



# THE IRONHORSEMAN

1st Brigade Combat Team 1st Cavalry Division

Centurions brave gas chamber  
in the name of training



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1st Brigade Combat Team  
1st Cavalry Division  
Fort Hood, Texas



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# Dragon Battalion conducts airborne mission

By Staff Sgt. John Couffer  
IBCT, 1CD PAO



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Couffer

Sgt. Justin Allen (left) a wheeled vehicle mechanic, and Spc. Ariel Naples, an artillery mechanic, both assigned to the Dragon Battalion, tighten 550 cord around a cargo bundle used in low-cost, low-altitude aerial resupply missions July 15, at Fort Hood, Texas. The main purpose of LCLA is to resupply troops on the ground when other methods endanger Soldiers' lives.



Photo by Spc. Fred Brown

Cpt. Quenton Benjamin (left), a logistics officer and Orangeburg, S.C. native, and Spc. Simone Des Islets, a power generation equipment repairer and native of Lawrenceville, Ga., both assigned to the Dragon Battalion, prepare to offload a cargo bundle from a CH-47 Chinook helicopter midflight during a low-cost, low-altitude aerial resupply mission July 17, at Fort Hood, Texas.

FORT HOOD, Texas -- Guided by wind currents and suspended by parachutes; bundles of ammunition, food, fuel and water descend on their designated targets.

Soldiers of the Dragon Battalion conducted a low-cost, low-altitude aerial resupply mission July 16 to 18, here.

This marks the first time in Ironhorse history that such an exercise was conducted.

"This mission is groundbreaking for the brigade," said Monroe, La. native, 2nd Lt. Dexter Harris, a Quarter Master Corps officer assigned to FSC G attached to the Dragon Battalion, who aided in planning the event.

Harris explained the main purpose of LCLA is to expediently resupply troops on the ground when other methods endanger Soldiers' lives, are not feasible or are too costly.

"The system is relatively cheap and saves the Army time, money and lives," Harris explained. "Anything we can do to save Soldiers' lives will be the best option."

In conducting this event, the Dragon Battalion is writing the standard operating procedures necessary so any unit in the brigade can conduct an LCLA.

"Not only is it the first time being done," Harris said. "But it's laying the foundation for everyone in the brigade ... whether we deploy to Afghanistan, any other indigenous nations or (the National Training Center)."

Coordination for training was done via Ironhorse air mobility liaison officers, the Air Force and their drop zone instructors at Fort Hood.

Harris explained that during training, the Air Force used a Hercules cargo aircraft to better aid in hands-on training instruction but during the actual event Army Chinook cargo helicopters were used.

The Air Force DZIs taught FSC G Soldiers how to secure and run a drop zone, stage orange panels that mark the drop zone and how to recover the supplies.

"Dropping cargo is not something the Ironhorse Brigade normally does.

"This brigade does not ordinarily (conduct) this type of mission," said Orangeburg, S.C. native, Capt. Quentin Benjamin, commander of FSC G.

He added special operations, air assault and airborne units normally perform these tasks.

"Conducting LCLA operations

broadens the capabilities of the brigade," Benjamin said. "It gives (the Ironhorse) brigade another asset of getting supplies to its Soldiers."

The whole point of the training is so FSC G can resupply fellow 1-82 FA with anything at anytime over any terrain, all while keeping fellow Soldiers out of harm's way, Benjamin said.

The training certified FSC G on LCLA functions and procedures, for instance, one Soldier certified as a "lead" Soldier.

A "lead" Soldier is one of two Soldiers on either side of supply bundles in an aircraft who are in constant communication with the pilots and who push the bundle out when the red light turns green. The lights indicate to Soldiers when the aircraft is over its designated drop area and is ready to drop its cargo.

Watsonville, Calif. native, Spc. Pedro Duarte, petroleum supply specialist assigned to the Dragon Battalion, said being chosen to conduct LCLA training was a privilege and he feels the training prepared him to perform the task in the future.

"When we deploy, this training will benefit us, our company and our battalion," said Duarte. "If they need us, we'll be ready."

# Centurions conduct CBRN training

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer

IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Seventy-five Soldiers from Company C of the 1st “Centurion” Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, conducted chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training at the Black Gap Small Arms Complex, here, Aug. 21.

“If we ever go into a combat zone where there is contamination, we want to be able to still function and accomplish our mission,” said 1st Lt. Quintin Kuntz, New Knoxville, Ohio native and platoon leader with Co. C. “It is important for the Soldiers to be comfortable with their gear so they have confidence in what they are doing.”

When Co. C Soldiers arrived at the CBRN range, there were three stations they were required to attend for training before entering the CS, or gas chamber.

Soldiers spent approximately 20 to 30 minutes at each station, where they were instructed on the M256 Chemical Agent Detector Kit, the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology and how to properly don their protective gas masks.

Some of the younger Soldiers haven’t participated in a gas chamber exercise since they graduated their basic combat training, including Spc. Nathan Menard, New Iberia, La. native and combat engineer assigned to Co. C.

“We have practiced putting on our masks a few times this year,” Menard said. “I haven’t done the gas chamber since basic training, about two years ago, so it was a good refresher.”

This will not be the last time Centurion Soldiers will conduct CBRN training. They have an upcoming gunnery where one test is a CBRN engagement, involving the use of their gas masks and hatches closed.

“Usually in gunnery (Soldiers) have all the hatches open so they can quickly and accurately identify targets,” Kuntz said explaining the CBRN portion of gunnery. “When it’s a CBRN engagement all hatches are closed and you have to wear the mask so you are

looking through different optics with the mask on.”

Kuntz went on to explain, if Soldiers aren’t comfortable on how to employ their masks on the ground it toughens their tasks at gunnery and he believes this training helps boost Soldiers confidence.

“This training will help Soldiers because they know they can accomplish their mission even if in a contaminated area,” Kuntz concluded.



Photo by Sgt. Bailey Kramer

Pfc. Sadruddin Latif (right), a Decatur, Ga. native, and Staff Sgt. Garrett Kile (left), of Farmington, Mo., both combat engineers assigned to Company C of the 1st “Centurion” Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, don their protective masks to ensure they are able to properly secure them during chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training at the Black Gap Small Arms Range on Fort Hood, Texas, Aug. 21.



# Muleskinners train to decontaminate patients

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer  
IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Twenty-five Soldiers assigned to Ironmedics of the Muleskinner Battalion trained on procedures to decontaminate chemically injured Soldiers, here, Aug. 1.

The Ironmedics conducted training to familiarize leaders and Soldiers with the proper procedures for handling patient decontamination in a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear environment.

“We need to know what steps need to be taken and when they need to be taken,” explained the training noncommissioned officer in charge, Bay City, Mich. native, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Manyen, the Ironmedics evacuation platoon sergeant. “We know of countries who have the ability to use contaminants that can affect our military and service members, so we need to know how to counteract.”

Manyen believes when America went to war with Iraq and Afghanistan the focus was changed to a more tactical mission, but now with Operation Iraqi Freedom complete and Operation Enduring Freedom drawing to a close, it's time to change direction.

“Since we have been in the fight with (Iraq and Afghanistan) it kind of got pushed as



*Photo by Staff Sgt. John Couffer*  
New York native, Spc. John McKay (right) a healthcare specialist assigned to the Ironmedics of the Muleskinners cuts and removes protective clothing from a Soldier simulating chemical contamination and medical injuries during chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear patient decontamination training Aug. 1, at Fort Hood, Texas.



*Photo by Staff Sgt. John Couffer*  
Black Hawk, Colo. native, Pfc. Megan Paulman (left), a healthcare specialist assigned to the Ironmedics of the Muleskinners Battalion guides a Soldier through a chemical treatment shower during chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training Aug. 1, at Fort Hood, Texas.

not being as important because there was less of a chance of being attacked with chemical weapons,” Manyen added.

With current events turning to Syria and Egypt, the trainings officer in charge believes CBRN training is important.

“It is my understanding (this type of) training hasn't been done in years and is something we need to be able to utilize, especially with what is going on with the attacks in Syria,” stated Texas native, 2nd Lt. Tyler Fonseca, a medical service officer for the Ironmedics.

Manyen explained if a medic doesn't know how to properly decontaminate a patient it could cause a domino effect.

“Being the medical professionals, we need to know what to do to ensure we minimize the number of contamination injuries,” Manyen added. “We don't need to become one or cause somebody else to become one; it will only cause a chain reaction.”

Soldiers across the Muleskinner Battalion wore MOPP Suits to the agent decontamination site with different simulated injuries, where they were examined by the physician's assistant, and then classified as a liter or ambulatory patient. After they received their diagnosis they were directed where to go next.

“If (the patient is) someone who needs attention right away we have a site where they

can get treatment,” Fonseca added. “They will go through the procedures of dropping their clothes, scrubbing them down, pushing through and getting checked by the ICAM to see if they are clean, if not then they go through the process again.”

After determining what type of casualty the patient is, medical personnel removed the Soldiers MOPP gear, along with their outer garments or Army Combat Uniform.

Patients classified as a liter casualty received a sponge bath and ambulatory patients were transferred to the decontamination showers.

Once cleaned, the Soldier was sent to the ‘hot line,’ or non-contaminated side, and further treated. If needed they were evacuated to a more suitable medical facility.

“This training was really hands on,” said Slidell, La. native, Spc. Angelo Bayona, a medic assigned to the Ironmedics. “It makes you more confident when you are able to actually practice.”

Bayona explained, until now his training was limited to classes of discussion and pamphlets.

“So, actually being out there and getting hands on training helps it sink in better,” Bayona added.

Future CBRN and NBC training has been incorporated into upcoming field exercises to get a more realistic feel for the training.



# Muleskinners host family, organizational day

Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton  
 1BCT, 1CD Public Affairs



Attleboro, Mass. native, Spc. Bradford Betts, an armament repairer assigned to Co. B of the Muleskinner Battalion, runs with his dog during the Muleskinner Organizational Day family fun-run July 26 at Fort Hood, Texas. After the run; Soldiers, families and pets met at the Carl Levin Park in Harker Heights, Texas for games, food and other summer activities.

Children of Soldiers assigned to the Muleskinner Battalion play in a bounce house during the Muleskinner's Organizational Day July 26 at Carl Levin Park in Harker Heights, Texas. Other activities included a photo booth, face painting, an egg race and a water slide.



Fort Smith, Ark. native, Lt. Col. J. Bradley Swift, commander of the Muleskinner Battalion, hands a plate to a little girl July 26 during the Muleskinner's Organizational Day at Carl Levin Park in Harker Heights, Texas. Other activities included a photo booth, face painting, an egg race and a water slide.

Miami native, Staff Sgt. Joaquin Goicoechea (right), a career counselor for the 115th "Muleskinner" Brigade Support Battalion, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, helps dress up Brewer, Maine native Staff Sgt. Melissa Wolfe (center), a Muleskinner human resources specialist, and her daughter Jaylin (left), for their portrait in the photo booth during the Muleskinner's Organizational Day July 26, at Carl Levin Park in Harker Heights, Texas.



# Ironhorse receives the Army Marathon trophy

## There is strength in unity

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer

IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas -- The 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division received the Army Marathon military unit award, July 18 here at the Ironhorse Chapel.

Taking the top four runners from each unit, the Ironhorse Brigade received the lowest collective score of 399, earning them the first place military unit award out of more than 1,000 runners.

"It feels great to have helped my brigade place so well," said San Salvador native, Spc. Jorge Hernandez, the Ironhorse first place finisher assigned to E Forward Support Company of the 2nd "Stallion" Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment.

The Army Marathon organization began long before the first Army Marathon was conducted. It was observed that veterans were returning from deployments with a wide variety of challenges and not enough resources to support their needs.

Four retired service members, Richard Archer, Gene Deutscher, Jay Taggart, and Ed Bandas, were looking to make a difference and decided to come up with a plan to raise funds and awareness, fill-in the gaps of veterans services and to highlight the sacrifices of our service members.

"Sometimes our service men and women need a little more help than current programs allow," explained Belton, Texas native, Ed Bandas, a coordinator for The Army Marathon. "Our mission is to augment those efforts while creating an honored tradition, an atmosphere of athletic achievement and competition and at the same time allowing our communities that surround Fort Hood to honor these heroes as well."

The first Army Marathon took place Sunday, April 21, 2013 in honor of the 238th anniversary of the 'shot heard around the world,' which was the beginning of the American Revolution, April 19, 1775.

The 26.2-mile marathon began in Killeen, Texas running through Harker Heights, Nolanville, Belton and ending in Temple, Texas.

"I am proud to be here with our team ... to present the 'Strength in Unity Trophy' to (the Ironhorse Brigade), to keep proudly," Bandas stated during the ceremony. "Also knowing it will be the only trophy that ever bears the words 'Inaugural Army Marathon.'"

The trophy got its name 'Strength in Unity,' from Aesop's Fables classic tale of "The bundle of sticks."

The tale explains how a father calls his sons to his deathbed and hands his oldest a bundle of sticks. He asks him to break them; he was unsuccessful. The father then unbundles the sticks and hands one to each son, asking them to break it, of course, they were unsuccessful.

"His wise counsel to his sons was, 'There is strength in unity,' suggesting his sons should forever stick together and protect each other as brothers," added Bandas. "How appropriate for our military folks that this trophy should embody the lesson we have all learned during our service to our country."

Bandas explained the purpose of the marathon was to raise money for qualified veteran charities. Raising about 25,000 dollars, Bandas believes their goal was reached.

"For being the first year that is really good, and it can only continue to grow," Bandas added.

The marathon will be held annually, in Killeen, Texas, on the first Sunday in March.

"I am proud our brigade finished so well," Hernandez concluded. "It feels good to have accomplished so much."



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Couffer

Unit Team Champion  
 1st Cavalry Division  
 Inaugural Army Marathon  
 April, 2013

Ed Bandas (center), Belton, Texas native, a coordinator for The Army Marathon, presents the Strength through Unity Trophy to Col. Steve Gilland (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Mervyn Ripley (right), command team for the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division at the Ironhorse Chapel, July 18 on Fort Hood, Texas.



# Soldiers balance dual-military lifestyle

## Absence makes the heart grow fonder

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer  
IBCT, ICD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – When joining the military, service members enlist with an understanding that it is both demanding and rewarding, especially when your spouse is wearing the same uniform as you.

Time away from loved ones can cause friction between one another, but anticipating upcoming challenges can help alleviate some of the stress.

Military OneSource gives four tips to help aid dual-military couples in the journey together: accept the certainty of separation, expect difficult career decisions, acknowledge the likelihood of sacrifices by children, family and friends, and understand the differences in rank and career management fields.

Twenty-three-year-old, Sgt. Michelle Hildreth, a Canyon Country, Calif. native and medic assigned to Company C of the 115th “Muleskinner” Brigade Support Battalion, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, returned from a rotation at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Calif., when she received an invitation from a friend to spend a Friday night out on the town.

Not knowing this simple invitation to hang out would change her life, she accepted. Spc. Nickolai Silva, a medic previously assigned to Company A, 2nd “Stallion” Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment of the Ironhorse Brigade, was the platoon medic for, Spc. Kevin Hildreth, an infantryman also assigned to Co. A. “I knew (Kevin’s) medic,” said Michelle explaining the mutual connection.

“It was different meeting him as compared to everyone else that night, but I wouldn’t call



Photo courtesy of Sgt. Michelle Hildreth

Sgt. Michelle Hildreth, Muleskinner Oakland, Conn. native, Spc. Kevin Hildreth (left), an infantryman assigned to Co. A of the Stallion Battalion embraces his wife, Canyon Country, Calif. native, Sgt. Michelle Hildreth (right), a medic assigned to Co. C of the Muleskinner Battalion, June 24, 2012 at Cooper Field on Fort Hood, Texas.



Photos courtesy of Sgt. Michelle Hildreth

Sgt. Michelle Hildreth Muleskinner Canyon Country, Calif. native, Sgt. Michelle Hildreth (left), a medic assigned to Company C of the Muleskinner Battalion, and husband Oakdale, Conn. native, Spc. Kevin Hildreth (right), an infantryman assigned to Co. A of the Stallion Battalion are expecting their first child in the fall of 2013.

it love at first sight,” Michelle explained first meeting Kevin.

One of the challenges in an active duty dual-military relationship is separation, which the couple experienced shortly after they started dating.

Although the couple had only been together a couple of months before deploying, they

began talking about marriage.

Michelle’s outgoing flight was scheduled a week before Kevin’s, when he originally planned on proposing to her.

“I planned on proposing to her in front of everyone the day she left, but I wasn’t able to get off in time,” Kevin described.

Michelle explained because

they were unable to get a ring before deploying, she bought a cheap ring in Iraq to represent her relationship with Kevin, but he knew she wanted a ‘down on one knee’ proposal. About a year later, the young couple married.

“He proposed the night before we got married, in his living room in front of our friends and family,” Michelle said about the romantic gesture.

The couple’s first year together included a deployment to Iraq and Kuwait, NTC and many field exercises.

Kevin compared the time they are required to spend apart to the old saying, ‘absence makes the heart grow fonder.’

“I wouldn’t say the time we have had to spend apart has hurt us, if anything it has helped us grow closer together,” Kevin said about his wife.

With both Soldiers assigned to the Ironhorse Brigade they were deployed at the same time, but that doesn’t mean they got to spend a whole lot of time together.

While deployed to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn 2011, they weren’t living on the same base, and had the pleasure of seeing each other only once.

“It’s a common misconception when you are dual military and deployed together, (that) it is easier because you are together,” Michelle explained. “But, actually it’s quite the opposite. We saw each other once and being military you better understand the risks your (spouse) may possibly face.”

Baltimore native Capt. Young Hong, the chaplain for the 1st “Centurion” Brigade Special Troops Battalion of the Ironhorse Brigade, believes communication is key to keeping a marriage successful.



## Dual-military

“Many couples believe problems will disappear when you are apart, and sweep them under the rug,” Hong added.

The one time the Hildreth’s were able to see each other while deployed lasted 15 minutes. “It was very brief,” Kevin added.

His unit visited Contingency Operating Station Kalsu, where Michelle was living, to drop Soldiers off. As she entered the dining facility to eat breakfast, a friend told her he was there.

“When I found out where he was sitting I went and talked to him for a couple of minutes before he had to leave,” Michelle added.

Although not being able to communicate everyday was tough, they didn’t let it get them down.

“I was always on mission, so when I was able to talk to her, it would only be a couple of minutes,” Kevin said about their limited communication. “It was one of the hardest things, keeping in touch, but knowing I would soon be with her everyday kept me going.”

There are resources across the military to assist service-members when they feel there is a need for help: Military OneSource, Chaplains or the Military and Family Life Consultants.

“We are here to help,” Hong said about the Chaplain Corps.

Spending anniversaries, birthdays and holidays working separate duty assignments is one of the many hardships this couple has faced while serving as an active duty dual-military couple.

“Being apart was one of my main concerns before we got married,” Kevin explained. “I knew it was going to happen, but it was a concern of mine.”

After being home for more than a year, they know that another NTC rotation is in their future.



Photos courtesy of Sgt. Michelle Hildreth

*Oakland, Conn. native, Spc. Kevin Hildreth (right), an infantryman assigned to Company A of the Stallion Battalion, and wife, Canyon Country, Calif. native, Sgt. Michelle Hildreth (left), a medic assigned to Co. C of the Muleskinner Battalion on their wedding day February 10, 2012, in Connecticut.*

Michelle explained that their second year anniversary is going to fall during their upcoming NTC rotation in 2014.

“He made it back just in time for our first (anniversary) last year,” she added.

Separation isn’t the only trial dual military relationships face, but it is the biggest for the Hildreth’s. With rank and responsibility playing a large role in the Army lifestyle, they explained they are often being compared to each other.

“We are constantly being compared like we are two of the same Soldiers, in the same squad,” Michelle explained about one of the bigger nui-

sances of the difference in rank. “People act like because I outrank him, I am his superior. At work, yes I outrank him, but at home we don’t play the rank card, we are equals.”

The couple doesn’t let rank get in the way of their relationship, but there can be a barrier when it comes to work.

When two service members of different rank marry, they may not have the common experiences and understanding of each other’s career expectations, according to Military OneSource.

Although a large chunk of the relationship has been spent in separate locations, there are

perks to being a dual military couple.

“It is helpful coming home and not having to explain why I am late or why I missed dinner,” Kevin gratefully explained.

According to Military OneSource spouses are able to appreciate a special kind of bond. You understand each other’s experiences and can relate to the other’s career triumphs and challenges in ways nonmilitary spouses can’t.

Michelle said it might be annoying, but agreed it is more easily understood having been in similar situations.

“Having personally experienced formations or details running later than planned, it is easier for me to understand why he is late,” Michelle explained. “I know what he is talking about when he explains problems at work or uses an acronym. I think it’s just an overall better support base.”

The couple is now expecting their first child, a son, in the fall of 2013. The Hildreth’s understand that their dual-military status puts them at risk for both parents to be gone at the same time.

Acknowledging the sacrifices they are likely to make for their new family, the Hildreth’s understand with Kevin III on his way, their family and friends will be asked to make their own sacrifices to help them out.

“It’ll be hard,” Michelle explained. Michelle and Kevin have begun discussing the possibility one of them may have to separate from the Army.

Preparing their new addition has only helped the two grow closer.

“We spend our weekends just driving around looking for something new to do together,” Kevin concluded. “I love spending time with her, I love her.”

For more information or tips on balancing a dual-military lifestyle, visit [militaryonesource.mil](http://militaryonesource.mil).



# Guys connect through Rough Cut Men Conference



A group of Soldiers and civilians discuss the topic of father-son relationships during a breakout session while attending the Rough Cut Men Conference July 27, at the Spirit of Fort Hood Chapel at Fort Hood, Texas.

## Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. John Couffer 1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – At times, men may find themselves without a friend, especially when one is needed most. One man is out to change all that.

Fort Hood Soldiers and men from the surrounding community attended the Rough Cut Men Conference July 26 and 27, here at the Spirit of Fort Hood Chapel.

The conference, designed for men, used movie clips and current events to get men talking with one another in an authentic and transparent way.

“The purpose of RCM, in a nutshell, is to help men make friends ... so they end up with a ‘battle buddy’ so to speak,” said Sarasota, Fla. native, David Dusek, founder and executive director of Rough Cut Men Ministries.

Dusek believes there is a strong absence of masculinity in church. Dusek also believes, it’s because of this disconnect, men may feel alone, leading them to do the wrong thing.

“I believe that isolation oftentimes leads guys to do

things that are desperate ... either commit suicide or walk out on their marriages because things aren’t going well,” Dusek said. “I think if a guy has another guy, it ups his chance of survival, and so we do it in a way that’s fun and engaging.”

Dusek said he is not a pastor, but emphasized that RCM is a ministry and the goal is to have men become more Godly. But, in doing so, it helps everyone.

“If we can help a church, or any group, get men connected to each other then that will do nothing more than make the church, the community and our nation stronger,” Dusek stated.

One Army leader, who is always seeking self-improvement tools to pass onto to others, discovered RCM during a chance encounter and thought it would be something good to bring to Fort Hood.

“I met Mr. Dusek at (Landing Zone) X-ray reunion with veterans of landing zone X-Ray earlier this year,” said San Francisco native, Lt. Col. Jay Miseli, commander of Garryowen.

At the time, Dusek was

writing a book on Retired Lt. Gen. Hal Moore’s qualities, beliefs, values and faith as a Christian leader and how they manifested themselves while leading Garryowen during the Battle of Ia Drang in 1965.

In addition to cinematic snippets, Dusek also used his own life events as a way to help the men relate, and understand that it’s ok to have trying times in life. He said being honest and genuine with people will foster honesty and authenticity among men.

“I’m basically setting the table for guys to sit down at a discussion and talk about what really is going on in their life,” Dusek said.

To put what RCM brings to the table into context, Miseli used the example of pulling security.

“I think the tactical parallel would be that you can’t pull 180-degree security on your own,” he stated.

Miseli explained that for 360-degrees you need at least four people and another four to replace them in order to rest, even if it’s for a short break from the mental strain of being alert for long periods of time.

Dusek said he hopes the conference encourages men to openly discuss their concerns and understand they’re not suffering alone.

“Now, we have a common ground established, we’ve spilled the same blood in the same dirt, so to speak, in the battle of life,” Dusek said.

Brattleboro, Vt. native, 2nd Lt. Jeremiah Cioffi, an intelligence officer for Garryowen’s Troop B, attended the conference to improve himself as a whole.

“I thought this would be a cool way to better myself in the area outside of the military as a person in general,” Cioffi said.

Cioffi explained how he found the movie clips helpful in showing men how to break emotional barriers.

Cioffi said the conference brings to light how what a guy says and does, while dealing with things in life, can hurt people and this helps men realize they should stop and think about what they are doing.

He also said he likes how RCM fosters friendships and foundations among men.



# Garryowen Games test Soldiers under pressure



*Soldiers assigned to B Troop, Garryowen, approach the finish line of the 7 1/2 mile road march during the fifth Garryowen Games, July 23, at Fort Hood, Texas.*

**Story and photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton**  
1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 7th “Garryowen” Cavalry Regiment, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division tested their limits during the fifth Garryowen Games, here, July 22 to 26.

The two-part competition consisted of a road march followed by a series of physically demanding exercises with intervals of target engagement. Each company participated on a different day and was broken down into teams by section.

The Garryowen Games was designed to build esprit de corps, explained Louisville, Ky. native, 1st Lt. Matthew Whitehouse, an armor officer assigned to Garryowen who coordinated the competition.

Garryowen Games participants had two hours to march 7 1/2 miles to the range, where the rest of the competition took place.

The simulation began with Soldiers running the length of the range, approximately 200 meters, and then firing at red and blue targets.

Between firing intervals, competitors flipped large tires, dragged teammates on litters and conducted various physical exercises.

At the last firing interval, participants donned their protective gas masks and engaged targets from the kneeling firing position. To complete the iteration, the teams ran to the base of the tower.

Whitehouse said the competition gives the commander, team leaders and section sergeants the ability to gauge the mental toughness and lethality of their troops.

Putnam Valley, N.Y. native, Sgt. Edward Lamy, a cavalry scout assigned to Garryowen, believes competitions like this give motivation and discipline to Soldiers.

“I thought it would be (easier) but this was a lot more chal-



*Soldiers assigned to B Troop, 1st Squadron, 7th “Garryowen” Cavalry Regiment, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team flip tires between firing stations during a stress under fire simulation at the fifth Garryowen Games, July 23, at Fort Hood, Texas.*

lenging than I expected,” Lamy laughed.

The competition gave smaller units a chance to bond and Soldiers the opportunity to see where they could help their comrades in areas that may need improvement, said Dummerston, Vt. native, 2nd Lt. Jeremiah Cioffi, an intelligence officer assigned to Garryowen.

If smaller units are strong, it strengthens the whole platoon, Cioffi added. Thus the whole troop and squadron are stronger as a result.

“When we’re out there doing missions, people are more confident in their peers,” Cioffi explained. “They know their strengths and weaknesses. (Soldiers) know where they have to step up when the other person just can’t do it.”

Because participants were not told about the events in detail before the competition, Cioffi compared the Garryowen Games to the saying, “the fog of war.”

“It’s the idea that there’s an uncertainty that comes with war,” Cioffi added. “You don’t really know what’s going to happen next.”

Although there was uncertainty, Cioffi believes his team was highly motivated and went into the competition with a positive attitude.

Lamy mentioned he has never fired a weapon while wearing a protective gas mask, and had to adjust his rifle position in order to shoot properly.

“That was a good learning experience for me,” Lamy added.

“My guys keep giving me trouble for saying that it was fun,” Cioffi added.

Cioffi explained that a set physical training schedule can be monotonous, so when Soldiers are given the opportunity to mix things up, morale improves.

“Even if people know the events are going to be difficult, just the fact that it’s something different motivates people,” Cioffi concluded.



# Ironhorse father, son serve same brigade

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer  
IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – A command sergeant major runs across a landing zone in Afghanistan to catch his flight. In midstride he is told to stop for a photo. He takes his eye protection off, places them in his hand, turns to the camera and places a big smile on his face.

After returning to base and uploading his photo to his social media account for family and friends to see, he immediately receives a comment from his son, “Hey hero, where’s the eye-pro?”

“The best part of having my sons in the Army is when they validate my life, by saying things I would have said as a Soldier,” said Command Sgt. Maj. José Fragoso, who hails from Toledo, Ohio, referring to his son Spc. Eric Fragoso’s correction on his photo.

Father and son are now both assigned to the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

In 2010, Eric informed his parents of his decision to enlist in the Army. José was proud his son decided to follow him into the Army, but it came as surprise to both him and his wife, Kerri Fragoso, a licensed nurse practitioner.

“It had just slipped off my radar. (Eric) didn’t want to join when he was 18, so I said, ‘ok, that’s fine,’” José said about his son’s decision.

The shock wasn’t until he told his parents what military occupational specialty he had chosen: infantry.

“When we found out he was going infantry like dad, we were like, have you not watched dad all these years,” Kerri said, laughing.

Shortly after Eric completed basic combat training, José

deployed on a special assignment to Afghanistan. Eric received orders to the Ironhorse Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas, where they were preparing to deploy to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn.

“It was pretty scary,” Kerri, who was currently living in Germany, said about her son and husband deploying at the same time. “You never knew what was going to happen... we knew quite a few people who didn’t make it the last

homemade enchiladas again, he wasn’t too excited his father was assuming responsibility of his battalion.

“I was mad,” Eric said, laughing. He is now assigned to Company B of the 2nd “Stallion” Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment. “I was going to get kicked out of my unit, going to go somewhere else... I didn’t want to leave the guys I knew I could trust, I had trained with for about two and half years, and then

this on his own, he won’t use his father as a crutch.

“I have had people say to me, ‘you can do this because you are a sergeant major’s son or ‘just call your daddy,’” Eric said. “But, I sit there and tell them every day, ‘I don’t want to use him for anything,’ and I am not going to.”

José said he doesn’t use him, he does it on his own.

“I think that is a point of pride for me, he does it all on his own,” José added. “The things he has gotten from me, I didn’t tell him, he observed it.”

Although Eric doesn’t have the same leadership style as his father, José commented he sees himself in many of the same conclusions Eric decides on.

“We don’t have the same leadership style. What I do, wouldn’t fit his personality,” José stated. “It would be fake coming out of him, and people would see that... He has identified things that are wrong, that I would have identified as wrong, and he has come up with solutions I would have.”

Eric mentioned there have been times he caught himself sounding like his father.

“I feel like I am becoming a little more like him, and that’s fine with me,” Eric stated. “He’s been an inspiration, but I still have to do things my way.”

Kerri said she is pleased with Eric’s decision of enlisting in the Army and José’s professional and personal example.

“I am proud of my sons for going into the military and doing something with their lives, following in their dad’s footsteps,” Kerri said. “And I’m proud of my husband; he has gone the distance and is still going. He shows his sons there is more ... there can always be more.”



Courtesy photo from Spc. Eric Fragoso, 2-8 Cav.

Spc. Eric Fragoso (back right), an infantryman assigned to Co. B of the Stallion Battalion, and his father, Command Sgt. Maj. José Fragoso (center right), the senior noncommissioned officer of the Lancer Battalion are from Toledo, Ohio and both stationed at Fort Hood, Texas with the Ironhorse Brigade.

time they were in Iraq.”

Kerri wasn’t the only one who was scared; Eric had mutual feelings.

“I was worried more for him,” Eric expressed. “I didn’t want to lose him.”

While José was deployed he learned he was going to be the command sergeant major of his son’s battalion, the 2nd “Lancer” Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment.

Although it had been about a year since the family had seen each other, and Eric was happy to be eating his mom’s

get thrown in with some new guys. But that’s how the Army works.”

After the change of responsibility, Eric’s first sergeant came and informed him he was to leave his company immediately.

“I took three days to move,” Eric said.

“Yeah, you did leave kicking and screaming,” José added jokingly.

Even months after José took responsibility of the Lancer Battalion, Eric still has to remind people he wants to do



# Lancer Soldier works on different battlefield

Story and photos by  
Pfc. Paige Pendleton

1st BCT Public Affairs, 1st Cav. Div.

FORT HOOD, Texas – When one Lancer Soldier is not out on the battlefield or training, he fights a different kind of battle on the rugby pitch with Fort Hood's sanctioned rugby team: Phantom Warriors.

Spc. Griffin Simmons, Fiji Islands native and healthcare specialist assigned to Company B of the 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, has been playing rugby since he could run.

Growing up, Simmons played rugby on the beaches of Fiji using coconuts, bottles or shoes when no proper ball was available.

The rules are very similar to American football except there are no pads, helmets or forward passing. Football later developed from rugby, changing to become more fashionable, safer and marketable.

Simmons played rugby through high school and college at the Fiji School of Medicine. After moving to the United States, he played for a year with a Houston team and toured the country.

Capt. Carlos De Castro Pretelt, Barranquilla, Colombia native and commander of G Forward Support Company attached to the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd "Greywolf" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div. is the Phantom Warriors forwards coach.

"We call him Fiji on the pitch," De Castro Pretelt said about Simmons. "Everybody has a nickname."

De Castro Pretelt is glad to have Simmons on the team because of his experience growing up playing rugby.

"It's just part of my culture," Simmons explained. "Pacific Islanders are very big rugby players."

Simmons believes because Pacific Islanders are accustomed to playing in soft sand, they are known for being very heavy hitters.

At 5-feet-10 inches tall and 215 pounds, Simmons thinks he is small for a Pacific Islander.

The beautiful thing about rugby is it accommodates all shapes and sizes, explained the Phantom Warriors head coach and San Antonio native, Capt. Jason Williams, a pre-mobilization planner assigned



Capt. Carlos De Castro Pretelt (left), Phantom Warriors team captain and commander of G Forward Support Company attached to the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd "Greywolf" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, presents Nicholas Johnsen (right), director of Fort Hood's Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center, with the Phantom Warriors' most recent tournament trophy, July 19 at Fort Hood, Texas.

to the 1st Army Division West.

"Although size, strength and speed matters, most of it is about spirit and will," Simmons explained.

De Castro Pretelt associated rugby to a game of chess because each player has a tactical position according to their body type, capabilities and strengths.

Uneven matchups happen frequently and smaller players often face heavier, taller players who should, by every account, run them over, Simmons explained.

"For you to have the personal strength, the courage to take on somebody that size and the sheer will to be able to put him down and defend your line (is) the most amazing feeling in the world," Simmons continued.

Simmons mentioned while teams try to win, they don't necessarily want the opponent to get hurt so they can play each other again another day.

"It really is a gentlemanly sport, (as) violent as it is," Simmons added.

Simmons explained a saying known to many rugby players: "soccer is a game for gentlemen played by hooligans, while rugby is a game for hooligans played by gentlemen."

"While you're on the field you let go," De Castro Pretelt explained. "You just try

and hit (the other) guy as hard as you can where it hurts him the most with everything you have."

Simmons added the intensity that happens on the field is vented and left on the field.

"That's part of the camaraderie about rugby," Williams explained.

Teams rough each other up during the game then go out to eat, share stories and have a good time, Williams continued.

De Castro Pretelt said the Phantom Warriors are fortunate to have support from the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center allowing the team to travel to play tournaments.

The team is grateful the MWR has helped with tournament entry fees, kept up the practice field and provided the Phantom Warriors with what they need to be successful, Williams added.

"The only thing that we're actually lacking is volunteers," De Castro Pretelt continued. "We need to get the word out there and show people that (rugby is) not all about size."

Williams mentioned one challenge for the Phantom Warriors is that they are unable to maintain consistent players due to conflicting schedules, deployments and training.



## Rugby continued



*Spc. Griffin Simmons (left), Fiji Islands native and healthcare specialist assigned to Company B, 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, runs with the ball during a Phantom Warriors rugby practice July 22, in Killeen, Texas.*

"Our primary job is being a Soldier and that does come first," Williams added.

Simmons believes he is lucky to have a very good support system in his company.

"They really encourage us to take part in things like this because they understand the value," Simmons added.

Simmons explained some qualities taught in the Army already exist on the playing field. Rugby deals with concepts like controlled aggression, listening to commands and leadership.

Williams thinks rugby emulates the Army Values and is the ultimate team sport.

"There is something to be said for bleeding together, winning together, and losing together," Simmons explained.

Simmons believes this sport is similar to his job as a senior line medic in an infantry platoon because players put their bodies on the line for their comrades.

Players have to work together in order to win a game or have an effective offense and defense, Williams added.

"It's not like football where one person can make a play that defines an entire game," Williams continued.

"You have to trust the man or woman to your left and to your right in order to succeed in this sport," De Castro Pretelt added. Simmons said he feels as close to his rugby team as he does to the brothers he deployed and went to war with.

"It forms a brotherhood that I have no comparison for," Simmons added.

Williams explained the Phantom Warriors don't use rank on the rugby field.

"We're all brothers trying to win a game and do the best that we can," Williams added.

De Castro Pretelt said Simmons treats the team like family.

"We don't shake hands," De Castro Pretelt added. "We hug whenever we see each other."

By playing with coconuts instead of traditional structured rugby while growing up in Fiji, Simmons learned to play by analyzing the field, De Castro Pretelt said.

Simmons is a very knowledgeable player because he has been playing this sport for so long, Williams added.

De Castro Pretelt thinks Simmons has a sort of natural instinct greatly benefitting the team.

"He serves as an inspiration of what they can become," De Castro Pretelt added.

Williams said Simmons' in depth knowledge of the game and basic skills helps him come up with practice drills for the younger players.

De Castro Pretelt believes if the Phantom Warriors can master what Simmons knows in addition to the traditional strategic way of playing rugby the team will be phenomenal.

"You are going to play against people who outweigh you, who outreach you, who are probably faster than you, but that's the whole point of the game," Simmons said.

"What is life without a little bit of a challenge," Simmons asked. "How do you know your limits if you don't test them?"

The Phantom Warriors are constantly searching for players to join them on the pitch. Any Soldier interested in trying out for the team may contact Stephanie Mann, MWR Varsity Sports Coordinator, at (254) 287-5405.

## CONTACT US

Have an interesting story idea? Know an interesting Soldier? Feel free to contact our office via phone, email or social media. We would love to hear from you!

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<https://www.twitter.com/1stcav1bct>



# Ironhorse EO News

## Your BDE EOA

1BCT Equal Opportunity Advisor



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## Monthly Observance

### Hispanic Heritage Month Observance

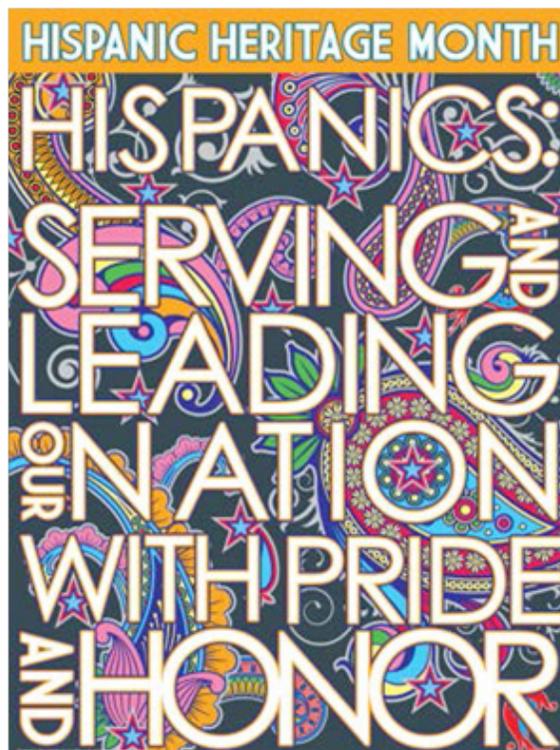
Guest Speaker  
Col (Ret) Raul G. Villaronga  
(Former Killeen Mayor)

24 September 2013  
1330 – 1430hrs  
Phantom Warrior Center

## SQDN/BN EOLs

HHT, 1BCT  
SSG Clay / 287-6121  
1-7 CAV  
SSG Buchanan / 618-7162  
2-5 CAV  
SSG Mouring / 288-1417  
2-8 CAV  
SFC Benavides / 288-6000  
1-82 FA  
SSG Grabowski / 288-7851  
115th BSB  
SFC McLeod / 287-0812  
1 BSTB  
SSG Pinder / 288-2221

## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH



“The inspiration for this year’s Hispanic Heritage Month poster came from Latin wrought ironwork and embroidery,” said Mr. Hemmer. “The interlaced shapes of iron seemed to echo interlaced stories of strength, pride and honor which are woven throughout the history of Hispanics’ service to our country. The brightly colored embroidery patterns inspired me by their vibrancy and movement,” he said while describing the background for the poster.

### What is Hispanic Heritage Month?

This month has been designated to celebrate the rich heritage and cultural diversity that Hispanic Americans have contributed to our country. According to the National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers, this year’s theme is *“Hispanics: Serving and Leading our Nation with Pride and Honor.”*

This observance began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson; it was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period—September 15 through October 15. The celebration commences on September 15 because five Latin American countries, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, declared their independence from Spanish colonization on this day in 1821. Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively.

**Visit any of the Ft Hood Dining Facilities for lunch on 24 Sept 2013 for a taste of Hispanic Cuisine.**

SOURCE: [www.deomi.org](http://www.deomi.org) (DEOMI RELEASES 2013 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH OBSERVANCE POSTER)