

STEEL RAIN

3RD BATTALION, 157TH FIELD ARTILLERY

Do you have what it takes?

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - Nine Soldiers competed in the Soldier of the Quarter competition here Nov. 14.

Competing were Sgt. Carlos Garcia, Spc. Zachery Anderson, Sgt. Benjamin Kassaw, Spc. Joseph Jarvis, Spc. James Warram, Spc. Joseph Emery, Sgt. Nathan Vosburg, Pfc. Michael Richard and Spc. Christopher Elson.

The winner for Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter was Garcia and the Soldier of the Quarter was Anderson. Both Soldiers received a four-day pass to Qatar, the Governor's coin of excellence and an Army Achievement Medal.

Tasks Soldiers performed included properly calling in a nine-line medical evacuation, evaluating a casualty, and operate and transmit a call on a radio, answering questions regarding Iraqi culture, Arabic language, stating the troop leading procedures and reciting some of the 82nd Airborne Division chain of command.

At the culmination of the day, the Soldiers enjoyed a steak dinner in the battalion area.

See NCO p. 10

Sgt. Carlos Garcia successfully assembles, tests, and operates a radio to transmit a message as one of the many tasks Soldiers were required to complete.



Sgt. 1st Class Luis Luna Rodriguez (left) points while explaining the weapons course the Soldiers must complete. In Ramadi, the range where Soldiers conduct weapons training is located off the forward operating base.



Nine Soldiers assigned to 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, competed Nov. 14 for Soldier of the Quarter and Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter at Camp Ramadi, Iraq.



Spc. Jeremy Ham of Battery A serves as the gunner in his vehicle as the troops convoy to the range in Ar Ramadi for weapons qualification.

From the Battalion Leadership:

Battalion Commander:

Lt. Col Al Morris



As we look forward to the holiday season, want to share a few thoughts about our deployment and how the Soldiers are doing. In terms of our mission, it has continued to expand as our personnel security details, base defense, quick reaction force and camp management duties continue to have us hopping.

We find ourselves continually readjusting and adapting to become more efficient and reduce or eliminate unneeded tasks. While we don't always look forward to changes, junior leaders and Soldiers have kept a positive attitude and have found ways to still do more with sometimes less.

There are occasionally rumors and other irritants that challenge leaders and I am happy to report the team has risen above that and continues to have a positive outlook and esprit de corps. I pass on my thanks to each of you as you encourage each other and make the most of your situation.

As I look around the other units with which we have worked, it is easy to see how we have earned a great reputation for excellent Soldiers who conduct the mission in an outstanding manner. That is a tribute to each of the fine Soldiers here and the support we get from the Rear Detachment, Family Program, and every family member and friend who supports us back home. We are over half way through our deployment and even after having done so much already, we remain Eager for Duty.



Battalion Command Sergeant Major:

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Koob



We had another good month in Iraq. First, hats off to the marathon runners. Training for an event like that in addition to their busy schedules took a lot of commitment and time. The first sergeants and I had held our first Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter board.

Nine Soldiers spent a day conducting a physical fitness test, weapons skills testing, Warrior Training Tasks and then an oral board. We finished the day with a steak fry and awards ceremony. All Soldiers that participated represented themselves and the unit well. I would like to recognize Sgt. Carlos Garcia from the Apache Battery and Spc. Zachary Anderson from Berserker Battery for finishing in first place.

The senior noncommissioned officers are currently in another round of section validations. We will continue to train and validate each section to make sure that they retain their skills and proficiency at their jobs.

Last, hats off to Pfc. Joshua Jordan from Headquarters Battery, Cpl. Greg Lampe and Spc. Brian King from Bravo, Spc. Devin Snell from FSC, Spc. Troy Polland and Cpl. Ian Alcorn from Alpha. This month they received a Coin of Excellence from Gen. Raymond Odierno, the Commanding General of all forces in Iraq. Receiving a coin from a four-star general is a great honor and something these Soldiers will treasure for years to come.

I hope everyone has a great holiday season, we will see you all in a few months.



Chaplain's Corner: *Upholding the Army Values*

Chaplain (Capt.) Todd Wolf,
115th Fires Brigade

Please recognize that our communities watch us and continually assess our behavior for pros or cons. Back home, in the United States, we're judged when driving our personally owned vehicles when we have our uniform on, stickers showing our military affiliation, and/or National

Guard license plates. Like it or not, our behavior is scrutinized whenever people know we're in the Guard. Even more, people develop opinions that range from great levels of gratitude for us all the way to prejudice against us. As with any other sub-culture, interactions with Guard Soldiers will assist in the formation of opinions. Even dependants/family members of Guard Soldiers are viewed with particularly high standards; people know that the military and military families represent the backbone of our country. Because we're ambassadors, of the

Army, to our local populations ... it benefits all of us to behave according to the Army Values.

The Army Values are a part of why the Army is great, why Soldiers and our families are respected, and why our Army is honored internationally. They are a set of rules based in common sense, for our success as citizen-Soldiers. There is a pop-Christian saying, "What would Jesus do?" It is for the purpose of challenging believers in Jesus to a

See VALUES p. 15



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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

Staying Operational

Story by Spc. Justine Garcia
Photo by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

The 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery is involved in many missions in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. An instrumental part of completing all these missions is often overlooked until an import piece of equipment does not work properly.

The 188th Forward Support Company Soldiers' Maintenance Platoon are what keeps these missions going by performing maintenance and preventative checks and services. Maintenance is not limited to just vehicles. The Soldiers of the 188th Maintenance Platoon take on a wide-range of tasks that support not only our battalion, but other elements on Camp Ramadi as well.

The 188th has Soldiers skilled to fix generators, weld and has carpenters and weapons experts to name a few of the many job skills they encompass. Vehicle recovery is also a vital part of the 188th motor pool and bringing in vehicles that are not able to make it back to the motor

pool or Camp Ramadi because of breakdowns while on missions.

As part of our wide range of responsibilities every maintenance Soldier has learned things that are not typically part of his or her normal job titles such as operating the fuel trucks, welding and proper procedures for waste disposal. As a part of the army spirit of camaraderie and leadership noncommissioned officers and even lower enlisted have stepped up and been vital assets as leaders and teachers.

"Often times the soldiers do not have certain tools or parts that are needed, that's when you see them come together and really work as a team to get the job done. They know their number one priority is the mission and each other," said Chief Warrant Officer Stephanie Mann.

It is not uncommon around Camp Ramadi to see Soldiers lending out a helping hand either, whether it's going to look at a generator or giving someone a tow, these soldiers are here and excited to help.

The mission as a whole will give the 188th maintenance Soldiers the opportunity to gain knowledge that could only come from a deployment; first aid, mechanics, warrior tasks and a Soldiers' trained intuition. These skills make for outstanding soldiers and citizens of Colorado.



Capt. Beth Soelzer



Headquarters & Headquarters Battery Based in Colorado Springs

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

The Soldiers of HHB would like to wish all the families and friends back home a Happy Thanksgiving. HHB Soldiers continue to shine and work hard. It seems everywhere we go people recognize our patch and give us positive feedback. This is a testament to all of the countless hours put in by each Soldier.

This month marked a historic event for our battalion as we officially turned over a portion of Camp Ramadi to Camp Ali and the government of Iraq. The turnover was done as part of the "Shrink and Share" initiative and a major step for the Iraqis to take control of their own security as we and other coalition forces take on more of an advisory role. The ceremony for the turnover was held Nov. 5 and was followed by lunch that included staff members from the 1st Iraqi army brigade and our battalion.

We continue to train and refine our skills even though we are in a combat zone. We have developed specific

training lanes for missions we conduct so we are sharp while outside the wire. Our training lanes are validated by our Non-commissioned Officers in the battalion to make sure they are performed to standard.

With all of the activities and work going on, a handful of the Battery managed to go to Al Asad and participate in the Marine Corps Marathon. Everyone from our Battalion finished the race in the allotted time, and I'm proud of them all.

We are excited about the holidays and Thanksgiving. We look forward to the dinner and all the entertainment. Although it is not the same as being home and spending it with our loved ones, the change in the everyday routine will be an enjoyable one.

As always, we recognize your sacrifice and thank you for all the support!



Capt. Ashkan Angha

Alpha Battery Based in Longmont

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



Capt. Dom Tatti

Happy Holidays!

The holiday season is upon us, and it is time for family and friends to gather around the table to share stories and laughs over times that have past. Smiles on faces and the cheer in the air are the sweet signs of the holidays. As we reunite with family and friends this year, let us take a special moment to count our many blessings.

Not everything has gone according to the plans that we have made both personally and professionally; however, there are still many blessings that have fallen upon the Alpha Battery family. The blessings I would

like to focus on are the several new members added. And, we are still awaiting the arrival of a few more to add to the Alpha Battery family.

Those of us who have been down this road remember the organized chaos during the big day. The confused look on the faces of the new dad and the amazing new mother as their child is brought into the world. This moment carries us through many trying times that are to come. Times like when the innocent little angels decide to make new jeans into shorts, give faddish haircuts to their siblings (or themselves), and redecorating the walls and furniture with crayons or paint. As parents, there are many versions of trying times, but the one thread that holds it all together is that moment when a dad and a glowing new mother are handed their precious gift.

Regardless if you are veterans of the parenting game or a whole new world for others, we are all thankful for the beautiful gifts that we have been given.

On behalf of Alpha Battery, we ask that you enjoy each other's company and companionship for that is what we will do while we are away. Make no mistake, the Soldiers of Alpha Battery would like nothing more than be home sharing in storeis and laughter this holiday season. However, we still have our mission.

Know that our love and best wishes goes out to everyone back home awaiting our highly anticipated return. Take time during the holiday season to give thanks for the many blessings that you have received and for those of our Alpha Battery family.

Enjoy the holiday season!

Bravo Battery Based in Aurora

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

Task Force Troy

Story by Staff Sgt. John P. Martinez III

On the evening of the Oct. 24, members of Bravo Battery loaded up their Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and began the more than two-hour trip to Camp Al Asad.

Approximately 25 Soldiers comprised of members from Bravo Battery and the 188th Forward Support Company traveled through the night to attend an important course held in Al Asad, Iraq. They were on their way to participate in the Task Force

Troy Level II Counter-Improvised Explosive Device training.

Task Force Troy is a brigade-sized element comprised of personnel from the U.S. Air Force, Army and Navy, according to the Multi-National Force-Iraq Web site. Instructors from TF Troy were contacted by Staff Sgt. Kyle Sullivan, Bravo Battery's Operations Noncommissioned Officer, who inquired which courses were offered and any required prerequisites. The requirement was fairly basic; Soldiers needed a security clearance and completed the Small Group Leader course.

The three-day block of instruction is used to give small group leaders the skills needed to pass along important counter-IED training to their respective units.

"It was comprehensive training of not only insurgent IED (tactics) but

also in conducting your own counter-IED course," said Sgt. 1st Class Warren Baker, the NCO in charge of the Bravo Soldiers who attended the course.

The training was realistic and very important to the environment that the unit operates in everyday.

Although they were attending a class, the Soldiers took the time out of their schedule to enjoy the amenities of Al Asad, such as the full-size movie theater and indoor swimming pool.



Capt. David Wilcox

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class David Garduque



Sgt. Tazue Mueller



Lt. Col. Al Morris and 1st Lt. Jeff Wilson



Sgt. Brandon Cordova



Spc. Sherrondolyn Williams



Sgt. Katherine Connelly and Spc. Osel Rengulbai



Sgt. Theodore Wilson and
Spc. Terrence Mahathey



Sgt. 1st Class Richard Hallman



Sgt. Matthew Schumacher and Staff Sgt. Roger Davis gives bunny ears to Staff Sgt. Joseph Vigil III

The Same as Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Story by Chief Warrant Officer Jody Hakala
Photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

It's 6 a.m., and another day begins for the maintenance platoon of the 188th Forward Support Company. Another day just like yesterday, just like tomorrow.

Charged with the responsibility of all equipment maintenance and recovery, as well as weapons and communication equipment maintenance for 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, the maintenance personnel take their jobs very seriously. With more than 100 wheeled vehicles, to include Mine Resistant Ambush Protected, which are key to Soldier survival, maintenance operations run seven days a week, 10 to 12 hours a day. Interaction with all maintenance sections and civilian maintenance personnel stationed on Ramadi is an everyday occurrence.

More than 3,500 missions will be conducted during the time 3-157th FA operates in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Soldier safety and survivability is the primary focus for every mechanic who maintains the vehicles. Through a detailed inspection process, section chiefs ensure the highest maintenance standards are achieved and every work order is completed with a detail-oriented mind set. There are no short cuts, and if there is any doubt whether the vehicle is ready or not, it doesn't leave the shop. Success for these mechanics is measured by Soldiers' ability to safely accomplish their missions and return to the safety of the base.

The 188th also provides support for other units who do not have their own maintenance sections. The roles of these units vary, but all contribute to the stabilization of this region. Whether these units work directly with the Iraqi Police or Iraqi army, the maintenance support provided is

invaluable. Their mission success can all be tied directly to the maintenance efforts of those ensuring only the best product leaves the motor pool.

The 188th is also responsible for the maintenance of more than 690 weapons. All are maintained at the highest state of readiness at all times. Armor support is also provided to other units stationed here in Ramadi. Weapons seized or found in caches are "de-milled" (destroyed) to ensure there will be no future threat to Coalition Forces.

The maintenance control section manages more than 1,200 repair parts and makes weekly logistical supply missions. Through constant inventory and over watch, repair parts are usually on-hand, which expedites vehicle repairs.

Work is never in short supply for this approximately 30-personnel platoon. Mechanics assigned to the 188th come from various backgrounds. Some are students, nurses, welders, or supervisors in the civilian sector. Many work as maintenance personnel full-time for the Colorado Army National Guard and bring a wealth of experience.

All of these Soldiers will return with a much higher maintenance skill set and, no matter what unit they may be assigned, will have a positive impact for those units' maintenance posture.

To say they are a tightly knit group is an understatement. They live, work, eat, and share the same day to day experiences here in Iraq.



Cpl. David Meggison turns wrenches to ensure proper installation of parts to keep the vehicle operational.



Sgt. 1st Class Jason Matter reviews maintenance documents.



Soldiers assigned to 4th Squad of the 188th's Maintenance Platoon take a moment from their busy day to take a photo.



Spec. Donald Cannell lifts the cab on a medium tactical vehicle for quality assurance checks.

Deployed Brothers

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - It's not often that brothers deploy together. It's even more infrequent that two brothers share the same rank, the same battalion and, if you don't know them well enough, you would never be able to tell them apart. Identical twin brothers, Sgt. 1st Class Mitchell Landers and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Landers are a unique pair.

Mitchell is assigned to the 188th Forward Support Company and is based in Al Asad as a liaison officer and Michael serves with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery at Camp Ramadi's Mayor's Cell.

The brothers joined the army together in August 1989 and have lead military careers that paralleled their lives.

The separation has not been easy for Mitchell, he said, who is based at Al Asad, which means he's without the in-person support from his brother and many of his friends with whom he deployed. However, he said he is making the best of it.

"I love my job. Everyone kept

telling me that I had one of the best jobs," said Mitchell. "I have the autonomy to do what it takes to support the battalion and that's why I love my job."

Mitchell helps with numerous tasks from coordinating connections at Al Asad to picking up troops traveling through Al Asad's flight line as they transition back. He'll pick them up at the facility, bring them to temporary housing or the chow hall. He'll meet up with the logistical convoys that come to pick up parts and supply items.

With his organic unit miles away, Mitchell has learned to rely on a unit based at Al Asad, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. The 751st CSSB lets Mitchell use their office equipment to include their phone lines, photocopier and computers.

Mitchell added his gratitude for Al Asad's many amenities to include numerous chow

halls, unlike Camp Ramadi's one and only chow hall.

"Back home in garrison, everyone looks forward to the weekends. I don't have weekends here. So, I look forward to chow," he said laughing.

The brothers were able to spend a few days together since arriving to Iraq in mid-November.

Finishing up their second tour together (their first was to Saudi Arabia for the Gulf War) the brothers are able to share experiences together most don't get the opportunity to.

Family is important to the brothers.

Mitchell was able to go home recently for the birth of his son.

"I'll always be grateful for them sending me home for his birth," he said.



Sgt. 1st Class Mitchell Landers was happy to visit his brother Michael at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, for the first time since leaving Kuwait.



The identical brothers easily confuse people upon first contact.



Sgt. 1st Class Mitchell Landers (left) and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Landers spent their first time together since being in Iraq in mid-November.

Wounded Warriors Seek Closure

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq (Oct. 15, 2009) - Thanks to a new program, troops injured in combat are able to return to the combat zone and see the country that changed their lives. Along the way, they can hope to find the closure they need after suffering life-changing injuries. Among those returning are five amputees, one blinded from an improvised explosive device and one who, for a period of time, was unable to read, write and communicate due to a traumatic brain injury.

Operation Proper Exit, a program co-sponsored by the USO and Troops First Foundation, is a week-long event for these seven wounded Warriors who get the opportunity to find closure or peace with a traumatic experience that redefined their lives, physically, emotionally and mentally.

Rick Kell, director of the Troops First Foundation, said the program promotes a speedy recovery for Service members injured in combat so they don't have to wait years to find closure on an incident.

Returning wounded Warriors included Cpl. Craig Chavez of Temecula, Calif., Marine Sgt. John Eubanks of Atlanta, Ga., Sergeant John Hyland of Charlotte, N.C., Sgt. 1st Class Josh Olson of Spokane, Wash., Sgt.

Eric Payton of Milford, N.J., 1st Lt. Ed Salau of Stella, N.C., and Staff Sgt. Luke Wilson of Hermiston, Oreg.

Salau, a now medically retired North Carolina Guardsman, lost his leg from an ambush east of Tirkat, Iraq, Nov. 14, 2004, said he was grateful for the opportunity to return for closure.

It was considered a relatively routine patrol for his platoon that had been deployed for 10-months. Little did Salau know that Nov. 14, 2004 be the day his new life would begin. Two well-aimed RPG penetrated their Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

"[Insurgents] in our area of responsibility couldn't shoot," he said in awe over two RPGs being aimed with such precision.

It was shortly after the ambush that he realized his leg was severely severed and dangling. The radio operator threw him his belt so he could apply a tourniquet that kept him from bleeding out. He was medically evacuated and within two days found himself at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

A little more than five months after the ambush, Salau was medically retired from the National Guard and tried returning back to the life he left before the war. His job as a safety officer for the Department of the Navy was waiting for him; his superiors had even promoted him twice during his absence.

Upon his return he met new chal-



1st Lt. Steve Travnicek and Sgt. Jason Sorenson serve as 1st Lt. Ed Salau's escort while visiting Camp Ramadi.

lenges. "I was learning my leg and how to walk," said Salau who describes his office as being accommodating his new lifestyle and challenges.

"They were sensitive to my pride," Salau said while refusing to use a wheelchair. His job was tailored to more of an office job but he joked, "The cubicle walls beat me up worse than the insurgency could."

At 34-years-old with a master's degree, Salau decided to venture closer to his new lifestyle as a combat-injured veteran and began working as an advocate for veterans' benefits.

He heard the Marine Corps was expanding their wounded Warrior program a couple years after being a veteran's advocate and thus began his work with the Wounded Warrior Battalion - East at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Getting involved with Operation Proper Exit was a happenstantial. While on vacation with his wife to Ireland in September, Salau met Rick Kell, director of the Troops First Foundation, during a golf outing. He joined a group to make a foursome for a round of golf and was able to chat more with Kell.

"By the second hole, I'm on the phone with Rick's daughter. I'm going to Iraq," said Salau, who then realized he'd have to break the news to his kids.

Salau said his children, daughter Kelli, 18, and son Ethan, 16, "have



Soldiers based at Camp Ramadi stand for a group photo at the culmination of the question/answer session held by the wounded Warriors.

See HEALING p. 12

REWARDING GOOD WORK

Marine Sgt. Maj. Carpenter, sergeant major of Multi National Force - West visited Camp Ramadi, Iraq, Nov. 20. Upon his visit with 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, he coined Colorado Guardsmen. Coined were Cpl. Janice Valentin, Spc. Kevin Bishop, Spc. Ben Harbour, Sgt. John Stapleton, Spc. Osel Rengulbai, Spc. Walter Moss, Spc. Thomas Black, Sgt. Tonio Manuello Spc. Richard Meckstroth and Spc. Dan Moffitt.



U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

Faces of *Your* Soldiers!



Spc. Abraham Yongerman



Spc. Keaton Stein



Sgt. David Chavez



Staff Sgt. Michael Cotner



Cpl. Jon Ern

Cont. NCO p. 1

(Right) Pvt. Michael Richard of Battery B assembles the M2 .50 caliber machine gun for one of the tasks.



(Left) A Soldier assesses a "casualty" during the medic portion of the testing.

(Right) Spc. Joseph Emery of Battery A completes the task of assembling the M2 .50 caliber machine gun.



(Left) Soldiers go one-by-one attempting to move and shoot targets at varying distances. They must hit the targets while shooting from both the kneeling and standing position.



(Left) Soldiers burn through additional ammunition at the range after completing the weapons portion of the competition.

(Right) Soldiers are quizzed on their general knowledge to include the 82nd Airborne Division chain of command and Arabic words.



Running in the 2009 Marine Corps Marathon

1st Lt. Dana Wilkins of Idaho Falls, Idaho, serving as the executive officer for the 188th Forward Support Company:

I competed in the Marine Corps Marathon, an annual event. They have been doing a marathon in forward deployed areas for four years now, so it was an honor, a privilege, and once-in-a-lifetime experience to run a marathon in a desert in a combat zone. I did much better than I expected. The time limit was 6 hours to finish, so I expected to finish around 5:30. My finishing time was 4:08:55, which is an average pace of nine and a half minutes per mile and approximately 6.3 miles per hour. I ran the first half (we ran one-way for 13 miles, then turned around and ran back to where we started) with an average of a nine minute mile. That surprised me because I didn't think I could keep that pace for so long.

Somewhere around the 15-mile point I noticed that my energy level dropped. I had some packets of energy gel (called "Gu") that my first sergeant had given me for the race. I ate one of those (are they eaten?) and it coated my mouth, so I had that to focus on. From that point on I did "intervals" where I would run for a little while, walk for a while, run, walk, etc. That means that I averaged 6 miles per hour (10-minute mile) for the second half, which surprises me for how fast I finished.

At the turn-around point I realized that I had made it there in about two hours, so I decided that I wanted to try and make it back in two hours and shoot to break the four-hour mark. I had originally made my personal goal to finish in under five hours. With a few miles left I wasn't sure I could make it in under 4 hours, but I didn't give up. I continued to run and walk (briskly, I might add) until I got back to the stadium where we began. The course was laid

out so that we entered the stadium and ran almost a full lap around the track to the finish line. Although my leg muscles were burning and almost cramping, I didn't stop running.

It was nice to be done, and difficult to walk (especially going up and down steps). I made sure to get some water and Gatorade so that I didn't dehydrate and kept my energy and electrolytes. That was something else I found easy to do during the race: I only passed up a drink point twice. Otherwise, I would often take both Gatorade and water to ensure I had enough to keep me going.

The weather was just about perfect; temperatures in the 70s and 80s with overcast skies and a good breeze. I couldn't have asked for better conditions.

As far as training for the marathon, I only focused on it heavily for about six weeks prior to the event. Capt. Soelzer, 1st Sgt. Bishop and I would get up around 5 a.m. and run around Camp Ramadi. There are a few loops we have laid out to judge our progress. The largest loop is about 3.7 miles, so we would often run that loop twice. We weren't great about being consistent, but usually at least two of us would get up and run three to four times each week. The furthest we ran was only 10 miles, but it gave us an idea of what to expect for 26 miles.

I would like to continue running long races like this, but I'm not sure how motivated I'll be. Unless I have someone else to train with, I'm unlikely to do it.

All in all it was difficult, but it's something I will remember for the rest of my life. I'm grateful for the experience and for the chance to share it with several friends.

2nd Lt. David Cutler of Longmont, Colo., serving as platoon leader assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery:

I decided to run the Marine Corps Marathon (Forward) because I had been telling myself for probably 10 years that I wanted to



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Josh Murray

Runners dash through the starting line of the 4th Annual Marine Corps Marathon (Forward) aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Oct. 25. Three hundred nine participants ran the 26.2 mile course for various reasons, including personal goals and homage to fallen comrades.



(Left to Right) Staff Sgt. NAME Solomon, Capt. Ashkan Angha, Maj. Clay Taulman, 2nd Lt. David Cutler, 1st Lt. Dana Wilkins, Capt. Beth Soelzer, Sgt. 1st Class Jason Bruch, Sgt. Joseph Lapp, 1st Sgt. Joseph Bishop. (courtesy photo)

Cont. HEALING p. 8

grown through the rehabilitation process with me so it wasn't hard for them to understand my need to come back. We each have a burning desire to know. We want to know we didn't lose a guy in vain." Salau thought this was true about all combat veterans, whether it was Vietnam, Korea or Iraq.

"When our C130 landed in Baghdad, we didn't know what to expect. Col. Sutherland said, 'listen, keep your guard up. But know that every place you go in Iraq will be the safest place in Iraq,'" said Salau who trusted Sutherland's words. Sutherland understood the life-altering experiences in war. The former brigade commander in Diyala, Iraq, may not have been physically injured but lost more than 100 troops during their long tour from late 2006 to early 2008.

Being in Iraq again has allowed Salau to see the progress first hand. "I'm not sure you see it," Salau said about people's experiences as they understand the war in Iraq. "You've seen it," he said to Sgt. Jason Sorenson, a medic assigned to 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, who was one of his escorts at Camp Ramadi, Iraq. Salau explained that Soldiers like Sorenson, who had deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom I and, deployed again in 2009, could see the significant differences between both tours.

"Never in a million years – as much as we were doing, as hard as we were working – did I see this happening," Salau boasted about the progress he witnessed. "We got off the plane in Baghdad with no vest and no helmet. My first 12 hours in Iraq I had no gun, no gear – I'm just a tourist," he said almost perplexed at how different the atmosphere is in Iraq than in 2004.

"There were no shootings, bombs or mortars. It was quiet," he said. "The only fear I have in this country is that a Soldier might get hurt protecting us while we are here, and I couldn't live with that."

The wounded troops were able to travel to different bases in Iraq and Salau returned to a location to meet his fellow currently-deployed North Carolina Guardsmen who took photos of him getting off the helicopter that brought them in.

"My guys were taking pictures at [Forward Operating Base] Falcon," he said about his friends who awaited his arrival and then forwarded the pictures onto his family. "My son had a picture of me coming off the helicopter. I've got my vest, helmet and bag."

At that point in his story, Salau paused, looked away and did his best to hold back the tears welling in his eyes. "Must be the dust," joked Salau.

The caption for his photo posted on his son's Facebook page of him getting out of the aircraft read, "Dad walking to his guys, instead of being carried. Inspiring."

"It made me feel 10 feet tall and bulletproof again," he said about his son's comment.

Salau's Iraq experience through Operation Proper Exit gave him that feeling of infallibility once again. In Balad, Iraq, he had an experience that granted him closure in a way he was unable to when he was medevaced years earlier.

"I went to the hospital in Balad. I walked in [the hospital] and shut the door and then walked back out. The doc didn't have a say, the enemy didn't have a vote," said Salau who was happy to be back in Iraq and experience it on his own terms. Entering and exiting the hospital on his own accord was monumental for him.

Getting medically evacuated for Soldiers like Salau means one minute being in combat, the next minute being evacuated for

medical aid and as early as hours or a day later, ending up in Germany and on to the continental United States. Following a serious combat injury, a Soldier doesn't get a chance to pack up, say good-bye, part with his comrades and make peace with the reason he is leaving. This is why Salau said something as simple as walking in and out of the hospital in Balad – for the sake of doing it – meant so much to him.

Coming back for Iraq was not only for his benefit but also to help others as well. Before leaving Ramadi, the troops took part in a town hall meeting that was open to U.S. troops based at Camp Ramadi. One-by-one the wounded Warriors introduced themselves, described their injuries and their military backgrounds.

It was a healing process for the combat-wounded Warriors and also their currently deployed brethren. Salau emphasized to the troops that no matter if they return 100 percent from the battlefield or not that there was one simple truth based on his experience.

"I want you to know that life goes on. That you'll be taken care of," said Salau.

After thanking the Soldiers for their service, the wounded Warriors departed Ramadi with a little more closure than they had upon arrival. It may take years to heal their physical wounds but their journey toward emotional and mental recovery is well underway.



The Wounded Warriors attended briefings held by the 82nd Airborne Division about Al Anbar Province operations.

Finding Peace through Yoga



"Yoga, an ancient but perfect science, deals with the evolution of humanity. This evolution includes all aspects of one's being, from bodily health to self-realization. Yoga means union - the union of body with consciousness and consciousness with the soul. Yoga cultivates the ways of maintaining a balanced attitude in day-to-day life and endows skill in the performance of one's actions."

~B.K.S. Iyengar, *Astadala Yogamala*

By Sgt. 1st Class Deborah Manzanres :

Before the deployment I started doing Birkram Yoga 3-4 times a week. I wanted to make sure I could be strong in the heat. I have only been practicing yoga on and off for two years, but this deployment has brought to me a place where I have come to really appreciate it and enjoy it. I can physically feel the benefits of each practice.

Our classes have been sporadic - ranging from both well- and poorly-attended. We do not actually teach the classes ourselves, instead we rotate through a selection of DVDs, and we are keen to one in particular. None of us are skilled to actually teach the class, so this method works.

I was self-conscious at first doing

yoga right next to the speed bag and punching bag in the aerobic room, but now I hardly notice. I occasionally hear the moans and groans from the weightlifters pushing iron to their capacity, but I just attempt to focus. We do not hesitate to dim the lights, sanitize the mats and begin the practice. I can feel my arms getting stronger, my legs getting leaner and some days my head becoming clearer.

The employees of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center smile when they see us walk in armed with our DVDs and hand over the remote control.

We always have the on-lookers that linger in on the mats and those who want to try just once. It is a great way to build strength. It is one of the things I look forward to, even walking through the Ramadi mud to get there.

**"NO ONE CAN
GET INNER
PEACE BY
POUNCING ON IT."**

~Harry Emerson Fosdick

attendees; a Marine, a Sailor, two Soldiers and two civilians. We set up two yoga classes a week that worked well initially until the operational tempo, R&R scheduling and the Marines and Sailor's redeployment

created a few hiccups in our schedule. So, we readjusted our schedule and continued doing yoga. I have fallen in love with yoga because it reminds me to do the most simplistic task: breathe. Through most of the day, I don't need to think about breathing but yoga is different. Your breath and your moves go hand-in-hand. It reminds you to breathe deeply, move with a purpose and reconnect your body and mind.

**"FOR FAST-
ACTING RELIEF,
TRY SLOWING
DOWN."**

~Lily Tomlin

Stress is tough out here. At the end of a long day I can't call up my friends and go out for a drink or a nice meal. Out here there is no "getting away from it all" so yoga is my outlet.

For one hour out each day, I am able to walk away from work, mentally leave this place, calm my heart, breathe deeply and slowly and reconnect with myself. It's a break from this place that I need. We all have our avenues and this is mine.

Doing yoga has really influenced my life. Even after this tour, I plan on continuing and maybe even getting certified to teach it one day.

So, if you are at home and find yourself a bit more stressed than usual, call up some friends, pop in a yoga DVD and remember ... just breathe.

Joining the NCO Corps

By Sgt. Raymond Mueller

Back even before 9/11 I knew I was going to join the Army. My grandpa and dad were in the Navy and my uncle was in the Army. The military life runs in my blood and, when I was old enough, I joined. Now I am in Iraq fighting for freedom and the American way of life.

Joining the time honored Noncommissioned Officer Corps is an accomplishment that feels like no other. I'm proud that I've earned the trust and respect from my upper leadership and they view me as a vital member of the

team. Having the responsibilities and duties of leading troops into a mission and gives me a sense of pride and accomplishment at the end of the day.

In my opinion, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery is doing an outstanding job. We are overcoming obstacles and persevering through our time here. From our lower enlisted to our highest officers the mission is getting completed with expertise and outmost professionalism.

The NCO Corps is at the center of it all. It's our struggles that define us. As a team, as a family we will make it home as a whole.

Editor's Note: Sgt. Raymond Mueller of Battery A, 3-157th FA was recently promoted to the NCO Corps. Congrats and welcome, Sgt. Mueller!

A Message from the Family Readiness Group in Colorado



Salutations to our Family and Friends,

I hope that this month's newsletter finds you all well and in good spirits. I also hope that you all had a safe and Happy Halloween. It is that time of year where we have set our clocks back and are enjoying one more hour of rest. It is interesting to wake up when it is dark out and to be driving home when it is dark out. Just one more thing to remind us that winter is here.

I wish you all a very happy and safe Thanksgiving and I hope that you enjoy your time with family and friends. As a friendly reminder if you plan on going out of town to visit family and friends please do not forget to inform your family assistance center representative of where you

will be going and if you can provide an address and phone number that would be much appreciated.

Please remember to utilize your family assistance center representative should you have any needs or concerns. We are here for you and will continue to be here for you as long as you need us.

On behalf of the Family Assistance Center representatives we all wish you a very Happy and safe Thanksgiving.

With warm regards,

Suzanne Buemi

Family Assistance Center Coordinator

Colorado National Guard Family Program

Family Readiness Group Dates

HHB & 188th FSC: Jan. 9 and Feb. 13

Alpha: Jan. 23 and Feb. 20

Bravo: Jan. 9 and Feb. 13

Save the date!

Jan. 15 -17th Spouses Retreat in Colorado Springs. Look for the registration packets early December.

Cook books are here!!! Contact your family readiness group leader if you would like to order one.

الف مبروك (Congrats!)

The following Soldiers were promoted this month:

Sgt. Pablo Sanchez

Sgt. Hector Lozanogredo

Spc. Donald Cannell

1st Lt. Harry Thompson

Pfc. Manuel Blair

Staff Sgt. Jason Sorenson

Spc. Thomas Black

Sgt. Jeffrey Searly

Sgt. Walter Williams

Sgt. Jeremiah Winters

Sgt. Raymond Mueller

Sgt. Cedric Gamble's road to weight loss

by Staff Sgt. John P. Martinez III

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - Sgt. Gamble returned from leave and to our surprise, he lost 10 lbs. He is definitely committed to his workout and has returned strong and ready to continue. This weight loss has contributed to a total weight loss of 25 lbs. Great Job!

AGE: 39 • STARTING WEIGHT: 253 • CURRENT WEIGHT: 228

A Message from the Rear Detachment

Capt. Chris Stutz
Commander
Battery C

As it grows colder out and thoughts turn to a busy holiday season, the Soldiers of Battery C and 188th Forward Support Company Detachment 1 gear up for winter. Talk of the latest developments in the football pool, snowboarding and speculation on the new design of Chestnut Armory (Yes, it will finally be remodeled!) make way for the Soldier tasks at hand.

In October, the battalion was well represented by 67 Soldiers on the

ground for the Colorado Army National Guard Change of Command ceremony, marching proudly behind the 157th Regimental colors.

November saw us in the field repeating the success of September's drill.

The Fire Direction Center under 2nd Lt. Brackney and Sgt. 1st Class Motiska and the launcher platoon under 2nd Lt. Ward and Staff Sgt. Montgomery completed 38 digital fire missions successfully. The 188th FSC DET 1 under 2nd Lt. Lobato and Sgt. 1st Class Podhirny showed their usual "can do" attitude and love for the field by bivouacking next to

their vehicles all weekend in the rain, even though nice warm billets were available to them.

In December we will welcome in the holidays with the usual mandatory briefs and Class A uniform inspection that many Soldiers are dreading.

Battery C is still looking for volunteers for the FRG. Please direct any spouses of family members who might be interested in helping out with our families at home to me at christopher.stutz@us.army.mil or (720) 250-2516.

Remember when a Soldier serves the family does as well; let's give them the support they deserve.

Cont. VALUES p. 2

life of ethical self-examination.

In the same line of thought, no matter what the spiritual stance, Soldiers are held to a high standard; the Army values. They are loyalty, duty, respect, selfless-service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.

Soldiers and families alike must endure a lot in order to maintain their military affiliation. It is a price Soldiers volunteer to pay. This is experienced primarily in relation to trainings and deployments. This generation of Soldiers and dependants are strong supporters of the battles we are fighting as a nation, and in order for families to function healthfully, we have to line up with the Army's values.

Marriages and other relationships with loved ones don't last when loyalty isn't applied. When I was an active duty Chaplain at Fort Hood, a couple of my children attended a junior high school that had slogans throughout the halls. The catchphrase that caught my eye the most said, "Character: Who are you when nobody's watching you." This should challenge all Soldiers and family members. Do we love each other enough to behave as though our loved ones are always with us, in ways that wouldn't make them feel unsafe about our level of love and devotion toward them? Also, do we bad mouth them and spread their metaphorical "dirty laundry" out for people to see, who don't need to see

those flaws?

Are we devoted enough to carry out our duties to make things work, even when separated. As working Soldiers and family members, do we take care of business the way we should at home, at work and on the battlefield, with a good attitude?

Do we respect one another? Oftentimes we can get too bossy or demanding toward those that we love the most. This is probably based in fear of things potentially going wrong, but nonetheless, can be perceived as disrespect. Do we use trigger terms when our tempers are rising? Are we disrespecting our loved ones by starting sentences with the word, "You...?" Are we disrespecting, actually lying, exaggerating, and accusing our loved ones of utter failure by using terms like, "You never, you always, every time you, you constantly, etc.?" We might be more successful if we try the approach of phrasing things more gently with, "I feel that sometimes you," or, "occasionally, I feel that you," etc.

Can we live with the fact that some acts of selfless-service are necessary sacrifices? If you're not willing to sacrifice, someone will have to in your stead. For instance, putting up with the absence of a family member due to deployments and training, or just putting up with pressures that can accumulate during deployments when your Soldier is gone, where they would normally be helping you with

domestic duties and responsibilities.

Trust is a huge component in helping family relationships last. Trust is earned, over time, by perceived honorable behavior. Lost trust is often far more difficult to earn than trust that is continued by consistently behaving honorably. Honorable behavior is doing the right thing even when it's tough. But it pays off. It's about doing your part to make things work.

Who are you when no one is looking? Integrity is about ensuring that we do the ethically, morally, and legally right things, even when we think we could get away with doing wrong. If it's wrong, represent the Army and don't do it. It'll pay off in the long run. Relationships work better, bosses and the IRS are all happier when we focus on this Army value.

Do you have the personal courage to do the right thing at the right time? Most of the time, when we don't possess personal courage it's because of FEAR: False Evidence Appearing Real. Buck up and be courageous to do what you know is right. This is such a benefit all around you that it will bring you great satisfaction and favor.

I pray that this article is beneficial to you. The Army values are integral to Soldiers and their loved ones. May you have a more fulfilling and happy life by applying these great Army principles. Greater Soldiers, greater families, greater country.

Giving Thanks, Counting Blessings

Despite being away for the holidays, Soldiers share what they are thankful for.

1st Lt. John Avery: I am thankful for the loving support of family back home.

Sgt. Brian King: I am thankful for running water. In 2003 we had to make shower points and find other means of sanitation.

Sgt. Cedric Gamble: I am thankful for my son Elijah, he is the greatest. I couldn't ask for anything better. I am also thankful for the 'four guys,' they know who they are.

Sgt. John Stapleton: I am thankful for the Soldiers who came before me and earned the peace we have now.

Cpl. Greg Lampe: I am thankful for a good gym to work out in.

Staff Sgt. Joel Kelm: I am thankful for having a supportive family at home. It makes being deployed a little easier.

1st Sgt. Rodolfo Reyes: I am thankful that my Soldiers have an ample supply of 'Rip-Its.' Without them I'd have a heck of a time to get them to do anything."

Sgt. 1st Class Deborah Manzanres: I am thankful for opportunity, I see it everywhere. I am thankful for my daughter, Chelsea, who has chosen to serve our country with enthusiasm and love for others.

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Sanchez: I am thankful for my



See THANKS p. 16

Cont. THANKS p. 15

mom's quick recovery from cancer.

1st Lt. Christopher Berven: I am thankful for my new baby boy.

Cpl. Jonathan Ern: I am thankful for our 24-hour laundry facility and the Ramadi bus.

1st Lt. Harry Thompson: I am thankful for the care packages we all get.

Cpl. Theodore Duncan: I am

thankful for the internet in my CHU.

Lt. Col. Victor Palomares: I am thankful for the knowledge to practice medicine and the ability to help others. Also very thankful for a wonderful family.

Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli: I am thankful for the love and prayers from my friends and family back home.

Let us remember that, as much has been given us, much will be expected from us, and that true homage comes from the heart as well as from the lips, and shows itself in deeds.

Theodore Roosevelt

Coping with Combat Stress

Story by Lt. Col. Victor Palomares
Photo by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - Combat stress, commonly known as shell shock or battle fatigue, is a military term used to help categorize a range of behaviors resulting from day-to-day stress that comes with stability and support operations.

During World War I, shell shock was classified as a psychiatric illness from injury to the nerves during combat.

Today, we understand that combat stress reaction is generally short-term and should not be confused with acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder or other long-term disorders attributed to combat stress. Although any of these may commence as a combat stress reaction.

In day-to-day support operations, we are faced with threats which are hard to recognize. These dangers are unclear or unknown, which can affect the troops.

Boredom, no privacy, separations from home and dealing with restrictions in communication can presuppose anyone to signs of distress.

Some of the most common stress reactions are:

- Slowing of reaction time
- Slowness of thought
- Difficulty prioritizing tasks
- Preoccupation with minor issues or familiar tasks
- Indecision and lack of concentration



Avenues for help are available for all Soldiers and family members. Pay attention to signs if someone seems to need help. Remember to be a buddy and take care of one another.

- Exhaustion
- Somatic systems such as headaches, back pains, inability to relax

During deployment, we advise our service members seek assistance from the chaplain, combat stress team or medics.

We also encourage all to learn effective relaxation techniques such as playing cards or sports, keeping a diary, taking slow, deep breaths, talking with friends, reading a book, working out or meditating.

So, as a friend, always be a good listener. Don't judge but do offer to get help.

Cont. MCM p. 11

run a marathon someday, but it was always someday. I have been a distance runner since high school, but hadn't been running much in the last nine months because of an injury. Running this marathon was an impetus to get me back to running, something that I greatly enjoy. I was running between 30 and 50 miles a week for the 10 weeks leading up to the marathon, and had set a goal of 3:30:00. I ended up running 3:43:34, but I am happy with that for my first marathon. I have already committed to running the BolderBoulder and the Denver Marathon next year after returning home.

Maj. Clay Taulman of Parker, Colo., serving as the battalion executive officer:

I participated as a way to stay in shape and to do something extra ordinary, run the last Marine Corp Marathon in Iraq. That is the stuff of history. Why be ordinary? Set yourself apart. Plus, it was a long-time personal goal of mine to run a marathon. This was my first marathon. I completed it in 4:23:08. I beat the goal of 4:30 that I had established as a bench mark. My training method was to run, run and run. My next physical fitness goal is competing in the Ironman Arizona 2010.

Sgt. 1st Class Jason Bruch of Cameron, N.C. serving as the platoon sergeant for the Military Police Platoon assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.

I participated in the 2009 Marine Corps Marathon, which is a marathon I have always wanted to run. Even

though I couldn't run it in Washington D.C., I wasn't going to pass up the chance to run it in Iraq. This marathon was my fifth full marathon that I have done; I have also completed a few half marathons, not counting the half marathon I did on Camp Ramadi one night when I couldn't sleep. I completed this run in 3:19:56, which is a new personal record for me. My goal for this run was 3:30, and this being the first marathon I have really be able to dedicate time to train for, I didn't think 3:30 would be too hard of a goal for me.

My training plan for this marathon was lots and lots of running, I used a training plan that incorporates a variety of runs, such as hills, sprints, and tempo runs, as well as goal paced distance runs. My future running goal is moving beyond the normal marathon and into ultramarathons, which is really anything over 26.2 miles. However, the run I am planning right now, is a 50-mile run to raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project, I will be doing it right here on Camp Ramadi, on the March 20, 2010.

I plan to continue running in marathons. Eventually, I will try to run a sub-three-hour marathon, but my focus is on 50 miles, and some day a 100-mile run.



Sgt. 1st Class Jason Bruch re-enlisted after finishing the marathon.

Nomination Season Opens For 2010

National Guard and Reserve members and families encouraged to nominate supportive employers.

ARLINGTON, Va. – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense (DoD) agency, announced the opening of the nomination season for the 2010 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have provided exceptional support of military employees above the federal law requirements. Nominations will be accepted at www.FreedomAward.mil from Nov. 2 to Jan. 18, 2010.

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their

outstanding support of their employees.

The 2010 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored a ceremony Sept. 23, 2010 in Washington, D.C. Recipients of the 2009 Freedom Award met privately with President Barack Obama and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. Dr. Jill Biden, Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Dennis McCarthy presented the awards at a ceremony attended by members of Congress and senior government and military officials.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve. The DoD shares these citizen-Soldiers with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

Past recipients of the Freedom Award have provided significant support including full salary, continu-

ation of benefits, care packages and family assistance to employees fulfilling their military obligation.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of ESGR to recognize exceptional support from the employer community.

"There is much excitement surrounding the 15th anniversary of the Freedom Award," noted acting ESGR Executive Director Ms. Polli Brunelli, "and we're enthusiastic to begin selection of the 2010 recipients from amongst all of the heartfelt nominations."

ESGR is a DoD agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflicts through mediation.

For questions regarding the Freedom Award nomination process, please visit www.FreedomAward.mil or contact Maj. Melissa Phillips, ESGR Public Affairs, at 703-380-9262.

Military Family Appreciation

Letter to the families by M.G. Mullen, Admiral, U.S. Navy

As we count our blessings this month, America's Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen serve day and night around the globe to defend our nation. We are all very proud of them, and yet we should never forget that none of them do it alone. The extraordinary families who support them sacrifice every bit as much to make their service possible. In the spirit of giving thanks, we devote this week to honor and appreciate our military families.

Our families serve as the bedrock for our nation's defense. Family members may not shoulder a weapon, drive a ship or fly combat sorties, but their commitment, support and endurance is a source of great pride and inspiration for us all. From care packages to e-mails to invaluable friendship, your love and devotion helps our forces do their very best. I can think of no better words to express this than those spoken by a Soldier from the 25th Infantry Division upon his return from Afghanistan. Reflecting on his family's help while deployed, he said "just receiving letters ... seems to give you the motivation needed to stay upbeat ... I couldn't do this without your support."

Our combat readiness stems from readiness at home, and America's might is a reflection of the power of military families. As a nation, we can certainly never say or do enough to express our gratitude for their devotion and sacrifice, but this week is one way in which we show our appreciation.

On behalf of my family and those of the Joint Chiefs, to all our military families, past and present, we thank you for your service and for your love. Our nation's strength and honor depend upon you. Because of you, we truly accomplish far more than we ever could alone.

The 150th
Colorado
Anniversary Ball is
scheduled for
Jan. 23.
Please mark this on
your calendar as a
"save the date."

facebook

FANS OUT THERE?

Thanks to all the families and friends, Colorado's 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, now has more than **830 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