not believe the level of energy Soldiers have upon arriving to country. They just want to make things happen, improve their work areas, and improve their overall quality of life. Let them loose and you will be amazed by the results. >> Page 24

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Sgt. Jose Ulloa, gave his life for the country he loved.

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1st Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office

Commander:
Col. Kevin O'Connell

Command Sergeant Major:
Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Cardoza

Editor in Chief:
Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Staff Writers:
Sgt. Jennifer Schweizer

Spc. Andrea Merritt
Staff Sgt. James Brown

Assistant Editors:
Lt. Col. Christopher McCurry
Capt. Adam Smith



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Sgt. Aaron LeBlanc takes us on a midnight ride with the 68th "Eagle Express" Transportation Company.

By Sgt. Aaron LeBlanc

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Contact us at Bryant.maude@Iraq.centcom.mil

Cover photo provided courtesy of the 168th Brigade Support Battalion. Lt. Col. Todd Heussner in action.



THE "MAKE IT HAPPEN" APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP

Story by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

If I had to guess what Lt. Col. Todd Heussner's favorite three words were, I'd have to say make it happen. After all, a twenty foot high, infantry blue, sign that reads MAKE IT HAPPEN is mounted on the top of the 168th Brigade Support Battalion headquarters building at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

But that's not the only reason. For Heussner, "Each day you have a choice to make. You can sit around and hope things happen, you can watch it happen, or you can make it happen." And that's really the culture he has created in the Battalion. His Soldiers are taught that in the absence of guidance they are to execute in accordance with the focus areas; mission support, safety, offensive support, and quality of life, producing Army leaders. Heussner believes that "If the Private down in the warehouse doesn't have any other guidance, then he knows his job is to make it happen in support of

anybody who comes in and needs something."

This thought process didn't happen overnight. He took command of a brand new organization in June of 2006 at Fort Sill, Okla., with little to no Soldiers or equipment; and when they did start getting Soldiers they were a bunch of brand new recruits straight out of Advanced Individual Training. The ratio of Soldiers to noncommissioned officers was about 20 to 1. "I had Privates leading Privates and that was a challenge up front because they don't always lead in a positive way. Not because they don't want to but, because they don't know what to do," recalled Heussner. So he had his team get aggressive about making sure they set a good example and established a good way forward. And that was really the first challenge for the newly formed 168th BSB.

"Lt. Col. Heussner and I, and about three others, stood in his office and laid out on 12 pieces of paper... what we were going to train on for the next year," stated Master Sgt.

Jerry Richardson, a resident of Plano, Texas, and the future operations noncommissioned officer in charge.

Heussner grew up in Fort Meyers, Florida. He was adopted at age 16 and his father and grandfather were both entrepreneurs who believed in hard work and taking risk. He learned the value of hard work from his new dad by going to work with him.

"He always found me the hardest jobs with the lowest wages...digging ditches, sewer lines and electric ditches, and cleaning out drainage ditches," recalled Heussner. "And although I was the owner's kid, I was expected to outwork the other workers and I got paid less. It was very clear that I was not special and was expected to meet my father's high work ethic without complaint. My dad is the most honest, hardest working man I have ever met and I work every day to be worthy of the name he gave me."

Heussner attended Stetson University, a small school with about 2,400 students, an hour north of Orlando and about 40 miles from Daytona Beach. "It was a really good place to go to school," he recalled. He pursued a degree in political science and philosophy.

After graduating college he looked at the Army as a way of paying off his student loans. "I didn't want to be in the Army frankly. The Army was a means to an end to pay for school and I really applied for reserve duty and at that time it was really hard to get onto active duty in the early nineties," said Heussner.

He applied for reserve duty thinking for sure he would get reserve duty; so when he got a note in the mail that said "Congratulations, you're on active duty," he was a bit surprised. But shortly after, he deployed to Desert Shield as a fire support officer and it was here that he knew the Army would be his life's ambition. "I saw the synchronization of the Air Force, the Army Air power, combat power on the >> Page 23



LTC Brem during Battlefield circulation

really didn't care for me after that first date." Several months later he was reassigned to Seoul and on a whim stopped by her work and asked her out. "I walked with her from work to catch the city bus that day and we've been together ever since." On February 22nd they celebrated 16 years of marriage.

"I walked with her from work to catch the city bus that day and we've been together ever since."

STEADFAST AND STRONG

By Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

At 18, Lt. Col. Robert Brem almost became a Marine but the Army was quicker with their 4-year scholarship offer; beating out the Navy by a week. His desire was to study engineering at Lafayette College in eastern Pennsylvania so when the Army offered their scholarship he took it. As a result of this decision, 22 years later, he is now the Commander of the Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, currently deployed in Iraq.

"I checked my AKO mail and saw I had an RFO to be in Kansas by 1 February to take command of the battalion."

Brem was notified of his new position as the STB Commander in the middle of December 2006, while

traveling on temporary duty in Hawaii. "I checked my AKO mail and saw I had an RFO to be in Kansas by 1 February to take command of the Battalion," recalled Brem. Apparently, two other Lieutenant Colonels had declined the position and he was next on the list. He accepted the job knowing that he still had several more days before he could return to Korea where he had been assigned for the past five and a half years. "I ended up clearing during the holidays and arrived in Kansas the last week of January 2007."

Korea has been good to Brem. On his first assignment there he met a young lady on a blind date named Ok Kyong (O.K.). He was assigned in Uijongbu at the time and she worked in the Commissary bakery on Yongsan Garrison in Seoul. He recalls their first meeting with fondness. "We went on a double date and afterward didn't see or attempt to contact each other for a few months. In fact, OK was mad because she had been set up with a bald man (yes, I was already bald, this is not just a haircut) and she

The mission of the STB is large and diverse. In addition to managing the Brigade's headquarters personnel and running a battalion aid station through their highly capable Headquarters Company and providing satellite based network communications for the Brigade by way of their superior Signal Company, they also have a Financial Management Company and Human Resources Company. They are newly formed modular organizations that support more than 80,000 Soldiers and civilian contractors throughout Multi-National Division-Baghdad and Multi-National Division-Center.

The 24th Financial Management Company disburses 18 million dollars in contract and vendor payments weekly and 10.5 million dollars to paying agents weekly for a total of 3.5 billion dollars so far in 2008 alone. This is as much cash as some nations produce in gross domestic product in a year.

Responsible to provide postal services, casualty liaison, and in-transit passenger accountability support, the 510th Human >>

Special Troops Battalion Lt. Col. Robert Brem, Commanding

» Resources Company has also had a number of successes. Of particular note, they managed to cut down the transit time for mail coming from the states to only seven days (from 10 to 14 days) by improving their mail distribution processes.

“Not only are they new missions technically, but there are also organizational and cultural differences among the Adjutant General branch, Finance branch and logisticians.”

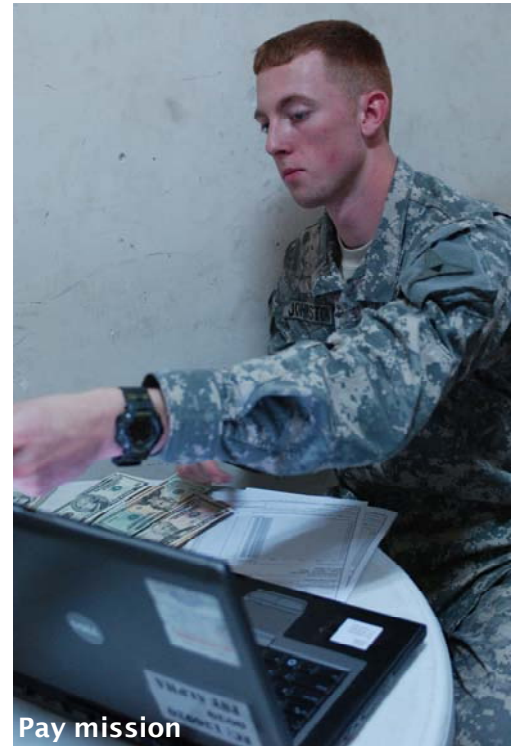
Brem believes his biggest challenge and greatest impact in this deployment has been integrating and employing Financial Management (FM) and Human Resources (HR) forces into his organization. This is the

first time these forces have been employed in modular formations under sustainment brigades.

“Not only are they new missions technically, but there are also organizational and cultural differences among the Adjutant General Branch, Finance branch and logisticians. So, understanding, adapting to, and assimilating these new missions, Soldiers, and units was the biggest challenge,” he stated. In addition to that, his team developed from scratch, the necessary staff procedures and oversight mechanisms to effectively plan for and employ these forces.

Brem operates mainly off of intent. As much as possible he tries to steer away from being directive and authoritarian. He is passionate about the mission and developing an organization that has high standards and produces quality outcomes. “I like to be able to be a cheerleader for my subordinate units and Soldiers,” states Brem.

Brem is very proud that his Soldiers have accomplished with one battalion what three battalions did previously with the largest and most important FM / HR missions of any other sustainment brigade in Iraq,



Pay mission

Kuwait, or Afghanistan. “And not only did we not miss a beat but, we significantly improved operations and customer support across the board,” concluded Brem. **STF**

LIST OF COUNTRIES BY GDP	
1 USA	13,843,000,000,000
2 JAPAN	4,383,762,000,000
3 GERMANY	3,322,147,000,000
4 CHINA	3,250,827,000,000
5 UK	2,772,570,000,000

142 TAJIKISTAN	3,712,000,000
143 MALAWI	3,538,000,000
STB*	3,500,000,000
144 FIJI	3,409,000,000
145 RWANDA	3,320,000,000

*The 24th Finance Management Company makes 18 million dollars in contract and vendor payments weekly and disburses 10.5 million dollars to paying agents weekly for a total of 3.5 billion dollars disbursed so far in 2008.



Finance Soldiers serve with a smile

“Durable” House of Pain

Story by Spc. Andrea Merritt

As cheers grow louder around the ring, two challengers stand face-to-face in the eye of the storm. They are able to drown out the noise from the crowd, but the beats of their hearts and the flutters in their stomachs are as loud as ever.

When the bell rings, the gloves come up and the bout is on. The only thing that matters now is remembering everything they were taught, so they can out-think and out-manuever their opponent.

Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, this is the reality for the residents on Camp Taji who go to learn the fundamentals of boxing at a place known as the Durable House of Pain Boxing Gym.

“I’ve been boxing for a while now. I know for a fact from practicing boxing in the past that it’s a great workout,” said Sgt. 1st Class Luis De La Rocha, the maintenance manager for the support operations section of the 1st Sustainment Brigade and the noncommissioned officer in charge of the boxing gym.

“The goal here is not only to provide the Soldiers a different way

to work out and get in shape, but also to instill discipline and self-confidence because that’s what boxing is all about,” added De La Rocha, an El Centro, Calif., native.

A few months ago, a group of Soldiers from the 1st Sustainment Brigade took a vacant building and turned it into a place where people on the camp could get a good workout and learn the fine art of boxing.

Along with finding a place to operate in, the group also built the boxing ring and supplied punching bags, gloves, hand wraps, jump ropes, mitts, and other essential items necessary for training.

“Just about everything you see came from our group. We got together and came up with ideas from our different backgrounds. We were able to put it all together and make the facility what it is today,” said Chief Warrant Officer Four Darren Lester, a Kansas City, Mo., native and the boxing facility manager.

Since opening three months ago, attendance at the boxing gym has gone from ten to 40 people.

During the boxing workout, the

class goes through a one-hour conditioning drill, which consists of upper and lower body exercises. During the second hour, participants work on their form. They learn how to control their punches, how to control their moves, and how to fend off of their opponent.

“Boxing causes you to think a lot. You have to think about what you’re going to do to defend yourself from an attack and what you’re going to do as an offensive attack to your opponent,” said Lester.

“You can definitely get in shape with this program that we have. You are guaranteed to work every bit of your body. With this, you learn discipline and the basic skills of defense. You will [gain] a greater love of the sport,” Lester added.

Although most people come for the workout, about ten people – both males and females – actually train to compete. Servicemembers who are not a part of the 1st Sustainment Brigade need approval from their commanders to box.

“People not in the Brigade can still come and train, they just can’t get in the ring and do contact, like sparring, until we get a memorandum from their commander stating they are released to do that,” De La Rocha said.

Once a month, a boxing smoker is held at the Durable House of Pain Boxing Gym, where competitors can actually put all that they have learned into practice. Before competing, boxers have to complete a physical with the medics at the Easy Red Clinic.

“It was harder than I thought it was going to be. All of a sudden I got scared and nervous all at the same time,” said Sgt. Genevieve Capalia, a Shreveport, La., native and a logistics NCO for the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, who participated in the boxing smoker June 20.

Since opening, the gym has held three boxing smokers; one on June 20, one on July 4, and the other on August 15. **STF**



An exciting match at the “Durable” House of Pain



Honing their skills at the range

In Command: Q&A with LTC Robert D. Burke, Squadron Commander of 1-152 CAV (RSTA)

By SFC Jason Thornbury

Few are given the opportunity to command a battalion in a combat zone. And to be a commander is, arguably, the highlight of an officer's career. To command is to serve, as Andre Malraux states.

For Lt. Col. Robert Burke, the squadron commander of 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry RSTA (Recon, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition), service and commanding have been a part of his life since birth.

Burke was born on a military post and witnessed his father, (Christopher Burke, a Vietnam veteran and Army Reservist), retire at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and complete some of the hardest schools the Army had to offer.

The standard was set by his father and LTC Burke chose to meet those same challenges.

A graduate of Norwich University with a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, he commissioned through the Army Senior ROTC program as a Second Lieutenant and branched as an Armor Officer.

He went on to complete the Armor Officer Basic course, Ranger school, and Airborne school prior to arriving at Fort Carson for his first duty assignment.

Upon completion of his active duty tour, he chose to join the Indiana Army National Guard and sought a career in civilian law enforcement.

Hired by the Indiana State Police in the summer of 1993, Burke attended the Indiana State Police Recruit Academy. Choosing not to settle for the bare minimum, he went on to be selected for the Emergency Response Team as a sniper and eventually the Sniper Team Chief for his ERT in the Central Indiana zone. He has also been promoted to the rank of Sergeant with the ISP.

Burke continued his military education while pursuing his career with the state police. Through the Indiana Army National Guard, he attended the Command and General Staff College just prior to a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan with the 76th Separate Infantry Brigade (Enhanced) as the Brigade's J3 (Operations / Training Officer).

Burke's knowledge of Armor, Cavalry, and Infantry became very useful as he became the battalion commander of the 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry in 2007. As with many units in today's Army, the Indiana National Guard was experiencing a re-organization. With this information, the 1-151 Infantry battalion would be reorganized into the 1-152 Cavalry Squadron (RSTA), based out of New Albany, Ind. The transition was a learning experience for commanders, NCOs and enlisted Soldiers, alike.

And, then word came that the unit would deploy again. But this time to Iraq, not Afghanistan - like the unit had done in 2004-2005.

With this deployment to Iraq, Burke commands an Area Defense Operations Center (ADOC) and provides force protection for a portion of Camp Taji with two units from the Arkansas Army National Guard (1123rd Transportation Company & 1038th Horizontal Construction Company), and his own headquarters company of 1-152 Cavalry.

The following is a question / answer session conducted with LTC Burke concerning his thoughts on command, the deployment, and tough issues relating to commanders.

We hear a lot about command philosophy? Command philosophy is exactly what it says....what does the commander of a unit expect from his Soldiers in the unit, what can the Soldiers expect from him as the commander, and what does the future look like for the entire team. It allows for everyone to be focused on the same objectives, goals, and expectations. It allows a commander to tell his Soldiers who he is, what he stands for, and what he believes in to be a successful unit.

What is your command philosophy? I believe that a commander's philosophy should be short, concise, and simple. If I had to stick to that belief, then I would say these few things are what my philosophy is all about: **First**, Be honest in word and deed. Having integrity is what it is all about with both yourself and your subordinates. If they know you are fair, honest, and personable, then they will trust you and your decisions to do the right thing. **Secondly**, the one thing that we never have enough of is time. So use your time wisely, stick to the time that you put out...don't be late and hold your subordinates to the time as well. Time is a valuable resource, so have a good battle rhythm. Good units do things on time, meet suspense's, and don't waste time. **Third**, Discipline. Have the discipline to do the right thing at the right time, all the time. Soldiers should do things right without leaders present; leaders should >>

» trust their subordinates to do that right thing. But keep in mind no one is perfect, including myself, and mistakes will be made. That is okay as long as it doesn't violate the first two points. Expectations should be reasonable as well. **Lastly**, be a Warfighter! Train to be a Warfighter in everything we do. Train to standard, maximize your capabilities, and be focused on your job, your Soldiers, and your mission. Family Readiness and FRGs are all part of this as well.

What is your advice to future battalion commanders? Be your own leader. You will see good things from leaders throughout your career and bad things as well. Develop yourself around the good and implement those positive aspects that apply to your leadership style. But most of all, be open and honest with your Soldiers, but also don't be afraid to be hard on them as they expect that from their commander. They expect to work hard, train hard, and fight hard. They know the standards, know what right looks like, and expect their leaders to enforce and follow the same standards they are held too. Don't ask your Soldiers to do something that you would not be willing to do as well.

What has been your most difficult decision as the squadron commander? Telling a great NCO, leader, and human being that he cannot deploy with us. We had a Vietnam veteran, Bosnia veteran, Afghanistan veteran, and soon to be Iraq veteran that could not deploy because of a medical situation. His dream was to deploy with "his boys" one last time. His whole life was the military. Here was a 60 year old man that was in better shape than most of his 20 year old Soldiers. He could still run the two-mile run in 12 minutes, and because he had a life threatening illness, he could not go with us. Telling him that news, sharing his grief, and helping him come to the realization that he cannot go with us was the hardest thing I had to do during this deployment as the Squadron Commander. Now with that said, this NCO has had his life saving surgery, is recovering well, and is determined to still join us in country. How can you say NO to that? What an admirable person, leader, and human being who has dedicated his whole life to serving his country like he has. I admire this guy more than I can say and he is one of my true heroes in life.

What, in your opinion, is the number one error made by Battalion Commanders? Second guessing their decisions made at the time, whether it was a poor one or not, and then questioning themselves about the decision they made. You have to be willing to accept that you may have made a poor decision, but the question becomes what are you going to do to fix it if need be. Be willing to admit that you made a mistake, be honest about it, correct your situation and move on. I have seen leaders in general make a poor decision, not be willing to accept input or advice, and then blame or point the finger at someone else for their failure. Be willing to accept full responsibility for your decisions:

right, wrong, or indifferent and move forward, fix the issue, and learn from what you did. That is what your subordinates will respect the most, not if you look the other way or blame someone else for something that you actually did yourself.

What do you bring to the table from your civilian occupation? Do you believe your position with the Indiana State Police contributes to your ability to do this job? Well it would be easy for me to say that I can bring a lot of police experience that I could use with the Iraqi Police forces on how to police communities, deal with crime, and work for the "Citizens" of the community that you serve. However, probably the most that I can attribute to my civilian work is being able to talk to people in general, be open to questions, approachable, and have the confidence to deal with problems and situations that require a decision. I have to make many decisions on a daily basis that can positively or negatively impact a person's life as a police officer, and most of those decisions have to be made very quickly and on the spot. I would say that after 14 years as a Trooper, I can take that experience and put that to use as a Squadron Commander to deal with similar situations that effect our unit on a regular basis and believe that I can almost always resolve any situation put before me.



Indiana State Police Sergeant Robert Burke

What do you enjoy the most about being a squadron commander? The most rewarding thing about being a commander in general is seeing » Page 26



BORN ON THE BAYOU

Story by Sgt. Aaron LeBlanc

165th CSSB, UPAR

Lt. Col. Randall Beaugard Bradford of Alexandria, La., known to his many peers simply as “Beau” is the commanding officer of the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. With well over 1,300 troops in its ranks, Bradford’s ‘miniature brigade,’ as it is sometimes called, is currently the most robust battalion in Iraq.

Bradford was born in New Orleans, La. in 1964. In 2005, he helped to deliver his birthplace from the worst natural disaster in U.S. history as the commander of the Louisiana National Guard’s 773d Military Police Battalion.

“I was proud of our ability to rapidly mobilize and deploy to the Louisiana Superdome prior to flooding,” Bradford recalled. “We saved thousands of lives by providing security at the Dome, along with distribution of MREs and bottled water, and played an integral part in moving persons from the Dome.

“From there, we were on point of the convoy providing MREs and

water to persons at the Morial Convention Center,” he continued. “We secured the MSR for the transports, formed distribution points, and subsequently directed and oversaw an immediate and timely evacuation of all persons from that venue.”

The 773d remained in New Orleans for six months following the storm. “We performed a law and order mission in high visibility areas such as the French Quarter, the New Orleans Central Business District where we demonstrated great readiness, reliability, and relevance as a Military Police Battalion during the most difficult of circumstances,” Bradford said.

The mission of the 165th in Iraq is arguably among the most complex missions assigned to any comparable unit in the theater of operations today. In addition to moving every class of supply down some of the most dangerous roads in the world (and providing for their own security), the 165th bears the brunt of the logistics effort that allows Camp Taji to function.

The 165th’s 536th Maintenance Company is responsible for the largest and most comprehensive

maintenance operation on the base, and boasts command and control of one of the largest Supply Support Activity warehouse complexes in the country.

A detachment of the 297th Transportation Company, also belonging to the 165th, is responsible for the administration of the Camp Taji Central Receiving and Shipping Point, or CRSP Yard. The 165th’s 515th Transportation Company has, for the past year, been responsible for the delivery of all diesel fuel, MOGAS, and JP8 on Camp Taji, and a good chunk of the same in the surrounding MND-B area.

Soldiers pulled from various units within the 165th are spear-heading the effort to turn over U.S. Army Humvees to the Iraqi Army, and are quickly nearing the 2,000th Humvee transferred since the 165th’s arrival in May. The headquarters element of the Battalion is knee-deep in a new program to help their Iraqi counterparts, the 6th Motorized Transportation Regiment (MTR), form a more effective and efficient logistic apparatus.

Even in the face of all of this, Bradford sees providing for those in his charge as the most important part of his job. “The most important part of being a battalion commander in Iraq is taking care of Soldiers and maintaining the values of the Army I serve and the values of the great men and women that I serve with, which are: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage,” Bradford said.

To achieve A-list results, Bradford advises calling on A-list Soldiers. The commanding officer of the 165th prefers a style of command that relies heavily on the professionalism and expertise of the commissioned and noncommissioned officers organic to his battalion, and he encourages the commander set to inherit his battlespace to “Draw from a pool of officers and senior NCOs that are at the top of their game – the best of the best - from which to build your winning team. Once you have those core leaders, learn quickly their strengths and weaknesses >>

» so you can capitalize on their strengths and figure out ways to mitigate any weaknesses. Mentor them and provide guidance; you'll be amazed at their results."

This formula for success has proven extremely effective for Bradford. But as any military leader would attest, no matter how fool-proof any given strategy may seem, how well a battalion commander's immediate subordinates perform, or no matter what technological or numerical advantage one possesses over one's enemy, the heartbreaking reality of war is that victory demands sacrifice.

This harsh reality is a lesson that the Soldiers of the 165th recently learned first-hand as on August 8, 2008, Sgt. Jose Ulloa of the 515th Transportation Company was killed in action during a deliberate combat logistics patrol. Such events are often described by commanders as the most challenging to handle; Bradford is no exception.

"The other day, a brave young man from this Battalion died near here," said Bradford. "I know who



Repairing a tread



68th Transportation Company 915 rolls out the yard

he was and I know the name to be etched on a concrete grave marker. I consider the name and life that one day will be forgotten by all but the ones who loved him and / or knew him. I wondered, as I signed a letter to his spouse, as I have before, about these Soldiers, some who look like children and some who do not, and about a mother or father or wife or friend who on a clear morning, in the calm of their home, were struck with the pain of learning that someone they love isn't there anymore. My duty, as Battalion Commander to Soldiers, is my greatest challenge and one that I will always embrace."

"The other day, a brave young man from this Battalion died near here."

Bradford continued, "This unit's very recent loss of a great Soldier, father, and son relates on a personal level to me. I was thinking: Suppose one morning you never wake up or that there is no tomorrow; did all Family and friends know you loved them? I could die today, tomorrow, or next week, and I wondered if I had any wounds needing to be healed,

wounds that I had caused or that someone may think they had caused me or friendships that needed rekindling or just three words needing to be said to someone. I made it a point to call, email, or write people close to me to tell them "I Love You" and have encouraged others to do the same in discussions."

With so much responsibility on his shoulders, Bradford unsurprisingly makes note of a few crucial sources of support, namely his God and his Family. "My most vital sources of support are faith, Family, friends, and my fellow Soldiers," He said. "I believe in the power of prayer and take strength from it. Spending time with my eight year old son and ten year old daughter always makes me happy. I love the laughter of and smile upon my little boy's and girl's face."

Bradford went on to explain that "A reason I am here and missing the faces of my children and my wife is about preserving our rights and our freedoms. I have always given my best in the service of my Country and State. Whether saving lives of those in the Louisiana Superdome or standing watch on the sands of Iraq, you can be sure that we will succeed with mission accomplishment."

STF



THE EAGLE EXPRESS

ROLLS ON DOWN THE ROAD

Story by Sgt. Aaron LeBlanc,

165th CSSB, UPAR

The 68th Transportation Company, out of Mannheim, Germany, known affectionately as the "Eagle Express," is playing a critical role as part of the heavy-lift capacity of the largest battalion in Iraq.

The Company, commanded by Capt. Donna Johnson of Columbus, Ohio, is currently operating out of Camp Taji, Iraq and is attached to the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, in support of Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Traveling exclusively at night, the men and women of the 68th are responsible for moving everything from beans and bullets, to Humvees and radio towers, down some of the most dangerous roads in the world.

"I love my truck," said Spc. Sam Hyacinth of his 915, the Army's version of a semi-truck. "She may not look very pretty on the outside, but it's what's on the inside that counts. This truck will get up and go. Plus the AC will freeze you out; that's a must in the desert,

even at night." Hyacinth is a native of New York City, and is currently assigned to the 68th as a driver.

"I like this company, and I trust my leadership," continued Hyacinth, who was assigned to his present duty station directly out of advanced individual training, and is currently serving his second combat tour with the 68th.

Although the world of transportation may not be as glamorous as kicking in doors or lobbing artillery shells downrange, the Soldiers of the 68th nevertheless approach their mission with a sense of duty, earnestness, tenacity, and calm determination.

Just before rolling out the gate on a recent mission to move needed supplies from one area of the battlefield to another, mission commander Staff Sgt. George Barnhart walked from truck to truck checking on the Soldiers in his charge, and disseminating last-minute information. "There has been recent enemy activity along our route, but medical evacuation status is good, so we're OK to roll," he said in a matter-of-fact manner.

If the serious prospect of driving into a firefight was a source of fear for the young men and women assigned to the mission, none of them showed any

outward signs of it; the various drivers and truck commanders reacted to Barnhart's words of caution with the same quiet readiness with which they were issued.

This dauntless attitude is typical of the Eagle Express, and is a testament to the Soldiers who wrote the unit's long history of courage under fire.

Originally formed in 1936, the 68th participated in campaigns in World War II, to include Tunisia, Sicily, Naples-Foggia, and Rome-Arno.

The unit's most recent deployments have been in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. From Feb. to Oct. 2003, the company ran combat missions from Logistic Support Area Cedar, Forward Operating Base Resolute, and Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

As the only company within its home battalion with a split-based operation, they deployed again in August 2005 from both Mannheim, Germany and Vicenza, Italy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07 and operated from Al Asad Airbase, Iraq in Area of Operations West, supporting the 1st and 2nd Marine Expeditionary Forces, the 172nd Stryker Brigade, and Task Force 1-36 Armor.

The 68th was awarded the Army Superior Unit Award for 1996-1997 and 2001-2002. **STF**



Securing the load

STAGE RIGHT: HANCOCK



Movie review by Pfc. Samantha Schutz

The recent release of the spectacle that is Warner Brothers' "Dark Knight," directed by Christopher Nolan, starring Christian Bale and the late Heath Ledger, makes it hard to focus on anything else Hollywood has offered previously or currently.

Despite that fact, I came across the not-as-highly-touted "Hancock (July 2008)," distributed by Columbia Pictures, directed by Peter Berg (who also directed 2007's, "The Kingdom"), starring Will Smith (who starred in the 1996 mega hit, "Independence Day") and former Best Actress winner Charlize Theron (who won the Oscar for her role as convicted serial killer Aileen Wuornos in 2003's, "Monster").

Hero-Anti-Hero?

The first 20 - 30 minutes of the movie begin with action sequences in which a drunk and disheveled John

Hancock is seen stopping crimes and natural disasters in his native Los Angeles, but not without causing more damage than the events themselves would likely have caused.

Intoxicated as he is, Hancock still feels compelled to stop the crimes and save the town from itself and the disasters, though his means of doing so are very questionable.

In one sequence he stops a high speed car chase on a highway by crashing through the top of a speeding SUV (Where was he when OJ Simpson was on the loose?) trying to persuade the gang-bangers to give themselves up. They resist, call Hancock a few expletives, and subsequently open-fire on him to no avail, breaking his sun glasses in the process.

Extremely angry at this point, Hancock scoops the SUV and it's occupants into the air, taking them on a drunken flight through downtown LA. The scene ends when he thrusts the vehicle and its passengers onto the antenna of the Capitol Records building after they beg him to put them down.

Enter Ray Embrey into the picture, played by former teen-star Jason Bateman of the '80s TV show "Silver Spoons." Ray is a less-than-successful public relations guru who is on his way home from a pitch-meeting that did not go very well. He's stuck in traffic on the train tracks as the electronic arms start to come down with the train fast approaching his car.

Panicking, Ray tries to move his car, but can't because of the bumper-to-bumper traffic. He attempts to abandon the vehicle but the door handle breaks off into his hands. Certain doom now upon him, Hancock swoops in just in time to give Ray a "dude-what-are-you-doing-type-look," flipping Ray's car over backwards onto the car behind him. Hancock stands there as the train's engine smashes into him, permanently wrecking the vehicle and derailing all of its subsequent boxcars.

Hancock saved the "Ray"

As the scene and carnage of the wrecked train settles in to the minds of the people nearby, they immediately begin a verbal assault on the drunken Hancock whom they view as a menace for the structural damages he causes instead of as the hero he is.

"I can smell alcohol on your breath," says a woman at the scene of the train wreck, to which Hancock replies, "That's cause I've been drinking, (expletive)!" showing his I-care-but-not-enough-to-care-what-you-think attitude.

Ray, who is now out of his over-turned car quickly ►►



Charlize Theron and Will Smith in “Hancock”

» jumps into the middle of the tongue lashing and saves Hancock from the verbal assault, telling the crowd that they should be thankful for Hancock’s help, not belittling him for his methods. Then, as Hancock is about to depart, Ray wryly asks him for a “lift” home.

“Take the key and lock him up...”

Hancock drops Ray and the family car off in front of the Embrey’s home and is about to leave when Ray asks him to stay for dinner. It’s at this time we are introduced to Mary Embrey (Charlize Theron) who instantly gives Hancock a look of mysterious disdain and tries to convince Ray not to ask Hancock to stay for dinner. Ray gets his way, however, and Hancock accepts the invite.

After dinner Ray comes up with an outlandish public relations move that Hancock should give himself over to the authorities who are clamoring for him to go to jail (because of all the damage his heroics have done to the city) and sit behind bars until the crime rate becomes so chaotic that the citizens and the city council will be begging for his release.

After some thought on the matter, Hancock accepts Ray’s proposal and the ensuing prison scenes are both funny and smartly written.

Ray’s idea pays off and before we know it LA is a crime filled mess again. The chief of police asks for Hancock’s help with a bank robbery involving hostages and a new-and-improved (if only moderately more behaved) Hancock comes to the rescue, donning a super-hero-type navy blue and yellow outfit, something akin to what Wolverine of the “X-Men” comic books might wear.

After a sequence in which Hancock shows off his new politically correct attitude while saving an injured policewoman and apprehending all the crooks, he utters his catch phrase to the main crook, (which I can’t repeat here), and the movie takes an intriguing twist which may or may not catch the viewer off guard depending on how perceptive you might be. As per my norm, I won’t disclose those details as this is a film I am recommending to you all, if for nothing else than a lot of laughs and a few touching moments.

The performances are good, considering the genre. And the eye candy, to include the lovely Ms. Theron, is enough to keep action seekers interested in the film for the full 92 minutes.

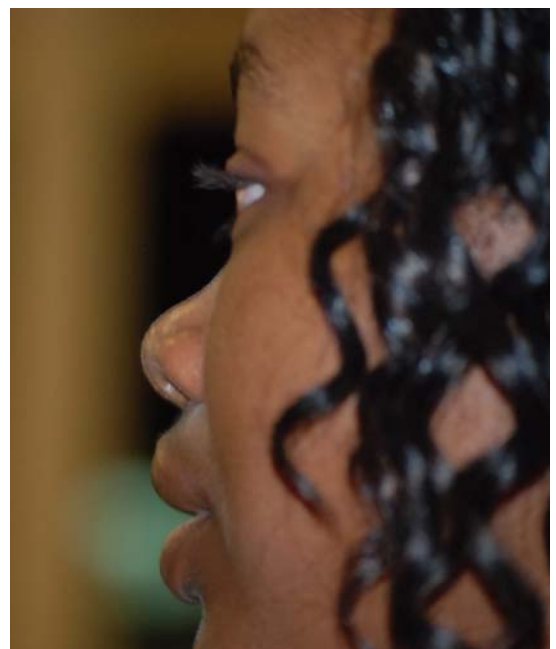
Though it is certain Hancock’s longevity will not live up to the hype or garner the status of a film like “Dark Knight,” it is still a film worth watching even if you are not a super-hero / comic book movie fan. Additionally, it is safe to say Smith can add Hancock’s signature to his long list of 4th of July blockbusters. Moreover, when the film is released on DVD, I will be adding it to my personal collection, gladly signing my “John Hancock” on the credit receipt.

The film asks each of us to never judge a book by its cover and always give people the benefit of the doubt or the chance to redeem themselves. In turn, I have no problem giving Hancock one rocker and three chevrons, a very amicable rating.

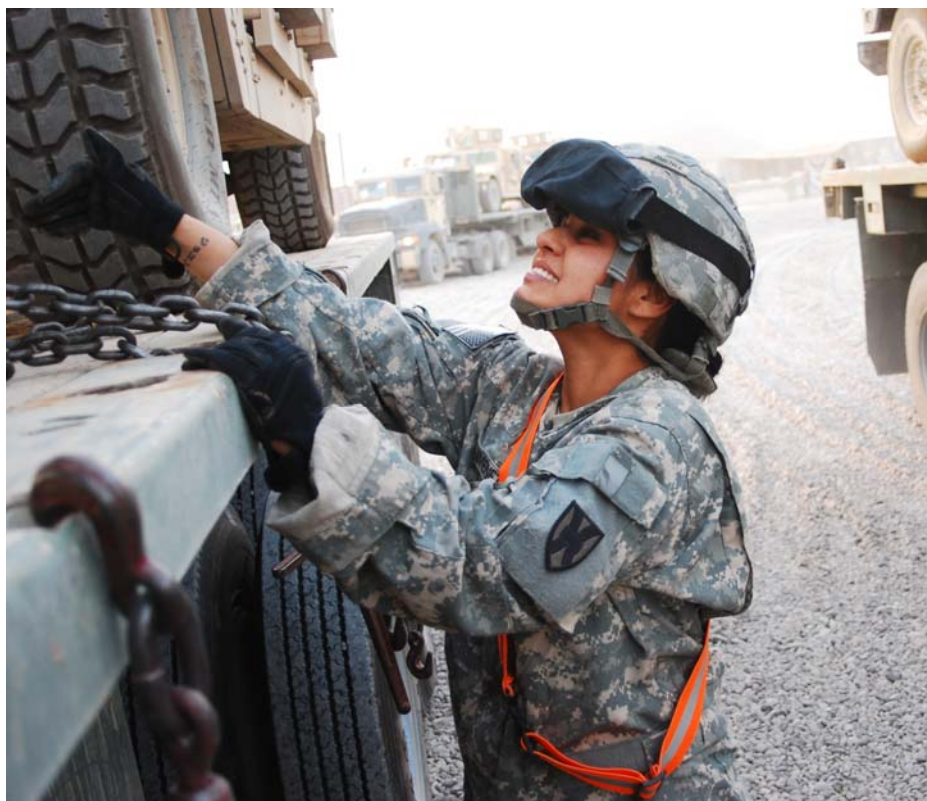
If you would like me to consider a movie for future review or to give feedback on this film or this film’s review, feel free to email me at mndb_pao@yahoo.com.

STF

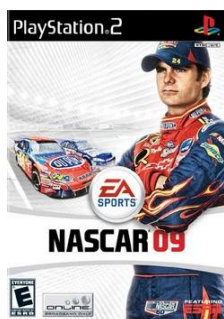
SOLDIERS OF THE BRIGADE







Review



PlayStation 2

NASCAR 09

Competition tightens in 'Chase for the Cup'

*By Sgt. Jason Thompson
MND-B PAO*



Games

After seven and a half months of walking and driving tactically, I felt it was a great opportunity to now send everyone spinning through a whirlwind of fast cars with "NASCAR 09."

"NASCAR 09" is EA Sports' 12th installment in the popular racing series dating back to 1997 and there's no question that with all of the new features, "NASCAR 09" is an improvement over all previous versions.

The game play hasn't changed much from previous editions, but better presentation, the ability to completely customize your ride, and other minor enhancements make this a game that should please most fans of the sport.

Jeff Gordon's involvement can be seen consistently throughout the game; he's not just the guy on the cover.

What makes his involvement unique is that Gordon essentially acts as your crew chief through the entire game helping navigate through all of the different stages that a driver must take to reach the winner's podium. Although Gordon will forever be the last person I'll cheer for on race days, the onscreen addition of the four-time champ improves the presentation and results in a better overall experience.

Although some may prefer to get right down to racing with the Race Now mode, many will be intrigued by the improved Career mode. After you set up your new driver information, it's off to the garage to explore the robust new customization options. You start by selecting and designing your own number, and then lay down a base color for the body of your car. Racing



stripes, waves, flames, and sponsorship decals are just some of the graphics that you can use to pimp your ride.

As if that weren't enough, you can design your own graphics in an image-editing program (such as Photoshop) and upload them to your console where they will then be available for use in the game. For myself, I am currently competing against the field in a classic '77 'Bandit' Trans Am.

This impressive depth of customization makes "NASCAR 09" a much more engaging experience than any of the previous versions.

Upon completing the design of your car, you'll be asked to sign with a sponsor followed by signing with your new team. Then, it's off to the track to begin your climb towards the top of the NASCAR world.

Before each race, you can tinker with every aspect of your car's suspension, aerodynamics, tires, drive train, and even weight distribution if desired. For those of you who aren't full-time mechanics, you have the option of choosing between a basic rookie setup and a veteran setup, which immensely simplifies the process of setting up your car.

Nevertheless, you probably won't have to mess with your car's setup if you're playing on rookie or veteran levels. Qualifying for a race is uninteresting and >>



»» too easy on either setting. It's possible to drive through the grass or even scrape the walls and yet still grab the pole. Obviously, the first position is desirable to any driver, but starting first often feels like you're racing the track alone because you rarely ever see any other cars. In fact, the hardest part of winning a race may be staying awake for the remaining laps after you've taken the lead.

Fortunately, if you find the competition lacking on rookie and veteran settings, you can step it up another notch to legend difficulty. This makes qualifying and finishing first much more challenging and rewarding when it's accomplished. If you start the race toward the back, it may take you 50 laps just to get up front.

You may have to work a bit to find the settings that fit for you, but "NASCAR 09" definitely provides a better combination of difficulty levels to fit each gamers' abilities.

Additionally, "NASCAR 09" offers two different driving styles: normal and pro.

Normal is the easier of the two styles, in that it lets you be a little less precise when taking turns. Conversely, the pro driving style requires a more experienced driver with steadier hands to be successful.

To master the driving controls, it certainly takes some precision behind the wheel at first. The slightest wrong move and you'll slam into the wall if you're not quick enough to correct.

To master the driving controls, it certainly takes some precision behind the wheel at first. The slightest wrong move and you'll slam into the wall if you're not quick enough to correct.

I definitely recommend a compatible steering wheel for your consol for achieving the best feel of the track.

Despite the sensitivity of the controls, they're accurate. When racing at almost 200mph, the stakes are high and your every turn must be precise, and the controls reflect this. However, it's really not that

difficult to remain on the road and become the pack leader once you've adjusted to the game.

Overall, the computer AI is not as aggressive as with some of the previous editions. Drivers will still attempt to fight for position, but it's nothing like some of the road rage incidents I've witnessed in earlier modules.

NASCAR 09's graphics are adequate but the crashes could use some work. The problem is that you rarely get huge collisions that result in cars flipping end over end. Most crashes result in one driver bumping another and spinning out of control until the yellow flag comes out. It's more realistic that huge crashes don't happen that often, but it would no doubt add to the excitement of the game.

I give NASCAR 09 4 smoking tires out of 5.

The graphics aren't stellar, but they still look pretty good considering the number of cars onscreen at any given time. All of the tracks are the same from a year ago and look nice, but it's difficult to notice any major graphical flaws when you're consistently driving more than 170 mph.

The sounds within NASCAR 09 are, as always, a great complement to the game. The noise from the crowds and the engines sounds lifelike throughout the game. Additionally, the spotter does a solid job of helping you navigate through the field by consistently letting you know if there's an opposing driver running down low or up high.

I do not believe EA Sports will ever be able to provide the same level of excitement in their NASCAR series as the real sport (you just can't duplicate the atmosphere associated with a race weekend). Regardless, this game is at the least an improvement over last year's game in nearly every way.

If you're willing to spend the time adjusting some of the settings, you'll find NASCAR 09 to be a fun and challenging game.

I give NASCAR 09 4 smoking tires out of 5.





Bulk fuel farm on the Victory Base Complex

Commander's Intent

Story by Spc. Andrea Merritt

Rosalyn Carter, wife of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, once said, "A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."

For Lt. Col. Gregory Koller, a Mobile, Ala., native, and commander of the 553d Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, a true test of his leadership abilities came when he had to prepare his unit for not only one, but two mission sets that it would take on during a scheduled 15-month rotation in Iraq.

After commanding a company in the 703d Maintenance Support Battalion, 3d Infantry Division, in Kitzingen, Germany, Koller stepped into position as battalion commander for the 553d CSSB in June 2007.

"I was taking over a battalion of 1,090 people; six companies. I was looking forward to taking over and providing the necessary guidance, direction, and leadership for a great organization that had just returned

from an OIF rotation and preparing the unit to come back out. I knew good and well that I didn't have too long before that was going to happen," said Koller.

Since the Battalion had recently come off of a deployment when Koller took over, the unit was undergoing personnel changes, which meant that all the new officers, noncommissioned officers, and Soldiers were going to need training.

Koller decided to conduct the training in an environment that best mimicked the conditions of Iraq. He took his troops from Fort Hood, Texas, to the deserts of Fort Irwin, Calif., for a 45-day rotation at the National Training Center, where he was stationed from 2003 to 2004.

"Having recently been an Observer/Controller for the National Training Center, I reached out to the NTC and was able to obtain permission to go on a rotation in support of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. I took the Battalion out there and trained on everything that we would potentially have to do once we

arrived (to Iraq)," Koller stated.

While at NTC, the Soldiers of the 553d CSSB focused their training on supply, commodity, management, and maintenance. They also conducted missions to transport and distribute different classes of supplies to simulated forward operating bases at NTC.

"I took the Battalion out there and trained on everything that we would potentially have to do once we arrived (to Iraq),"

When the Battalion arrived to Camp Liberty, Iraq, in April 2007, the unit was fully prepared to take over the mission left to them by the 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, a Fort Carson, Colo., unit.

Since the transition, the 553d CSSB successfully operates the Liberty Ammunition Supply Point, Bulk Fuel Farm, Class I Point, Central Receiving and Shipping Point, Arrival / Departure Airfield Control Group, and has Shower, Laundry, and Clothing Renovation sites in nine different locations.

"In the last four months the >>



Lt. Col. Koller in Kuwait

» 553d CSSB has issued 3.3 million cases of bottled water, 55,000 cases of Meals Ready to Eat and Halal meals, 39 million gallons of fuel, and managed and issued out two million rounds of ammunition,” said Koller.

The Battalion has also receipted and shipped 34,000 pieces of equipment by ground and almost 1,300 pieces by air, which equates to keeping approximately 800 trucks and Soldiers off the roads.

Although the 553d CSSB has performed their base support mission successfully, the Battalion won't be able to stay comfortable in its current mission set because it is scheduled for another transition.

In September, the 553d CSSB is scheduled to transition its current mission to the 398th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and take over the mission of the 168th Brigade Support Battalion, a Fort Sill, Okla., unit.

Unlike the mission it has now, the 553d CSSB will take over operating a multi-class Supply Support Activity and conduct direct-support maintenance operations.

The 553d CSSB will also conduct a lot of missions that require them to travel outside the wire and distribute all



Relocating a shower tent

classes of supplies and equipment to about 80,000 Soldiers throughout Multi-National Division – Baghdad and Multi-National Division – Center.

Even though the Battalion's mission is set to change, their mentality of providing support to the Warfighters throughout MND – B and MND – C hasn't.

“Both missions play a vital role to providing what the Warfighter needs to do his job,” said Maj. Darcy Manion, an Inyokern, Calif.,

native, and the executive officer for the 553d CSSB.

“Although we are picking up a different set of responsibilities, our mission and our focus remains the same – provide support to Soldiers throughout central Iraq,” Manion added.

Considering the fact that the 553d CSSB will transition twice during a single rotation and carry out two different missions, the Battalion will be able to say that it has worked twice as hard as any other support battalion in Iraq.

With the training accomplished through the leadership and guidance of the Battalion commander, the Soldiers are equipped and ready to take on the missions given to them.

“I enjoy working with people and being in a leadership position affords me the opportunity to influence folks, hopefully always for the positive, to make them better and that gives me a lot of satisfaction,” Koller said.

“I try to coach, teach and mentor them on the right path and I really enjoy watching them grow up and get promoted and become the next leaders of our Army,” Koller concluded. **STF**



Loading a mail container at the A / DACG

» From page 5

ground all coming together on the ground and that...level of team work and professionalism, that camaraderie; and I don't think you get that anywhere else, maybe you do, but I'm sold on the Army. After that I never considered leaving and I don't regret it," continued Heussner.

Deploying to Iraq was another means to an end for Heussner. It was a way for him to get the training and resources his Soldiers needed and deserved. It was a way to build a world class Brigade Support Battalion. So he hopped on a plane and flew to see the force provider at FORSCOM, and did the unthinkable; he asked for a deployment.

"I flew there and said 'Hey I need a mission.' The FORSCOM force provider said 'We don't have a mission for a BSB.'" This didn't deter him however, he looked at the list of un-resourced requirements and said "Look, I have a headquarters, I have distribution and maintenance companies; you have all three of these needs, why don't you...deploy me and I'll take care of those for you?" After his meeting in Atlanta he picked up the phone and called his wife and said "Hey, they're happy to see me they think they have a mission and she said 'Sure they're happy to see you they want to see what stupid looks like. You went there and volunteered for a mission.'"

In September he and his wife Linda will celebrate their fifteen year wedding anniversary. They have three children; Emma is 12, Henderson is 10, and Jeb is 7. "They're just super kids. I mean, I wish I could take credit for them my wife has done all the hard work and they're just great kids. They're fun to be around," said Heussner. "I'm very proud of who they are and what they are; there just tremendous kids. And she's a single mother raising three kids. And then she finds time to help other people, she runs the Family Readiness Group and does just a tremendous job of taking care of people at the expense of herself. I couldn't be prouder of what she's

done and what our Families have done...just tremendous."

Once in Iraq the goal was to provide the best service and support and to build the 168th BSB into the Army's best. They would do this through the use of two of his other favorite words; aggressive and offensive.

"By offensive we don't mean we go around aggravating people," states Heussner. "We mean pushing support, pushing supplies, pushing all of our capabilities forward." It's his belief that if you anticipate the needs of the war fighter and push their stuff forward, ahead of time, they'll never have to look back and wonder where their supplies are. As a result his team spends a lot of time trying to think through the needs of their customers and have the supplies ready to go.

They've done this in a number of ways. They led the charge in linking contracted security with the Iraqi Truck Company Drivers; keeping Soldiers off the road. They push out mobile maintenance teams to repair equipment in other people's motor pools. Their Combat Service Support Automation Office doesn't make the units tear down their Standard Army Management Information Systems

and bring it to them, the 168th Soldiers go to the customers office to fix it where it sits. And if they can't fix it they'll give them another and take it back to their office so they're never out of business. "It's about pushing our capabilities forward. We don't want to just sit in an office and wait for someone to come to us; that's reactive support...we want to be aggressive and proactive about it," states Heussner.

The results speak for themselves. As a result of the offensive logistics mindset the Soldiers of the 168th were able to accomplish 2,500 maintenance jobs in a month. Their next nearest competitor does about 400. On top of that; all of those jobs were completed with no jobs reaching over 30 days. "Because we are aggressive and offensive about going and finding the parts that we need. If we can't find it we'll make it. If we can't make it, we'll go to the junk yard and we'll get it. There are a number of ways that you can go and solve problems. At the end of the day it's about making it happen not hoping it happens," continued Heussner.

In addition to world class support Heussner wants to develop world class officers, NCOs and Soldiers.

In order to enable his officers »»



Picking up supplies at the SSA



Fireman's carry

» to be successful, Heussner trains them to be multi-functional. "We used to be very specialized and compartmentalized. We've gone away from that specialization to more generalization," states Heussner. In his mind, his people need to understand the whole thing. So initially he assigned junior officers to their respective branch specialty positions. Then as they became proficient and successful, he swapped them out and assigned them to a different focus area or position. This way if they had a supply job at first he would move them around so they could work a maintenance job or a transportation job. He believes the pace of operations

is so fast, that they gain years of experience in months in Iraq. "When they're company commanders, and that's really what I'm focused on producing, they're going to be miles ahead of their contemporaries. "At the end of the day it comes down to investing in people and the courage and conviction to follow what is right because there are a lot of people along the way who will try to convince you that you're not right and you need to do something else. You've got to have the strength of character and courage," said Heussner. He believes that in the face of opposition you've got to have the character and courage to move toward what is right; and that there are people who try to sway you one way or the other. "You've got to be resolved to move toward the objective, and as long as you have people's best interests at heart, and the mission as your primary focus, I don't think you can go wrong."

Heussner is very proud of his Soldiers and wants to finish the mission aggressively and go home. After 19 years of Army life he looks forward to spending quality time with his Family. He will miss the team he assembled as he realizes half of them will go their own way once they arrive in Fort Sill. But he realizes that these Soldiers will go into the Army and preach the aggressive, offensive message called "Make it Happen!" **STF**



Trucks are ready to roll out at the Iraqi Truck Company

» From page 3

The driving guide of the Battalion was the Commander's offensive support philosophy and the vision of becoming the best support battalion. Sure, it was hard to accept at the beginning, especially with the lack of personnel and equipment, but the Soldiers did not lack the fortitude to overcome challenges and do their best. Energy, attitude, and enthusiasm were abundant, especially with a personal desire to excel at their given mission.

It is important to recognize excellence, but how you do this when it is everywhere and your strength is nearly 1000 personnel. "Heroes of the week" is our program. Every company has one Soldier being recognized for their outstanding efforts every week. Thru those Soldiers we symbolically recognized the hard work being performed by all Soldiers in the Battalion. Of course we continue with our Soldier / NCO of the Quarter boards, and when you have great achievers it is not hard to win those competitions from our higher headquarters either.

"Get comfortable being uncomfortable"; if your leaders and Soldiers reach this temple, there is nothing they will not achieve. It is not about the weather or the work hours, it is about doing the extra or additional task that, although thought to be insignificant, is the task that will develop our leaders and Soldiers the most. Going the extra mile, reading and discussing a book with your peers, instead of going to your tent to watch a movie, are valuable traits for your Soldiers to obtain. Pushing support to our customers instead of waiting for them at our shops; listening to the innovative ideas of our Soldiers and executing them; giving them room and the ability to make mistakes and to learn from them; that was our success; that is what cultivated the excellent spirit in our Soldiers and that is how they "Made it Happen."

STF



Chaplain's Thoughts

Chaplain Terrence E. Hayes, Brigade Chaplain



Muhlbach prays for his Soldiers before their shift

NATIONAL GUARD CHAPLAIN SERVES IN IRAQ

By Maj. Terrence Hayes

How does a Lutheran pastor from Indiana end up in Iraq as an Army chaplain? Just ask Craig Muhlbach. Listening to his accent you might detect he's from back east. He was actually born in Jamaica Queens, N.Y., in 1960. He spent five years in the U.S. Coast Guard as an aviation electrician, and then attended Concordia University, Bronxville, N.Y., followed by a Masters in Divinity at Concordia Seminary St. Louis, Mo., in 1992. Feeling a call to the pastorate, he was ordained that year and moved to Faith Lutheran Church in Tracy, Minn., during which time he entered the Army Reserves as a chaplain. He also served Lutheran parishes in

Neb., and presently pastors St. John Lutheran Church in Seymour, Ind. Moving to Indiana put him in the Indiana National Guard and when his unit mobilized for Iraq he went with them.

His church back home was founded in 1836 and the membership runs around 670. They also have a Christian school with classes from preschool through eighth grade. When he joined the Guard the church had mixed emotions; not everybody was happy, but the majority supported the mission to Iraq. Other Lutheran churches in the area got behind the pastor; mobilized and provided prayer, and filled vacancies where needed until a more permanent solution could be found while he was in Iraq. Presently the church has a Vicar and oversight is provided by a sister congregation. The church has made some sacrifices

to give up their pastor for a year and Chaplain Muhlbach knows it. There are many churches across the U.S. whose pastors are serving as military chaplains with their Reserve and Guard units.

His Family includes his wife Erika and three boys. They communicate regularly through phone and e-mail. "That link has kept the Family going," said Muhlbach. "The support of my church and community has been a great comfort also."

His mission is with the 1st Squadron, 152 Cavalry Regiment. He provides religious support to the headquarters and two additional companies attached to the 1-152nd from the Arkansas National Guard. The squadron is responsible for the Area Defense Operation Center and base security at Camp Taji, Iraq. Muhlbach stays busy with counseling, classes, worship, and bible studies and well as interacting with other chaplains. **STF**



Muhlbach visits a guard tower

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Soldiers perform their missions to success and thus knowing that you are successful, because your Soldiers are successful. Having the gratitude to know that you have trained them well, provided them the opportunity to excel, resourced them well, and overall taken care of them so that they can succeed. I have always been amazed at how Soldiers perform their missions, maintain overall positive attitudes, continue to serve their country, and in the end do this on a daily basis. They never cease to amaze me on their performance, which is the most rewarding thing about being a commander.

I understand your squadron reorganized from an infantry battalion to a cavalry squadron. How difficult was that for you as a commander and for your troops? At the beginning it appeared to be a daunting task that just didn't seem possible to meet all of the challenges that were ahead of us to transform, conduct NET training on our new equipment, and prepare the unit to go to war all in about eight months. But looking back on it now, even though there were many long, hard days we had to deal with, it was accomplished because of the hard work of everyone within the unit. We had good plans, positive attitudes that were focused on the mission before us, and we utilized all of our resources and TIME to make it happen. Once again, I am amazed at our unit's performance over the past year to accomplish what we did in such a short period of time and proud of what we did, because I did not expect anything less.

And then you rolled into a mobilization? What was it like to do a reorganization and a mobilization piece in such a short time frame? Again, it is the same that I said before. Everyone worked extremely hard to identify the requirements, put the resources against the requirements, attempted to maximize good use of the limited time that we had to accomplish the missions before us, and even stayed



Lt. Col. Robert Burke at the firing range with his Soldiers

focused on maximizing the Family life for the Soldiers as best possible prior to our mobilization. It was not easy to do all of this, but we did it with hard work, professionalism, and teamwork.

And how did the squadron's mobilization go at Fort Stewart?

The mobilization at Ft. Stewart started out extremely rough for the Squadron due to the short timeline that we had to operate on as we rolled into collective training within 72 hours of hitting the ground. And on top of that the training started with gunnery, which was the most demanding task for our Soldiers to do well on with very little time to prepare. But as I expected, they performed magnificently and we made it through a tough, realistic, demanding war fighting training exercise that prepared us well for our deployment to Iraq. There were daily obstacles to contend with, but junior leaders at all levels made great decisions, and were able to execute the training very well. I was extremely proud of how the training went, and grateful that we did not have to contend with the extreme weather of Indiana during the months of January and February. We were fortunate to be able to train in a more mild environment like Georgia and grateful that we had that opportunity, which allowed us to get more out of the training, that overall, was excellent

and well supported by the 1st Army trainers.

How do you deal with time away from your Family and how does your civilian job handle you being gone?

I stay in constant contact with the Family through the mail, phone, and internet. I have a great support channel back home that keeps me up on everything and that makes it easier being so far away from the ones you love the most. A daily picture of the kids, an email from a friend, and a phone call to the love of my life makes each day bearable. It is just so important to have a stable life back home, and support of the Family and work makes it much easier to stay focused on the mission at hand and be able to accomplish our daily requirements here in Iraq. My employer has always been a huge supporter of the military and it is comforting to know that my fellow troopers and employer are my number one fan club. There are many state police officers from Indiana that have deployed over the past five years and our department has always been there for both us and our Families and I could not be more grateful for their support. I have the best of both worlds with two great employers: the Indiana State Police and the United States Army.

STF

SGT Jose Ulloa

515th Transportation Company

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN



Rest in Peace

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