

THE *Ivy* U.S. DIVISION-NORTH LEAF

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 40



ESTABLISHED IN 1917 TO HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE



AUGUST 5, 2011



FINAL FLIGHT

Vietnam veteran retires for second time after return to cockpit

U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn Miller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Tamietti, an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance pilot assigned to 339th Military Intelligence Company, an Army Reserve unit attached to Task Force ODIN, watches flight crews prepare for a mission at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 26, 2011. Tamietti, a decorated Vietnam veteran, returned to military service in 2003 after a two-decade hiatus. Tamietti flew his final flight, July 31, and is now looking to retire after two deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

Staff Sgt. Shawn Miller
109th MPAD
USD-N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Tamietti scanned the desert of northern Iraq quietly slipping by beneath his C12 reconnaissance plane – a far different sight than the jungles of Vietnam he first took flight over more than 40 years before.

Four decades after serving in Vietnam as a young helicopter pilot with the 1st Aviation Brigade, Tamietti made his final flight in support of Operation New Dawn, July 31, before hanging up his wings for retirement later this year.

This is not the first time Tamietti made a “final flight,” however, nor is it his first experience with retirement.

After his deployment to Vietnam and ensuing service

in the Army National Guard, Tamietti said he left the military in the early 1980s to pursue a career as a commercial airline pilot.

“I just kind of closed that chapter in my life and I thought that was it, and never expected to get back in; not 25 years later,” he said.

After more than 20 years as a commercial pilot and several years on the Professional Golfers’ Association of Amer-

ica tour, Tamietti traded global travel for a relaxing retirement.

That all changed in 2003, he said, after listening to the Nevada Army National Guard advocate general speak about losing experienced Soldiers to the competing demands of multiple deployments and life at home.

“I thought they could use my knowledge for something,” Tamietti said. “I never really
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STEADFAST AND LOYAL IRONHORSE DEVIL LONGKNIFE BLACK JACK

STEADFAST AND LOYAL IRONHORSE DEVIL LONGKNIFE BLACK JACK



IRONHORSE STRONG: Soldier of the Week

Mechanics ensure vehicles and aircraft used by Soldiers are fully functional, and able to carry Soldiers and other passengers to their destinations safely.

Private 1st Class Deangelo James, an aircraft mechanic assigned to Company A "Aces," 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Saber, worked effectively to enable a 100-percent mission success rate for aircraft conducting missions, July 14-20.

James, a crew chief with Aces Company, stepped up to fill the role of a troop maintenance team member, directly supporting three scout weapons teams.

"On a daily basis, he checks the aircraft log books for each one and ensures they are mission ready," said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Goddard, platoon sergeant with Company A.

During the week, James, who calls Oklahoma City home, assisted in the completion of three preventive maintenance services, two 40-hour lubrications and the replacement of a starter-generator, as well as progressive phased maintenance on three other aircraft.

"He doesn't think he did anything special," said Goddard. "He feels as if he did the same as everyone else. It speaks to his character."

James, recently promoted to private first class, continuously proves himself, going above and beyond his duty to ensure completion of his task, unit leaders said.

"He's a brand new Soldier, and just got promoted," said Goddard. "Most of the things he does he didn't learn in (Advanced Individual Training). He learns on an accelerated pace, and it shows."

James personally led inspection and clearing of aircraft, allowing one Kiowa helicopter to leave maintenance and respond to attacks near Contingency Operating Site Warrior with no time



U.S. Army photo

Private 1st Class Deangelo James, an aircraft mechanic assigned to Company A "Aces," 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Saber, conducts preventive maintenance checks and services on a helicopter at Contingency Operating Base Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 3, 2011. James, a native of Oklahoma City, ensures air crews remain flight-ready during missions in support of Operation New Dawn. For his contributions to Task Force Saber, James earned the title of U.S. Division – North "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week.

lost. His technical proficiency enabled Aces pilots to fly 120 hours without issue.

James' actions and attention to detail contributed to the mission and earned him the title of U.S. Division – North "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week.

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THE IVY LEAF

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1st Advise and
Assist Task Force
1st Infantry Division

2nd Advise and
Assist Brigade
1st Cavalry Division

4th Advise and
Assist Brigade
1st Cavalry Division

Mullen visits Fort Hood troops in Iraq

4th AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq - The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, visited Soldiers assigned to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, Aug. 1.

Mullen met with service members to show his gratitude for their hard work and sacrifice in support of the brigade's advise, train and assist mission in U.S. Division – North.

"I want to express my appreciation for what you have done here," said Mullen. "There is not a day that goes by that I'm not thinking about what you do out here."

During his speech, the chairman also commented on the improvements he's seen in the Mosul area since assuming responsibility as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2007.

Mullen said, throughout his tenure as chairman, there has been a significant change in the security conditions and partnership efforts between U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces in Mosul.

"It is because of your efforts that these extraordinary improvements and changes have occurred," he added.

Besides thanking the troops for their dedication, Mullen conducted a group discussion addressing the deployed troops' questions and concerns. After the question and answer session, the chairman handed out coins to the service members.

"It means a lot having the highest-ranking officer in the (U.S. Armed Forces) come visit us and congratulate us on a job well done," said Cpl. Kelvin Scott, an armor crew member assigned to Company C, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regi-



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Philip Crabtree, 4th AAB PAO

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, left, and Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander of U.S. Forces – Iraq, land at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, Aug. 1, 2011. Mullen and Austin met with senior leadership from 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, and U.S. Division – North to discuss security in northern Iraq during a tour of the Ninewa Combined Coordination Center.

ment, 4th AAB.

During what is expected to be his final trip to visit troops in Iraq, Mullen also met with ISF and senior U.S. leaders to discuss progress in northern Iraq.

Mullen led a roundtable discussion with local police, army, and Kurdish Security Forces leaders, as well as U.S. commanders from 4th AAB and U.S. Division – North at the Ninewa Combined Coordination Center and heard firsthand about efforts the ISF have made in improving security in Mosul and Ninewa province.

"I've watched this from afar and have been very impressed in the process," said Mullen after hearing about the effectiveness of the NCCC. "This takes bold leadership."

The NCCC serves as a hub to coordinate security efforts between the Iraqi Army and police, as well as the Kurdish Security Forces in areas of mutual concern in northern Iraq. The

center facilitates all parties having a common concept of security issues throughout northern Iraq and serves as a catalyst for coordination between them.

"One of the benefits is this is a way to bring all security forces together to assess situations together," said Maj. Gen. David Perkins, commanding general of 4th Infantry Division and U.S. Division – North. "It's more coordination to prevent misunderstandings rather than anything else."

Mullen also met with commanding general of the Ninewa Operations Command, staff Lt. Gen. Hassan.

Mullen and Hassan spoke about improvements the Iraqi Army has made in targeting and defeating extremist threats in northern Iraq.

The Iraqi army worked in concert with the Iraqi police and Kurdish security forces to provide a mutual solution to securing Mosul.

"Throughout the last few years, and with the help of U.S. generals, we were able to establish a good relationship with the police," said Hassan.

Hassan expressed his satisfaction with the leadership and focus Col. Brian Winski, commander of 4th AAB, took during Operation New Dawn, which is oriented toward advising, training and assisting ISF units.

"Colonel Winski has helped us with training, allowing us to focus on external threats, defending our borders and protecting our national sovereignty," Hassan said.

Encouraged by the efforts of both the 4th AAB and the ISF in Ninewa, Mullen reiterated the United States' commitment to a lasting alliance and partnership with Iraq before departing.

"We value the strategic relationship between our two countries and are very committed to it," he said.

4th AAB, 1st Cav. Div.

PILOT, cont'd from Pg. 1

expected to fly; I certainly never expected to do two tours in Iraq. It's been an adventure, no question."

Shortly after re-entering the military, Tamietti found himself in Iraq serving with the 339th Military Intelligence Company, an Army Reserve unit attached to Task Force ODIN.

As an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance pilot, Tamietti and his fellow Soldiers are charged with the mission of observing, detecting, identifying and neutralizing the threat of improvised explosive devices throughout Iraq.

"There are a bunch of kids who get to go home in one piece on account of us, and I feel good about that," he said. "I feel that's a pretty major accomplishment for us."

Despite being a highly decorated combat veteran, Tamietti said military service is not about medals or heroics, but rather about building camaraderie, leadership and protecting those with whom he serves.

On several occasions in Vietnam, Tamietti disregarded his personal safety as he repeatedly flew headlong into withering enemy fire to aid ground troops.

Any pilot would have done the same, Tamietti said humbly, but he just happened to be the



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn Miller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Christopher James, Company B, Task Force ODIN, soaks Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Tamietti during a retirement celebration for Tamietti at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 31, 2011. Tamietti, assigned to 339th Military Intelligence Company, Task Force ODIN, is scheduled to retire after returning to military service in 2003. Tamietti served in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot and then retired from the commercial airline industry before re-entering service to help train younger pilots.

first one available to help on those occasions.

After being shot down and badly wounded, Tamietti said his observer pulled him from the downed aircraft and propped him against a rice paddy wall.

As enemy forces closed in, Tamietti said his wingman's observer, Staff Sgt. Jim West,

emerged from the weeds, crawling to his position.

After being shot down himself, West crawled more than 200 meters into the midst of the fighting to rescue Tamietti and his observer.

That devotion to fellow Soldiers, Tamietti remarked, is what defines a life of military service, and is a lesson he imparts on younger Soldiers he now serves with.

"The respect I get from these kids for what we did means a lot to me," Tamietti said. "I would hope that they would look at me as a guy that did his job and was there when they needed him."

Major Temple Brown, commander of 339th MI Company, said Tamietti brings a wealth of knowledge to the mission in Iraq and teaches younger pilots everyday problem-solving techniques not learned in flight school.

"When you get with Chief Tamietti, you know you're with an experienced pilot," Brown said. "He brought all that experience back into the Army after a long hiatus."

Still flying daily missions at 61 years old, Tamietti is an inspiration to younger Soldiers, Brown said.

"Every day he's out there grinding it out with the rest of us," Brown said. "They see him out on the flight line pre-flight in 115, 120-degree weather out there with everyone else. They look at him and they stop complaining because he's out there with the rest of us doing it. He's an impressive guy."

While he said he sometimes gets tired of the daily grind, Tamietti said he never gets tired of putting on the uniform each morning and serving his country – a lesson taken from his father.

"He spent six and a half years in North Africa, Italy and France during World War II, and never regretted a day, and I feel the same way," Tamietti said of his father. "I feel lucky to get the opportunity to do this. I enjoy the challenge."

In some ways, that challenge of supporting complex counter-IED missions in Iraq is easier now due to technology advancements, Tamietti noted.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn Miller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Tamietti, an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance pilot assigned to 339th Military Intelligence Company, an Army Reserve unit attached to Task Force ODIN, walks the "ODIN mile" between the airfield and his unit headquarters following a mission at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 26, 2011.

“We had a lot less technology and a lot less communication, and did a lot more by the seat of our pants back then,” Tamietti said of Vietnam.

Now, he said, the technology and near-instant exchange of data makes it possible to conduct missions with greater accuracy and protect the Army’s most valuable assets – the Soldiers to his left and right.

Through a combination of teaching high-tech reconnaissance assets to fellow pilots and low-tech cunning garnered from years in the pilot’s seat, unit leaders said Tamietti amassed a vast wealth of knowledge they now must look to replace as he retires.

“The impact will be felt dramatically when he leaves because of all the experience and confidence he brings to everybody,” said Brown.

Lieutenant Colonel Jon Tussing, Task Force ODIN commander, said Tamietti serves as a role model for Soldiers and officers in the unit.

“Gary Tamietti is a great American and we are fortunate to have him in Task Force ODIN,” Tussing said.

Besides being a mentor and leader to other pilots, Tamietti has a keen understanding of how to most effectively support ground units working with Task Force ODIN, he added.

“He defines ‘selfless service’ and is well-respected,” Tussing said. “It has truly been a pleasure working with him.”

Now looking to wrap up his second deployment to Iraq, as well as his re-visited career as a pilot, Tamietti said he is excited to return to his hometown of San Clemente, Calif., and trade flying for a set of golf clubs and a second round of retirement.

Through it all, Tamietti said the friends he met along the way are the most memorable part of his long tenure as a pilot.

“I really do enjoy being around them,” he said of his fellow ODIN troops. “A lot about war is bad, but the friends you make and the bonds you make are with you forever, and that’s a good thing. At the end of the



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn Miller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Tamietti, a pilot assigned to 339th Military Intelligence Company, Task Force ODIN, conducts pre-flight checks on his C12 Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance aircraft at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 26, 2011. Tamietti, a Vietnam veteran who returned to service in 2003, flew his final mission in support of Operation New Dawn, July 31, before retirement later this year.

day, I’m proud to be a warrant officer and I’m proud to be a pilot.”

Rather than focusing on individual achievements or accolades, Tamietti said he would

rather be remembered for being a good leader to his brothers-in-arms and building trust.

“One of these kids told me one time, ‘You know, Chief, when I look up there and see

you sitting there, I think wow, everything is OK, the Chief’s got us.’ What can you say to that?” Tamietti asked. “It just doesn’t get much better than that.”

Arkansas Guardsmen respond to attack

Spc. Andrew Ingram
U.S. Division – North Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Most days, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Robert Linder and his UH-60 Black Hawk flight crew carry members of the U.S. Division – North command team throughout Iraq, often transporting additional passengers between trips with the division leadership.

During one seemingly routine mission, Linder and his crew, members of the Arkansas National Guard's Company B, 1st Battalion, 185th Attack Helicopter Regiment, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, found themselves under attack.

As passengers disembarked Linder's helicopter at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, June 13, he heard the voice of crew chief Sgt. Steven Guinn say, over the radio, "We're taking indirect fire, I just saw one hit."

When mortar rounds continued to explode across COB Warhorse, Linder said his first instinct was to take flight immediately to minimize possible damage to his helicopter.

"My hand was on the lever," said Linder, who hails from Bella Vista, Ark. "I wanted to get off the ground, but we still had passengers and luggage on and around the aircraft. The rotors were so loud they could not hear the explosions so they didn't realize what was going on."

Guinn, who was helping the passengers offload their baggage when the attack began, said his first priority after reporting the attack to his flight team was clearing the passengers and luggage out of the aircraft and making them aware of the threat.

"I had to get everybody in and around the helicopter out of the way so we could take off," said Guinn, who calls Hot Springs, Ark., home. "After that, it is all survival, protecting the aircraft, making sure my guys are all safe."

With the passengers out of harm's way, Linder and his wingman took to the sky and began conducting a battle-field damage assessment of the base. Within moments, COB Warhorse air controllers asked Linder and his team to conduct a reconnaissance mission to identify the point of origin for the at-

tack.

"The point of origin was on one of the major roads with off ramps," said Linder. "They told us to look for a man on a scooter with a metal tube. When we arrived on site, I saw a man on a scooter accelerating off the major road onto a dirt road and then under an overpass. A few more vehicles went under it so we were pretty sure we'd found our guys."

The crews circled the area, maintaining overwatch of the bridge as the quick response force stationed at COB Warhorse mobilized.

To reduce the chance of getting hit by enemy fire, the Black Hawks stayed in constant motion a mere 150 feet above the bridge. As one aircraft passed over the bridge, its sister helicopter maintained a visual on the site to ensure constant coverage of the suspects, said Guinn.

"When we came around for a second pass, I could see them putting something in the trunk of a car," Guinn said. "Then they scattered like cockroaches."

"The car went one way, and the scooters went off in three other directions," said Linder. "I stayed with the car and the other aircraft took the scooters. We kept on them until the AH-64 Apache attack helicopters arrived and took over the mission."

By putting pressure on the suspects within minutes of the attack, the Company B flight team may have deterred further violence against U.S. forces on COB Warhorse, said Linder.

"I think we let them know that we are able to respond quickly and effectively to an attack like this," he said. "It wasn't something we expected, but as the air commander I have to think about things like; 'If this happens, this is how I will respond?'"

Although the Company B Soldiers usually fly passenger missions, the team responded well to the challenge, said Guinn.

"It was really exciting for about 30 minutes there," Guinn said. "We are a Black Hawk unit; it's kind of unprecedented to be asked to take on a mission like this, but we work well together as a team. Each of us instinctively knew what needed to be done. In the end we were just glad to be there, glad that we could help."

CBRN specialist serves many roles

Spc. Angel Turner
4th AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – Deployed Soldiers take on many different job titles outside of their military occupation specialty to ensure the mission at hand is completed.

Supervisors chose Spc. Ariana Little, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist, to serve as the daytime battle tracker for operations cell, Company A, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

With her added responsibility, Little monitors the battlefield tracker and radio communications, and is in charge of the administrative preparation of all convoy logistics patrol manifests within her company.

“Specialist Little is a motivated, dedicated, quick learner and has outstanding leadership potential. Overall she is an outstanding Soldier,” said Sgt. 1st Class Donald Dobbins, a truck master assigned to Company A.

A native of New York City, Little enlisted in the military to challenge herself and gain independence.

Currently on her first deployment, Little said she feels like she has definitely become more independent and disciplined since joining the U.S. Army.

Unit leaders said Little’s maturity and professionalism aid the mission because those traits allow her chain of command to focus on their tasks without the need to over-manage the junior Soldier.

“Little is who any leader would want on their team,” said Dobbins, a native of Queens, N.Y. “She always provides great results. She is my ‘money maker.’”

As 4th AAB “Long Knife” Soldiers prepare for their rede-



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Angel Turner, 4th AAB PAO

ployment back to Fort Hood, Texas, Little focuses the majority of her effort on inventorying and collecting CBRN equipment in her company.

During the deployment, Little maintained accountability and operational readiness of more than \$400,000 worth of

CBRN equipment for the unit as the only CBRN specialist in the company.

“I try to lead by example,” said Little. “I try to be as knowledgeable as possible on my job, so if anyone has questions, I can always have an answer.”

Little earned the title of

Specialist Ariana Little, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist assigned to Company A, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, manifests Soldiers for a convoy at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Ninewa province, Iraq, July 25, 2011. A native of New York City, Little is in charge of the administrative preparation of all convoy logistics patrol manifests for her company.

“Long Knife Strong” Soldier of the Week for her exceptional performance during the deployment.

The brigade commander chooses one Soldier each week for the title from a list of submissions from the battalions.

“I’m proud of myself. I think when you work hard, you deserve to be recognized,” said Little. “Any task that I am given, I try my best. I always give 100 percent.”



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Angel Turner, 4th AAB PAO

Specialist Ariana Little, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist assigned to Company A, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, monitors the company’s battlefield tracker at Contingency Operating Site Marez in Ninewa province, Iraq, July 25, 2011. Little, a native of New York City, earned the title of “Long Knife Strong” Soldier of the Week for her exceptional performance during her unit’s deployment in support of Operation New Dawn.

Soldier finds purpose in mission change

Spc. Kandi Huggins
1st AATF Public Affairs
1st Inf. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – In support of Operation New Dawn, numerous Soldiers of “Devil Brigade,” 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, work in capacities and jobs that are not their primary military occupational specialty.

In Devil Brigade, petroleum supply specialists sometimes work as members of a security platoon, and tankers may use trucks instead of tracks.

For Spc. Alvin Anderson, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, 1st AATF, a fires support specialist by MOS, supporting Operation New Dawn called for him to act as an infantryman on his commander’s personal security detail.

Originally a Soldier in the National Guard, Anderson said he enlisted in 2007 after receiving a letter from a recruiter.

“I was on my way to work and I checked the mail before I left and I had this letter from a recruiter,” said the Monroe, La., native.

“That was a Friday,” Anderson said with a laugh. “That Monday I went and took the ASVAB and by the next Friday I was signing to join the Army.”

After serving in the Guard for a few years, the 23 year-old Richwood High School graduate said he switched over to active duty in November 2009 because the pace was not moving fast enough for him and he wanted to deploy.

Fire support specialists normally perform forward observation missions to “spot” artillery shells fired from positions miles from their targets. These specialists relay target and impact location to the awaiting artillery batteries. The specialists are lightly equipped and are not intended to engage the enemy directly.

With U.S. forces’ current role as advisors helping to train Iraqi Security Forces, fire support specialists do not play a large role in Operation New Dawn.

“When I first joined, I wanted to go infantry at first, but they said I’d have to wait to deploy, so I picked fire support,” said Anderson. “Right now I’m PSD, so I don’t get to do my job out here as fire support, but I still take a lot of pride in it.”

First Lieutenant John Drew of Sandy Lake, Pa., Anderson’s platoon leader, said throughout the five months he has known



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Robert DeDeaux, 1st AATF PAO

Specialist Alvin Anderson, right, and Spc. Michael Jasa, both fires support specialists assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, download weapons and equipment from their vehicle for cleaning after an area patrol in Kirkuk province, Iraq, Aug. 1, 2011.

Anderson, Anderson always maintains a good attitude, stays motivated and takes initiative to accomplish required tasks.

“He’s one of the better Soldiers in the platoon,” said Drew. “Whenever there’s a detail that comes up, he’s always the first to jump up and volunteer in getting stuff done without being asked for it.”

Drew said no one in the platoon is an infantryman by trade.

“We all have different jobs, but everybody’s adjusting well, and Anderson is doing great,” he said.

On missions, Anderson is a .50-caliber gunner with his commander’s PSD, pulling rear security while the commander attends meetings and engagements.

While he is not doing what he went to school to do, Anderson said the experience he is gaining during this deployment will help him as he progresses in the Army.

“I decided if I stay in, that I want to become a drill sergeant, and I feel I can’t tell somebody about a war I never even

fought,” said Anderson. “I feel it’s going to help my career.”

“It’s fun being on PSD,” said Spc. Qual-eem Green. “We get to see the country, interact with locals ... in all honestly it can’t be explained, only experienced.”

Green, also a fires support specialist serving in Anderson’s platoon, said since their unit arrived to Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Anderson has maintained a positive attitude and a motivation that is inspiring to his fellow Soldiers.

“He just stays motivated,” said Green, a Greenville, S.C., native. “He’s always trying to help out and he works hard in representing a leader when there isn’t an NCO around.”

Even though he would like to gain experience in his MOS, Anderson said he still enjoys what he does and being in his unit.

“I love my unit and I love these guys,” said Anderson, “and there’s nothing I wouldn’t do for them. I have their backs and I know they have mine.”

1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div.

'Mustang' mortarmen display operational readiness



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Quentin Johnson, 2nd AAB PAO

Sgt. Quentin Johnson
2nd AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq – Soldiers assigned to 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, conducted mortar training operations on and near Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, July 23.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd AAB, conducted the training to certify mortar crews and company support personnel deployed in support of Operation New Dawn.

Soldiers conducted the two-day event in three phases: palm grove clearing, mortar registration and mortar firing, said Staff Sgt. Jonathan Spears, from Kingsport, Tenn.

Clearing the groves was a

partnered effort between U.S. forces and Iraqi Security Forces, said 1st Lt. Adam Coste, mortar platoon leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt.

Soldiers from Company C, 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., accompanied soldiers from 1st Bde., 19th Iraqi Army Div., as

Specialist Cristian Coury, standing, from Marshalltown, Iowa, and Pvt. Frank Corey, from Geneva, Ohio, both mortarmen with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, clean a mortar tube before firing during a live-fire mortar operations exercise at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, July 23, 2011.

the units conducted a patrol to clear a 500-square meter area of palm groves to ensure safety of the local population.

Mortar registration, the second phase, provided an opportunity to ensure that all the mortar-supporting computer systems were working, and the mortar itself is aligned and operational, explained Coste, who hails from Ocean City, N.J.

Phase three consisted of firing large numbers of 120mm high-explosive mortar rounds into the palm groves in timed intervals, said Coste.

Spears said firing the rounds shows the capabilities of the mortar teams and U.S. forces.

Those capabilities are dependent on the ability of each mortarmen checking the mortar systems, and coordination between the forward observers and higher echelon, added Coste.

"If (mortars) have to be used, we will be proficient," Coste explained.

Spears, a section sergeant with HHC, 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., spoke about proficiency being the pride of mortarmen.

"We pride ourselves on hitting the target with the first round," said Spears.

Being proficient comes with training, said Coste.

In addition to being an excellent training opportunity for 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., the battalion and brigade fires cells added significantly to the realism, Coste said. The operation had the added benefit of a significant disruption effect on local violent extremists through a show of force, he added.

The mortar firing exercise provided Soldiers an opportunity to recertify in their positions, which must be done every six months, explained Coste.

"It was excellent," said Pvt. Frank Corey, a mortar crewman from Geneva, Ohio, about the exercise.

Deployed for the first time, Corey said he is grateful for the opportunity to use his skills, show the accuracy of a mortar and provide security for Soldiers and civilians in the area.

Corey recertified successfully while keeping his position as gunner with HHC – a position he takes seriously, regardless if he is training or conducting combat operations.

"Train as you fight," said Corey of the exercise. "I love it."

Specialist Cristian Coury, right, a native of Marshalltown, Iowa, and mortarmen with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, prepares to fire a 120mm high-explosive mortar round during a mortar operations training exercise in support of Operation New Dawn at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, July 23, 2011.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Quentin Johnson, 2nd AAB PAO

2nd AAB, 1st Cav. Div.

US troops transfer base in western Ninewa

Capt. Philip Crabtree
4th AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – After the transfer of a former U.S. outpost several miles west of Mosul, Iraq, the transition of Al Kisik Military Base, home to 3rd Iraqi Army Division, is now complete.

Soldiers assigned to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, transferred responsibility for Joint Security Station W-4, a small U.S. base located within Al Kisik, to 3rd IA Div., Aug. 1.

“Everything is going smooth,” said Sgt. 1st Class Mario Giron, contracting noncommissioned officer for Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th AAB. “All the right things are in place to make this happen.”

Since arriving at JSS Whiskey 4 in 2010, Troopers assigned to Troop B partnered with 3rd IA Div. soldiers to improve security through advising and training them in areas west of Mosul.

U.S. Soldiers established the joint security station in 2005 to support a campaign against extremist networks that moved into Ninewa province. U.S. forces set up their base of operations in the heart of Al Kisik Military Base, which was under construction during the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

Giron, a native of Del Rio, Texas, explained once U.S. Soldiers established themselves at Whiskey 4, they brought contractors into Al Kisik to complete the construction work at the base and create a headquarters for what would eventually become the 3rd IA Div.

During the past six years, the Iraqi Army gained strength and improved logistically



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Philip Crabtree, 4th AAB PAO

Captain Sterling Showalter, executive officer of Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Squadron, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, thanks Iraqi Army Maj. Nashat Fadel Hassoon, warehouse commander for Al Kisik Location Command, who presented Showalter with a copy of documents showing the Iraqi Army's acceptance of responsibility for Joint Security Station Whiskey 4 in Ninewa province, Iraq, July 29, 2011. “Bandit” Troop Soldiers lived at the base for more than ten months while conducting operations in support of Operation New Dawn.

and tactically through training with U.S. forces. Soldiers of 3rd IA Div. now provide security for citizens in western Ninewa against extremist and criminal threats.

“Their progress from the beginning of Operation New Dawn to now has been exponential,” said Capt. Sterling Showalter, executive officer for B Troop. “They’ve absolutely grown and developed; especially in logistics.”

Soldiers assigned to “Bandit” Troop focused most of their efforts during the past year on training their Iraqi counterparts to provide skills necessary to improve Iraqis’ security capability further.

While extremist activity compelled the IA to contribute to internal threats – usually a police responsibility – security gains in the area and unit training with U.S. forces

allowed IA leaders in Ninewa to focus on defending Iraq’s borders.

Showalter, a native of Mission Viejo, Calif., explained that Iraqi soldiers initially did not like the concept of the training cycles. “Now they favor it,” he said.

Captain Ramey Moore, Bandit Troop commander, reflected on their training partnership with elements of the 3rd IA Div. as time approached for the base to transfer to the Iraqis.

“We partnered with (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance), commando and military police units from 2nd and 4th battalions in the 9th Brigade,” the Paris, Texas, native said. “In some cases, we set up something like mobile training teams to train mortar crew skills, communications and combat lifesavers at their units. We also operated the Joint Forces Security Training Center here at Al Kisik, where we ran new training iterations every 10 days.”

Moore deployed to the area in 2007 with another unit and said IA soldiers made



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Philip Crabtree, 4th AAB PAO

Trucks loaded with equipment assigned to Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Regiment, prepare to move Soldiers to another base in Iraq following the transfer of Joint Security Station Whiskey 4, Ninewa province, Iraq, July 29, 2011.

See BASE, Pg. 11

'Devil' Soldiers maintain ammo holding area

Sgt. David Strayer
109th MPAD
USD-N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Task Force “Devil” Soldiers with Company B, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, maintain readiness for the unit at the Basic Load Ammunition Holding Area on Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq.

Soldiers who man the BLAHA on a daily basis maintain the readiness of Task Force Devil by inspecting and cleaning ammunition so that it may be redistributed to other units or redeployed back home.

“We provide support to 19 units,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Gina Spivey, officer in charge of the BLAHA, Company B, 101st BSB. “We ensure safe storage and safe shipment of all ammunition that we handle.”

While only a handful of Devil Soldiers are responsible for manning the BLAHA at a given time, each one of them bears the responsibility maintaining the workload required to support all 19 units.

“It’s a fairly repetitive pro-



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Staff Sergeant Douglass Smith, Company B, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, carefully checks flash grenades for damage before packaging them at the Basic Load Ammunition Holding Area at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, July 26, 2011.

cess, but there has to be an unwavering attention to detail that goes into each load of ammunition that is sorted,” said Staff Sgt. Douglass Smith, an ammunition-handling specialist with Company B, 101st BSB. “When we receive a shipment

of an ammunition turn-in, we start by sorting the live ammunition from the residue.”

Residue is classified as any by-product of the live ammunition being fired, such as the brass casing of the round, the pin of a grenade, or the de-

tached links of a belt of ammunition.

“The residue has to be sorted and packaged together while the live ammunition, whether it is rounds or grenades, needs to be laid out, meticulously inspected for damages or faults of any kind, and then cleaned,” said Smith. “It’s important that we inspect and package all of the ammunition properly, because we know that a lot of what we handle will be reallocated to either another part of the Iraq theater or to Afghanistan. The Soldiers that receive it are counting on us to give them reliable, stable ammunition.”

The bottom line, Spivey said, is the Soldiers that work at the BLAHA have a two-part mission, and they carry it out each day: they package and ship ammunition.

“Our Soldiers here diligently work at sorting, screening, and cleaning our ammunition so that it can be either retrograded down south to be redeployed, or packaged up and placed back into the supply system to be redistributed to Soldiers throughout theater that need it,” Spivey said.

“It’s an important task and we are proud to do it,” he said.

BASE, cont'd from Pg. 10

significant improvements since then. He said the IA gradually learned how to make things work for themselves in their day-to-day operations and logistical planning.

As the transfer drew closer, Showalter said he felt encouraged by the capabilities of the 3rd IA Div., and feels optimistic about their future.

“They’re definitely capable,” said Showalter. “They have the leadership and logistics in place, and they’re ready to be more assertive. They’re proficient at the counterinsurgency fight, and they’ll really step up now. They’ll be all right.”

Sergeant 1st Class Mario Giron, contracting noncommissioned officer in charge for Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, leaves the troop command post to inspect buildings at Joint Security Station Whiskey 4 before transferring the base to the 3rd Iraqi Army Division, July 30, 2011.



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Philip Crabtree, 4th AAB PAO

Hey Doc: 'How can I avoid norovirus?'

Maj. David Schnabel
Preventive Medicine
USD-N Surgeon

Hey Doc: "I live on Contingency Operating Base Speicher and saw a flyer at the dining facility about norovirus. Some of my buddies have recently gotten sick. Should I be worried?"

-Signed, "Healthy and want to stay that way"

Dear "Healthy,"

I'm at COB Speicher, too, and you and your colleagues are definitely at risk of being infected with norovirus.

Noroviruses are a group of viruses which cause more than half of all outbreaks of nausea, vomiting and diarrhea globally.

COB Speicher is not the only place in Iraq with an outbreak of norovirus, as there have been more than a thousand cases in Baghdad alone in the past couple of weeks.

Norovirus is very hardy and most gel hand sanitizers won't kill it. To stay healthy, frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Norovirus easily spreads since it only takes a few virus particles.

The virus stays alive on surfaces like



keyboards or door knobs for a long time. Though it does not reproduce within food like bacteria do, the virus can contaminate food if a food handler is sick and shedding the virus. Our DFAC was inspected and is determined to be safe from this outbreak.

Overall, the most common way norovirus spreads is simply person to person with individuals infecting themselves with unwashed hands.

The norovirus transmission cycle is a very difficult one to break, but there are steps to take.

Stay disciplined about frequently washing your hands, especially before eating and after using the toilet. Units can sanitize their work and living spaces by cleaning common surfaces like tables, keyboards, and phones with Clorox-type wipes.

If you do not have commercial products, you can make a diluted bleach solution taking one teaspoon full (5 ml) of regular bleach per gallon of water, or 5 tablespoons full (75 ml) of 10-percent bleach per gallon of water. Units should develop policies to allow sick personnel to stay in their quarters to reduce transmission.

More than half of those who get sick have vomiting for 24 hours and almost all have a combination of fever, diarrhea, nausea and cramping. The symptoms last from one to three days.

Antibiotics will not kill this virus. Dehydration is common, so if your urine is very dark or you are feeling dehydrated, go to sick call. The medics will assess you and may give you intravenous fluids or advice on oral re-hydration.

Avoid fatty foods because the norovirus has temporarily damaged your intestines and these foods can be difficult to digest, and cause more pain and cramping. Protein digests more easily.

While you are sick, and for the week following, be hyper-vigilant about washing your hands with soap and water after using the toilet, as you do not want to spread the virus to anyone else.

Stay healthy and keep those Taskforce Ironhorse questions coming!



USD-N Social Media

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