

COBRA

VOL. I, ISSUE I

STRIKE



4BCT Deploys to Baghdad



see

TASK FORCE COBRA ... pg. 4



Iraqis take over FOB--pg.6



Forever Honored--pg.15



Table of Contents

pg. 3	COMMANDER'S UPDATE BRIEF
pg. 7	COBRA QRF ready to rock'n'roll
pg. 8	Baghdad, a city of Brotherly Love
pg. 9	Sharpshooters score M14
pg. 10	Helping make Baghdad better
pg. 11	Soldiers embody WARRIOR ETHOS
pg. 12	SPOT REPORT
pg. 16	UNSUNG HEROES
pg. 16	Culture Notes: Ashura
pg. 17	Couple re-enlist in Baghdad
pg. 18	SAFETY FIRST with Sean Morrill
pg. 19	COBRA FITNESS
pg. 20	U.S. Army in the News
pg. 21	This Day in History
pg. 22	COBRA vFRG
pg. 23	COBRA'S LIGHT
pg. 24	SGT'S TIME

COVER PHOTO:

Iraqi Map
Graphic
designed by
Staff Sgt. Raymond Piper
(4th BCT, 3rd ID Public Affairs)



Printed circulation: 5,000

Commander: Col. Michael F. Beech

Command Sergeant Major: Command Sgt. Maj. John E. Moody, Jr.

Public Affairs Officer: Maj. Mark Cheadle

Editor: Staff Sgt. Brent M. Williams

Staff Writer: Pfc. Jason W. Dangel

Cultural Notes: D. Saleeh

In accordance with AR 360-1, this insert is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army.

Contents of this newsletter are not necessarily the views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, Department of the Army, III Corps or the 4th Infantry Division.

The Cobra Strike is published monthly by the 4th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Team, 4th Infantry Division and is reproduced via a contracted private publication company. Questions or comments can be directed to the editor located at Forward Operating Base Prosperity, in Baghdad, Iraq at 242-5269.

All editorial content of this newsletter is prepared, edited, provided, and approved by the 4th BCT Public Affairs Team and the 4th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office. This insert is printed by the Al Sabah Jadeed Printing House, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army.

COBRA⁶ on POINT

Greetings,

The Cobras have arrived safely in central Baghdad and have been conducting very successful operations. We deployed over 3,500 Soldiers and thousands of pieces of equipment to our final destination without a single serious injury or loss of equipment. We are off to a great start.

We conducted a smooth transition of authority and took over the battle space from 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division on Jan. 14. Since then we have made progress in our efforts toward training the Iraqi Security Forces, improving the quality of life of the local populace in governance, essential life services and economy.

The enemy has tested our mettle and found that the Cobras are ready for anything they can throw at us. Thanks to the capabilities of our Soldiers, our Iraqi Security Force partners and the Iraqi citizens, we have captured many insurgents

and established the framework for effective relationships.

We have enjoyed some great first successes as well as the bitter taste of loss. We continue to perform vigilantly, strengthened by those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Our Soldiers are living the Warrior Ethos every day. They will never quit and remain on duty with steadfast resolve.

It is obvious to everyone here that the training we did at home is paying off and saving lives everyday. We have had some Soldiers wounded in action. In every case they were evacuated to the hospital in minutes and received superb care and treatment from the point of injury and further on as needed.

Despite their injuries, these heroes all tell me that they want to get back to their unit. Our Soldiers inspire and motivate me everyday.

We are making significant progress

toward Iraq's self-reliance.

The Iraqi security forces are stepping up to the plate. They now control

more than 50% of Baghdad. The number and scope of their operations in our area, now eclipse that of our own.

I am encouraged by the steadfast and loyal families that are taking care of each other at home. I have been very proud of the dedication and hard work of our Family Readiness Groups.

Keeping the Soldiers focused on the mission at hand is key to our mission accomplishment.

COBRA STRIKE!



Col. Michael F. Beech

F*R*O*M THE F*R*O*N*T

I want to take this moment to greet all of our Soldiers in the brigade. I am proud to be serving with you on this mission.

On January 14, 2006 the Cobra Brigade accepted with pride the transfer of authority from Vanguard Brigade (3rd Infantry Division). I want to personally thank the leaders and Soldiers of Vanguard for such a smooth transition.

Godspeed to you all as you return home to your loved ones.

You have done an excellent job in your transition. I am

particularly proud of your attitude, professionalism and your "can do" spirit.

I am amazed at how motivated you are at doing your job, and I think you are doing an excellent job so far.

During our time here, we must make this a better place first and foremost. We must defeat the insurgency, protect our Soldiers from attack and assist the Iraqi people to ultimately make this country a safer place.

In order to accomplish this we must take the upmost care of one another and remain vigilant against the enemy. When you go out the gate, understand what we are doing here.

While one part of our mission is to assist the Iraqi people, there is also an enemy who is trying to interfere with every-



Command Sgt. Maj. John E. Moody, Jr.

thing we are trying to accomplish. We must remain focused!

Soldiers you are doing more than just "pulling guard." Every military occupational skill is important in making a difference. Everyone's job is a valuable contribution to the mission. We must take it seriously—there is no other option!

From the time this brigade was established, our priority has been soldiering on the basics and successfully accomplishing whatever mission is set before us, and that has not changed.

Let's not lose focus on the basics such as pre-combat checks prior to every mission and maintenance on your equipment.

Leaders, you must place this in the forefront of each and every one of your Soldiers' minds.

Finally, I want Soldiers to be safe! We must not become our own worst enemy through carelessness and negligent behavior. I challenge every Cobra NCO to train their Soldiers to cut out negligent discharges and excessive speeding. This will ensure our Soldiers' safety throughout the ranks. So far, we have done well, but there is always room for improvement. Be safe, stay focused and be vigilant.

COBRA 7 OUT!

Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division arrived at Forward Operating Base Prosperity during December and made a successful transition with the departing 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division in a transfer of authority ceremony Jan. 14.

Graphic by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Brent M. Williams



TASK FORCE COBRA

starts first mission in Iraq

*4th Brigade Combat Team,
4th Infantry Division embarks
on first mission in support
of Operation Iraqi Freedom*

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

After a successful transition with the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, the 4th Infantry Division's Cobra Brigade is ready for its first mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 4th Brigade Combat Team took command of central and southern Baghdad as Commander Col. Michael F. Beech and Command Sergeant Major Command Sgt. Maj. John E. Moody, Jr., unfurled the brigade colors during a Transfer of Authority Ceremony at Forward Operating Base Prosperity Jan. 14.

The ceremony marked the start of Task Force Cobra, and the brigade's first deployment since its activation Dec. 16, 2004.

"This unit was formed specifically for this mission a year ago," Beech said. "We spent the last 12 months prior to this deployment focused on coming to Iraq to do this mission, and after a year of preparing for this operation, and building this brigade, it is a phenomenal thing to see it

all come together here in Iraq."

As the battalions of Task Force Cobra execute their mission in the war zone, said Beech, their primary focus will be security of the key infrastructure of Iraq's new government, partnering and developing Iraqi Security Forces, and helping Iraqi Security Forces defeat anti-Iraqi forces throughout the brigade's area of operations.

"During the short time the U.S. Army has been here, we've seen great strides in the Iraqi Security Forces' ability to defeat the IAF and secure the population," Beech said.

"During our time here, their ability will increase," said the colonel from Worcester, Mass.

The Cobra Brigade brings six of its own battalions to the fight, and employs a host of units as well to include a company from 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, attached to the task force from the 101st Airborne Division.

With the implementation of its "Strike Force" Soldiers from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 506th Inf., the brigade totals approximately 4,000 combat-ready personnel.

The brigade's subordinate combat battalions 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry; 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry; and 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery are located throughout brigade's battle space and have begun full spectrum combat operations, said Beech.

"Over the last few days our Soldiers on the ground have been extraordinarily successful identifying a variety of threats," Beech said. "Everyday there are dozens of examples

where our Soldiers and leaders on the ground are making a huge difference, getting this country closer to a self-sustaining independent democracy."

"After being here for the last few weeks, it's absolutely clear that we have the best trained, best equipped and the best lead Army in the world," he said.

we have the best trained, best equipped and the best lead Army in the world," he said.

Cobra combat support and combat service support units, the 4th Special Troops Battalion and 704th Support Battalion will be responsible for command and control for all the units of Task Force Cobra while simultaneously providing logistical support, said Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Walker, 4th STB, 4th BCT.

"The (forward) support battalion role is complex," he explained.

"Some units must provide the brigade with the ability to communicate and operate," he explained. "Others must gather intelligence; while others must maintain detainee collection points and other assets essential to the mission."

Created as a unit of action under the U.S. Army's force restructuring, the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., manned, equipped and trained more than 3,500 Soldiers in less than one year, and began deploying personnel to Camp Buehring, Kuwait late November.

As the brigade's Soldiers arrived at Camp Buehring, the battalions began preparing for the eventual movement to Iraq.

Each Cobra Soldier completed additional training, conducted preventive maintenance checks and services and performed pre-combat inspections before leaving for Baghdad.



Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Brent M. Williams

Soldiers from the 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry question a young Iraqi man about a recent attack with a Vehicle-Born Improvised Explosive Device on an Iraqi Army checkpoint in southwest Baghdad. Soldiers of Task Force Cobra worked hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Army during a cordon and search operation in which members of the 5th Brigade, 6th Division went on the offensive to combat the insurgency in Iraq.

Some of these requirements included Improvised Explosive Device awareness training as well as weapon proficiency and crew-served gunnery ranges.

After fine tuning their weapons and combat knowledge, the Cobra Brigade began they're trek into Baghdad, arriving just in time for the Holidays, where many Soldiers celebrated Christmas and New Years at their assigned forward operating bases.

Shortly after holiday festivities subsided, leaders from the 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., the "Vanguard Brigade," helped their replacements take the lead in daily operations as final transitions between the two brigades took place.

"I feel that our transition with the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division was absolutely superb," Beech said. "It really served as the capstone event and put the finishing touches on this brigade as we ready ourselves for this mission," Beech said.

As the Vanguard Brigade returns to their home station at Fort Stewart, Ga., Task Force Cobra will assume responsibilities building upon and adding to the accomplishments of the nation of Iraq.

"The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division had a very successful rotation," said the brigade command sergeant major, a native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

"Many Soldiers from their units lost their lives while they were here," Moody said. "They gave their lives for a great cause, and we intend to build upon all the success they achieved."

The Cobra Brigade will play a critical role in the success of the new Iraqi government as the people of Iraq work to make history, said Moody.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent M. Williams

(Left to Right) Lt. Col. Lian Gentile, commander, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry and 4th Brigade Combat Team Commander Col. Mike Beech observe a joint Iraqi and U.S. Army cordon and search operation in southwest Baghdad.

Iraqi Army takes over U.S. Army base

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

The Iraqi Army's 5th Brigade, 6th Division assumed control of Forward Operating Base Honor from the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team in an official transfer of authority ceremony Jan. 31.

The ceremony marked the increasing role Iraqi Security Forces are undertaking in operations as they continue to maintain more battle space.

"This brigade is responsible to protect Iraq's new government here in the International Zone," said the 5th Bde. Commander Col. Mohammed Wasif.

"The brigade consists of three battalions, he said. "We will work day and night to achieve our mission for the new government of Iraq."

FOB Honor is located in the palace district in central Baghdad and housed the former Ba'athist regime prior to the war.

Prior to coalition arrival, U.S. air strikes destroyed five of the twenty buildings of the former regime headquarters.

Today fifteen buildings still stand as Iraqi forces transition with the 4th BCT Cobras and make FOB Honor their new home.

Soldiers from 3rd



Soldiers from the Iraqi Army's 5th Brigade, 6th Division celebrate at the Forward Operating Base Honor Jan. 31.

Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment were the first to move into FOB Honor in October 2003 followed by the 3rd Infantry Division's 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry in Jan. 2004.

The 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div arrived in Baghdad in December 2005 and has relinquished responsibility of the FOB to the Iraqi 5th Bde.

"The turnover of FOB Honor demonstrates the increased capability of Col. Mohammed's brigade to assume greater responsibility and security of Baghdad," said Col. Michael F. Beech, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. Commander.

"The 5th Brigade has earned a reputation of being a tough well led and well trained unit," he said.

The 5th Bde., 6th Div.'s 3rd Battalion will

occupy the area in South FOB Honor and 1st and 2nd Battalions will occupy the area in north FOB Honor.

"Today is another great step forward for the future of Iraq," said the Iraqi Army's 6th Division Commanding General Gen. Mubder Al

Dulaimi.

"Today we lay down a new brick in the building of our Army, he said. We are committed to the citizens of this country and this army, and will defend our homes from the threats of the terrorists as we bring freedom back to this country."

The FOB Honor transition marks the continued improvement in the Iraqi Security Forces' capability over the past year as they continue to assume more battle space throughout the country.

"With the seeding of the new government and the increased capability of Iraqi Security Forces, I'm very optimistic. I think 2006 is going to be a great year for Iraq," Beech said.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

The Iraqi Army's 6th Division Commanding General Gen. Mubder Al Dulaimi speaks to his Soldiers of the 5th Brigade 6th Division at Forward Operating Base Honor Jan. 31.

The CURRAHEE COBRAS



Cobra's Quick Reaction Force-- Currahee's Company C makes the green

*Story by
Pfc. Jason Dangel*

Soldiers from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division walk the grounds of Forward Operating Base Prosperity as the newest members of Task Force Cobra, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division knowing they have a special mission.

With a stone cold stare and an attitude only found in "Currahee" country, the paratroopers from the mighty 101st have one mission alone, to be ready at a moment's call, 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week, as the "Cobra" Brigade's Quick Reaction Force.

"Once our guys arrive at the scene, our primary responsibilities are to access the situation, pull security and treat casualties," explained Sgt. 1st Class David W. Keeler, platoon sergeant, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment.

The company of approximately 150 "Screaming Eagles" must be able to react at a moment's notice to any given scenario, to include Improvised Explosive Devices, Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices and hostile gunfire, said Keeler, a native of Heidelberg, Miss.

"When we get a call we have to be up and gone almost instantly," he said.

The primary responsibility of the QRF, said Keeler, is to be the first to respond to any hostile action, or enemy engagement a convoy may face while traveling inside the brigade's area of operations.

No matter how minor the incident may be, a QRF must be ready to respond, he explained.

As the Soldiers of the 4th Inf. Div.'s Task Force Ironhorse prepare for a year-long deployment in the combat zone, cohesion between partner units will be quintessential for the success of the mission, said Sgt. Robert H. Steele, team leader, Co. C, 2nd Bn., 506th Inf. Reg.

"It's been great working with 4th ID so far," Steele said. "I'm looking forward to working with them during the deployment."

The platoon sergeant, a native of Independence, Ore. said the only major change from his last deployment to Iraq will be working with a mechanized unit, during which mounted patrols will be used the majority of the time while conducting QRF operations.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

**Sgt. 1st Class David W. Keeler, platoon sergeant,
Company C, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment,
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division**

"Mounted patrols are a whole different world than being on the ground," he explained.

"I would say about 90 percent of the guys here are used to doing foot patrols. We'll have to see how it pans out during the course of the year."

Pvt. Sean P. Sullivan, an infantryman from Cincinnati said he wants to use his time on the QRF team as a learning experience and a chance see a part of the world.

"This is something I've always wanted to experience," he said. "Everything I've done so far has been a learning experience, and it's been awesome."

With a history of greatness dating back to D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge during World War II, the Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division come to FOB Prosperity ready to take the fight to the enemy and accomplish their mission.

"You can ask any retiree from any war, and if you were to show them the 101st patch with the airborne tab sitting on top of it, they would tell you, 'That is one great unit,'" Keeler explained.

"The 101st has been around a long time, and has completed some great missions," said Keeler emphatically. "This mission will be no different. The 101st is the most lethal light infantry unit in the Army!"

As the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. transitions with the 3rd Inf. Div.'s "Vanguard" Brigade and assumes responsibilities of the International Zone, the Soldiers from the "Cobra" Brigade can find comfort in knowing that the paratroopers from the "Strike Force" Battalion have their back.

Family Reunion

Walker brothers

Spc. Taruis Walker

Spc. Marquis Walker

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

reunite in Baghdad

For many servicemembers, family is the driving force, a channel of support during hard times. Going home to be with family, as most Soldiers would attest, is the ultimate reward after a long deployment in a combat zone.

As the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division assumes command from 3rd Infantry Division, a "Vanguard" Soldier, has requested to stay in Baghdad a little longer.

After completing a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, U.S. Army Spc. Taries Walker wants to stay another year, and his reason is ... family.

The 20-year old medic assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team made the decision after hearing his older brother's unit would relieve his battalion, currently operating out of Forward Operating Base Union in the International Zone.

"I thought about staying here for another year, when I found out he was coming here, and especially when I found out he was going to be on this FOB," Taries, a native of Las Vegas, Nev., explained.

Taries' decision to stay could prove to be a huge test for his new family. Taries and wife, Shantell, were married before he left for Iraq in Jan. 2004. He also has a 2-year old daughter, Saniya.

"When we were growing up, it was just basically us brothers, and we didn't see much of our cousins or anything," he said. "If I were able to stay and change over to his unit, our kids would be growing up right around each other."

Spc. Marquis Walker, a radio and communications specialist assigned to the 704th Forward Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, arrived at FOB Union three days before Christmas, where he was greeted by his brother's unit.

"It was funny, because when I got here

people were telling me 'Hey, your brother is here. He's looking for you,'" said the 23-year old Walker. "It was really weird to see him."

Marquis, a native of Thomaston, Ga. sent emails to his brother virtually everyday from Fort Hood, Texas until his departure for Kuwait Dec. 4.

He didn't realize that within the coming weeks he would reunite with Taries in Baghdad.

"I kept looking on the vehicles for the numbers, and I noticed the 1-76 (FA)," Marquis said, looking up at his brother and laughing. "I remembered that it was his unit, but I really didn't think I'd end up seeing him here."

A former Marine, Marquis knew the importance of staying in touch with his younger brother, who deployed with the 3rd Infantry Division in January 2004.

"I had a ton of questions before I got here," Marquis said, "and some of the information that he gave me I went ahead and passed it on to my battle buddies."

With a year of work in the combat zone, Taries took every opportunity to help his brother with any questions about his deployment.

"I wanted to pass my knowledge onto him," he said. "I spent a whole year out here, and I figured I could tell him everything I know before he got here."

The Walker brothers have been best friends for as long as they can remember. Their close bond stems back to childhood.

Their father served 15 years and their mother four in the U.S. Army. Like many military families, the Walkers moved as their families changed duty stations, constantly redefining what the brothers called "home."

When Marquis graduated high school and left their home for the U.S. Marine Corps in 2000, the brothers did not drift apart, but became closer than ever.

After three years of splitting time

between college, the Marine Corps and his wife, Marquis decided to join the Army, and follow in his younger brother's footsteps

"I figured it was the best thing to do at the time," said Marquis, who attended the University of Mexico. "I was kind of burnt out and wanted my life to get started."

While Taries had already completed his Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training, his brother Marquis had just started his tenure in the Army.

The former Marine attended his AIT at Fort Gordon, Ga., and coincidentally, his younger brother was stationed just four hours away at Fort Stewart, Ga.

"We ended up hooking up almost every weekend at my dad's house. It was pretty nice," Marquis explained.

Two years later, the Walkers once again find themselves together in a military setting, but this time, under entirely different conditions.

As if one year deployed in a combat zone wasn't enough, Taries wants to stay in Iraq with his brother.

"I was a lot more ready to go before he got here," Taries said. "I mean I want to go home to my family, but I kind of feel like if I left, I would be abandoning him."

As much as Marquis wants Taries to stay, he believed his brother deserves to go home and be with his family.

"He's been over here a year, and no matter how much I feel like I'm the big brother, he has the experience," Marquis said.

As Task Force Cobra began its mission, Taries redeployed to the United States in mid-January, returning to his family.

Despite being separated once again from one another, both brothers agreed on one point.

"We are family and everything, but at the same time, we're Soldiers," they agreed. "We have a job to do."

SHARPSHOOTERS

set sights on

M14

Story by
Pfc. Jason Dangel

A weapon known for its durability and long-range accuracy can be seen around the shoulders of many of the Soldiers from 4th Brigade Combat Team walking the sandy roads of Camp Beuhring, Kuwait.

The M14 rifle, originally used during the Korean war and during the first half of the Vietnam War has been assigned to select combat personnel who scored expert or higher during weapon's qualifications earlier this year.

The weapon is intended to be used as a sniper rifle, and gives Soldiers the ability to acquire targets that the M16 or M4 rifles cannot reach.

"This is a great long-range weapon," explained Spc. Paul Canale, personal security detachment team leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th BCT.

"The effective maximum range is something like 800 meters and it definitely packs a punch," he said during a class conducted to familiarize Soldiers with the weapon.

As the predecessor of the famous M1 Grande rifle, the M14's wooden stalk supports a chamber compatible the robust 7.62 millimeter round, and can be fed with a magazine and can also be top loaded rather quickly with its built-in speed loader mechanism, said Canale.

This user-friendly weapon can also be assembled and reassembled quite easily as it has only seven main components.

Typically each squad is issued two sniper rifles, usually the best two marksmen in the squad carry the M14, said Canale.

"This weapon definitely gives us another way to take the fight to the enemy, explained Sgt. Andres Su, cavalry scout, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, 4th BCT.

"We now have the ability to fire long-range if the situation permits. It's a little extra to tote around but its

Sgt. Lorenzo Luna Headquarters and Headquarters Company
4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division

definitely a great acquisition," he said.

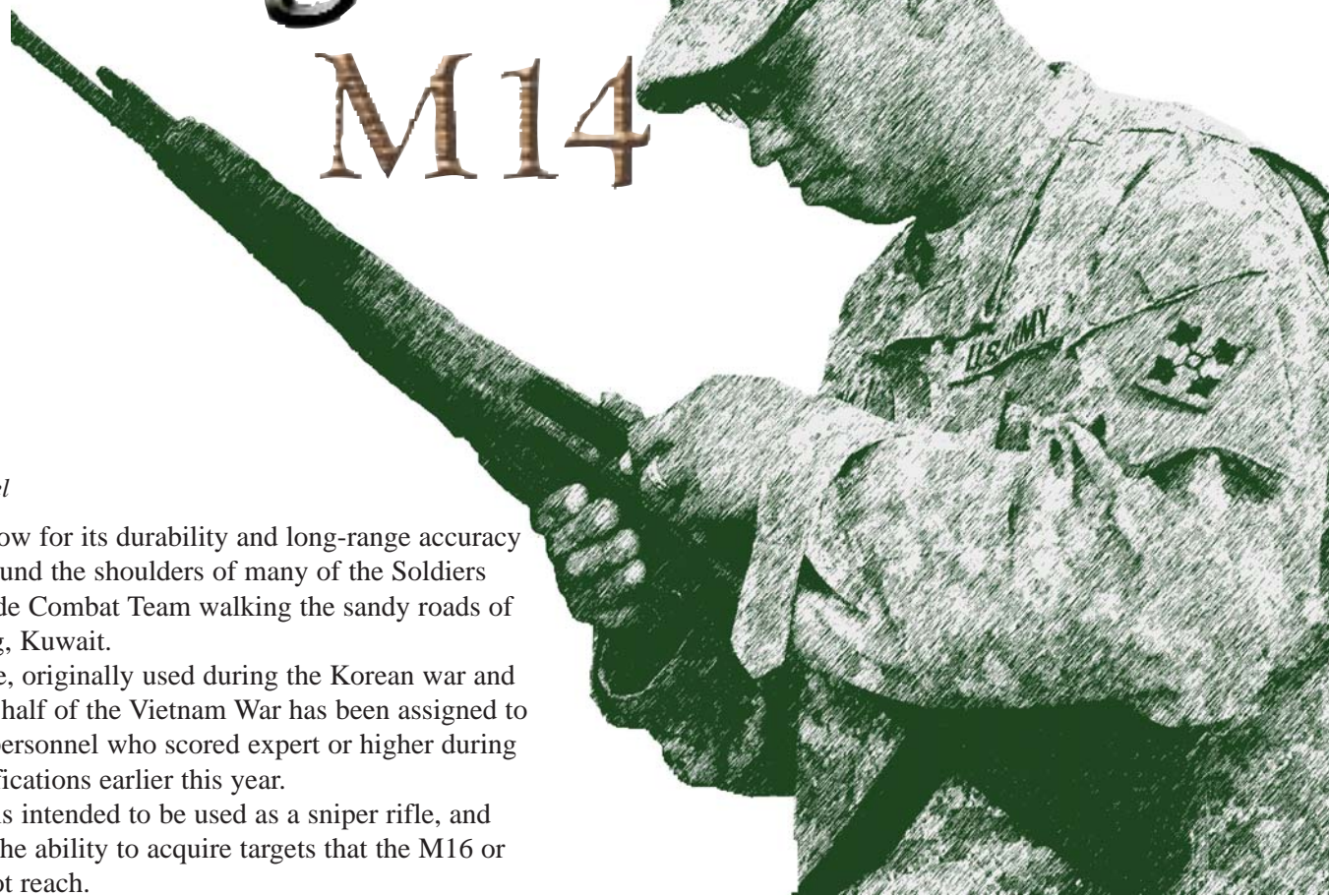
The M14 is also a very durable and reliable weapon, a great attribute for a piece of equipment that will soon see the harsh, sandy environment of the Middle East. Its durability is second to none when it comes durability, Canale said.

"You can drop this thing in the mud, get it wet or sandy and it will still fire," he said.

"If my M4 locks up on me, I know what weapon I'm going to pick up, that's for sure."

As the time draws near for the Cobra Brigade to depart from the sandy training grounds at Camp Beuhring, the Soldiers that form its formations have a high level of morale knowing they have another way to take the fight to the enemy.

"If I need to hit an insurgent down range I can do that. If my weapon malfunctions in the heat of battle I have another weapon in reserve," explained Su.



Rebuilding Baghdad

Story by Staff Sgt. Brent M. Williams

Responsible for the rebuilding of Baghdad's essential services, such as the restoration and improvement of electricity, water, sewer and transportation systems, the members of the 4th Infantry Division's Task Force Cobra Infrastructure Civil Engineer Cell have their work cut out for them.

A daunting task that requires support from the newly-elected Iraqi government, state departments and non-governmental organizations, the 4th Brigade Combat Team, reconstruction efforts are one of the many missions facing the task force today.

"We bridge the gap by developing a relationship with not only the Iraqis, to gain their priorities—that is really where we are trying to focus at," said Maj. Ray Proske, executive officer, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th BCT, "but also to make sure that we begin to build a relationship with the (Iraqi) state departments that are currently standing up."

The coordination cell works with local leaders within the communities and neighborhoods to identify and service their particular needs, working especially to coordinate the repair of Iraqi essential services within the brigade's prescribed area of operations.

"Each of the different areas has its unique challenges," Proske, a native of Giddings, Tx., said. "One thing to keep in mind: most of the infrastructure in this country was built more than 20 years ago, and has been very poorly maintained, and especially since 1990."

The problem is also complicated by numerous unauthorized taps on the city's water and electrical systems, "further draining an already depleted infrastructure," Proske said.

This will only be resolved once the city begins to regulate the services it provides to the people living in Baghdad, he explained.

As a result, the biggest task before the four-man team, responsible for overseeing special reconstruction projects in Central and South Baghdad, is working with the local Iraqi governance to ensure that the planning, upkeep and improvement of city systems happens as efficiently as possible.

The engineers overcome this challenge by hiring local Iraqi engineers to maintain and supervise the many ongoing projects to assist in quality assurance and ensure that the contractors are providing an adequate product, said Proske.

"Though we have a small staff, the local Iraqi engineers that are hired are absolutely vital to operations for the ICE," he said.

As a result, their consultant engineer, an Iraqi man named Thamer, wears many hats.

The 46-year old electrical engineer is responsible for identifying all the scopes of work within the communities and coordinating the execution of each project through the different state departments, each responsible for a service in the Baghdad area.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent M. Williams

"After that we bid for those projects, we call contractors, and we give them those bids to submit it at those prices," said Thamer. "We analyze the price and compare it with the quantity to see if it is reasonable or not."

Thamer, who earned his Masters degree in engineering from the University of Birmingham, UK, also manages several Iraqi site engineers, who supervise the local contractors to ensure the quality of work, and the project is completed in a timely manner.

After the project is finished, the ICE also maintains contacts with the two district advisory councils within the brigade's battle space and the Iraqi government to ensure that the work completed meets the Iraqi people's needs.

"Our goal is to give a very good project to serve the people," Thamer said. "We are in constant contact with the departments and the employees with the district council in order to coordinate with the contractors."

Capt. Robert Graetz, sewers project manager, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th STB, hopes that the projects being completed now will eventually lay the groundwork for larger construction projects that will increase the capabilities of the current systems.

Yet, even as the civil engineers work to improve living conditions for the communities, they are also working to help the Iraqi people become self-sufficient.

"A good solution is, instead of throwing a lot of money into project after project, invest funding into the city government to prop up their operating budget, so that they can do it themselves," said Graetz, a native of Union Grove, Wis.

A West Point Graduate with a Masters degree from the University of Missouri—Rolla, Graetz said that one way the U.S. Army is accomplishing this goal is by providing equipment, training and technical expertise to the maintenance departments and the local communities within the districts.

Most of the projects beginning during 4th BCT's deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom will take a while to complete, said Graetz.

In fact, many of the end effects of the projects will not be seen until after Task Force Cobra has completed its mission and redeployed, he said.

Despite this fact, "generally, making Baghdad a better place to live," will remain the ICE Cell's primary mission and full-time job, said Graetz.

A Tale of Heroes

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Prior to a deployment, Soldiers learn how to react to situations that arise in combat. Three Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division applied the skills they learned to ensure the safety of their wounded comrades.

Staff Sgt. Bradley Hoy, Sgt. Jeffrey Rogers and Spc. Paul Canale, 4th BCT Personal Security Detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, successfully evacuated two wounded Soldiers and detained a suspected insurgent after an improvised explosive device struck their convoy Jan. 16.

The six-vehicle convoy was returning from a routine mission inside the brigade's area of operations when the blast erupted under the second vehicle, wounding the gunner, Pfc. Lee Hueckstaedt, and driver, Pfc. Robert Blade.

The blast destroyed the front end of their M114 High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle, tossing the armored vehicle approximately eight feet into the air.

Amidst confusion and a billowing cloud of dust and debris sat Rogers inside the overturned vehicle confused and disoriented.

"It took me a second to get my bearing. I didn't know which way I was faced or really what had just happened," the 23 year-old Buffalo, N.Y. native said.

Once Rogers regained his composure, the first thing that was on his mind was the safety of his men, and immediately took control of the situation.

"I started calling off names to the people I knew that were in the truck," the 23-year old team leader explained. "When I called out to my gunner and didn't get a response, I knew something was wrong."

Hueckstaedt received the worst injuries, after he was thrown from his gunner's position into the road 20 feet away.

As Rogers coordinated his troops' movements to ensure the area was clear, Canale rushed over to Hueckstaedt with Combat Lifesaver Bag in hand and began treating his injuries.

Blade received only minor abrasions and bruising to his lower legs and tried his best to help Canale tend to Hueckstaedt.

"As soon as we got hit I jumped out of the vehicle and saw one of our guys on the ground and another one stumbling around," Canale explained.



U.S. Army photo

Spc. Paul Canale, Personal Security Detachment, HHC, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. rushes to the aid of his team members after an Improvised Explosive Device struck a vehicle in their convoy.

"I ran over to Hueckstaedt, who was on the ground, and noticed he was bleeding from the head pretty bad, so I immediately applied a dressing," the 30 year-old team lead said.

After stabilizing the wound, Canale stayed with Hueckstaedt to ensure the young gunner would not lapse into shock.

"I just wanted to reassure him that everything was going to be okay, and he was still pretty," Canale said, a native of

Bethlehem, Penn.

Meanwhile, Hoy was on a mission of his own. Before the attack, Hoy had observed an individual walking away from the explosion undeterred, and apprehensive.

The 26 year-old Llano, Texas native's intuitive nature led him to believe the suspicious person walking down the road could have been involved, and with haste, pursued the suspect.

"I noticed a guy walking on the side of the road about 75 meters from the blast, and when the blast occurred he didn't turn around," Hoy said.

The suspect was later transported to the Detainee Holding area for further questioning.

Once the situation was under control, Hoy and Rogers decided to stay in the area and look for more IED's and any possible subjects associated with the blast, while Canale helped prepare the wounded for medical evacuation.

After thoroughly searching the area, the team had found nothing, and returned to see their troopers off with Canale and the rest of their team as a U.S. Army UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter sped towards the closest medical facility.

"It's very important to keep your composure in situations such as this, especially if you're a leader on the ground because you have to coordinate and make things happen very quickly," Hoy said.

Rogers credits the entire PSD team for their ability to immediately respond and get the job done.

"When we first started this deployment we thought some of our guys were a little immature. We were a little bit uncertain about their abilities, and how they would react in a combat environment," Rogers explained.

"When something like this happens, it really puts some age on your people," he said. "Everybody came together; they followed the orders of the team leaders and did a great job."

Hueckstaedt was later presented a Purple Heart by the 4th Infantry Division Commanding General Maj. Gen. J.D. Thurman for wounds received in service of his country.

SPOT REPORT

Spc. Mary Anton, and Spc. Stephanie Beechley, Troop D, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry stand guard during a cordon and search operation in South Baghdad.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Lt. Col. Darron Wright, 4th Brigade Combat Team Executive Officer, scrambles away from a tackle during a flag football game at Forward Operating Base Prosperity.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Commanding General Multi-National Force-Iraq Gen. George W. Casey, Jr. addresses progress in Iraq with Laura Ingraham, a nationally syndicated radio show host, at the Combined Press Information Center in central Baghdad. Soldiers From the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division had a chance to watch and participate in a live show with Ingraham at CPIC Feb. 8.

Fourteen Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery reenlist in the shadow of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in central Baghdad.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Chaplain (CPT) Will Horton, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and chaplain assistant Staff Sgt. John Ocasio participate in a candlelight vigil on Christmas Eve at Forward Operating Base Prosperity.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division form a massive line as they prepare to zero their M2A3 Bradley Team Fighting Vehicles at Udari Range in Kuwait Dec. 16. The Soldiers conducted the additional training as part of the brigade's a mandatory training requirement before moving into Iraq.

Let's We Forget

I will always place the mission first

I will never accept defeat



I will never quit
I will never leave a fallen comrade

Forever Honored

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

January 29 was a somber day of reflection as the Warriors of 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division said farewell to two of their brothers-in-arms at Forward Operating Base Prosperity.

Staff Sgt. Lance M. Chase of Oklahoma City, Okla., and Pfc. Peter D. Wagler of Partridge, Kan., both assigned to Company D, 1st Bn. 12th Inf. were remembered for their dignity, valor and honor, said Warrior Commander Lt. Col. Robert Estey.

Chase, 32, and Wagler, 18, were killed on patrol in the Doura District in Baghdad when an enemy improvised



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

The 4th Infantry Division 4th Brigade Combat Team Commander Col. Michael F. Beech and Command Sergeant Major John E. Moody, Jr., pay their respects to the late Staff Sgt. Lance M. Chase and Cpl. Peter D. Wagler Jan. 29.

explosive device detonated on their vehicle Jan. 23.

"These two men courageously volunteered to lead America's response to international terror, and they lead the way, facing our enemies over here so our families would not have to face that terror back home," Estey said.

Currahee Soldiers gave all

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

"We have a lot of work to do here in Iraq, and they would have expected us to carry on and continue with our tough mission and continue to do it with the same spirit,"

With these words, a solemn Lt. Col. Gregory K. Butts, commander, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, bid farewell to two of his Soldiers in a memorial ceremony at Forward Operating Base Falcon.

Sgt. David L. Herrera, 27, of La Mesa, Calif. assigned to Company D and Cpl. Brian J. Schoff, 22, of Manchester, Tenn., assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn., 506th Inf. were killed in two separate enemy Improvised Explosive Device attacks.

"Sgt. David Herrera and Cpl. Brian Schoff gave the ultimate sacrifice, Butts said. "As we continue to do our mission in the upcoming months, we will do so with their memory in our hearts."

Capt. Jeremy C. Fisk, commander, Co. D, 2nd Bn., 506th Inf. gave a tearful tribute to one of his finest noncommissioned officers as he described Herrera as a warrior and professional Soldier.

"To sit-in on one of his mission briefs was a demonstration of the high level of technical and tactical competence that exists among the NCO Corps of the 101st Airborne."

Close friend and subordinate, Cpl. Eric N. Robinson described Herrera as a father, a leader and an inspiration to all sergeants.

"His keen eye for detail, unfaltering discipline and his commitment drove Delta Company, 3rd Platoon to be the best in everything we did."

"He died doing what he believed in; fighting the global war on terrorism and defending the call of freedom."

Capt. Jessie K. Griffith, commander, HHC, said Schoff exemplified what a great Soldier should be.

"Cpl. Brian Schoff was a great Soldier, and on his way to being a great man," he said.

Leader and friend Capt. Christopher B. Wood said Schoff was a great friend and expert infantryman who was always there to help his fellow Soldiers.

He reflected on Schoff's desire to learn more about his job, and his positive effect on everyone in his life.

"It was an honor and a privilege to

have served with a man like Brian Schoff, his memory will be with us for all of our days."

As the customary Twenty-one Gun Salute rang through the air, Currahee Soldiers said goodbye to two of their friends of the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Col. Thomas D. Vail, commander, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division says goodbye to two of his fallen Soldiers at FOB Falcon Feb 7.

UNSUNG HEROES

On January 12th, around 6 p.m., Pfc. Jason Ackerman, a radio transmitter operator from 8th Battalion, 10th Cavalry Squadron, was on his way to dinner after duty. As he neared the entrance to the Dining Facility, he heard a sudden shuffle and thud, and noticed people moving away from the area. Looking ahead, he realized that an unexploded rocket round had landed about 30 feet from the Dining Facility's main entrance.

His first thoughts were, "Get down, and get away," instinctual actions for the forward observer that he is. However, he realized that there was work to be done.

"Something told me that I should help in getting people out of the danger area," he said in an interview after the incident. After clearing people from the area and having the DFAC guards block off the entrance, he went to a nearby

noncommissioned officer, giving him the Squadron frequency to call in the report.

Shortly after the incident, Maj. Eric Endries, operations officer, and Capt. Jack Lauramore, fire support element, 8th Bn., 10th Sqdn., arrived at the scene. With their help the Mess Sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Perkins, closed off the front entrance to the Dining Facility, and they directed traffic to the rear.

While the Dining Facility staff went to notify an explosive ordnance disposal team of what had happened, Ackerman made sure the ordnance was properly marked with chemical lights and a larger cordon was taped around the site.

After doing everything he could to secure the area and protect his fellow Soldiers, Ackerman proceeded to chow, and then returned to his duties.

Pfc. Jason Ackerman, a married, 20-

year old Soldier from Kempner, Texas, lived the Army Values that night. He demonstrated selfless service and personal courage by putting himself in harm's way in order to save the lives of others.



Cultural Notes: A Soldier's guide to Ashura

Story by D. Saleeh

What is Ashura? What is the story behind it? Who is Imam Husain? All these questions are about Al Taaf Battle which took place in Karbala.

The battle was approximately 1,326 years ago when Imam Husain decided to fight Yazeed's Army after he received letters from the residents of Iraq to help them. So he went to Karbala, where he mobilized his army to go to Iraq. Ashura is the incident where Imam Husain was martyred. It was in month of Moharm, according to the Arabian Calendar.

Husain, son of Ali bin Abi Talib, and grandson of the Holy

Prophet, Mohammed.

Who was Husain? He was the son of Fatima for whom the Holy Prophet said, "Husain is from me and I am from Husain. May God love whoever loves Husain."

With the passing away of his brother Hasan in 50 After Hasan, Husain became the leader of the household of Mohammed. Hussain was killed on the battlefield as he did Sajdah. His head was removed from his body on the plains of Karbala, mounted on a spear, and paraded through villages and towns as it was taken to Damascus and presented at the feet of Yazid.

Why is Husain regarded as the "leader of the martyrs"? It is

because he was not just the victim of an ambitious ruler. There is no doubt that the tragedy of Karbala, when ascribed to the killers, is a criminal and terrible act. However when ascribed to Husain himself, it represents a conscious confrontation and a courageous resistance for a sacred cause. The whole nation had failed to stand up to Yazid. They had succumbed to his will.

So after the battle was completed, the people felt guilty, because they didn't support him. This was the start of Ashura to commemorate this day and mark it in the history books. During this time the people who believe in Husain started to hit themselves. Every

year they do it during Ashura, and we can see the Shiite in Iraq and around the world do that as the anniversary.

The Ashura starts at the first day of Moharm and lasts for 10 days but the most important days are the 9th and the 10th when Al Husain died. He lost the battle physically but he won spiritually.



photo courtesy of www.I-CIAS.com

Shiite Muslims use red paint to reenact a martyrdom during the Islamic holiday Ashura.

Married couple fights together, re-enlists to stay together

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Some do it for love of country. Others do it for personal gain, financial reasons, security or college. Many for all of the reasons above, but for one couple assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, to reenlist in the U.S. Army is to start a life together again.

Sgt. David A. Seidel and wife, Sgt. Melissa A Seidel, both assigned to the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th BCT, reenlisted after arriving in Kuwait, and for the first time during their 4 years of marriage, the couple will be stationed together in the same unit.

"Our biggest goal right now is to start a family, and hopefully after this deployment nothing will get in our way," said David, a 33-year-old ground station operator assigned to Company A, 4th STB.

After what has so far been a tumultuous marriage, consisting of mainly long distance phone calls, David and Melissa's reenlistment officially marks the start of their lives together.

The couple exchanged vows in April 2002 in a small wedding in David's hometown of Crookston, Minn., while both attended college at the University of Minnesota.

Shortly after joining hands in matrimony, they both made the decision to start a new life together and join the Army.

Melissa was indecisive at first, but after much convincing from her husband who was prior service Army, she decided to become a Soldier.

"David made the suggestion that I join the Army because of the amount of debt I was racking up at college, so I decided to join," said Melissa, a native of Malacca, Minn., assigned to Co. A, 4th STB.

"I think it was the best decision for both of us at the time," said the 33-year old systems maintenance specialist.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason L. Bonds

U.S. Army Sgt. Melissa and Sgt. David Seidel reenlisted in Kuwait to stay together

Melissa, who was 30 at the time, enlisted in the U.S. Army National Guard before making the decision to change over to active duty, and as David said goodbye to his wife of only one month, he prepared to restart his career in the Army.

"It was hard saying goodbye to her," David said. "We had just gotten married and really didn't have time to get adjusted to the lifestyle."

The couple reunited at Fort Wachuka, Arizona, where they had a chance to live together on post while they each attended Advanced Individual Training; however, once again, they were separated upon David's graduation, when he left for duty in Korea.

Shortly after being separated for the second time in their short marriage, Melissa also received orders to Korea, but that still did not mean the couple would be together.

"Even though we both had orders for Korea, we didn't see each other very often, and we couldn't live together," Melissa said.

As David and Melissa both struggled to make time for each other in Korea, their luck would finally change after they both received orders for assignments at Fort Hood, Texas in Sept. 2005.

Melissa's orders were for the 1st Calvary

Division, and David received orders for the 4th Infantry Division's newest brigade, the 4th Brigade Combat Team.

"We were both so happy when we knew we were going to Fort Hood, but the only problem was my unit was getting ready to deploy to Iraq," David said.

As David prepared for his first deployment to Iraq, wife Melissa was able to change her orders and was reassigned to the 4th STB, 4th BCT.

The sergeants deployed together for the first time to a combat zone as the 4th Infantry Division and the Cobra Brigade left for Baghdad, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom Dec. 4.

"I think this deployment will be easier, because we have each other's support," Melissa said smiling. "Anytime I need to talk to someone, he'll be there."

The couple was living together briefly before being deployed, but will have to start anew after they complete their mission in Iraq.

"At least we're together, and that's all that matters," Melissa said.

Melissa and David look forward to their renewed marriage and start to a new life. The sergeants have their hearts set on starting a family when they return home next year.

"One of our long-term goals has always been to set ourselves financially for a future family, and our reenlistment together has given us just that," Melissa said.

The couple grossed a combined sum of \$25,000 of reenlistment bonuses and incentives, and plan to use the money for their family, David said.

As they both embark on their year-long mission in the combat zone, the couple is grateful they are together.

"During our time together we've had our arguments and differences," David said, "but we've been able to make it work."



SAFETY FIRST!

with Sean Morrill

Safety in a Combat Zone?

As we officially take on the mission here in Iraq, it's easy to think that safety is not something we pay attention to in a combat zone. But FM 3.0 Operations says different.

As one of the elements of combat power, it defines "Protection" as "the preservation of the fighting potential of a force, so the Commander can apply maximum force at the decisive time and place."

Safety plays a critical role in ensuring we have enough people and equipment to get our missions accomplished. Safety in a combat zone focuses on using Composite Risk Management to eliminate or reduce those hazards we face from tactical risks and accidental risks.

It is an organized way of thinking ahead using what we know about ourselves, our equipment, our mission, and our enemy. It can give us an edge and helps take the vote away from "Murphy". By following established standards, and having the discipline to follow procedures.

WARNING!
OVERHEAD HAZARD
HARDHAT REQUIRED

FLAMMABLE

NO SMOKING
GROUND USE ONLY

The Army defines Protection as having four elements, these being:

Force Protection – Minimizes the effects the enemy's firepower, maneuver, and information have on us.

Field Discipline – Reduces losses from hostile environments.

Safety - Reduces the inherent risk of non-battle death and injuries

Fratricide Avoidance - Minimizes the inadvertent killing or maiming of Soldiers by friendly fire.



CONSTRUCTION SITE
KEEP OUT

And Soldiers, living on a forward operating base is like living on a construction site!

Avoid hazards by:

Keeping clear of work in progress

Looking out for holes, rebar, broken stairs, and other trip & fall hazards

Don't step on cables or exposed wires

Stay away from generators, electrical boxes, & other FOB equipment

Give construction & supply vehicles plenty of room.

Don't assume they see you!

Don't stand under damaged parts of buildings that could fall on you.

Report hazards in your area to the Mayor's Cell for correction.



Staff Sgt. Donaval Avila, Reconnaissance Noncommissioned Officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, squats 405 lbs. with Staff Sgt. Andre Brown, HHC, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. spotting the bar at the Forward Operating Base Prosperity Physical Fitness Center Feb. 9.



COBRA FITNESS

Newsletter and Fitness tips by:

Pfc. Jason Dangel

A former Personal Trainer certified by the American Counsel on Exercise

Stay fit in the combat zone!

Deployments can be a hard time for everyone. More times than not you're gone for at least a year, and for some a year is a long time. Between stress at work and missing loved ones back home, people tend to forget about staying in shape, and that is a huge mistake.

Too many trips to the short order line are going to catch

up with you and you're not going to like it, and when you go home go home, your family will be surprised how pleasantly plump you've become. It's time to act now, and make fitness a priority.

During the course of the next year this page will be dedicated to help you meet your fitness goals.

TOPIC OF THE MONTH: Eating to build and maintain muscle

The foundation to achieving results is nutrition, and this means you have to eat. Many times people make the mistake of cutting calories to an extremely low level.

This is the wrong answer. The key to fitness is balanced nutrition and stable blood sugar. Balanced nutrition means eating protein (preferably about 1 gram per pound of lean body weight if you're weight training), "clean" carbohydrates, and yes, even some fat. When you dramatically cut your calories, as many of us do when trying to shed the pounds, you are starving your body of key nutrients used to repair and regenerate muscle tissue, and you're probably not achieving the results you so desire.

There are two goals to

keep in mind so far as nutrition is concerned.

First, you want a properly limited but high quality stream of nutrients available to help your body recover from workouts. Second, you want to keep your blood sugar stable. If you do this properly, you can burn fat and gain muscle simultaneously.

Research is clear that the best way to keep your blood sugar stable is to eat small, frequent meals, containing protein and carbohydrates, and even a limited amount of fat.

In general, you want to fuel your body roughly every 2 1/2 to 3 hours. That works out to about 5-6 small meals daily. There are several reasons to eat this frequently. It's been demonstrated that athletes who eat 6 times a day have significantly lower levels of body fat than those who eat 3 larger meals a day.

This is because frequent meals even out your blood sugar, so you don't have the peaks and valleys that cause your body to defend fat.

The body doesn't "store" amino acids, so the frequent meals are also essential to ensure that the building blocks for muscle are present when they are actually needed.

Don't get fanatical about this though. If you're 90 minutes late having one of your meals, don't force-feed another one an hour later. The point is to keep the nutrient stream relatively stable, not to choke down 6 meals regardless of the time-of-day or your physical comfort.

The way I would recommend doing this is to snack on protein bars or drink milk between major meals. When most people think of a meal they think they have to sit down and have a plate of

food in front of them, and this isn't the case. The truth of the matter is anything that fuels your body and passes through your large intestine is a meal, and if you are wondering why I mentioned milk the reason is because your body treats it as a solid once you ingest it, and can be considered a "meal".

It's important to have both protein and carbohydrates in your meals. If you severely restrict carbohydrates, you'll "bonk" and slow down your metabolism. You'll also lose muscle.

When you run too low on carbohydrates, the body first tries to burn fat, but if fat burning is too slow to provide enough energy, your body starts using protein for energy.

If you overly restrict protein, you won't build muscle, and you increase the risk that your body will feed on muscle mass.

U.S. ARMY *in the* NEWS

Top generals protest 'reprehensible' cartoon

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Feb. 2, 2006)--In a rare letter co-signed by the the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the senior military leaders of the United States objected to a political cartoon published in the Jan. 29 issue of the Washington Post.

Led by Marine Corps Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and signed by the vice chief and the senior officers of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, the letter addressed what the leaders agreed was a "callous" cartoon.

Editorial cartoonist Tome Toles depicted the U.S. Army as a quadruple amputee, attended to by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who lists the patient as "battle hardened."

The Joint Chiefs agreed the cartoon was offensive. Responding with what they termed a "rare" unanimously signed letter, they said "we cannot let this reprehensible cartoon go unanswered."

The letter expresses the military leaders' disappointment with the content, noting that while editorial cartoons exaggerate issues, they believe the cartoon was "a callous depiction of those who have volunteered to defend this nation, and as a result, have suffered traumatic and life-altering wounds."

"While you or some of your readers may not agree with the war or its conduct, we believe you owe the men and women and their families who so selflessly serve our country the decency not to make light of their tremendous physical sacrifice," stated the letter. The letter, printed in the Feb. 2 letters section of the Post, received national media attention.

Spc. Jeremy Teela, a biathlete on Team USA for the Winter Olympics, skis past spectators during the 20-km Individual Competition of the TD Banknorth Festival at Fort Kent, Maine, last month where he finished second and qualified to compete in Torino, Italy, beginning Feb. 11.

Photo by Jack L. Gillund



Army begins CAC logon for computers

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Feb. 10, 2006)--The Army began implementing CAC Cryptographic Logon last month and will soon require a common access card and personal identification number, or PIN, to log onto the Army's unclassified network.

By March, about 10,000 Army users, including most Pentagon staffers, are expected to be logging onto their computer network by scanning their card. By summer, implementation should be Armywide, G6 officials said.

"Protecting identity is critical as the Army moves forward to deliver a joint net-centric, information enterprise," said Lt. Gen. Boutelle, Chief Information Officer/G6.

"One of the greatest vulnerabilities of our networks is posed by weak user names and passwords," Boutelle said. "Spyware or keystroke tracking software can steal your username and password, and even your PIN. It cannot steal your CAC. The Army's goal is to eliminate the use of username and password."

CAC logon allows users to be authenticated with something they know — their PIN, and something they have — a CAC, officials said. CAC is a type of smart card with electronic information about an owner and digital public key infrastructure, or PKI certificates that insure identity.

Guard leaders laud Army's Olympic athletes

Story by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

ARLINGTON, Va. (Army News Service, Feb. 10, 2006)--National Guard leaders are bidding good luck to five Army National Guard Soldiers who will help represent the U.S. during the XX Winter Olympics that begin in Torino, Italy, on Feb. 10 and end Feb. 26.

Spc. Jeremy Teela from Vermont will compete as an Olympic biathlete in his second straight Winter Games. Spc. Steve Holcomb and Spc. Shauna Rohbock from the Utah Army Guard have qualified for the men's and women's bobsled teams for the first time. Both of them are drivers.

The head coaches for the men's and women's bobsled teams are also National Guard Soldiers. They are Spc. Tuffy Latour from Vermont and Spc. Bill Tavares from New York.

"The Army National Guard is proud to have five of its Soldiers in the upcoming Winter Olympics," said Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army Guard.

ARNEWS



This Day IN HISTORY

February 16, 1959 Fidel Castro takes Cuba

Fidel Castro is sworn in as prime minister of Cuba after leading a guerrilla campaign that forced right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista into exile.

February 19, 1473 Copernicus Born

Nicolaus Copernicus is born in Torun, a city in north-central Poland on the Vistula River. The father of modern astronomy, he was the first modern European scientist to propose that Earth and other planets revolve around the sun.

1945 Marines invade Iwo Jima

On this day, Operation Detachment, the U.S. Marines' invasion of Iwo Jima, is launched.

February 21, 1848 Marx publishes *Manifesto*

The Communist Manifesto, written by Karl Marx with the assistance of Friedrich Engels, is published in London by a group of German-born revolutionary socialists known as the Communist League.

February 25, 1964 Clay TKOS Liston

22-year-old Cassius Clay shocks the odds-makers by dethroning world heavyweight boxing champ Sonny Liston in a seventh-round technical knockout.

1993 Federal agents raid the Davidian compound

Agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms raid the Branch Davidian cult compound in Waco, Texas, prompting a gun battle in which four agents and six cult members are killed.

March 10, 1876 Speech transmitted by telephone

On this day, the first discernible speech is transmitted over a telephone system when inventor Alexander Graham Bell summons his assistant in another room by saying, "Mr. Watson, come here; I want you."

February 18, 1929 First Academy Awards announced

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, founded in 1927, announces the winners of the first Academy Awards.

February 20, 1962 American orbits Earth

From Cape Canaveral, Florida, John Hershel Glenn Jr. is successfully launched into space aboard the Friendship 7 spacecraft on the first orbital flight by an American astronaut.

February 22, 1980 The Miracle on Ice

In one of the most dramatic upsets in Olympic history, the underdog U.S. hockey team, made up of college players, defeats the four-time defending gold-medal winning Soviet team at the XIII Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid, New York.

February 23, 1945 U.S. Flag on Iwo Jima

During the bloody Battle for Iwo Jima, U.S. Marines from the 3rd Platoon, E Company, 2nd Battalion, 28th Division take the crest of Mount Suribachi, the island's highest peak and most strategic position, and raise the U.S. flag. Marine photographer Louis Lowery was with them and recorded the event.

March 2, 1836 Texas Independence Proclaimed

During the Texas Revolution, a convention of American Texans meets at Washington-on-the-Brazos and declares the independence of Texas from Mexico.

March 6, 1475 Michelangelo Born

Michelangelo Buonarroti, the greatest of the Italian Renaissance artists, is born in the small village of Caprese on March 6, 1475.

1965 U.S. Marines land at Da Nang

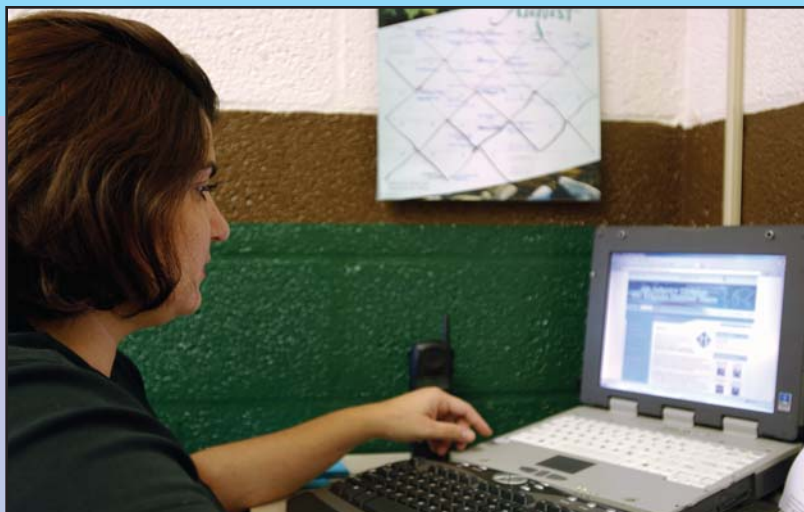
The USS Henrico, Union, and Vancouver, carrying the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade under Brig. Gen. Frederick J. Karch, take up stations 4,000 yards off Red Beach Two, north of Da Nang.

March 14, 1879 Albert Einstein Born

Albert Einstein is born, the son of a Jewish electrical engineer in Ulm, Germany.

1990 Gorbachev elected president of the Soviet Union

The Congress of People's Deputies elects General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev as the new president of the Soviet Union.



Rachel Voll, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., FRG Assistant, updates the vFRG website from Fort Hood, Texas

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Soldiers don't forget to tell your family back home that they can find out the latest news on the deployment by accessing the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division virtual Family Readiness Group website at www.armyfrg.org/4bct4id

The official brigade magazine "Cobra Strike!" will also be available to access and download on the vFRG website.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Cobra Brigade was selected to be one of the first units to implement the new Army-wide vFRG. The brigade was chosen with the idea that it would be very active with the site and provide useful feedback, said Traci Cook, 4th BCT vFRG Content Administrator and Department of Defense contractor with Defenseweb Technologies Inc.

The initial vFRG website was created to support the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division during its Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment in 2003, said Cook.

"The idea was to build a system to replicate the major components of Family Readiness Groups in a virtual context that can support an Army at War," Cook said.

"A second purpose was to create vFRGs to meet the needs of geographically dispersed units and families across the Army," she explained.

The unique blend of user-friendly

applications and helpful information make the Cobra Brigade virtual FRG an important tool for Soldiers and their family members during the deployment to Iraq.

"The website helps Soldiers and families prepare for deployment," said 1st Lt. Andrew Adams, brigade plans officer and FRG rear detachment website administrator. "It also acts as a tool for ensuring family welfare once Soldiers are deployed.

The website is full of useful information about the Army, services available to families, news about training and deployments, and emergency contact numbers, said Adams.

"Anyone who is a family member or friend of a Soldier in the 4th BCT can register for the site by filling out a simple, electronic registration form," he explained. "Once it is verified that the Soldier is in the unit, the site administrators approve the registration and that person is granted access to all aspects of the site."

After the quick registration process, there are many tools and resources available to users of the site, including current news, a photo gallery, electronic post cards, blogs, and forums.

There are also helpful website links, calendars, Frequently Asked Questions, and rumor control.

Users can also send in any questions they have so they can get the official answers from the chain of command

regarding the condition of their loved-ones overseas.

"Because 4th BCT is preparing for deployment, we are able to utilize the vFRG to post 'Rumor Control' questions and answers, photos to keep families updated on events, and newsletters to keep communication flowing," Cook said.

For the first time, family members who are not geographically located near an Army installation can receive information about their loved ones' unit in a virtual context. This will give parents, other family members and close friends access to unit information and enable them to better support their Soldiers family, said Cook.

"This website offers a lot to family members," said Rachel Voll, 4th BCT FRG assistant. "The site can be updated as frequently as its needed to, which will enable Soldiers and their families to receive clear and concise information."

Voll explained that the website will be available at anytime, whether a Soldier is on a deployment or and garrison, and is there to better assist families with what can sometimes be a tumultuous "Army life" because of the frequent deployments.

Registering for the Cobra vFRG is quick and easy. Just log onto www.armyfrg.org/4bct4id.

COBRA'S LIGHT



Spring Fever

By Chap. (Capt.) Will Horton

4th Brigade Combat Team Chaplain

Baseball is a couple of months away but here is a baseball story with a punch line. A little boy was over-

heard talking to himself as he strutted through the backyard, wearing his baseball cap and toting a ball and bat. "I'm the greatest hitter in the world," he announced. Then he tossed the ball into the air, swung at it, and missed. "Strike One!" he yelled.

Fearlessly, he picked up the ball and said again, "I'm the greatest hitter in the world!" He tossed the ball into the air. When it came down he swung again and missed. "Strike Two!" he cried.

The boy then paused for a moment and examined his bat carefully. He stuck the bat between his legs, spit on his hands and rubbed them together. He straightened his cap, picked up the ball and said once more, "I'm the greatest hitter in the world!" Again he tossed the ball up into the air and swung at it. He missed. "Strike Three! WOW!" the boy said, "I'm the greatest pitcher in the world."

Our attitude definitely determines how circumstances impact our lives. While the circumstances

hadn't changed, the little boy's optimism prompted him to bring encouragement to his challenged position. Many of our great Cobra soldiers are facing challenges everyday. They drive the roads of Baghdad poised to counter the insurgent strikes with the Cobra Strike.

The Apostle Paul hit a home run when he said, "A man reaps whatever he sows." (Galatians 6:7) It doesn't matter what the situation is, every decision has consequences. When a person has faith, you can trust that the consequences will build character into your life. Whether you experience positive or negative consequences, God can use them for a better you. It is determined by your attitude.

It is impossible to consistently create perfect plays in your field of life. But it is not impossible to consistently create a right attitude for each field of your life. Paul went on to say, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice." (Philippians 4:4) Paul understood the value of a right attitude. He wrote these words while sitting in prison—alienated and isolated from the outside world. He knew the value of keeping a trustworthy attitude with God in spite of his circumstances and life. And the result of his right attitude—millions of people like you and I continue to read his writings and turn their trust to God.

A Soldiers Prayer.....

Almighty Father, with an upright heart I have left my dear ones at home, to defend my country against its enemies. My thoughts constantly goes back to them. They are thoughts of love and of anxiety. I ask You loving Father to keep a watchful eye over each and every one of them. Soothe their hearts and help them to bear my absence patiently. Protect them from the dreadful dangers of war.

O' my Lord, I ask not much for myself ~ just only courage to perform my duties well. I offer You this day and every day my thoughts, words and actions of mine as prayers of faith in You, of hope in Your provident care, of love of You and Your justice. May my prayers parallel all my service and sacrifices for my fellow comrades, my family and my country, protect them all and bless them now and forever. For all those who have died welcome them into your loving embrace. Gracious Lord, lend an ear of compassion to the supplication of a soldier ~ your child ~ serving my country to the best of my ability out of love for You.

Amen.

ONLINE IED EVAC

- Line 1** Location of Pick-up site
- Line 2** Radio Call Sign & Frequency
- Line 3** # of patients by precedence
A-Urgent, B-Urgent(surgical),
C-Priority, D-Routine,
E-Convenience
- Line 4** Special equipment needed
A-None, B-Hoist,
C-Extraction, D-Ventilator
- Line 5** # of patients by type
L-#of litter patients
A-# of Ambulatory patients
- Line 6** Security of pick-up site
N-No enemy troops in area
P-Possible enemy troops in area
E-Enemy troops in area (possible)
X-Enemy troops in area (armed)
- Line 7** Method of marking at HLZ
A-Panels, B-Pyro, C-Smoke,
D-None, E-Other
- Line 8** Patient Nationality and Status
A-U.S. Military, B-U.S. Civilian
C-Non U.S. Military,
D-Non U.S. Civilian, E-EPW
- Line 9** NBC (war)
- Line 9** Terrain Description

Use the five C's to
secure an IED site.

- Confirm : the device
- Clear : the area
- Cordon : the perimeter
- Control : site access
- Check : for secondary devices

