

June 2009

Call of the WOLF



The Wolf's Howl

Greetings to the Arctic Wolves and to the Entire Diyala Team. We are now in the ninth month of our deployment and it is an honor to celebrate our Army's 234 year legacy of sacrifice and service to our nation. It's important for an organization such as ours to stop and reflect on its proud history and how different the history of the United States and the history of the world would be without the United States Army. The history of our Army is the history of America and today, without question, our Army is the best fighting force this country has ever seen.

On June 14, 1775, a small band of patriots joined together to fight for a set of ideals. Those ideals were nothing less than revolutionary. America's first Army was armed with little more than hunting muskets. Most enlistees had no uniforms. Gunpowder was scarce, and boots were a luxury. Those Soldiers had little more than those ideals to sustain them. In the winter of 1776, with thousands of Soldiers' enlistments about to expire, and the fate of our fledgling Nation uncertain, Thomas Paine wrote "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer Soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman." One hundred and seventy years later, our Nation was again at war, but we met the challenge there, too. The men and women that fought and won the Second World War are often referred to as the Greatest Generation. Just as Pearl Harbor was the call to arms for that generation, the attacks of September 11th serve as the Call to Duty for today's generation. And, just as America's Soldiers helped win the Second World War, so too will today's generation, the grandsons and granddaughters of the Greatest Generation help win the Global War on Terrorism. Today you are the best trained, best led and most capable Soldiers in our history and you continue to play a vital role in the Global War on Terror. You continue to take on the many challenges that face you with extraordinary skill and devotion. Today you continue to defend our country and our democratic ideals and to answer the "Call to Duty."

As we celebrate another historic Army birthday, I can't help but to reflect on the character -



Col. Burdett Thompson and Brig. Gen. Sa'ed, 18th Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division cut a cake celebrating the U.S. Army's 234th Birthday.

and the awesome achievements - of you and the generations of brave Soldiers who have put their boots on the ground, and borne arms in defense of American ideals. Serving one's country is a noble calling and, I believe, among life's greatest work. Nothing illustrates our nation's commitment more than putting boots, your boots on the ground where they are needed.

Arctic Wolves, you represent all that is right and good about our Nation. I could not be more proud than to be called a Soldier, and to stand shoulder to shoulder with you and your Families. Together, we are and always will be, America's Army: the Strength of the Nation. Your willingness to sacrifice, to build a better future for others and to preserve our way of life is without a doubt, the Strength of our unit and our Nation. You are writing the history of warfare, line by line.

I thank each of you for your fighting spirit, for your remarkable resilience and for your legacy of success. I pray that God will continue to bless the American Soldier, the Arctic Wolves, America's Army, and the country we so dearly love, our United States of America.

Happy Army Birthday.

Arctic and Desert Tough!

The Wolf 

Notes from Wolf 7

Arctic Wolves and Black Knights, Hooah! This month I will focus on finishing strong the last ninety days of our deployment. The last ninety days is statistically the most dangerous time of a year-long deployment.

It is dangerous because of smelling the barn too early, taking short cuts, relaxing standards, turning a blind eye to safety, undisciplined, and sub-standard behavior. These examples are the total sum of acts that lead to complacency. Complacency kills!

The next ninety days is a critical time in our deployment that will require all the tools in our kit bags to combat complacency, and uphold the Army Values. The Battle Buddy Concept remains the most effective and important tool we have to protect each other from complacency and undisciplined/sub-standard behavior.

Col. Thompson and I are concerned about the number of unacceptable behavioral issues we are experiencing across Diyala; driving too fast for road conditions, negligent discharges, mistreatment of Soldiers, and inappropriate relationships to name a few. All these examples are intolerable, and no one can afford to turn a blind eye. The consequences of turning a blind eye are too great; a price we cannot afford. In last month's edition I told you that we are a band of brothers and sisters, sharing a sense of duty and loyalty. Finishing Arctic Strong is the way to prevent unacceptable behavior!

When it comes to preventing substandard behavior, I consider everyone a Leader and demand that you have the intestinal fortitude to prevent adverse behavior. We must all finish Arctic Strong! I challenge all of you to live the Army Values, Wolf Creed, and the Soldiers' Creed. Leaders, do not compromise your essential Leaders' Creed.

We will be remembered for our last act, and we, the Arctic Wolves want to be remembered for finishing STRONG! AND RETURN WITH HONOR! Continue to enforce the Battle Buddy concept and may God bless you all.

Wolf 7

ARCTIC WOLVES!

ARCTIC TOUGH!



Command Sgt. Maj. Gabriel Cervantes

1-25 SBCT Battalion Equal Opportunity Leaders

***1-25 SBCT Equal Opportunity Advisor
Sgt. 1st Class Marvin Smith
770-6045 or 849-0753***

***1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment
Sgt. 1st Class Andre Anderson
770-5301***

***1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment
1st Lt. Casey Martin
770-6010***

***2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment
Sgt. 1st Class David Anderson
770-5585***

***3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment
Sgt. 1st Class Jeramy Thompson
770-5702***

***5th Squadron 1st Cavalry Regiment
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Wilson
770-5405***

***25th Brigade Support Battalion
Sgt. 1st Class Yalonda Smith
770-6094***

***Brigade Troops Battalion
Staff Sgt. Shannon Long
770-5107***

***3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment
Staff Sgt. Ryan Waller
794-3402***

U.S. Army Private 1st Class Jeremy Jones, from Preston, Minn. with Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 172nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and Iraqi Emergency Response Forces, provides security during a search for insurgents in the neighborhood of Hawash al Basania, in Balad Ruz, Iraq on May 12th, 2009. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sergeant Ali E. Flisek)



On the Cover

Spc's Daniel Brioli and Kyle Wilson, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and Iraqi Emergency Response Forces patrol through the Hay Mula-meen neighborhood, in the Diyala Province, Iraq on May 31st. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sergeant Ali E. Flisek)



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NCO Induction Remembers the Past and Present of the Corps

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Jeremy Pitcher
145 MPAD

Fourteen Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment joined the ranks of the Non-Commissioned Officer Corps during an induction ceremony on May 25.

The induction ceremony offered the chance for senior NCOs of the battalion to speak to the inductees and the audience, about what it means to them to be an NCO. They also spoke on what they felt is expected not just of the newly received but the entire Corps. The values and leadership abilities were a distinguishing point among the Soldiers who challenged the inductees to uphold the highest of standards.

Also during the ceremony a history of the NCO Corps was presented by the battalion Command Sgt. Maj. James Herbert. The "history lesson" was delivered to remind each Soldier of the time honored tradition involved with the ranks that they were now a part of. During the presentation stories of heroism and sacrifice were read to the Soldiers to remind them of the dutiful task that has been bestowed upon them.

As the guest speaker, the 1-5 Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Shawn Reed,

spoke on the importance and dedication of the NCO.

"For the NCOs the Army values are not just a buzz word. They are the character you live," said Reed.

Finishing the speech Reed reminded the Soldiers that the name "the backbone of the Army" was not just a catchphrase.

"Our Army has done great things, but not one was done without the NCO," said Reed.

After Reed had finished the 14 new inductees received their official welcome as they walked across the stage and were presented a certificate and a welcoming handshake from their Command Sergeant Major.

Though these types of ceremonies have been prominent recently they have been overlooked for years in Iraq.

"I am a big believer in

history and tradition. That is why we had this ceremony today. These young NCOs have to know where they come from so that they can make it to where they are going," said Herbert.

For the Soldiers of the ceremony the induction had special meaning. For some it was a passage in their careers while others shared a more sentimental connection with the induction.

"I've got to follow behind my brother who was an NCO. It is a great honor to follow in his footsteps," said Sgt. Joshua Hall.

For those like Sgt. Cassie Lambert the ability to mold the young Soldiers of today is the most rewarding part.

"I enjoy leading and training Soldiers so that one day, they too can stand where I am."

At the end of the ceremony, Soldiers walked across a bridge and were welcomed into the Non-Commissioned Officer Corps by Command Sgt. Maj. James Herbert.



1-24 IN Soldiers Enable the Kharnabot Police

Story and Photos provided by
1st Lt. Matt Russell
1st Battalion, 24th Infantry

On May 15, something significant occurred in Kharnabot; nothing involving insurgents, IED's or rocket attacks, though. Instead, 1st Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment assisted the Iraqi Police with a Humanitarian Aid distribution in the town that formerly served as a base for rocket attacks.

Sgt. 1st Class Brian Schramm, who led the event along with members of the Kharnabot Police Station said, "It was an exercise in 'by the numbers' to get them to plan and execute it, like in basic training." A total of 51 families received bags of rice or sugar, but more importantly, the aid drop showed Iraqi citizens that the Iraqi Police are not only capable of protecting them but also helping those in need.

Though the supplies came from Coalition Forces, the Iraqi Police did the 'leg work' in organizing and distributing the drop. "All they needed was to be pointed in the right direction, and once they saw what the goal was they got the job done," said Staff Sgt. Jason Jones. Though aid drops have been distributed in the area before, this was the first drop that the Iraqi Police set up. They unloaded the truck, checked the list of names, and



Iraqi Police from Kharnabot unload a truck carrying rice during a Humanitarian Aid drop, May, 15.

passed out all the supplies to the appropriate families.

The days of Coalition Forces' HA drops are numbered, but it is certain that the Iraqi Police now have the experience they need to continue assisting the poor in their towns.

Though the aid distribution was an overall success, it was not without one slight error in judgment. In what seemed like a good idea at the time, some IPs initially enlisted the help of young children to help download the bags of rice. However, a 70 pound child carrying a 110 pound bag of rice was definitely not the picture of safety.

As the aid went out the people of the town were very pleased with the process. All of the key players arrived on time and the IP's had an

efficient system where people could wait, get screened, and receive their aid with minimal hassle, said Hart.

Once all the sugar and rice had been passed out and the crowd drifted away, US soldiers and Iraqi Police were left alone on the streets with the satisfaction that comes from knowing that they helped people in need.

For 1st Platoon, there was an additional feeling of satisfaction because they are accomplishing the mission of training ISF to be self sufficient. In the large scheme of things, one successful HA drop might seem insignificant, but in Kharnabot, joint distribution of Humanitarian Aid proved to be a substantial milestone in the progression of Iraq's self sustainability.

3-21, Iraqi Army conduct

Story and Photos by
Spc. Anthony Jones
145 MPAD

Even in the face of adverse weather, Soldiers of the Iraqi Army trained alongside Coalition Soldiers in combined strike training on the flight line of Forward Operating Base Normandy, April 8.

The training, conducted by the IA's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 20th Battalion, 5th (IA) Division and 1st Platoon, Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, was performed to keep the Soldiers prepared for an aerial quick reaction force mission, said Capt. Morgan Maier, platoon leader, 1st Platoon.

Due to the adverse weather; heavy clouds, sand and partial rain, a helicopter could not be provided for the static training portion, forcing Soldiers to improvise and use cots to simulate the inside of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter.

The training included how to safely enter and exit a helicopter while maintaining security. Coalition Soldiers demonstrated how to properly conduct the movement then had the IA Soldiers join in and practice conducting combined entering and exiting.

"This training is important," said Staff Sgt. Caleb Mellette, a squad leader with 1st Platoon. "It builds [the IA's] confidence and allows them to establish their own tactics, training and procedures (TTPs)."

Mellette added that the static training is productive for Coalition Soldiers as well, pointing out the language barrier in coordinating movement to and from the helicopter.

As a way to bypass the language barrier the Coalition Soldiers taught hand and arm signals to the IA; this allowed for information about movement and security to be passed between Soldiers of both Iraqi and Coalition forces easily and quickly.

After completing the static load training, there

was another mandatory task: the completion of the house-borne improvised explosive device (HBIED) lane, operated by a Navy explosive ordnance demolition team.

The IA Soldiers, lead by an Iraqi non-commissioned officer, navigated through several stages of the HBIED training complex, finding several hidden IEDs and booby traps.

Once inside the final area of the HBIED trainer the IA Soldiers collected several intelligence items and weapons placed by Navy EOD personnel.

Following the IA's completion of the HBIED training lane, Maier had his Soldiers navigate the lane in order to keep their edge and reinforce previous IED awareness training.



Iraqi Army and Coalition Soldiers practice the "three steps and drop" method of exiting a UH-60 Black Hawk during joint strike training, April 8.

combined strike training



Iraqi Army Soldiers belonging to the 20th Battalion, 5th Iraqi Army Division demonstrate their room clearing technique to Coalition forces during combined strike training at Forward Operating Base Normandy, April, 8.

Staff Sgt. Joshua Wilson briefs Iraqi Army Soldiers on how to clear a large room with multiple doorways, providing feedback on what they did properly and what could have been done better. The room clearing training was part of combined strike training conducted on FOB Normandy, April 8.



Convoying Around the World

Story and Photos

Provided by
25th BSB

Distribution Company (DC), 25th Brigade Support Battalion's primary mission is to provide responsive logistical support to all Arctic Wolf maneuver battalions and units operating throughout Diyala Province, Iraq. DC Soldiers provide transportation support and movement security for all classes of supplies to include critical Stryker and MRAP repair parts moving between Forward Operating Base Warhorse and FOBs Normandy and Caldwell. The unit also routinely transports other Brigade Soldiers, Department of the Army personnel, and military working dogs on a regular 130 mile Combat Logistic Patrol (CLP) between these FOBs affectionately and sometimes derisively known as "Around the World" (ATW) run.

The ATW mission starts with customer requests for supplies and parts. "[The CLP] brings us our parts", stated Mr. Darin Nachrieb, Production Control Clerk for General Dynamics at FOB Normandy. "The CLP keeps us going. Without them there, would not be a mission, this place would stop." The transportation of vital Stryker parts and supplies is coordinated between Staff Sgt. Matthew Moore, the DC Load Master, Sgt. 1st Class Donald Hertzberg the CLP NCOIC and numerous Kellog, Brown and Root (KBR) truck drivers. "Sgt. 1st Class Hertzberg and

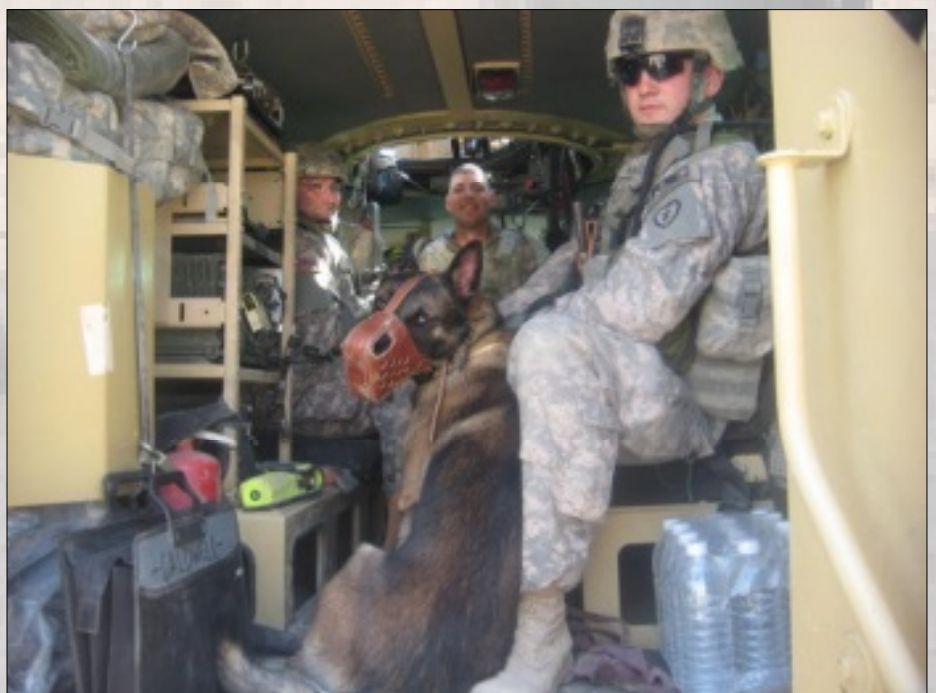
Staff Sgt. Moore are the voices that drive our mission," said Larry "Levy" Smith, a KBR truck driver from Friendsville, Tennessee. "We move whatever the military needs." KBR is an important transportation asset moving everything from Stryker tires and engines to containerized latrines to Class V resupply. "As long as the CRT is receiving 02 (High Priority) parts, they are happy," said Staff Sgt. Paul Thomas 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, Forward Area Support Team (FAST) NCOIC.

The ATW mission provides a reliable means to transport Brigade personnel throughout the battlespace. The passengers on the ATW are referred to as "hitch-a-rides." Hitch-a-rides request a ride on the ATW through the BSB's S-3 Battle Cell and more often than not, by finding the CLP NCOIC or OIC at FOB Caldwell or FOB

Normandy. "Basically you're a taxi moving to Normandy and Caldwell," said Spc. Robert Parr a Soldier with Brigade Troops Battalion K9. Parr and Darko his K9 bomb dog, were escorted to FOB Normandy as a replacement team working in support of the 3-21 IN. Parr said, "You guys haul our mail, equipment and dog food too. It's more convenient than flying and I've never had an issue hauling as much stuff as I need for my mission."

The ATW has transported over 300 personnel supporting a variety of Brigade missions. Maj. Reiner, with 448 Civil Affairs, "I came to Caldwell to look at [water] well sites near Balad Ruz." "You always know that the CLP will go even when the air is red." Civilian contractors are also on our VIP list. "I work for MPRI Law Enforcement Professionals," said Mr. Tom

Spc. Robert Parr and Darko his K9 bomb dog wait for their CLP to leave for Forward Operating Base Normandy.



Miller, "I'm at Caldwell to assist 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment. We help gather information and work with the Army and Iraqi's to gather the evidence needed to prosecute insurgents who emplace IEDs. Traveling with these guys has been a wonderful experience."

All ATW missions start and end at the DC CLP Academy. The CLP Academy is a unique training tool created and implemented by the Company 1st Sgt., 1st Sgt. Antonio Davis. DC converted a regular expando van into an information station. The concept was tested and proofed at the National Training Center, where the Company was recognized for employing such an innovative and effective tool as part of its troop leading procedures. It was even adopted by the National Training Center as a new Tactic, Technique, and Procedure (TTP) to share with future deploying units. The academy is the hub for all convoy operations and was created to be a centralized briefing location for the team. The walls are filled with all of the latest intelligence information. It is where the CLP Commander conducts a thorough orders briefing to all who CLP participants. "The CLP [mission] brief was very formal. The most organized I've seen in country as far as the brief and knowledge of the Soldiers," stated Sgt. Brandi Devasier, an explosive dog handler with STB 25th Infantry Division. The CLP academy also provides information and training to KBR truck drivers travelling with the ATW CLP. "You all are more organized than other units I worked with at Anaconda. You really work



At the CLP Academy, 1st Lt. Craig Iwen, CLP Officer-In-Charge and Staff Sgt. Jardine CLP Non-commissioned Officer-In-Charge give a convoy briefing.

with the drivers and let us know what's going on," said David "Slim" Pershalla KBR recovery driver from Fort Worth, Texas.

DC CLP Soldiers give hands on training to hitch-a-ride passengers on a variety of equipment and battle drills. They teach them the use of spare air, the location of medical bags and roll over and egress procedures. "You never know," stated Sgt. Jeff Cameron, a CLP gun truck commander, "it may be a hitch-a-ride who saves your life."

The most famous of the ATW routes is RTE COWBOYS. A 30 mile stretch of pot hole riddled asphalt which lives up to its name by giving crew and passengers alike a bucking bronco experience. "Cowboys is one of the roughest routes I've ever been on," said Larry Smith. Every passenger who has ridden a full ATW has the same reaction to the bumpy ride. "All you can do is brace yourself and hold on for the ride," stated Spc. Daniel

Lopez a CLP gunner. The CLP is not deterred by the long, rough route and, "this team operates like clockwork," stated Capt. Sweeney, the 25th Infantry Division Pharmacist. "You guys are a tight crew. Always focused on the mission and keeping situational awareness from the lead gun truck to the last."

"We have been successful because of the hard training prior to deployment," says Staff Sgt. Bryan Nelson, a CLP NCOIC. "We began training at Donelly Training Area in Alaska at 20 below and we put all that training into effect in triple digits temperatures at the NTC." DC CLPs have successfully conducted over 100 ATW missions travelling over 16,000 miles to date during OIF 08-09. The DC CLP Soldiers strive to live up to the 25th BSB motto to provide logistical support and service "Without Delay" on every ATW mission.

World Religions Conference held at FOB Warhorse

Story and Photo by
Sgt. Jeremy Pitcher
145 MPAD

A world religions conference was held at Forward Operating Base Warhorse on May 6. The event was coordinated to teach chaplains how to deal with the issues of operating in a culture that has different beliefs than what some may be accustomed to.

The speaker of the event was Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy Bedsole, who is the first World Religions Chaplain to be assigned to Multi-National Corps – Iraq.

“One of the main jobs of Chaplains that is often forgotten is their advisory role to the

commanders. To best advise their commanders, chaplains need to be able to understand the relationship between religion and society. In a place like Iraq, this relationship is very intertwined and needs to be taken into account,” said Bedsole.

Bedsole used this time to speak to the chaplains of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division regarding subjects from explaining the religious beliefs of the Iraqi people, to properly speaking to local religious leaders on particular subjects.

Chaplain (Maj.) Roderick Mills, Brigade Chaplain for 1-25th SBCT, said that he was happy to have Bedsole come to speak to the chaplains and for all to learn more about how they can best serve.



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy Bedsole speaks with the chaplains of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, May 6.

“Religion is one lens to see the world through. Our goal is to see the world from the perspective of the people we are here to help,” said Mills.

Brigade ‘Fires Battle Captain’ Promoted

Story and Photo by
Spc. Anthony Jones
145 MPAD

Brian Cotter, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team’s Fires Battle Captain was promoted to the rank of captain in a ceremony held in the 1-25 SBCT’s conference room on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, June 1.

Cotter, graduated from the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Providence College in Rhode Island.

“It’s pretty neat to be promoted in Iraq,” said Cotter. “This is as good a place as any to be promoted.”

He thanked the audience in the conference room and his parents who, thanks to modern technology were able to watch

from his father’s station in Qatar.

Cotter’s father, Col. David Cotter is the U.S. Army Area Support Group Qatar commander.

Cotter added the only thing that would have made his ceremony better was if his wife, Rachel, could have been present.

After his promotion ceremony, Capt. Brian Cotter thanks the audience including his parents watching from Qatar.



Farrell Receives Soldier's Medal for Heroic Rescue of Fellow Soldier

Story and Photo by
Spc. Anthony Jones
145 MPAD

Trapped upside down inside a dark Stryker filling with cold water is a terrifying ordeal with a horrible fate for those inside, however dedication to one another and the heroism of Soldiers prevented a catastrophe in mid December 2008.

Spc. Ricardo Farrell, of Annandale, Va., a member of 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, was put in such a situation.

Following the Army core values of personal courage, loyalty and selfless service, Farrell dove from the vehicle commander's seat of his Stryker swimming through the flooded driver's hole to rescue the trapped driver and saving his life.

For his actions, Farrell was awarded the Soldier's Medal, an award presented to any person of the Armed Forces of the United States, or of a friendly foreign nation who while serving in any capacity with the Army of the United States, distinguishes themselves by heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy.

The night of December 22, 2008, Farrell's Stryker was part of a convoy headed out for a combat patrol; when an oncoming vehicle caused the driver of Farrell's Stryker to swerve and ultimately roll into a watery canal, leaving only a foot of breathable water in the rear of the Stryker.

"We hit the canal and started to slide to the right and the



Spc. Ricardo Farrell, a member of 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, shakes the hand of Brig. Gen. James Nixon after being presented with the Soldier's Medal

weight pulled the Stryker into the canal," said Farrell. "Next thing I know we are upside down and water is rushing in."

After righting himself in the vehicle and finding most of the crew in the back Farrell heard the shouts of his driver, trapped under his seat.

"I heard my driver yelling, he was screaming 'I don't want to die'. I heard him a couple more times then the yelling stopped," said Farrell.

Still wearing his own body armor, Farrell went through what Soldiers call the "Hell hole", a small opening between the crew compartment and drivers seat, and pulled the driver out.

"I went under the Hell hole, but I couldn't reach him, I remember moving stuff out of the way and I was scared he had drowned. I thought that was it for him," Farrell stated. "I grabbed him by his arm and body armor and pulled him out. I just didn't want

my driver to die. That's the worst feeling anyone could have."

Farrell was recognized for his heroism in a ceremony held on Forward Operating Base Warhorse. Brig. Gen. James C. Nixon, Deputy Commanding General – Operations, 25th Infantry Division, presented Farrell with his medal.

Also honored was Staff Sgt. Melvin Clark, Minneapolis. Clark was the first Soldier from another vehicle to reach the rolled Stryker and was able to open the doors allowing the trapped Soldiers to escape. Clark was awarded an Army Commendation Medal for his actions.

After presenting the Soldiers their awards Nixon stated, "These two heroes, under great stress, made the commitment to risk their own lives to save one of their buddies, quite frankly there is no higher honor. I'm proud to stand in front of these two heroes among heroes. It makes an old Soldier feel proud."

On the PROWL

WHAT DID YOU DO ON LEAVE?



"I GOT ENGAGED ON LEAVE. WE WENT TO GATLINBURG, TN. WE HAVE A NICE CABIN IN THE MOUNTAINS." SPC CODY PENLAND, SALEM, ILLINOIS COMPANY C, 1ST BATTALION, 24TH INFANTRY REGIMENT



"I went to Vegas for about a week and then I traveled all over Texas visiting family members." Spc. Gary Hopson, McLean, Texas, 63rd Engineer Co.



"I took a Honeymoon with my wife to some islands in the Eastern Caribbean. We did a lot of sightseeing and repelling." Spc. Dennis Singh, Pennsylvania, Company A, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment



"I went to my daughter's graduations. Then we went to Disney World for a few days and went to Kentucky before heading back to Georgia." Maj. Reginal Dykes, Albany, Georgia, 5th Division Military Integration Transition Team



"I spent time with just my wife and kids. My brother took leave from the Coast Guard and we just hung out and went fishing." SPC Christopher Sandoval, Houston, Texas, Company B, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment



"I went home and spent time with my 2 week old son and spent time with my family." Staff Sgt. Melvin Clark, Minneapolis, Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment



"I spent my time in Vegas and in South Carolina, a week in both." Sgt. Christopher Polson, South Carolina, Headquarters, Headquarters Company 1-25



"I went home. Three days into being home my appendix ruptured. I spent four days in the hospital and the rest on the couch." SPC Thomas Jacobs, Stenvenson, Washington, Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment

Combat Out Post Diamond helps secure remote area

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Jeremy Pitcher
145 MPAD

A “diamond in the rough” that seems a fitting description for the small Combat Out Post (COP) Diamond, located south of Balad Ruz in the southern Diyala province.

With only eight small tents located on the land, members of Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment under Task Force 3-66, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, along with other “enabler” personnel, call this home.

Their mission, as they rotate from Forward Operating Base Hammer every few days, is an array of tasks that not only help to improve the security of the area, but also improve the region’s stability so that many of the displaced people, who once lived in the area, will return one day.

“We do combat patrols, work with the Iraqi Army on joint missions, and often check on Iraqi checkpoints to ensure they have what they need and that they are doing their job properly,” said 1st Lt. Russell Morgan, 2nd platoon leader for A Company.

Another facet of their mission is to observe the internally displaced population and see what progress is being made and what is still needed for people to return home.

“We are trying to see how many of the internally displaced persons are coming back and seeing if they have basic needs, such as water and electricity,” said Morgan.

Recently the COP underwent a

build-up of needed items to help with the living conditions there. Before this expansion Soldiers had no tents or freezers to store water.

“When we first got out here there wasn’t much. We lived out of our vehicles and that was it. It was kind of like we were Nomads,” said Spc. John McManus of Headquarters platoon.

Though the area around Diamond may be harsh, the spirits on the COP stay high.

“We enjoy working with each other and make the best of it. Often we entertain ourselves with movies or video games. But we will also get together for a game of cards,” said Spc. Benjamin Menner.

Recently Task Force 3-66 was tasked to move from FOB Hammer further north to FOB Caldwell. The

process will change the ‘second home’ for the residents of Diamond, while adding in the interesting task of moving tons of equipment on the few days they are actually there.

“It’s kind of nice - having somewhere new to live all of the sudden. The move has also helped to make time go by pretty fast because we have all stayed so busy,” said McManus.

For it all, COP Diamond was established for a sole purpose: to continue the security and stability progress that Task Force 3-66 has worked so hard to accomplish thus far.

“The tangible evidence that we have done our job successfully is when the people begin to move back. That’s how we know we’ve made the difference,” said Morgan.

1st Lieutenant Russell Morgan, Platoon Leader for 2nd Platoon meets with Iraqi Army leaders to discuss upcoming missions in the region. 1LT Morgan’s platoon operates out of Combat Out-Post Diamond south of Balad Ruz.



Small Village a Symbol of Resurrection in Iraq

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Jeremy Pitcher
145 MPAD

In a small village south of Baqubah, something extraordinary is happening. Without the national attention or funding seen in the larger cities around Iraq, this small, out of the way village has begun to rebuild from almost complete destruction.

The village of Bey'a was once an illustrious farming area located on the Diyala River in the Diyala province. Today all but a few houses are nothing more than a

pile of rubble; evidence of years of fighting in the region during some of the most volatile years in Iraq.

The village housed over 30 families in 2006 before Al-Qaeda in Iraq moved into the region and threatened the families with death if they did not join their cause or leave. This action displaced nearly the entire population, who fled with only the possessions they could carry.

"They put pressure on us. They tried to get us to join (Al-Qaeda) them. When we said we wouldn't they threatened to kill us," said the village Sheik.

Three years later some of the families have returned to

what used to be their homes.

This has not deterred the residents however, who have come together to share the remaining structures left standing. With the limited space some families have been forced to live in small tents in an open field just feet away from the rubble.

Despite reconstruction funding not yet paid to the homeowners, the families here have chosen to take the initiative and begin the daunting task of rebuilding on their own.

"We all pitch in and work together to try to rebuild. We work on each house together so that families can move back into their home," said a local resident.

This hard work in a difficult



During the 2-8's patrol of Bey'a Capt. John Turner speaks with the Bey'a Sheik and local residents. Turner's team has seen great progress being made by the people of the village through hard work and initiative.

situation has inspired members of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment that controls the area Bey'a is located in.

"It is amazing for me to come here and see the progress being made," said Captain John Turner of the 2-8. "They have been so willing to not only rebuild but to reconcile within their own community and around the area."

On May 27, Turner and a team from the Provincial Reconstruction team went to the village in order to see what projects were needed and if they would be possible to accomplish. Without a medical clinic, septic system or school for the area, the men of the small village offered to donate the land and volunteered their labor to encourage needed development.

"These people are not lazy. They do not expect for you just to give them stuff. They are willing to work to make this a better place. That says a lot about them," said Turner.

A young girl and her family rest during the heat of the day. Many Families live in tents while rebuilding thier homes in the village of Bey'a



A Soldier pulls security in the small village as leadership from the 2-8 and PRT meet with the local Sheik.



Dodging the Dog Days

Story by
Sgt. Dan Click
5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry

*Troopers do their part to prep for
a hot summer in Diyala*

Throughout the first half of the year-long deployment, Alpha Troop, 5th Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, has tackled the city streets of Balad Ruz and Mandali, roamed the expansive desert along the Iraq / Iran border, and sought out Al-Qaeda in Iraq throughout region. However, there is one thing yet to come for these Soldiers: the dog days of summer.

The summer days can encompass anything from a dust storm that turns the sky an orange hue that resembles the planet Mars, or heat that transforms the street into a griddle that can cook eggs any style. Finding ways to deal with the issues that come from the scorching heat is one of the next big challenges for A Troop.

One of the ways Soldiers are dealing with the oncoming heat is looking to past experiences, and learning from those Soldiers who have dealt with it before. Spc. Cook, a gunner, 1st Platoon, A Troop, who previously deployed with 4/14 CAV, 172 Stryker Brigade Combat Team out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska in 2005-2006, does his best pass on his knowledge to other Soldiers. "You have to drink water, and be sure to hydrate the night before," said the Pueblo, Colorado native. "I make sure Soldiers drink water, and Gatorade to ensure they get the electrolytes they need."

In addition to loading up on water and electrolytes, and eating a good meal, Soldiers are also taking heavy doses of morale. Whether it is playing baseball, lifting weights, or reading a book, finding a release from the day-to-day mission grind is important to maintaining morale, and being focused on the task at hand. While there are plenty of planned activities on Forward Operating Base Caldwell, including 5K runs, sport tournaments, card games, and radio-controlled truck races, unplanned events seem to be among the most popular with Soldiers.

In one room you can find a game of Call of Duty 4 pop up at a moments notice, with multiple players huddled around a small television, and even more Soldiers watching the action. In another you'll hear the shrieks and yells of another mission or conquest gone awry. No, it wasn't a bad day for the Soldier; he just lost to his buddy in an online game.

Although video games and playing sports are some people's way of letting out the frustration of a long hot day in Iraq, another group lets it out by watching movies. Watching movies as a group promotes camaraderie and allows for the morale to stay high in the platoon said Private 1st Class David Lekan, who is in his first deployment to Iraq. "We watch movies a lot," The gunner from 3rd PLT said.

"Someone will be watching a movie and then all of the sudden everyone in the platoon will be watching the movie."

While maintaining morale and staying hydrated are important factors when dealing with the heat, another important part of getting through the summer is sustaining the momentum from the previous six months, and not falling into a complacent mode.

Complacency can set in at any time, but especially after patrolling the same villages, and talking to the same people over the course of a long period of time. Compound that with the heat and drastic weather changes and it could make for a long summer for Animal Troop. But, the Troopers are doing their part to avoid the drudge that are the 'dog days of summer' by maintaining a high level of morale, staying hydrated, and motivated on the mission.

After participating in approximately 500 combat missions, the Troop knows that they have all come too far and done too much to give all their gains away because of the summer heat, said Captain Heath Major, Commanding Officer of A Troop.

"In the second quarter we flushed out an entire region and went into halftime ahead," said Major, who previously deployed with 2/14 CAV, 1/25 SBCT. "We have to maintain that edge and know that those guys can come back at any time."

CBRN IN IRAQ

Story and Photos by
Spc. Anthony Jones
145 MPAD

In Counter Insurgency Operations, units often have to adapt and adjust to changing missions and perform tasks never expected of them in decades past.

The Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear platoon of Troop D, Brigade Troops Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division is one unit performing outside its original requirements. These Soldiers learned to adapt to new tasks while performing old missions.

“Our job, doctrinally, is to address any chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threat,” said 1st Lt. Aaron Roman, CBRN platoon leader. “Basically just a response to anything in that realm found in the Brigade’s area of operations we would be called to sample, confirm or disconfirm what that possible threat is.”

However, in Iraq the CBRN platoon has been called upon to escort the explosive ordinance disposal and assist the EOD teams in any possible way with

security or taking samples, post blast of a suspected improvised explosives device or finding of a cache, said Roman.

“The majority of CBRN platoons in Iraq have been tasked with base defense missions. We’ve been fortunate enough to not be given those tasks and have an active mission set,” Roman said.

The CBRN platoon includes personnel designated as weapons intelligence teams, who work with EOD to collect soil samples, determine what caused a vehicle to explode or collect any evidence in the area.

Staff Sgt. Jason Jackson, a squad leader with the CBRN platoon, said once the WIT personnel collect the samples it is turned over to EOD for analyses. From there it is sent to a corporation located at Contingency Operating Base Spiecher.

Regardless of the mission, whether it be armed escort for EOD or collecting samples in a Nuclear Biological and Chemically-contaminated area, Soldiers of the CBRN platoon rely on the M93A1 Fox.

The Fox, an armored vehicle introduced in the 1990’s is capable of entering a possible

nuclear, biological or chemically contaminated environment. The Fox has several systems designed to detect contaminants in the air and has equipment able to collect soil, water and vegetation samples, all without exposing Soldiers to the dangers of the contaminated area.

“The Fox has the capability to detect more than 100 different chemicals utilizing the probe head outside the vehicle,” said Spc. Woody Cantrell a member of the CBRN platoon and operator of the Fox vehicle.

The platoon doesn’t utilize the Fox as much as it did when the 1st Stryker Brigade first arrived in Diyala province. It’s not due to a problem with the vehicle or its operators though. The increasing capabilities of the Iraqi Army’s EOD teams to handle their own IED sites have decreased the workload over time.

Recently the Navy’s West Coast EOD team redeployed and donated equipment to the IA. The equipment included bomb suits and testing equipment. This enabled them to determine what types of explosives were used in an IED.

“The IA are picking up a lot of slack, especially in the heavily populated areas. This has put a very positive spin on the eventual handover to Iraqi control,” said Roman, speaking about the IA’s ability to respond to IED sites. “With the status of forces agreement, basically it’s everyone’s mission to work ourselves out of a job. The IA taking more missions and us seeing less and less missions, is a very positive note that they are starting to handle things on their own.”

While working themselves out of a job, the CBRN platoon continues to perform at the highest levels expected of them, regardless of the mission.



Arctic Wolves work with fellow Wainwright Soldiers in Diyala.

Story and Photos by
Spc. Anthony Jones
145 MPAD

In Diyala province, Soldiers of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division are getting a little help from above, Cavalry style.

The brigade is receiving support from the 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment who are also from Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

The 6-17 cavalry unit flies OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter. The Kiowa Warrior is a dual purpose surveillance and attack

aircraft. The aircraft is able to mount several different weapons systems onboard, including .50 caliber machine guns and unguided rockets.

"Our mission here is to provide aerial recon and surveillance capabilities for U.S. and Coalition forces throughout the area of operations," said Capt. Robert Crouse, commander, Troop A, 6-17 CAV.

Crouse's troop is tasked with supporting two of Multinational Division - North's brigades, the 1-25 and the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division based at Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

"When we first got to Iraq the 1-25 wasn't here yet. When 1-25 did get here it was a good change of pace," said 1st Lt. Justin Kelly, a platoon leader and pilot with Troop A, 6-17 CAV. "It's really nice to work with these guys, it seems they are on top of their game. It's also nice to know when you're flying around supporting the ground guys they're your neighbors and friends from back home."

Working together isn't anything new for the two units. In 2006 the 6-17 CAV was moved from Hawaii to Alaska in order to prepare the 1st and 4th Brigades, 25th Infantry Division for Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, said Maj. Beau Tibbets, 1-25 SBCT Brigade Aviation Officer and former troop commander in the 6-17.



Soldiers of the 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment perform maintenance on a UH-58D Kiowa Warrior at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, April 29.



Several of the 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry UH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters await missions at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq.

“To my understanding the move was made because we had 1-25 and 4-25 in Alaska but no attack or recon assets for them to train with. So the 6-17 moved up there and started training,” said Tibbets. “It worked out great, now we are both deployed at approximately the same time and mutually supporting each other.”

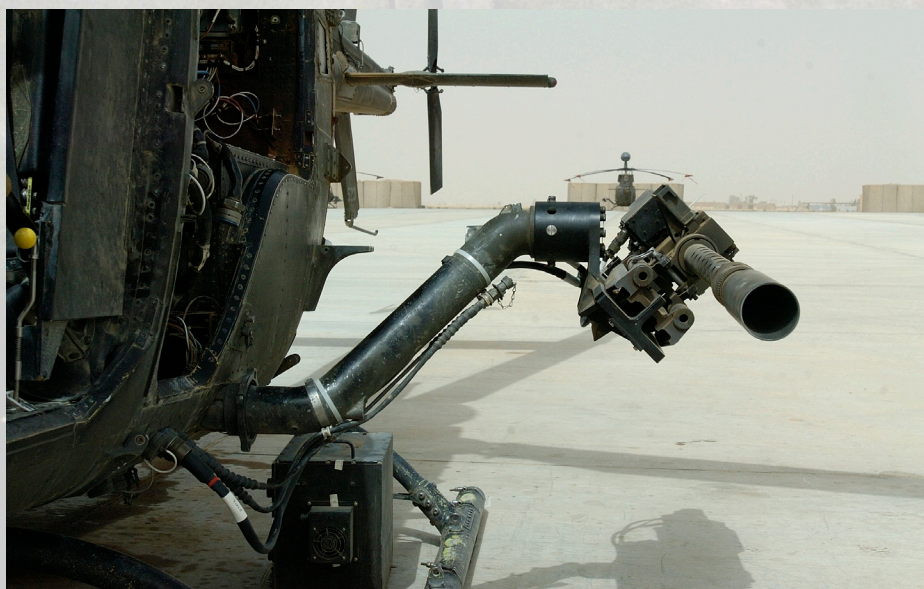
In order to better support ground units in Diyala and Multinational Division – North, the 6-17 is also operating in hunter killer teams or “pink teams” with units of the 1st Battalion 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, said Chief Warrant Officer Two Gunter Lugg. A “pink team” is a Kiowa Warrior working in tandem with an AH-64 Apache, providing the surveillance capabilities of the Kiowa Warrior with the firepower of the larger Apache.

“The command has found that for operations in Diyala, pink teams have provided a greater advantage. Providing longer station times and optimum capability to take out targets,” said Lugg.

The 1-25 and 6-17, are taking the Army’s battle buddy program and using it on a

large scale. They are building relations not just between the Soldiers themselves but between units; building esprit de corps and brotherhood.

An OH-58D has several outer panels removed exposing the complex internal wiring during a maintenance check.



Chaplain's Corner

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Perhaps this is one of the most popular quotes on caring. One of the most essential things people need to know is that others truly care for them. Regardless of our position in the military and our position in life, the measure of how much we genuinely care for those around us is a chief indicator of our inner character. Regardless of our MOS, we have been called upon to serve in combat and protect the lives of those around us. It requires genuine care for those with whom we serve and those we lead. In his book, *Citizen Soldier*, Stephen Ambrose said the primary factor that motivated American soldiers in Europe in WWII was their intense desire to care for and protect the lives of their fellow soldiers. In his memoirs, General Ulysses S. Grant describes General Sherman’s care and concern for his troops in battle. He would not leave them in the heat of the fight. He writes, “In thus

moving along the line, however, I never deemed it important to stay long with Sherman. Although his troops were then under fire for the first time, their commander by his constant presence with them, inspired a confidence in officers and men that enabled them to render services on that bloody battlefield worthy of the best of veterans.”

I firmly believe that true caring must translate from the inner heart to real actions of caring.

This challenge for leaders and soldiers can be described in two parts:

1) Consistently develop a genuine heart of compassionate leadership by truly caring for those we serve and lead.

2) Consistently demonstrate compassionate leadership through specific acts that communicate that care, including “tough compassion” through high standards of excellence.

In the Bible, God says that He leads His people as a shepherd leader, caring for them and their well being. “As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep,



Chaplain (Maj.) Roderick Mills

so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.” (Ezekiel 34:12)

All of us face cloudy and gloomy days in our lives. Yet those days aren’t so gloomy when we’re surrounded by people who have a genuine concern for our well-being and walk through those days with us. As they do, we discover that caring is contagious. Soon following, we find ourselves inspiring loyalty and imparting the power of caring to others, one person at a time.

FALLEN WOLVES

SPC Heath Pickard, C Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 18 Sept 1987 - 16 Oct 2008

PFC Cody Eggleston, C Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 17 Sept 1987 - 24 Oct 2008

CPL Michael Mayne, A Company, 5th Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 9 Oct 1987 - 23 Feb 2009

CPL Micheal Alleman, A Company, 5th Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 19 Jan 1978 - 23 Feb 2009

CPL Zachary Nordmeyer, A Company, 5th Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 5 Aug 1987 - 23 Feb 2009

SPC Israel Candelaria Mejias, A Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 26 Feb 1981 - 5 April 2009

SPC Michael Edward Yates Jr., HHC, 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 5 Sept 1989 - 11 May 2009

SSG Christian Erique Bueno-Galdos, HHC, 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 16 Aug 1983 - 11 May 2009

Military Working Dog, Jok, Brigade Troops Battalion, 14 Nov 2008



FALLEN WOLVES
WE WILL NEVER FORGET THOSE
WHO HAVE SACRIFICED SO MUCH



SPC. MICHAEL EDWARD YATES JR.
HEADQUARTERS, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY
3RD BATTALION, 66TH ARMOR REGIMENT
BORN SEPTEMBER 5, 1989
DIED MAY 11, 2009



STAFF SGT. CHRISTIAN ERIQUE BUENO-GALDOS
HEADQUARTERS, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY
3RD BATTALION, 66TH ARMOR REGIMENT
BORN AUGUST 16, 1983
DIED MAY 11, 2009



The Arctic Warrior March

We conquer the mountains and the valleys!

We train in the winter's bitter cold!

Alaska Soldiers! Arctic Warriors!

Sentries of the North!

So pick up your weapons and your snowshoes!

We're ready to fight and to defend!

The finest Soldiers! Arctic Warriors! From the last Frontier!

The Wolf Creed

Strike fear in the enemy's hearts and minds;
I am a lethal and skilled warfighter with unmatched intestinal fortitude.

Being a disciplined, professional Soldier, I live the Army Values.

Committed to my fellow Soldiers, unit and country, I am ready to answer my nation's call -- NOW!

Tough, both physically and mentally, and instilled with warrior spirit, I can accomplish my mission. Anytime. Anywhere.

Arctic Wolves!

Arctic Tough!