

STEEL RAIN

3RD BATTALION, 157TH FIELD ARTILLERY

A Time to Remember, Reflect

What it means to be a Soldier in Iraq on the 8th anniversary of Sept. 11

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - "[Sept. 11] marks an important anniversary, but today is no different than yesterday. It's just another important step toward [fighting in the Global War on Terror]."

For Soldiers like 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery Commander Lt. Col. Al Morris of Centennial, Colo., Sept. 11 was by and large, just another day in Iraq, but the memories behind the day surfaced as Soldiers reflected on the events that had unfolded eight years ago.

At 8:45 a.m. on Sept. 11, 2009, the only difference in Camp Ramadi residents' usual routine was a prayer breakfast open to all wanting to join together and reflect upon what Sept. 11 means to them.

The prayer breakfast led by Maj. Mike Wood, 1st Brigade Combat Team regimental chaplain, 82nd Air-

borne Division; Capt. Jeff Smith, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division chaplain; and Capt. Matthew Miller, 1st Brigade Support Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division chaplain, gave troops a forum where they could collectively reflect.

"It was a national tragedy that affected the world, which had direct affect upon the reason so many of us are in the military today," said Smith.

"It is important for everyone [to remember Sept. 11], but especially those of us in uniform, who at times question our mission

and wonder why we are here," he said. "Evil exists - it has a vote, and someone must stand up to stop it."

The impact of Sept. 11 is still felt in the Soldiers' lives eight years later.

Maj. Clay Taulman, 3-157th FA executive officer of Parker, Colo., said Sept. 11th means three years of his 11-year-old daughter's

life that he wasn't there to witness in person because of two deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"It means three years of not taking her to swim practice, not watching her ride horses, not having her around for a meal and not going to church with [my wife and daughter]," Taulman said about his daughter Mady and wife Angela. "You miss all the holidays and birthdays of all family members," he continued.

"But we [sacrifice time away from our families] because it's our job; we



The American flag and Iraqi flag hang at equal height in Iraq to show respect. While maintaining the utmost respect of Iraq, the American flag reminds American Soldiers of their proud heritage and the patriotism that compelled many Soldiers to join the military.



Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and civilians listen to the chaplains speak about Sept. 11 during the prayer breakfast.

See SEPT 11 p. 8

From the Battalion Leadership:

Battalion Commander:

Lt. Col Al Morris



We've been on the ground a couple of months now and for the most part we've settled in. With the upcoming changes in our higher headquarters there are many new units on the camp and we're getting to know our neighbors. One of the ways we do this is challenge them to softball and put on Fun Runs for some positive competition. We work hard, but still have a little fun. With a U.S. Army unit replacing Marines some of the camp rules will change as we'd expect and we'll learn what those are and adjust.

We've been doing our mission for a while now and as I've mentioned before we continue to refine the way we conduct operations, always looking to improve both our offensive and defensive mindset to keep us and those whom we protect safe. On that note, we continue to get high marks from those we support.

As we look to the months ahead I hope each of you has found a buddy or at least someone you can go talk to. Even on the best days each of us needs someone to lean on and we would do well to be that person for others. We don't do much very well on our own.

I think today is the first day it has not reached 100 degrees since we hit the ground in June. It's a nice break.

We appreciate the many packages and notes of thanks and the thoughts and prayers from those many of us do not even know. It means the world to the Soldiers here and I just want to relay their many thanks.



Battalion Command Sergeant Major:

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Koob



Camp Ramadi was filled to capacity this month with the transition of the camp command from Regimental Combat Team-6 (Marines) to 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division (Army). There were long lines at the dining facility and post exchange, the gym and Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities were filled every day. For a few weeks Ramadi lost that small-town feeling. Most of the Marines are gone and the official transfer of authority to the 82nd will take place later this month.

The good news from the Colorado National Guard is that the promotion lists are coming out. We are seeing noncommissioned officers at the senior level getting promoted, we should start seeing junior NCOs and specialists getting promoted in a couple of weeks.

Hats off to Sgt. Gregory Bice of the 188th Forward Support Company for running a great softball tournament labor day weekend. There was participation from the Marines, 82nd and our battalion. Everyone who participated had a great time. I also want to recognize Spc. Samuel Galvin from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery. He is signed for and manages over \$2 million worth of equipment without any loss to date. Spc. Jennifer Lee, a medic from HHB, continues to put forth the extra effort to take care of the troops. There are numerous smaller units on the Camp without medical support, Spc. Lee and all of the medics are always willing to lend a hand to anyone needing medical attention, regardless of unit.



Chaplain's Corner:

A Soldier's best friend

Chaplain (1st Lt.) William Ferris, Battalion Chaplain



"Where's the dog?" This has been a common question lately. Spc. Keaton Stein and myself have been trying to make official our acquisition of Mahnoosh, a playful puppy that loves to fetch.

One afternoon, Sgt. 1st Class Cliff Julian asked me if we would want a "combat stress" dog. He said that one of the Marine units had a dog and he

was trying to find her a home before someone would put her down. I definitely was interested, but a little hesitant, as I personally don't have the time nor effort to watch after a big puppy 24/7.

Sgt. 1st Class Julian found the paperwork for a legal dog and changed the name to "Angel" as that is what he thought her name was at the time. I took the paperwork to Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Al Morris, and he was hesitant as well because another dog bit a Soldier recently. He

could sense that I was more concerned about saving her than about her, though I hadn't even met her yet.

We finally met the dog and were calling her Angel for a while, before some others heard that her name was Marley, after the movie Marley and Me, or Molly.

Her previous owners (Marines) came by to visit, and she was all excited to see them and they called her Mahnoosh – which is a popular Persian female name which means "pretty girl."

See MAHNOOSH p. 12

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From the Batteries:

188th Forward Support Company Based in Pueblo

Capt. Beth Soelzer, Company Commander
1st Sgt. Joseph Bishop, First Sergeant

Summer would not be the same without the all American game of softball. Since we arrived in Ramadi we have played ten games with a record of 8 wins and 2 losses.

The team is coached by Sgt. Gregory Bice and Staff Sgt. Joseph Vigil. These two have put a lot of time and effort into building a great team.

The Soldiers come out for competitive play and fun, but the coaches emphasize that they are out there to win. We have many talented players who have played at all different levels of competition. We have managed to come together as a team on and off the field. We have about 16 Soldiers who come out and play. We also have great support from other Soldier in the company who come out to watch and cheer on the team. We have also had support from the unit leadership in allowing the Soldiers off work or out of the motor pool early or late in order to play.

You may be wondering where we find the time to play. We mostly play on Sunday mornings and we may throw a practice in there after the work is done during the week.

Coach Bice was even able to put together a two-day Labor Day Weekend Softball Tournament. The turnout was great!

We had a total of 10 teams participate from both the Marine Corps and Army, to include at least one team from each battery. Many games were exciting and the winner was not decided until the very last out. The Phantoms (our team) ended up taking 3rd place with a loss to our Bravo Battery who took 2nd and a Marine team who took home the trophy. The next tournament that trophy will be *ours*. Right now the next tournament is scheduled for Sept. 20. We will continue to play throughout the deployment.

Sgt. Gregory Kennedy from HHB was able to score a great deal from Softball.com on some softballs and a couple of gloves. We are able to check out gloves, bats and balls from the Morale, Welfare and Recreation office, and a lot us brought our gloves from home.

The battalion also received a softball package from Big O'Tires. This addition will help out our cause for softball fever. We will keep you posted each month on how the team is doing in the standings.



Capt. Beth Soelzer

Headquarters & Headquarters Battery Based in Colorado Springs

Capt. Ashkan Angha, Battery Commander and Deputy Mayor
1st Sgt. Ed Schwaigert, First Sergeant

Along with the transfer of authority between Marine Corps' Regimental Combat Team - 6 and the 82nd Airborne Division, a portion of the camp will given back to the Iraqi Army, a task given to the Mayor Cell.

Part of that task was to clean, ensure all United States property was removed and turned into the proper authority, and most importantly, make sure all hazardous materials were properly removed and disposed of. Handing back part of Camp Ramadi to the IA is a part of the responsible withdrawal of Coalition Forces. Beginning three weeks ago, we have worked extremely hard to get this task complete



Capt. Ashkan Angha

Moving with a purpose, the wall, known as the "Great Wall of Ramadi," will be completed by the end of September.

by the end of September.

One of the daunting tasks for the Mayor Cell was to build a new wall between our camp and Iraqi camp known as Camp Ali. The barriers are called Alaska, Texas and T-Walls. This project was assigned to Capt. Garrett Rasnick and his force protection team.

Capt. Rasnick, with the help of Soldiers and Marines has placed more than 1,200 T-Walls, 36 Alaska barriers and 80 Texas barriers to complete a wall that spans a mile. To the troops, this wall is known as the "Great Wall of Ramadi." It will serve as a boundary, as well as provide protection for our Camp residents. This is a great accomplishment for our unit and the Colorado Army National Guard.



Alpha Battery Based in Longmont

Capt. Dom Tatti, Battery Commander
1st Sgt. Eric Weis, First Sergeant



Capt. Dom Tatti

Fantasy Football

Story by Spc. Josh Webb

Many men in America spend the month of August in a storm of stats, scores,

and prayer to the gods of fantasy football that they may be blessed with the wisdom to choose the winning team in the upcoming season. Our Soldiers are no different. Last month, many spent every waking hour planning for their draft and every contingency that might arise. Spc. John White of Denver, Colo., was seen on the day of the draft clutching a notebook that had been filled front to back with every possible player pick and every possible outcome he could think of.

It was 135 degrees Fahrenheit on the day of the draft. Ten men walked into the building with one

common goal in mind ... victory.

It was a long and grueling process, but in the end they all came out with smiles on their faces and a strategy in mind for their player picks.

Each fantasy team is comprised of real players from different NFL teams. Scoring is based on their player's individual stats and as with most games, high score wins!

Sgt. 1st Class Tom Reese of Lakewood, Colo., and Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Julian of Englewood, Colo., are commissioning two separate leagues for their respective platoons.

We asked Sgt. 1st Class Julian about his duties as commissioner and why he

enjoys the fantasy leagues.

"Because I love every aspect of football; stats, watching it, the players, [and] the quality of the game. Football is life," Julian said.

For our guys, this is just another way for them to feel at home away from home.

Sgt. Dusky Van Ness said, "There's a lot of camaraderie behind it and it makes time go by. Watching games and being able to look online at your scores takes your mind off being here."

When asked about the upcoming fantasy season, our Soldiers were quick to reveal their individu-

See FOOTBALL p. 7

Bravo Battery Based in Aurora

Capt. David Wilcox, Battery Commander
1st Sgt. Rodolfo Reyes, First Sergeant

Fun "Mandatory Fun"

Story by Staff Sgt. John P. Martinez III

On the evening of Sept. 14, the members of 1st Platoon, Battery B, took time out to relax and enjoy one another's company at a barbecue provided by Platoon Sergeant Sgt. 1st Class Luis LunaRodriguez and Platoon Leader 1st Lt. John Avery.

"We needed something to improve morale around here" said Sgt. 1st Class LunaRodriguez, "and I think it went well."

Before the sun set in the western sky, falling below the Iraqi desert, Sgt. Kyle Harden and 1st Lt. Avery fired up the grill in anticipation of the cookout that was about to begin. The grill was set up near the Ramadi basketball court and many of the platoon members turned to basketball and football while waiting.

First platoon was not the only

attendees. Invitations were extended to operations platoon as well.

The first sergeant and battery commander were just a few of the Soldiers from operations who took part in the events, such as playing games of H-O-R-S-E with Soldiers and throwing around the pigskin.

After the games were over and as a surprise to the platoon, 1st Lt. Avery presented freshly grilled steaks on a platter.

"The steaks were good and it was a much needed break," Spc. Christopher Swain said about the event.

First platoon's primary training and responsibility throughout the deployment has been Personnel Security Detail, which can be especially grueling.

"The evening conveyed a feeling of home, which is something that the guys really need now that we are at the midway point," said Staff

(Right) This was painted by Pfc. Michael Gomez at one of the towers manned by the Berzerkers. At least it provided some relief while being painted from the heat because it's in the shade.

Sgt. Miguel Corrujedo.

The evening went off without a hitch and was well received by all in attendance.

"It was the best mandatory fun day I've had in a long time," said Spc. Michael Belknap, who laughed and joked with members of his team from the benches.



Capt. David Wilcox



A Classic Morale Booster: *Mail Call!*

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - It's one of the most rewarding morale boosters - a letter or care package from a loved one back home.

The voyage is extensive for these envelopes and boxes to make their way across the big blue sea, Europe, arriving to the Middle East and then making its way to the troops at Camp Ramadi.

It all begins with someone back home taking the time to pick up a few items to send to their Soldier - items a Soldier may need or want or something that might just make him smile - or sitting down to write a handwritten letter.

Soldiers here know first-hand that finding the time to write letters is sometimes hard to come by. However, it's also known understood that family members back home, who are taking care of the family, the house, working and still finding time for themselves are also in the same position. Time is tough to come by.

Yet, the devotion from many of the Soldiers here and their families and friends back home give them the inspiration to find the time for one

another.

"Getting mail always makes a noticeable impact on morale," said 2nd Lt. Trey Thompson of Battery A.

"Just getting a package is exciting. It doesn't even matter what's in it really. It could be full of junk but that wouldn't matter," he said.

"During the week it gets dull but then you see the board [with names of Soldiers who got mail] and you get excited," said 1st Lt. Matthew Kurnava of Headquarters Battery. "Stephanie (his wife) always sends good care packages," he said.

Normally, mail arrives to Ramadi every three to four days, said Sgt. 1st Class David Garduque, who emphasized that mail deliveries increase during the holiday season, which is quickly approaching.

During the holidays, there may be a dozen connexes of mail, which can be upward of a thousand letters and packages.

They look forward to mail regu-

larly, said Garduque.

A little envelope or a small care package can make a Soldier's week. Help keep their spirits up and keep sending mail when you find the time.

Each item sent yields a smile that is well worth the effort!



2nd Lt. Trey Thompson helps bring packages to the Battery A offices.



Soldiers unload mail from a vehicle filled with many packages and letters from home.



Representatives from all the units help organize the mail for their particular unit. Then they make it available for Soldiers to pick up.



Marines hand back the West

*Multi National Forces
- West returns back
to the Army as the
Marines redeploy*

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - The weather had been clear on-and-off for a few weeks, but leave it to Murphy's Law to have a heavy haze set in and disrupt the plans the Marines had made to leave.

Regimental Combat Team - 6, commanded by Col. Matthew Lopez, is scheduled to redeploy by the end of the month.

As part of their redeployment, the transfer of authority ceremony between RCT-6 and 1st Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division is scheduled for the end of September.

Lopez will hand over command to

Col. Mark Stammer, who will become the new commander of Multi National Forces - West.

This is a dramatic change for MNF-W, but not a new change for the 82nd.

When the war first began, MNF-W was commanded by the Army. Years later, it was passed to the Marines (recalling in the news the battles in Fallujah and Ramadi that were fought along with many other "hot" areas in MNF-W).

For a few years, the Marines were in charge. Regimental Combat Teams rotated in and out of the area but always maintained their operational command of the region.



Once given the command, Marines assigned to Regimental Combat Team - 6 grab their gear and load up and prepare to leave Camp Ramadi for their last time .

However, as the war comes to an end, it might just be fitting that the area return to the hands who had it when the war had begun - the Army.

A few select Marine elements will remain in place in MNF-W, but overall, it will be Army commanded at the culmination of the TOA in late September.

A Marine ground guides a vehicle with a flash light in hand to the convoy staging area for Regimental Combat Team - 6 in mid-September at Camp Ramadi, Iraq.

Marines stand by their gear waiting for the command to load up the vehicles and leave Ramadi for their last time.



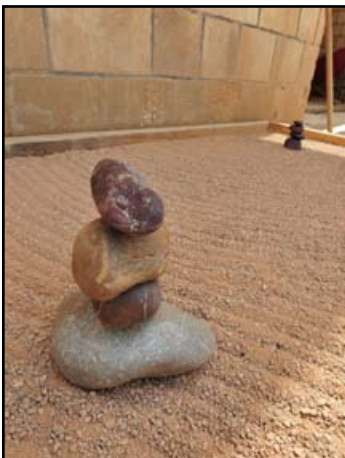
A Touch of Zen

Photos and story by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

The medics of 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery as featured in August's newsletter, are continuing to personalize their work area.

It began as a way to satirize Camp Ramadi's beautification but turned into a daily activity; a Zen garden as a peaceful retreat for all to enjoy. Each day since the garden was created, Soldiers pick up the rake, move the sand to a pattern that suites them and position the rocks.

When you walk passed the area, it's always worth stopping to see the pattern of the day.



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al strategies and give some good-humored “trash talk” about the other teams.

“I think Sgt. 1st Class Julian has last place locked up. He just needs to buy the lid to put on his toilet bowl award,” said Van Ness with a grin.

Sgt. Andrew Shaw of Gill, Colo., said, “I am not much of a trash-talker. I just pay close attention to the stats, and let my game do all the talking.”



Children in a War Zone



Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq - With curiosity apparent, they watch heavily armored American Soldiers driving and walking through their neighborhoods. From a distance they appear the same as any group of American children; watching, sometimes waving, and occasionally even venturing closer. This is Iraq, however, and life for these children is different.

Recently, outbreaks in violence in Al Anbar are much less frequent, but it is still an active combat zone. Only on some unfortunate occasions does the sound of gun fire or attacks play out like an orchestra. The insurgency is increasingly focused on the Iraqi police and government so fighting continues, however reduced, in the same streets and districts where Iraqi children live, play and go to school.

American Soldiers travel through Iraqi neighborhoods protected by the gear they wear and the vehicles they drive. Iraqi children have no such protection and instead of protective gear, they display a colorful array of clothes similar to many American children.

Despite the chances of violence erupting or the intimidating sounds of military vehicles topped with weapons, many Iraqi children are friendly to Soldiers and interactions are good considering the language and cultural barriers.

“Iraqi kids are the same as American kids, they love getting their picture taken, al-

An Iraqi boy plays in a school that is under construction in Kharma, Iraq. He approached the troops with a smile on his face hoping to get a photo, “Mister, photo?” After he got his picture taken, he walked away still smiling, and continued watching the troops from a distance.

ways have smiles on their faces, always asking questions about your gear, and like to have fun,” said Maj. Clay Taulman, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery executive officer.

He said communicating with Iraqi children is hard but “as soon as you make an initial connection then the smiles start.”

Using a combination of verbal and nonverbal communication, many times Soldiers are able to interact with the children, and both the Soldiers and children walk away with a friendly smile.

“I do not believe these kids know any different environment to live in. They have been brought up hearing the explosions, gun fire and emergency service sirens,” said Taulman.

The province has calmed significantly in recent years but the sounds of war have not stopped yet. It’s important for Soldiers to maintain a friendly posture with the children because they will either be America’s future allies in Iraq or end up on the other side of the battle.

Our goal is to remind them we are on *their* side.

Maj. Clay Taulman interacts with Ashet, an Iraqi boy, in downtown Ramadi. (Submitted photo)



ONE LESS STRESS ... *LAUNDRY!*

Editorial and photo by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

You might wonder what it's like to do laundry in a combat zone. Early in the war, Soldiers used the old-fashioned process of soap, water and a bucket. Now that we have been in Iraq for years, the luxuries of home had made it their way here thanks to a few contracted services such as laundry.

Soldiers can go to the laundry facility with their dirty laundry, fill out a sheet, leave it with the contracted personnel who clean the clothes and, within a day (sometimes as quickly as four hours) they can pick up clean clothes.

While it doesn't smell fresh like when it's cleaned at home, the clothes are at least no longer *dirty* smelling. Fresh smells and a lack of static cling is tougher to achieve, but at least we moved past moving buckets and manual labor!



Cont. SEPT 11 p. 1

are called to do it and we willingly do it because maybe the sacrifice of three years [with our families] is worth 50 years of peace [somewhere else in the world]."

"Maybe it's worth actively finding the bad guy in his neck of the woods so he doesn't end up on my city block," said Taulman, who acknowledges the hardships the distance takes on family, but does not regret his decision to serve his nation.

To others, Sept. 11 means recognizing Soldiers who were killed and those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Chief Warrant Officer Stephanie Mann, an armament technician of Colorado Springs, Colo., said Sept. 11 meant the remembrance of "all these Soldiers like Sgt. Reyes who will never get to go home."

Sgt. Luis Reyes of Durango, Colo., was killed when his vehicle rolled over on the way to Iraq while deployed with the 947th Engineer Company, Colorado Army National Guard in 2005. Reyes is one of the more than 4,500 troops killed in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

Despite the costs of war, Sgt. Katherine Connelly of Annandelle, Minn., a human resource sergeant assigned to 3-157 FA, joined the Army before Sept. 11 through the Delayed Entry Program.



Service members based at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, gather for the Sept. 11 prayer breakfast at the camp dining facility.

"I remember the recruiter asking me if I still wanted to go," Connelly said in the weeks following Sept. 11. "There was no doubt I still wanted to go."

"[In Basic Combat Training] the drill sergeants said that most of us would be going to the desert."

Not long after, Connelly was among the first group that invaded Iraq in early March 2003.

"I never thought about why we were going to Iraq. I never questioned it. It was for the people who passed away [on Sept. 11] so I didn't have a problem with it," she said.

"I guess now this day brings it back. Sometimes I lose focus why I'm here and this day helps me remember why we are actually here and what we are doing here."

As a Soldier, Connelly sees a deeper purpose of being deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"[My family] didn't know anyone in 9/11 who was hurt, but like the rest of the country, we were affected by it."

Like the call to patriotism that lead Connelly to join, Smith believes Sept. 11, "reminds us that beauty can come from ashes. The horrors of that day, though still vividly powerful in the hearts and minds of many, will not last forever. In time, with God's grace, we can and will recover.

"Though the emptiness for some will always remain, in time buildings will be rebuilt, homes will heal and lives will be renewed."

Before the sun set over the rubble where the World Trade Center towers once stood in 2001, President George W. Bush addressed the nation saying that the terrorist attacks "shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve."

The American resolve lives on in Ramadi in the hearts of those who proudly serve in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Time may heal the pain from Sept. 11, but it is a day that will never be forgotten.



Sept. 11 will never be forgotten.



Keeping active, staying fit

By Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

RAMADI, Iraq - Picking up from where we left off last month, the Morale Welfare and Recreation Office is keeping the troops and civilians at Camp Ramadi busy with activities.

Labor Day was particularly busy with a scheduled softball tournament and another camp-wide five-kilometer fun run.

The Marines, once again, swept the competition but 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery did have one Soldier who placed.

Sgt. Vanessa Lozano placed 1st for the female runners. It seems impossible that anyone could beat one of the new arrivals, Marine 1st Lt. Sean Barrett who ran the 5K in just over 15 minutes!



Sgt. Dusky Van Ness walks up to the plate.



Sgt. Vanessa Lozano comes in first!



Cpl. Jonathan Ern rounds third base.



Spc. Todd Stesen and Spc. Severon Carlson conclude there is only one out.



Soldiers from Battery A's Apache team watch the play on the field.

Sgt. Cedric Gamble's road to weight loss

Staff Sgt. John P. Martinez III

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - It appears that Sgt. Gamble's weight loss may have peaked. This past month he has a difference of one pound. He will be looking to tighten up on his diet and change his workout routine in order to optimize his weight loss goals.

AGE: 39 • STARTING WEIGHT: 253 • CURRENT WEIGHT: 238

This month's workout plan: 30 min Treadmill Fat Burn, 20 min abdominal and alternating strength training.



A Message from the Family Readiness Group in Colorado

Hello to all of our families and friends of Field Artillery,

I hope that this letter finds you all well and in good spirits. I cannot believe that it is almost fall as the weather lately has certainly felt that way.

Just as a reminder, we have a couple of things going on for you and your family in the near future. We have the Happy Apple Farm planned for Sept. 26. We would love to see you all there as it will prove to be a good time enjoyed by all. Also, the Family Readiness Group is selling Field Artillery cook books for \$10 each, so if you would like a cook book please get your cook book reserved today!

Remember that we are a phone call away should you

need anything throughout the deployment. No question to strange and no task to big, we will do our very best to fulfill your needs. Never hesitate to give us a call!

I found a quote the other day that I would like to share with all of you.

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. Author unknown

With warm regards,
Suzanne Buemi
Family Assistance Center Coordinator
Colorado National Guard Family Program



FAMILY READINESS DATES

Key dates for meetings:

September 19, October 17 and November 7
(Longmont area is meeting November 11)

Family Activities:

Happy Apple Farms September 26 in Penrose. All welcome to attend a pot luck lunch from noon to 3 p.m.

Neighborhood Hello's! Come join us for coffee and conversation

Sterling: September 9

Montrose: September 23-24

Alamos: October 6-7

Grand Junction: October 22-23

Holiday packages for Soldiers party TBD

الف مبروك (Congrats!)

Achievements:

1st Sgt. Joseph Bishop and Sgt. Gregory Bice won the Doubles Horseshoe Tournament again for the month of August.

The following Soldiers were promoted this month:

Sgt. 1st Class Harold Bridgers

Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Lorenz

Birth announcements:

1st Lt. Christopher Berven and wife Jenny gave birth to Grant Christopher Aug 29.

A Message from the Rear Detachment

Capt. Chris Stutz
Commander
C Battery

September brings Battery C and Detachment 1, Forward Support Company to the field to continue our artillery and support training to culminate in a live fire exercise and demonstration in March/April 2010.

Launchers roam down range at Fort Carson, Colo., and the rolling stock is ready for any situation that might arise, as our launcher crews and ammunition sections continue to hone their war-fighting skills. Training will continue through the winter months with the unit going to the field six out of the next eight months.

September is the first month that we will welcome back all of the Soldiers who trained during the pre-mobilization. Once we in-process these Soldiers, the Rear Detachment will have close to 100 drilling soldiers.

Soldiers of C Battery and DET 1, FSC are drilling and training. Our Soldiers on the home front are executing their assigned missions and are ready to support any state emergencies that might arise. They stand ready to support the families and loved ones of the Soldiers deployed. Be assured that our thoughts and prayers are with our brethren overseas, but know we stand ready to execute any state mission that is assigned to 3-157 FA.

Battery C is looking for a Family Readiness Group lead volunteer. We will be standing up the battery FRG over the next few months to work in conjunction with the other units and the battalion. My intent is to have our unit's FRG continue through the deployment and welcome those Soldiers home who will be transferring back to the Battery after the success-

ful deployment. So if any Soldiers who are overseas and know they will be coming back to our battery, have a spouse or relative that want to volunteer for our FRG please let me know. If any of the standing FRG volunteers know of anyone who is interested in stepping up and helping please let me know as well.

Standing up the battery FRG is the right thing to do and can only make support on the home front that much stronger.



Commo shop keeps things moving

Commentary and photos by 1st Lt. Jeff Wilson

The S6 section hit the ground running and has not stopped. As the 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery S6 section, we are responsible for the communication, automation, and electronic warfare assets and operation in the battalion.

maintenance and repair as well as assisting the electronic warfare officer to ensure all communication systems are operational and the proper preventative maintenance is performed on them. He also helps with the Mayors Cell Welfare and Recreation activities. On top of all this you will often find him with a hammer or other tools making upgrades or fixing something in the shop and around the camp. Hooah to you Sgt. Gates!



(Left) Pfc. Joshua Jordan trouble shoots a radio at one of the guard towers here at Camp Ramadi. He is a smart, hard-working Soldier who is excited about the opportunity to learn. Whether he is working on radios or computers, he is always trying to expand his skill set. He can be found performing a wide range of tasks to help our section, anything from helpdesk issues with the local area network,

computer and printer issues, wiring, radios and Blue Force Tracker troubleshooting or maintenance.

Sgt. John Burns is another great Soldier in the S6 shop. The 3-157th FA has Mayor Cell responsibilities for Camp Ramadi, so the S6 shop helps with camp -wide services such as Armed Forces Network broadcasts, SPAWAR or the MWR Internet and phone centers around Camp Ramadi, and "Big Voice," which is the emergency alerting system. Sgt. Burns is the heartbeat of these functions. Not only does he ensure the main systems are functioning properly he goes above and beyond the call of duty to assist Soldiers with reception, cabling and connections. He always brings a positive attitude to the shop and motivates us all with his spirit of service.

We have a total of eight Soldiers in the S6 section who all worked really hard during pre-mobilization and especially once we got here to Camp Ramadi. As the S6, I cannot say enough how much I appreciate the effort and attitude of each these Soldiers. I am amazed everyday by their perseverance. A lot has been thrown at these Soldiers and they have met the challenge and continue to strive for betterment. I am proud to be a part of the S6 Section.

(Lower Right) Sgt. Coe Gates tests a communication system in a vehicle to ensure it is operating correctly.

Sgt. Gates was just recently certified on additional counter improvised explosive device measurements.

He is a real go getter. He is everywhere you need him, a jack of all trades if you will. He recently assisted with a major re-cabling at one of the gates to get communications operational. This included first, trouble shooting the equipment and discovering that the problem was the wire and not the equipment, then the coordination of heavy equipment to dig a trench to lay new cable and conduit. He did this and did not drop or delay any of the other projects he was working on. He just does not quit. His main focus for the S6 section is radio, Blue Force Tracker, and cabling



At the Green Beans Stage with DJ Crunch

Story by Spc. Dana Nisley
Photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

Trying to keep the troops entertained at Camp Ramadi has been a task I have taken on with a passion!

Starting out with next to nothing for equipment and flying by the seat of my pants, I have successfully put on three weekly shows that are growing up to five, not counting the Fun Run series.



Mondaynight is open mic night that has seen a lot of talent from all services and civilians here on camp. Everything from singers, guitar players and even a key-

board in the mix.

Wednesday night is new release movie night. You could consider it more of a "walk in" instead of a "drive in." We play whatever new release we can get a copy of.

Friday Video Concert Night was a idea I came up with in Fort Hood, Texas, after my girl sent me a music video from back home, and within two songs, I came up with the idea to play outdoor video concerts on a stereo quality system.

Saturday night is a music jam where people can

go on stage with their instruments or sing and just rock out.

Sunday night will top off the week with televised sporting events to stereo sound on a big screen for all the sports fans and nuts as they enjoy their teams. (Go Broncos!)



Cont. MAHNOOSH p. 2

Another Soldier and I were visiting the Spiritual Fitness Center at the time started to call her by various names; Angel/Marley/Molly/Mahnoosh, and she clearly responded to Mahnoosh much more than all the others – so her name was settled.

Although her name is settled, her ownership is not. Lt. Col. Morris told me to take the matter up with Maj. Clay Taulman, who happens to like this dog and her "good temperament." But we still need a lot of paperwork.

The Marines took her to a nearby base to have her shots, but did not obtain records of those shots. Now, while the Marines like to get in and get out, the Army needs records of everything. So, we are trying to obtain Mahnoosh's shot records from the other base. If that does not happen, we will probably have to send back there to get the same exact shots, but this time get a record of those shots. Then, after that, we can include those records with our formal memorandum requesting her to be allowed and assigned to Spc. Stein and myself. Fortunately, Spc. Stein has the time, effort and in-

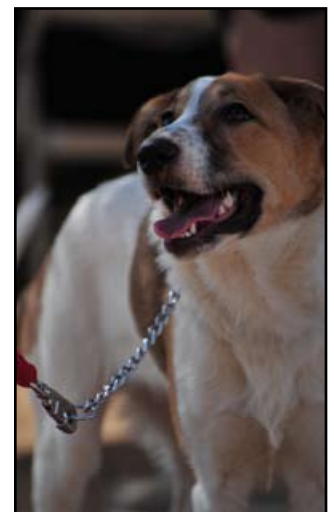


Manoosh and Spc. Keaton Stein visit the Labor Day Softball Tournament.



tense love for Mahnoosh in order to be her primary custodian.

When Soldiers end their shift on towers or missions, they know that they can come over to the Spiritual Fitness Center and not only grab some snacks and health items from care packages, but also get to play with and pet a great, fun loving, big puppy, it really makes their day. Please join us in prayer that all the right hoops can be jumped through in order to keep Mahnoosh as our Spiritual Fitness dog.



Available Family Resources

We are pleased to announce that the Army OneSource homepage has been redesigned with you, the end user, in mind! The new homepage will be released the week of August 10th, and will offer a few changes with big impacts!

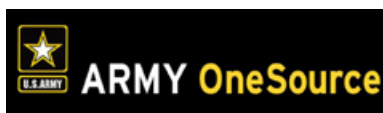
1 The banner will include six buttons to help end users navigate to some of the Army OneSource system's most popular applications like Online Training, Become a Volunteer, Conference Center, AOS Network, Profile and Forums. Previously, users were required to click through a series of pages multiple times before having the ability to reach these functionalities. These six important buttons will be available from every page via the top banner!

2 The announcement block on the homepage will display all important announcements the Army OneSource team has to disperse, such as events, new content, or site maintenance!

3 The homepage has also been redesigned to match the look and feel of other areas within the site. The height of the homepage rotating image has also been decreased to help end users with low resolution monitors have a more enjoyable Army OneSource experience!

Please let us know if you have any comments or feedback by clicking the 'Contact Us' link at the bottom of every page. Thank you in advance for your help.

Regards,
Army OneSource Team



Attention Spouses!!

We have scheduled a Women's Retreat on Jan. 15 - 17 in Colorado Springs. More information to follow in December!

facebook

FANS OUT THERE?

Thanks to all the families and friends, Colorado's 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, now has more than 400 fans!

For those of you who aren't familiar with Facebook, it's a "new media" outlet that many Department of Defense agencies now support. You can create a profile and connect with former military friends, colleagues, family members or your Soldiers who are overseas!

The 3-157 FA Facebook page is searchable if you type in search "3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery." The image that will appear is copied at the bottom so you know what to look for. Our main images is of our brigade unit patch that we proudly wear on our arm.

The Facebook page has photos, links to stories and imagery posted on DVIDS, updated information, and, with any luck, will also act as a forum for families and Soldiers to communicate. Also included are updates from Lt. Col. Al Morris about life over here.

The Facebook page for the battalion is: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fort-Hood-TX/3rd-Battalion-157th-Field-Artillery-Colorado-Army-National-Guard/219788830264?ref=nf>

Pages • 1 Result



Name: **3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, Colorado Army National Guard**
Type: Government
Fans: 479 fans

(Left) Here's what it looks like on Facebook when browsing for the group!

DVIDS IS HERE!

All released photos, stories and Steel Rain newsletters are posted on Digital Video & Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS) at www.dvidshub.net.

This Web site provides news, images, audio, video and publications from military operations around the world!

From this Web site all friends, families, Soldiers and employers are able to create a free account so they may download products.

You have options with DVIDS

- To subscribe via RSS go to (http://dvidshub.net/unit_rss.php?unit_id=671)
- To view a gallery of work from 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery go to (<http://www.dvidshub.net/units/3B-157FA>)

If you have questions about DVIDS, you may e-mail Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli at liesl.marelli@us.army.mil or contact DVIDS at 1-877-DVIDS247. Thank you and we hope you enjoy seeing your Soldier in action!

dvids
NEWS