

Ryder Dispatch

The Official Newsletter of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Infantry Division

Red Bulls validate at NTC

Soldiers conduct mission rehearsal before deployment



U.S. Army photo by Spc. James Wilton

A Soldier unloads his gear after arriving at NTC.

By Spc. James Wilton
HHC, 2-34th BCT

FORT IRWIN, Calif. --

Red Bull Soldiers began their final validation at the National Training Center (NTC) here Sept. 25, before their deployment to Afghanistan.

The purpose of NTC is to provide tough, realistic, joint and combined arms training in multinational venues across the full spectrum of conflict, set in a contemporary operating environment. NTC also assists commanders develop trained, competent leaders and Soldiers by presenting them with current problem sets. All of this together improves the force and prepares them for success in the global war on terrorism and future joint battlefields.

"We, as combat trainers, are here to oversee the training and ensure the best possible training is being conducted for units before they deploy on combat missions," said the command sergeant major in charge the combat trainers (CTs). "Our job is to enforce the standards put out by the unit's commander and sergeant major. They control the mission; we are just here in an advising role."

NTC's training schedule includes two weeks of full spectrum combat operations training where Soldiers are placed in true-to-life scenarios and the CTs evaluate how they react to these situations. Scenarios including convoy operations, reacting to indirect fire and protecting command positions 24 hrs a day test not only the Soldier's ability to perform his duty but to fight fatigue and stress. After each engagement, an after-action review is conducted where the strengths and weaknesses are discussed and a plan is made to improve shortcomings for future operations. This is a training environment and the mistakes made are lessons learned for the battlefield.

"It has been amazing being able to do my job in a real world scenario, allowing me to receive a greater understanding of what is expected of me during a mission," said Spc. Joshua Sawyer a topographical analyst with 2-34th BCT, Headquarters Company. 🐂



U.S. Army photo by Spc. James Wilton

The final bag comes off the truck at NTC, Sept 17.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Beswick

Staff Sgt. Josh Wise assists as Maj. Pam Reynolds and Sgt. Ellen Robinson unpack the physical therapy equipment set to be fielded.

Another form of PT

By Staff Sgt. Jessica Beswick
Charlie Co., 334BSB

CAMP SHELBY, Miss.--

When most soldiers hear PT, they think of push-ups, sit-ups, and a little bit of running. In Charlie Company, 334th Brigade Support Battalion (Charlie Med), however, Soldiers can find another form of PT.

"Physical therapy (PT) is a fairly recent addition to the BCT," stated Maj. Pam Reynolds of Johnston, Iowa, the only physical therapist in the brigade. "In fact, Iowa is one of only seven states now to have physical therapy at this level."

Historically, physical therapists and their assistants were found only at Level 4 Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs) and higher. For a forward-deployed Soldier, that would mean they would not receive physical therapy, if needed, until they were evacuated back to the Continental United States (CONUS).

Research has shown that putting physical therapists up closer to the troops, serving in conjunction with a Troop Medical Clinic (TMC), for example, helps to return Sol-

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What's on your mind?



A different kind of training



Vets volunteer for another deployment

From the Editor

Staff Sgt. Ashlee Lolkus
Editor-in-Chief
Public Affairs NCOIC

The road to the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, Calif. was a long one. The 2-34th Red Bulls Soldiers began training at home stations across Iowa and Nebraska, conducted a massive movement to Camp Ripley Minn. for annual training, pushed on through the suffocating heat and humidity of Camp Shelby, Miss. and finally made it to the largest training exercise to date at NTC.

Red Bull Soldiers have trained hard. They have succeeded in missions, made a few mistakes and picked themselves back up to make sure their commander's intent was met. The most important part of training is learning from mistakes and to "Charlie Mike," (continue mission). Through-



out the training, Red Bull Soldiers have done just that. Although the learning process never ends for a Soldier, the command is confident that its Soldiers are ready for the journey to Afghanistan.

The 2-34th Red Bull Soldiers have "jumped the pond" and step into the hostile grounds of Afghanistan. The families, employers and communities back home can rest assured that their Soldiers are prepared to take on the brigade's mission overseas.

In this issue we intent to tell the Soldier's story of training the past two months in Camp Shelby, Miss. and at NTC. Thank you for keeping up with the 2-34th.

Red Bulls! ATTACK! 🐂

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Ryder Dispatch

The Official Newsletter of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Infantry Division

2-34th Brigade Combat Team

Commanding Officer

Col. Benjamin Corell

Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Joel Arnold

Mission:

The **Ryder Dispatch** is a monthly publication created to celebrate and support the Soldiers and families of the 2-34th BCT by providing brigade members with information on what is happening around the brigade, and to keep Soldiers and families updated on current events and policies set forth by the command.

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By Brigade Commander
Col. Benjamin J. Corell



By Brigade Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. Joel Arnold



Congratulations on successful completion of a National Training Center rotation, and successful completion of our culminating training event. The training was tough, the environment challenging and the issues were nonstop. Very few National Guard brigades are given the opportunity to train at the National Training Center.

Completing this training isn't just another milestone on our road to Afghanistan, it is an opportunity to seek self improvement as well as enhance our ability to operate collectively. Our combat trainers provided excellent feedback at every level. Now, it's our job to take this feedback and put it to work throughout the organization in the coming days and weeks.

For the last several months we have operated together as an intact Brigade Combat Team. With the majority of our mobilization training now complete, parts of the 2-34th BCT will head in different directions.

The 1-133rd Infantry Battalion will depart for theater, along with elements of our advance party, while the remainder of the BCT will return to Camp Shelby for some additional training and to wait for transportation. The entire brigade

will flow into theater over the course of the coming weeks.

The challenges of command, control and communication will not get easier during this time. Our automation support will be limited as we move overseas and we will need to rely on more traditional methods of communicating within our ranks. This is where junior leaders and NCOs can make a critical difference.

Even though elements of the 2-34 BCT will be task organized to other brigades within the 101st Infantry Division, we will remain connected through our shared Red Bull heritage and traditional administrative control relationships. This headquarters will continue to provide support and oversight as appropriate and work with our rear detachment and state headquarters to address family and personnel issues.

Again, congratulations on a successful NTC rotation. I truly appreciate your hard work and dedication and I am honored to serve with you. For those going on pass, be safe, have a great time with family and come back ready to go. For those going forward, stay focused on the mission, work together as a team, and take care of each other. ♥

Military life is not easy: early hours, late nights, physically demanding activity, meals from a plastic bag, and many rules. Does it have to be like this?

I think so. The rigor we experience in training prepares us to face the rigors of combat operations. More precisely, the discipline we subject ourselves to is training us to display the discipline and responsiveness required in the fight. It is no less important if you work in a support role than it is as a member of a maneuver element. In fact, it is probably more important if you are in a support role.

In a maneuver element, the presence of the enemy forces you to do things a certain way as a matter of self-preservation. Protective gear must be worn, sentries must remain vigilant, equipment must be inspected and operable or there could be direct negative consequences for the individual. Support roles are different. In a support role, the consequences for doing substandard work or for putting something off until later are not as obvious or direct as they might be in a combat role. However, they could be dramatic and serious for someone else.

So, what makes someone who is not as close to the

fight push past their personal comfort level and do what's right? I say it is discipline. The motivation for this discipline can come from either internal or external sources.

Externally motivated people need an authoritative boss figure with the power of reward or punishment to make sure they are achieving results.

Fear of negative consequences is one form of external motivation. It is the nagging first sergeant reminding us to wear our gear properly "or else," or the non-commissioned officer in charge telling us that we "have to" stay until the job is done.

Internal motivation comes from within. Internally motivated people exhibit personal, individual discipline. They do not need to be told what to do...they know what is right and they do it. For them, doing the right thing when nobody is looking is its own reward. They are their own boss.

So here is the question... Who is your boss? The leaders in this organization have provided clear expectations, regulations and policies providing a road map of what is right. How will you respond? I hope you will decide to be your own boss and do what is right on your own, always. ♥



Photo illustration by Staff Sgt. Ashlee Lolkus

What's on your mind...

...and on your facebook?

By Staff Sgt. Ashlee Lolkus
2-34th BCT Public Affairs NCOIC

In the military there are people like the Intelligence section or communications section that are going to say that social media sites could breach security and that they shouldn't be used by Soldiers and family members. That's OK. It's their job to think like that. It balances out the rest of us in the end. But, for the sake of argument, let's discuss what kind of things we shouldn't talk about on social media sites.

Times. Dates. Locations. Exact numbers. These are the four big hitters for Operational Security (OPSEC). Who honestly needs to know that you are flying with 23.5 of your closest Army buddies at 6:52 p.m. from Opsecfailville to Catastrophetown to arrive at exactly 10:09 p.m.? No one, that's who. Use round-about language, like, "Hey friends! I'm going with some buddies on vacation to Safety Harbor next week! So excited to get my tan on!" This ensures

that you and your 23.5 closest Army buddies don't become targets for the enemy. Did you hear about that Israeli Soldier that gave away information for an upcoming operation and compromised the whole mission? I wonder where he's at these days... Social Media sites are great for bragging about what cool things are going on, but let's keep the specifics to a minimum.

Other things you should watch out for? Photos. Especially the photos taken when we get into country. From my experience, things that blow up are cool. So are the things that get blown up. But, our friends the terrorists like to check out how their work is paying off. They video tape their Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) detonating as our convoys drive by, or of their ambushes. Don't you think they'd like to see what their handy work has done? Of course, which is a great reason why you should NOT put up

"Don't say anything online that you wouldn't want plastered on a billboard with your face on it."

- Erin Bury

See FACEBOOK, Page 8

By the numbers:

average Facebook user has **130** friends and sends eight friend requests per month.

Americans spend **13.9** billion minutes a year on Facebook

3,627 (and growing) people like the 2-34th BCT on facebook

Soldier-on-the-Street on... facebook



"I love facebook. I LOVE facebook. I can keep in touch with all of my friends and all of my family all within 15 minutes," said Staff Sgt. Harold Coverdell of

Charlie Co., 1-168th Inf. Bn.



"It's user friendly when you have a time constraint. You can touch everyone with a click of a button," said Capt. Chris Shue, of HHT, 1-134th Cav. Sdrn.



"I pick-up chicks on Facebook," said Sgt. Tanner Johnson of Golf Co., 334th BSB, attached to 1-134th Cav. Sdrn.



"I use facebook to keep in touch with my family," said Spc. Rick Hilton of Echo Co., 334th BSB attached to the 1-133rd Inf. Bn.



"It's nice to use when you can't get to a phone to let your family know how you are feeling and how you are doing," said Spc. Laura Snow of Echo

Co., 334th BSB attached to the 1-133rd Inf. Bn.

Training instills trust, confidence in Red Bulls

By 1LT Gabe Haugland
B Co. 1-168 Infantry

CAMP SHELBY, Miss. --
When Sgt. Jake Jaeckle of 1st PLT, B CO, 1-168 Infantry Battalion deployed to Afghanistan in 2004, there was very little in the way of cultural training to be had at Fort Hood, Texas to prepare him for what he was about to experience in Afghanistan. In fact, despite the fact that he was deploying to Afghanistan, most of the training he received in Texas was focused on Iraq. Since then, things have drastically changed. Jaeckle, and the other members of Bravo Company, have been literally immersed in Afghan cultural awareness training since arriving at Camp Shelby, Mississippi in August. They have studied both Pashto and Dari, the two most prevalent languages in Afghanistan, as well as received multiple briefs on Islam, Pashtun culture and the history of Afghanistan. Many of their briefs have been given by native Afghans, and many of the role players



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jake Jaeckle

Pfc. Kathleen Wadding and Pfc. Felicia Hemphill, members of Bravo Company, 1-168 Infantry Battalion’s Female Engagement Team, interact with Afghan role-players during a recent mission.

staffing their training scenarios have been Afghan as well. The message the Afghans are sending is one of “trust and confidence.” Earn the peoples’ trust and confidence. Make them earn yours too. Partner with them, hand in hand. Teach them how to secure their country, but make them do it. By, with and through, as they say. The message is getting through, Jaeckle said, “Most of the training we received the first time in Texas didn’t pertain to Afghanistan in any way. We made do with what we had, but a lot of it was going in blind. Here at Camp Shelby, we actually have a chance to engage with Afghans. We’ve been able to gain basic language and cultural skills we’ll need to engage in street-level engagements with the local people this time, which helps us get better information from the people in the shops and on the streets.” Specifically, each Bravo company soldier has learned

15 Dari phrases which will help them in their everyday interactions with the people, and each team leader has had a chance to conduct a “Key Leader Engagement” with one authentic Afghan role player. Key Leader Engagements, or KLEs as they’re called, usually involve moving into a village to meet with a village elder or mullah and discuss their needs. They may need food, water, electricity or all of the above, but usually their concerns focus around security. If the soldier meeting with the local leader can win the elder’s trust and confidence by following up on the village’s needs, there’s a better chance the people will trust U.S. forces with their security as well, turning against the Taliban in the critical days to come. So for now, Bravo company soldiers spend much of their time learning about Afghan society, studying their language and honoring their culture. But very soon, Sgt. Jaeckle and the other soldiers of Bravo Company will be overseas, using their newfound skills to earn the Afghans trust and confidence. ♡

Holiday shipping time is here

The holidays are approaching fast and if your sending packages to loved ones in the overseas military community then you need to have them packed and shipped in a hurry. The method of shipping determines how long it will take to arrive. If you’re planning on using parcel post, the slowest option, make sure that packages are in the mail by November 12 to get there by December 25. All deadlines are according to recommended holiday shipping dates provided by the Military Postal Service Agency.

Mailing Deadlines

Express Mail		Priority Mail	Dec. 4
Military Services	N/A	Parcel Airlift Mail	Dec. 1
First-class cards and letters	Dec. 4	Space Available Mail (SAM)	Nov. 20
		Parcel Post	Nov. 12

Red Bull Soldiers recieve a different kind of training

By SPC Kayla L. Birmingham
B Co. 2/34 BSTB

CAMP SHELBY, Miss. –

Every day at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, Soldiers prepare and train-up for what they will encounter in Afghanistan. Many combat units are practicing clearing rooms, running entry control points (ECPs), and convoy operations. But there is other essential training going on that many people do not hear about. This Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) platoon of Bravo Company, 2- 34 BCT, Brigade Special Troops Battalion (2-34th BSTB) dived right into their intense training they would need for the upcoming deployment. On most days, anyone on Camp Shelby can look up into the sky and see one of Bravo Company’s planes flying. The UAS team tries to fly four missions a day making up their 12-hour workdays. This is the only way they can prepare for what lies ahead of them. According to their platoon leader and operations warrant officer,

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mike Schminke, the team will be expected to run 24-hour operations in Afghanistan with their 17-man crew. Schminke talked about how the missions they will be expected to complete such as route reconnaissance, counter IED, and assisting indirect fire teams will force the team to deal with a certain amount of stress that they haven’t dealt with before and the training they are doing here forces them to be prepared for what is ahead. Bravo Company’s UAS platoon has four planes called Shadows. They are 11 feet

long and have a 14-foot wingspan. The planes have a speed between 65-110 knots, can fly approximately 15,000 feet, and for approximately six hours. It takes a team of three to launch the plane and five people total to run an operation. For the deployment, the UAS platoon will receive upgrades to their planes. Including, a communication relay package that will allow them to communicate with troops on the ground, if they have problems. Everyday the pilots of these planes sit down behind their computer screens and joysticks and get ready to play a real life video game. “Back home the training we received was limited to simulators only on drill weekends but now we have an opportunity to fly everyday and learn all the new systems,” said Spc. Michael Brehany an operator of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). “All the flight time we are logging is only going to add to our success of our mission in Afghanistan,” added Spc. David Brumley also an operator in Bravo Company. But operators aren’t the only part of the team. With every team of pilots there are maintainers behind the scenes working just as hard. They have to be on the flight line just as much as the pilots, pulling the same long hours and do the same amount of guard duty while everyday making sure the planes will be up in the sky when they need to be. “Our training is different than the operators,” said Sgt. Tanner Klinge a maintainer of Bravo Company. “Our training consists of teaching the younger maintainer and repeatedly working on the birds so everything we do becomes second nature.” Every Soldier on the UAS team will tell anyone over and over that because of the training they have received here at Camp Shelby they have full confidence in their abilities to complete the mission in Afghanistan. 🇺🇸



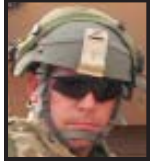
Language Survival Guide

English	Dari	Pashto
Stop the vehicle.	motare ta estaad ko	motar wadarwaa
Show me your identification.	tazkeraye Khod raa neshaan bedeh	shenaaKhate kaaRt dey Raa-wokhaayaa
We will search your car.	maa motaRe taa na talaashee	mong baa staa motaR tallshee kawoo
Do you have weapons?	aslaha daaree?	to wasla larey?

This issue’s LSG focuses on phrases that will be used at an entry control point. Being able to communicate effectively will lessen the danger troops face while in the field.

For more info: <https://bcks.army.mil> (AKO)
<http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/bcks/index.asp> (public)

Barrack's Lawyer



By Maj. Bill Kelly
2-34 BCT, Brigade Judge Advocate



BARRACKS LAWYER: Go ahead and do it because what happens on deployment stays on deployment.

The Truth: As General Norman Schwarzkopf said, "The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it." The expectation is that troops should behave professionally and responsibly at all times. Soldiers should be honest in their profession and personal relationships. The UCMJ contains several provisions under which sexual relations are prohibited between men and women. For example, married persons cannot engage legally in sex with anyone other than their spouse, or they can be prosecuted for adultery. Within the same chain of command, sexual relations between subordinates and higher-ranking personnel are banned. Sexual relations between officers and enlisted personnel are also generally prohibited. Homosexual relations are completely prohibited under the code. Almost anything stupid a soldier can think of doing has been done and they were most likely punished under the UCMJ. There is also the General Article that broadly encompasses almost any improper military conduct. "Though not specifically mentioned in [the UCMJ], all disorders and neglects to the prejudice of good order and discipline in the armed forces, all conduct of a nature to bring discredit upon the armed forces, and crimes and offenses not capital, of which persons subject to this chapter may be guilty . . . and shall be punished . . ." Finally, soldiers need to be honest so that the truth can be discovered on investigations when there is loss of life or equipment. Lying under oath during investigations is one of the most highly prosecuted UCMJ action in Afghanistan. Investigations are done to get the truth. Do not lie to protect a buddy. For one, they might be cleared of any wrong doing when the truth is out and second you could be punished severely for lying.

BJA Advice: The Army stresses integrity and that means that soldiers should do what is right, legally and morally at all times. The soldiers of the 2/34 IBCT are doing what brave women and men have always done in uniform by standing strong, and trying to serve honorably. We want you to come home to your families that love you without losing rank or pay for doing something foolish that a Barracks Lawyer advised you to do. 🐻

Let me know if you have received any other "good advice" from your Barrack's Lawyer and we will discuss it in the next edition of the Ryder Dispatch.

(Email: 2ndBCT34thID.PublicAffairsOffice@us.army.mil)



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Beswick

Maj Pam Reynolds and Sgt Ellen Robinson pose alongside their newly-received physical therapy medical equipment set, the first of its kind to be issued to the Iowa Army National Guard. Reynolds and Robinson are deploying with the 334 BSB this fall to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

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diers to their normal activities much sooner and more effectively.

"We act sort of like athletic trainers, working with the Soldier athlete to overcome sprains, strains, or minor injuries that do not require evacuation from theatre," explained Reynolds. By using diagnostic testing and advanced modalities at the forward level, the PT section acts as a direct provider for the Soldier, capable of being seen without the referral of a physician.

"We'll be running our own sort of 'sick call' once we hit theatre," stated Sgt. Ellen Robinson of Richmond, VA, the physical therapy assistant (PTA). "Soldiers can come in to be seen for their aches, pains, sports injuries, or for education and preventative services." Those preventative services are potentially the most important, especially in an environment where soldiers are working with so much extra weight in their equipment and doing tasks that put them in greater danger of musculoskeletal injury. "By teaching Soldiers how to use their bodies most effectively or by dealing with issues while they're still minor, we can save someone a lifetime of pain and injury," she added.

Reynolds, a physical therapist in the civilian world and veteran athlete herself, has significant experience dealing with sports injuries. Robinson is also an experienced assistant, having been deployed as a PTA once before and now working in the civilian world as a physical therapy assistant.

It is clear that the PT section is passionate about their work with Soldiers. Unpacking their medical equipment set, the first of its kind issued in the state of Iowa, both were excited to get to work.

"When I get to see a Soldier empowered because their pain is gone, because they understand and feel better and their life is improved because of the tools we've given them, that's the best part," replied Robinson when asked what the best part of their job is. 🐻

Chaplain's Chat

By Maj. Murray Phillips

2-34 BCT, Chaplain



In this column, I want to chat about finding balance in your life through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health. Balance in these parts of your life will help you to better cope with the stressors that may arise during a deployment.

The Army emphasizes physical fitness. Whether it is at home or in a deployment setting, it is usually pretty easy to find a set of weights or a gymnasium out there as you prepare for your next Army physical fitness test.

Physical fitness is only one part of the equation. Our mind craves challenges. Whether through hobbies, continuing education or simple activities, such as crossword puzzles or Suduko, we have a need to be productive and gain satisfaction in problem solving.

Emotions are another part of the equation, but an important one. We find encouragement and purpose through meaningful relationships with others. Whether it is remembering a birthday or remembering an event with that significant other, it shows you are connected to another person beyond work.

Finally there's spirituality. What are you doing to address the spiritual part of your

life? There are worship services, studies of Scripture, books, audio and visual materials, as well as opportunities to participate in a community of faith. The bottom line, you have to find what works specifically for you.

Some dismiss this notion because they may not believe in a creative higher power. Regardless of one's individual faith preference, we all are perplexed at the greater questions beyond our physical reality, such as, "Is there life beyond the one we experience in the here and now?"

Our spiritual perspective affects the other areas in our life. As a bare minimum, if we believe in something, we find guidelines that give us purpose and meaning. This helps us in our emotional and mental aspects. It gives us codes of conduct to live by, which affect our relationships and influence the choices we make concerning our physical health.

If something isn't quite right in one area of our life, our whole being suffers. Achieving proper balance is important in living day to day. What are you doing to achieve balance? 🍀

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"When I was a 1st Sgt., the AER went out of its way to help my Soldiers when they really needed it. some Soldiers recieved money the same day."

-Sgt. Maj. Charles Friend-

"Helping the Army take care of its Own" --- YESTERDAY - TODAY - TOMORROW



U.S. Army photo by Spc. James Wilton

FORT IRWIN, Calif. -- A Blackhawk takes off from Forward Operating Base (FOB) Denver in the National Training Center, here Oct. 2, 2010 after picking up Soldiers catching a ride to FOB Miami. The 101st Airborne Division supported the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division with air support during its final training validation at NTC before its deployment to Afghanistan.

Vets volunteer for deployment

By SSG Justin Niichel
B Co. 1-133 Infantry

CAMP SHELBY, Miss.—

As training at Camp Shelby Mississippi starts to wind down and focus changes to NTC and Afghanistan, one can't help but wonder what drives soldiers to volunteer for their 2nd, 3rd, or 4th deployment.

Across the 2-34th BCT, soldiers from all backgrounds and skills have decided to put their personal lives on hold yet again in order to serve their state and country. Their reasons for volunteering vary. For some it's the excitement of seeing a new place, for others it's a chance to gain points for retirement. One soldier volunteering that I spoke with, is Sgt. Dean Roepke Bco 1-133 Infantry.

Sgt. Roepke of Denver Iowa was deployed from 2005-2007 with the 1-133 Infantry in Iraq, and has completed over six years of service. When news of the upcoming deployment to Afghanistan started to spread, Sgt. Roepke had a decision to make. He realized that since there was no longer a "Stop-loss", and his enlistment was fast coming to an end, he had two choices. Either get out, or stay in and deploy again. For Sgt. Roepke it wasn't difficult

to decide. He was going!

When I asked Sgt. Roepke why he chose to deploy again, he gave me a list of reasons for his decision. He mentioned everything from Patriotic duty and family tradition, to deployment benefits and retirement plans. However, the longer I spoke with Sgt. Roepke, I noticed he kept coming back to one reason over and over and that was "Brotherhood"! Sgt. Roepke was adamant that there was no way he was going to watch his friends and fellow soldiers head off to war without him. Especially since he thought his experience would help the next group of new soldiers joining the ranks. Sgt. Roepke said, "I thought with the experience I had in Iraq, I could help the younger soldiers out".

As it turns out Sgt. Roepke is not alone. As I walk around and talk to soldiers that have deployed multiple times before, it is the connection they have to each other and the desire to pass on their experiences to others that drives them forward day to day more than anything else. They have a wealth of knowledge and experience, and they came here to pass on that knowledge to officers and enlisted alike. 🇺🇸

FACEBOOK Continued from Page 4

photos of how well your equipment held up while you were hit by an IED. What does that tell the terrorist? Should have used more explosives, or maybe to place it about five more feet to the left next time... So, everyone is very happy that you made it through, but let's keep the carnage photography to a minimum.

Lastly, let's talk about being a Soldier and expressing opinions. According to recent guidelines put out by the Army and the National Guard Bureau (NGB), Soldiers are personally responsible for all content that they publish on social networking sites, blogs or other websites.

"They must... be mindful of the content not related to the National Guard that they post," said Jack Harrison, the director of public affairs for the NGB, "since the lines between a Guard member's personal and professional life are often blurred." When expressing personal opinions, Guard members should make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the National Guard, he continued.

NGB suggests putting the following disclaimer on profiles: "The postings on this site are my own and don't represent

the National Guard's positions or opinions." This disclaimer, however, will not be a protect-all. Guard members must still, "avoid offensive and inappropriate behavior that could bring discredit upon themselves and the National Guard. This includes posting any defamatory, libelous, obscene, abusive, threatening, racially or ethnically hateful or otherwise offensive or illegal information or material," according to the NGB social media guidelines. So, gripping about how annoyed you are with the Army may help relieve stress, but let's keep angry posts to a minimum.

Ultimately, it's up to you on how you want to behave on social media sites. There will be repercussions, however. They might not get you every time, but you risk a lot. Whether it is OPSEC violation punishments from your command, valuable information fed to the enemy where Soldiers' lose their lives, or valuable information fed to the enemy where family members are targeted, you will be putting lives in your hands. Remember this before you really say what's on your mind. 🇺🇸

Red Bull on the Mountain Line

By 2nd Lt. Kyle Brewer

Assistant FSO/LNO BN HHC 1-168 IN

CAMP SHELBY, Miss --

For the families and friends following the deployment of Alpha Battery 1-194 Field Artillery, I'm back with an update. To bring you up to speed, here is Alpha's breakdown. Alpha consists of two platoons of Field Artillery Soldiers: 1st Platoon being attached with the 1-168th Infantry Battalion and 2nd Platoon with 1-113th Cavalry Squadron for the deployment to Afghanistan. For the most part, the platoons were broken down into small teams and spread out amongst the new units to supplement them with the field artillery skills that Alpha Btry brings to the fight.

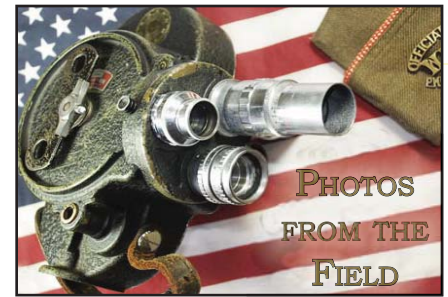
Being one of the officers with 1st Platoon, I will have the most communication with the members of Alpha Btry that are attached to the 1-168 but will try to bring you news of both platoons as best as I can throughout the deployment. With over a month down, your Soldiers have been working hard, adjusting to new training, new units and extreme temperatures and are finishing up another phase in their train-up for the move into Afghanistan.

After a 22 hour bus ride to reach Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (CSJFTC) near Hattiesburg, Miss., Alpha Btry was greeted by a wave of blistering heat and drenching humidity. It has been the one constant throughout the training conducted in CSJFTC thus far. The two platoons headed for separate areas of the training center to join their new units and get comfortable with the new scenery. After a few moves and trades, the Soldiers from 1st Platoon have been placed where they

will likely stay for the rest of the tour and have been showing great prowess in their training and leadership across the board.

The training at CSJFTC has not been up to the level that the men were expecting after the excellent training they received at Camp Ripley, but they make up for it by training at the small unit level, honing skills that will keep them sharp and prepare them for the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, Cali., which is the next step in the deployment. They have become acclimated to the wicked temperatures which were rarely less than 90 degrees. With full gear and over 70% humidity, conditions felt more like 115 degrees some days making training in the Mojave Desert a vacation for the men. They have also completed training in Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, received the latest in MultiCam uniforms, body armor and equipment, and completed Squad and Platoon level training exercises with their new units.

The Soldiers of Alpha Btry have been promised the best training that Army can provide when they arrive at the NTC which will be the final step for many of the Soldiers before heading for Afghanistan. The majority of the Soldiers will get a last four-day pass with their family members before heading overseas and that is a great motivation to do well and stay safe for the next step in their training process. For more updates on the training and daily lives of your Soldiers in 1st Platoon, the 1-168th Infantry Battalion and the 2-34th Brigade Combat Team both have Facebook pages that are very well maintained and can update you on nearly a daily basis. Thank you for all of your support. 🇺🇸



**Red Bulls,
ATTACK!!!**

Thanks to all of the support from our fellow Red Bulls the Public Affairs team has been hard at work telling the soldiers story. Check out our websites and leave us a comment on our wall.

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