

November 2006

Vol. I, Issue III

the STATIC LINE

**Joint patrols increase
security; Iraqi forces
successful throughout
Salah ad Din**





the **STATIC LINE**



Veteran's Day Message from the Commander

Every Veteran's Day Americans from all walks of life remember our men and women in the Armed Forces who made or are making great sacrifices on behalf of their country. As the commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division, I am humbled every day by the courage and determination of the men and women under my command. Despite the many adversities they face, they stand ready to defend freedom and our way of life.

After the Revolutionary War, President George

Washington said, "We owe these veterans a debt of gratitude, indeed a debt of honor." The challenges we face today are daunting as those faced by our forefathers at Lexington and Concord.

In 1776 many doubted the wisdom of fighting the British. They doubted whether freedom from oppression was worth the costs of war. The outcome of history has taught us the sacrifice made by those who stood their ground at Yorktown was not in vain. The freedoms for which they fought during those times of uncertainty are still relevant and worth fighting for today.

Throughout the Global War on Terrorism, the price of freedom has not been cheap; our sacrifices have been many. Since we arrived to Iraq in August, four of our Paratroopers have paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their country – Paratroopers who lost their lives making Iraq a better and safer place for its people. They believed in making Iraq a country free of violence and tyranny, and their sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Today is not only a day to remember our veterans and service members. It is also a day to remember and honor their families. For families who have lost loved ones here, everyday is Veteran's Day. They have paid a heavy price for the cause of freedom and to them belongs the knowledge and pride that their loved ones died as heroes. Our fallen heroes will never be forgotten. The sacrifices our families have made since 9/11 have been incredible, and they deserve not only our thanks but the gratitude of the entire nation.

Historians have often said those who fought in World War II were a part of the greatest generation. I have always stood in awe of the veterans from the 82nd Airborne Division who jumped into Normandy and Holland. They not only liberated a continent, but also changed the course of history in Europe. Today when I look into the eyes of the men and women with whom I serve, I am unshaken in my certainty that they are the best and the greatest our generation has to offer. They, like their forefathers in every other American war, carry the torch lit at Lexington-Concord. They proudly represent the best values of every American Soldier who fought in the Revolutionary War to Desert Storm.

These young men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan are risking their lives for nations and a world in dire need of dedication and sacrifice one can only find in a Soldier of the U.S. military. Keep our Soldiers in your thoughts and prayers, as every one of you are in theirs.

H-minus!!! All the Way!!!

Col. Bryan Owens "Panther 6"

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the Static Line welcomes columns, commentaries, articles, and photographs from our readers. Send submissions to Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden at crdn.carden@us.army.mil. We reserve the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity, and space

Paratroopers, Iraqi soldiers put dent in homemade bomb production

Spc. Joshua R. Ford
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE
BRASSFIELD-MORA, Iraq (October 21, 2006)—Iraqi army soldiers discovered multiple weapons caches during joint-patrols with Paratroopers from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Oct. 21-22 in a village north of Samarra, Iraq.

Iraqi army soldiers from 2nd Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, were patrolling fields outside of the village when they came across five 130mm artillery rounds hidden in a hole. The Iraqis reported the find to their Paratrooper counterparts, which lead to a second, more thorough search of the area.

One cache after another — each containing an assortment of munitions — was discovered throughout the countryside surrounding the village, said Capt. Brian Roeder, Company D commander.

The weapons caches included 60mm and 80mm mortar rounds, 130mm and 155mm artillery rounds, grenades and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

Spc. Joshua T. Pervis, infantryman, Company D, described the cache sites as a “Toys R’ Us” for terrorists.

Additionally, four of the 155mm mortar rounds were found rigged to explosives and ready for emplacement and detonation.

Approximately 240 mortar rounds were found during the searches, leading Sgt. 1st Class Miguel Antonio Ramirez, 4th platoon sergeant, and his troops to believe that they have put a significant dent in the production of improvised-explosive devices in that area.

After finding the surplus of weaponry, the troops questioned nearby villagers, which led to the detainment of three individuals, including one bomb maker.

Credit to the detainment of the bomb maker belongs to his own brother, an Iraqi soldier who serves with 2nd Company.

The Iraqi soldier informed the Paratroopers of his crooked brother’s profession as a bomb maker.

Success in Samarra

With the aide of their Iraqi army counterparts, the Paratroopers of Company D are charged with being the most successful company within the 3rd Brigade Combat Team in terms of numbers of insurgents and munitions seized, said Ramirez.

Being the smallest company in the battalion, Roeder says it feels good to be producing the greatest results.

“We have had success as a company. We went beyond catching the trigger man and going straight to the source. These guys are going to have a hard time replacing the rounds we pulled,” said Roeder.

Ramirez added that if it were not for the intelligence received from the Iraqi Forces, discovery of munitions caches and the detainment of suspected insurgents would be more difficult.

When Roeder and his men first arrived to support joint-combat operations in the Salah ad Din Province, he noticed that the Iraqi forces had little to no motivation to do their job and complete their mission.

However, over the past two months drastic improvements have been made in the way the Iraqi army is handling combat operations in their sector, said 1st Lt. Zachary Kaye, platoon leader.

“They’re definitely starting to hold their own in this area,” said Kaye. “You see them actively patrolling at least two to three times a day; they’re setting up check points on their own; they’re getting information from the local population on improvised-explosive device positions and information on the location of suspected insurgents.”

“I have a feeling that it won’t be long before the Iraqi army assumes full responsibility of the area between Samarra and Tikrit,” said Ramirez.



Photo by Spc. Joshua R. Ford/ 3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

An Iraqi soldier with the 2nd Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, places mortar rounds in an explosive-ordnance disposal truck after finding a weapons cache during a joint-patrol with Company D, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, north of Samarra, Iraq.

Iraqis lead reconnaissance mission to build trust

Sgt. Michael Tuttle
5th MPAD

Forward Operating Base Summerall, Iraq (October 27, 2006) — An Iraqi platoon led a reconnaissance mission Oct. 27 into the city of Suniyah, about 150 miles north of Baghdad.

While the early part of the mission was spent searching for weapons caches, the bulk of the time was utilized walking the city streets and talking to the locals.

“We asked the people about their problems, what they needed and what their daily lives are like in Suniyah,” said Sgt. Ajad Rawi, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, through an interpreter. “They said that they were happy to see us there because they felt more secure. They also said that because of our missions, there are fewer weapons in the city.”

Making the efforts to understand the locals and helping the locals understand what the Iraqis are trying to accomplish is an important part of their emergence as a self-sufficient security force here.

“Gauging the mood of the citizens will gain their trust and help in the development of future operations,” said Capt. Mark Tomola, operations officer for the Military Transition Team that supported the Iraqi Army platoon on the mission.

The Iraqi soldiers have been working with the MITT, from the 82nd Airborne Division’s 1st Bn., 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, for two months. The MITT advises the Iraqi battalion on the planning process and brings assets to the fight if necessary.

Tomola said that he has seen a lot of improvement over



Photo by Sgt. Michael Tuttle/ 5th MPAD

Soldiers from the 4th Iraqi Army Battalion greet Suniyah citizens Oct. 27 before speaking with them about daily life in the city.

those two months.

“They have gotten better at planning and using their intelligence to drive their planning,” Tomola said. “Today the Iraqi leader took charge of the element and asked the locals the questions he needed to have answered.”

There has also been a big difference in the reaction

of the locals to the Iraqi-led operations.

“When the Americans wave during patrols, the kids may wave back, but not the others. When the (Iraqi soldiers) waves, all of the people wave back,” Tomola said. “What’s a big deal is that they trust the Iraqi Army.”

Iraqi Army brigade receives new trucks to guard infrastructure

Sgt. Michael Tuttle
5th MPAD

Forward Operating Base Summerall, Iraq (October 27, 2006) An Iraqi army brigade received 25 new pickup trucks and two fuel tankers from an 82nd Airborne Division unit Oct. 28, enabling them to better protect the infrastructure here.

The 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment provided Bayji’s Strategic Infrastructure Brigade with \$1 million worth of vehicles to be distributed among the brigade’s six battalions.

Today is a huge step in the progress of the Iraqi army as they continue to take the lead in the country’s security, said Lt. Col. Scott Harris, battalion commander. Providing the SIB with the 25 four-ton

Chevrolet Silverados and two fuel tankers will allow them to better accomplish their missions throughout our area of operations. They guard oil pipelines, power lines and roads which are main avenues of approach where tankers travel long distances.

The SIB’s Iraqi soldiers arrived at Forward Operating Base Summerall early eager to check out their new trucks and wipe them down after an early morning rain.

“The vehicles are going to help our soldiers move in every mission and to every location,” said SIB commander Col. Hallaf, through an interpreter. The trucks will give the SIB the slotted number of vehicles they are supposed to have to accomplish their mission.

The city of Bayji, about 150 miles

north of Baghdad, is one of the most strategic cities in the Salah ad Din Province, according to Harris. It has the largest oil refinery in Iraq and produces enough gas to fulfill 70 percent of Iraq’s domestic product.

Bayji also provides about 50 percent of Iraq’s electricity, including about 60 percent of Baghdad’s electricity alone, Harris said.

“The key to success is ensuring that criminals don’t tap into those lines, steal the oil and don’t sabotage electricity,” Harris said. He expects the SIB to take the vehicles and put them to good use by stepping the security level up another notch.

Harris estimates that cutting out oil corruption in the area will gain \$6 billion for the people of Bayji.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

Staff Sgt. Jason W. Walker (right) and Spc. Dustin Hardy (left), Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, search the property of an insurgent's home with Iraqi army soldiers during Operation Portland Oct. 28 in Abu Ajil, Iraq, just east of Tikrit.

Iraqi soldiers and U.S. Paratroopers conduct joint operation near Tikrit

Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

ABU AJIL, Iraq (Oct. 28, 2006) – The Iraqi soldiers and U.S. Paratroopers passed the afternoon hours before their mission double-checking radios and performing last-minute inspections of their vehicles and weapons. Despite the language barrier and cultural differences, they shared conversations accentuated with cigarette smoke and laughter.

Soon, the cheerful mood would shift to serious and mission-focused. The sun would set, and the illumination of the quarter-moon would be all that was left of light in the town of Abu Ajil.

The rural farming area is about 2.5 miles, or 4 kilometers, east of Tikrit, and was the setting for Operation Portland, a joint-cordon and search mission with Iraqi soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division,

and Paratroopers from Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Oct. 28.

The target was an insurgent cell responsible for numerous indirect fire and roadside bomb attacks against U.S. and Iraqi forces throughout Tikrit and its surrounding villages and towns. At least six houses were suspected of harboring the insurgents. Several times during the pressing hours until the mission, voices called out, "FRAGO!," which is a military acronym short for fragmentary order, basically meaning there is a change to the mission.

This could happen for many reasons. There could be a change in the location of the target, how many or which homes are going to be searched, the route that will be driven, or the time the mission will begin, said 1st Lt. Brett Popp, 3rd Platoon leader, Battery A.

The troops had to re-group and make sure everyone in every platoon and squad – including the Iraqi soldiers – knew what adjustments to make because additional houses were added to the search list.

"Things are never going to go as planned," Popp said. "Sometimes we receive new intelligence on a mission up until the moment we roll out the gate, but we've done a great job making last-minute adjustments and not letting those changes get in the way of accomplishing our mission."

Just after 9 p.m., the more than 20-vehicle convoy, staggered with Iraqi army pickup trucks and U.S. humvees, left the gate of Saddam Hussein's "Birthday Palace" – now an Iraqi army base – in Tikrit en route for their targets.

The convoy began splitting up once it reached the village. Each Iraqi platoon

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PORTLAND

and its U.S. counterpart were responsible for cordon and searches of their own objectives.

The troops dismounted their vehicles in a frenzy as they rushed the gates and doors of each home. The women and children were quickly asked to separate from the men, and all were questioned. Some troops searched rooms and property while others pulled security.

Iraqi soldiers explained to the women why their men were being questioned. Some of the women wept with fear of their husband or son being taken away to a coalition detainment facility.

Only two men were detained, but both were positively identified as individuals the troops were searching for, Popp said.

“Any insurgent we can get off the streets makes a difference,” said Staff Sgt. Jason W. Walker, 3rd Squad Leader, Battery A.

The mission was a success in all aspects, not only because of the captured insurgents, but because of the level of competence the Iraqi soldiers are showing, Walker said.

When the Paratroopers of Battery A arrived to Tikrit in August, the Iraqi soldiers didn’t grasp the complexity of conducting military operations.

“They didn’t understand pulling security or segregating the men and women,” Walker continued, “but now they’re even starting to use hand-and-arm signals they developed on their own.”

“They’ve come a long way since we first started working with them,” Walker said.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO
1st Sgt. Jeffery Vollmer, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, pulls security while his fellow troopers and Iraqi counterparts search an insurgent’s home Oct. 28 in Abu Ajil, Iraq.



Spc. Dustin Hardy, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, pulls security while his fellow troopers and Iraqi counterparts search an insurgent’s home Oct. 28 in Abu Ajil, Iraq, just east of Tikrit.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

Above photo: Iraqi army Soldiers and Paratroopers from Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, discuss their findings at an insurgent's home during Operation Portland Oct. 28 in Abu Ajil, Iraq, just east of Tikrit.

Left photo: Spc. Dustin Hardy, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, searches the property of an insurgent's home during Operation Portland Oct. 28 in Abu Ajil, Iraq, just east of Tikrit.

Bottom photo: An Iraqi army soldier listens to a mission brief given by his coalition counterparts from Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, just before kicking off Operation Portland Oct. 28 near Tikrit, Iraq.



Vines awards Paratroopers for valor, injuries during ceremony in Iraq

Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

CONTINGENCY
OPERATIONS BASE
SPEICHER, Iraq (Oct. 22, 2006) – Commander of the 18th Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg, N.C., Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, recognized two “exceptional warriors” during an awards ceremony Oct. 22 at COB Speicher, Iraq.

Sgt. Aaron George, infantryman, and Spc. Justin Saint-Jacques, medic, both with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, were awarded the Purple Heart for injuries received during an attack on their mounted patrol Oct. 2 in the Market Street district of Tikrit, Iraq.

Saint-Jacques, a native of San Antonio, Texas, was also awarded the Army Commendation Medal with “V” device for valor as well as the Combat Medic Badge.

“I love to promote Soldiers,” Vines said to a foyer-filled group of Paratroopers at the 3rd Brigade Combat Team headquarters, “but more than that, I love awarding exceptional warriors for distinguishing themselves in combat.”

Saint-Jacques and George’s vehicle was stopped at an intersection pulling security for other vehicles in the patrol when the passenger side was struck by what they called an anti-tank missile, said George, who received burns to his right leg and lacerations to his face and hands.

Amid a second missile strike and a ruptured, bleeding eardrum, Saint-Jacques knew



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

Lt. Gen. John R. Vines (left), commander, Fort Bragg, N.C., and the 18th Airborne Corps; presented Spc. Justin Saint-Jacques, medic, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, with the Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal with “V” device for valor, and the Combat Medic Badge, during an awards ceremony Oct. 22 at the 82nd Airborne Division’s 3rd Brigade Combat Team’s forward headquarters at Contingency Operations Base Speicher near Tikrit, Iraq.

he had to get the wounded out of the vehicle. He treated them as best he could inside the vehicle, but the cramped space inside the up-armored humvee was much too inapt for medical care, he said.

The front, passenger-side door was jammed because of the explosion, making it difficult for Saint-Jacques, or Doc, as he’s known by his unit, to tend to the wounded. He dismounted the vehicle, and then pulled his platoon sergeant out of the passenger seat through the front, driver-side door for treatment, George recalled.

“Doc was great,” said George, a native of Milwaukee, Wis. “Even with his own injuries, he really came through for all of us.”

“It was really intense,” Saint-Jacques said. “It was strange that I couldn’t hear anything,

and so much was going on.”

The attack left four of the five Paratroopers with injuries.

The platoon sergeant in the front-passenger seat, Sgt. 1st Class Tony Wisyanski, is undergoing treatment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., for a fractured skull, punctured lung, shrapnel fragments in his liver, and hearing loss in his right ear.

Spc. William Hart, the turret gunner, is recovering from leg lacerations at Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg.

George and Saint-Jacques, along with Pfc. Dominic Carrera, the driver during the attack, are all returned to duty with the rest of their company and conducting operations in Tikrit.

Vines recognized the 505th PIR as the most decorated regiment in the 82nd Airborne Division, and that it’s evi-

dent in the actions of George, Saint-Jacques, and the others involved in the attack.

Vines referenced a poster, which is well-known throughout the 82nd community, pictured of World War II Paratrooper, Pfc. Vernon Haught, with the quote, “I am the 82nd Airborne, and this is as far as those bastards are going.”

Vines, former commander of the 82nd, said that statement is lived by no less now than it was in WWII.

He asked the Paratroopers to never lose site of the meaning in that quote and what it stands for today in the Global War on Terrorism.

“I am the 82nd Airborne, and this is as far as those terrorists are going,” he told the troopers. “It’s going to take Soldiers like you to defeat terrorism, here, in Iraq.”



Photo by Spc. Joshua R. Ford/ 3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

Sgt. Joshua Holman, truck driver, Company A, 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, guides a vehicle off the back of a trailer just after a combat logistics patrol Oct. 12 at Forward Operating Base Brassfield-Mora, Iraq. The vehicle was delivered to FOB Brassfield-Mora to support the movement of supplies within the FOB.

Paratroopers provide brigade with logistical support

Spc. Joshua R. Ford
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS
BASE SPEICHER, Iraq (October 16, 2006)—Paratroopers from the 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, are making combat operations possible in the Salah ad Din Province by providing combat units with the supplies necessary to carry out their mission.

“We consider (combat logistics patrols) to be our center of gravity. It’s where all the capabilities of the battalion come together into a single mission to distribute logistics out to the combat formations at the operating bases. It includes all of our supplies and our services to include maintenance, medical and many other capabilities,” said Lt. Col. John Hamilton, 82nd BSB commander.

“We are the lifeline for the forward units’ supply,” said 2nd Lt. William Angle, fuel and water platoon leader, Company A, 82nd BSB.

Prior to each patrol, the Paratroopers may have up to two days to pack, prepare equipment and get an intelligence analysis of the route.

“We try to stay on the road while the least (improvised-explosive device) activity is going on,” said 1st Lt. Caitlin M. Machon, an intelligence officer with Headquarters and Headquarters

Company, 82nd BSB.

Hamilton says that the BSB is always one step ahead of the enemy because of the analysis his intelligence section provides.

Since the BSB began CLP operations in Iraq, they have spotted numerous amounts of roadside bombs because of the intelligence reports provided before each mission, said Machon.

After spotting the IEDs, the convoy commander radios to the nearest explosive-ordnance-disposal team to neutralize the threat, added Machon.

Much time and patience goes into organizing a combat logistics patrol, said Angle.

One whole day is consumed with packing all the supplies of the outlying forward operating bases that are serviced. Some of the needs include water, rations, ammunition and fuel, added Angle.

The next day is filled with weapons and systems checks and letting units know that a CLP will pass through their area of operation, continued Angle.

Convoying down the roads and highways throughout the province, sometimes with up to 18 vehicles, makes them a target for enemy attack. A voluntary security platoon was established to ensure the protection of the convoy during the long haul to a destination.

The 82nd BSB has no combat job titles in the unit. So, truck drivers,

mechanics and fuel handlers went through a significant amount of training to provide security for every convoy supported by the BSB.

Thirty Paratroopers had to go through training that included blue-force-tracker training, training on various weapon systems, additional rules-of-engagement and escalation-of-force training and IED awareness training.

Because of the hazards that come with traveling the dangerous roads of Iraq, the BSB is provided with OH-58D Kiowa Warrior support on every mission. The helicopter’s birds-eye-view has proved to be extremely helpful in pointing out blast holes, dismounted personnel and anything looking suspicious.

With all of the elements required to run these missions, the group can support many needs of any unit, said Angle.

The logistics patrols are not limited to the bases in their area of operation, though. Battalion missions have stretched all the way to Tal Afar, Iraq, before, meaning the BSB can provide needed support to units much further than the usual bases the troops travel to, said Angle.

“Our goal is to move efficiently, not creating more problems than already exist out there and making sure our efforts are synchronized with the combat formations that are working the areas of operations that we travel through,” said Hamilton.



Photo by Spc. Joshua R. Ford/ 3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

Lt. Col. Troy Stephenson, commander, 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, folds an American flag he flew over his battalion headquarters in celebration of the birth of his first daughter, Carol Joy Stephenson, who was born on Sept. 14 at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Deployed Paratrooper celebrates daughter's birth from Iraq

Spc. Joshua R. Ford
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

CONTINGENCY
OPERATING BASE
SPEICHER, Iraq (October 8, 2006)—For a moment, rumors made their way around the 3rd Brigade Combat Team that they would not deploy — giving hope to Lt. Col. Troy Stephenson and his wife, Monica Ann, that the whole family would be present for the birth of their first girl.

Those hopes soon vanished when the official word came to them that the deployment would call a battalion commander to duty; duty that would protect the nation his un-born daughter would grow up in. It's a sacrifice he was willing to make for that reason alone.

Monica was heartbroken to find out her husband would miss the birth of their only daughter and that their daughter would spend the entire first year of her life without the presence of her father.

The Stephensons understood, knowing that God had good reasons for their circumstances.

Missing the birth of a child may be one of the hardest things a servicemember deals with when deployed.

In 19 years of service to the Army, Stephenson, commander, 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, hadn't missed the birth of any of his other children.

In mid-August Stephenson

deployed to Iraq, and on Sept. 14 Carol Joy Stephenson entered the world. On that very same day Stephenson flew an American flag over his headquarters near Tikrit, Iraq, in celebration of her birth.

After flying the flag over his headquarters, Stephenson folded the flag and placed it and his battalion's coin in a wooden case engraved, "This American flag flew over my dad's Battalion Headquarters on the day of my birth — September 14, 2006."

The idea Stephenson had for his daughter had been a slight adaptation of what he had done for his son, Stephenson said.

The native of Trail, Ore., came up with the idea many years ago when he planned to do something similar for his son Joshua.

Stephenson carried an American flag through every conflict he fought in. During the Gulf War he carried the flag in his cargo pocket. During conflicts in Bosnia, Haiti and his first tour to Operation Iraqi Freedom, he carried the same flag in his rucksack. Today Stephenson still carries the flag and will give the flag to Joshua at the end of his military career.

"Getting the reputation of being the hard-feeling, low-emotion Paratrooper and ranger, it wouldn't be expected of one with such a description to do something like this," Stephenson said. "When I told Monica, she thought it was very special." Monica found joy in what her

husband had done for their only girl. And to capture the moment on film and in photographs made it even better, she said.

One day Carol Joy would get to watch the video recording and look at the photographs and see what her father had done in her honor.

Stephenson's wife spent 10 years on active duty and knows much about what her husband is going through.

"My first-hand experience is like a double-edged sword. I know enough about the process to understand what my husband is probably experiencing," Monica said.

Stephenson said that his wife Monica, a native of Detroit, Mi., is the real hero in this situation.

"She's back home by herself taking care of three boys, one infant and still working a full-time job," Stephenson added.

When Stephenson returns from commanding his battalion in the Salah ad Din Province of Iraq, he wishes to do something special for his newborn daughter and spending time with his family.

The Stephenson family is an outdoors family, and Joshua attended his first duck hunt at the tender age of 6 weeks old.

So whether it is hunting for caribou on the frozen tundra of their new home in Fairbanks, Alaska, or salmon fishing in the rivers of Oregon, Stephenson and his family will vacation as only the Stephenson family can. Hunting, fishing, camping — it doesn't matter to them as long as they spend their time together.

*IN HONOR OF THOSE WHO HAVE
MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE ...*

**PFC. STEPHEN BICKNELL
KIA**

**SAMARRA, IRAQ
NOVEMBER 30, 1986 - OCTOBER 16, 2006**



**SGT. LESTER BARONCINI
KIA**

**SAMARRA, IRAQ
JANUARY 19, 1973 - OCTOBER 16, 2006**



**SGT. 1ST CLASS TONY KNIER
KIA**

**BAYJI, IRAQ
MARCH 20, 1975 - OCTOBER 21, 2006**



505th Parachute Infantry Regiment 82nd Airborne Division



**All the Way!!
H-Minus!!**

