

The LIGHTNING Bolt

Covering the 48th Brigade Combat Team

Vol. 1, Issue 12 November 1, 2005



GEORGIA'S 48TH BCT IN IRAQ'S RICH HISTORY

"You have done a fine job here and we are proud of you. Continue your mission here and we will make sure your families are taken care of."

Brig. Gen. Terry Nesbitt
Commander, Georgia Army National Guard

From

To:

Free Mail: please forward to your family and friends

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Into the Sunset - 48th BCT has successfully facilitated positive changes in thier area of operations. The cover design illustrates the departure from a place that the proud citizen Soldiers of Georgia will be remembered as friends of the new democracy.
(design concept by Spc. Tracy J. Smith - 48th BCT PAO)



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For more information on the 48th BCT go online to <http://www.dod.state.ga.us>

The Lightning Bolt

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Soldiers and families, the 48th BCT Public Affairs Office welcomes your comments, stories/story ideas, photos and any other contributions you are willing to share. We are here to tell the Soldiers' Story. Help us keep everyone informed. The Lightning Bolt is your voice and we want to make sure that it's heard. Feel free to contact the PAO Staff at 242-4808 or email at brigadelightningbolt@yahoo.com

MESSAGE FROM LIGHTNING 6

Lightning Soldiers,

We are half way through our deployment and have successfully accomplished the mission here. You should all be extremely proud of the work you've accomplished. Thanks to you and your dedication the Iraqi Constitutional Referendum passed with over 80% of the votes.

Your diligence and civilian expertise is what made the difference in our area of operation. As we begin our new mission, you can be proud of the fact that you helped to shape history in a war-torn region, where history began.



Brig. Gen. Stewart Rodeheaver
Commander, 48th Brigade Combat Team

Although this phase of our deployment has come to an end, we still have many more roads to travel before we depart this country. You will never forget this time; it is something you will talk with your grandchildren about. Generations upon generations of Iraqi civilians will one day take part in the freedoms that we all enjoy.

Thank you for your service thus far, let's continue the fight with the same diligence and warrior spirit that you have always demonstrated. You have made a difference.

STRIKE HARD!

Lightning 6

.....

Task Force Baghdad Soldiers Strike Back at Terrorists

2nd Lt. Selena Owens
48th BCT PAO



BAGHDAD — Task Force Baghdad Soldiers struck back at terrorist forces after a series of small-arms and roadside bomb attacks Oct. 7 southwest of Baghdad. Ground forces from 48th Brigade Combat Team and helicopters from Task Force Baghdad successfully repelled the attacks with no injuries or damage to U.S. Soldiers.

After Soldiers took small-arms and rocket-propelled-grenade fire, four improvised explosive devices detonated near their location. The Soldiers established security at the site and searched several houses in the area for Anti-Iraqi Forces and detained one terror suspect.

About an hour later, Soldiers in the area found an IED consisting of a 155-millimeter round with detonation cord. The patrol secured the area and called in an explosive ordnance disposal team to destroy the bomb.

The same patrol later found a cache of rocket-propelled grenades, which was also destroyed by the EOD team.

“We’ve expected these attacks based on the terrorist’s history of coordinated attacks,” said Lt. Col. Mark London, 48th BCT operations officer. “We were prepared for previous attacks and we’re prepared for these.”

BAGHDAD – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers stopped a potential attack on polling sites during the referendum. 11 suspected terrorists were detained at a checkpoint in Yusufiyah in the early afternoon of Oct. 15, heading off a potential attack on voters.

After stopping a suspicious blue van at the checkpoint, Soldiers from 108th Calvary, 48th Brigade Combat Team searched the vehicle and discovered three 125-millimeter projectiles.

“Coalition Forces are here to support the Iraqi Army and their efforts to protect their citizens while they vote,” said 2nd Lt. Chris Dryden, an operations officer with the unit. “Our Soldiers did exactly what we are here to do—help give Iraqis a chance at freedom.”

Water Plant Powers Up

Generator provides continuous source of power

Sgt. David Bill
48th BCT PAO

MAHMUDYIAH, Iraq — 250,000 people will have more access to clean drinking water now that a large generator is in place at the CiCi Bar Water Plant in Mahmudiyah.

Having a 1000kbh Perkins generator at the water plant will provide a more consistent source of power that will keep the water flowing to the people of Mahmudiyah, Yusifyiah, and Lusifyiah.

“Clean drinking water is one of the largest concerns in this area,” said Lt. Col Scott Carter, Civil Affairs Officer for the 48th Brigade Combat Team.

As one of the primary water plants for this area, it is essential that the flow of water be maintained, even through the “rolling blackouts” that occurs daily in the region. Normally power is disrupted for periods of three hours and occurs throughout the day. This disruption causes the water pressure to drop which reduces the amount of available water for the Iraqi citizens.

This generator will provide for a continuous source of power which is essential to maintaining strong water pressure so that everyone can benefit from clean drinking water.

“This project was completed with the cooperation of Coalition Forces, and Iraqi contractors, it has also provided local jobs for the area.” said Lt. Col Muhammad Jassem, Executive Officer for the Fourth Brigade of the Sixth Iraqi Army which is working with the 48th BCT.



Leaders: Brig. Gen. Stewart Rodeheaver (right) Commander of the 48th Brigade Combat Team, makes a point during an event. Lt. Col Muhammed Jassem (left) Executive Officer for the 4th Brigade of the Sixth Iraqi Army stands with him. (Photo by Sgt.. David Bill, 48th BCT PAO)



Thank You: Lt. Col Scott Carter (second from the left) 48th BCT Civil Affairs Officer gets thanks from Lt. Col. Muhammed Jassem, Executive Officer for the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraq Army in front of a new 1000kbh generator for a water plant in Mahmudiyah, Iraq.

(Photo by Sgt.. David Bill, 48th BCT PAO)

Jassem continued by saying “I would like to extend my thanks to the Coalition Forces for starting projects for the people. On behalf of the people of the Mahmudiyah area, we thank you for providing essential services which benefit the people.”

The continued efforts by Coalition Forces to provide essential services like clean dinking water are a key factor if the growth and continued progress toward democracy in Iraq is to be maintained.



Stop and Think!
IEDs are deadly killers.
Conduct 5 and 25 meter
checks around your
position.

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IEDs KILL

48th BCT Takes the West Point Academy Football Field

Black Knights cadet represents first National Guard unit on the academy's playing field

*Spc. Tracy J. Smith
48th BCT PAO*

WEST POINT, New York –David Clamon's dressing area in the football locker room at West Point holds mementos representing pride in varying achievements. Both personal and as proxy for those he may one day lead as a future Army officer. The Tennessean was surprised when he received a request to honor Soldier's of a National Guard unit. The tradition of representing the total Army by wearing the patch of active units dates back to the 1988 Army-Navy classic. The Black Knights linebacker had no idea that he would be privileged to wear the colors of the 48th Brigade Combat Team.

“Traditionally we represent all the active maneuver units in the Army. We feel we represent the whole Army not just the Academy on the field,” the 22 year old senior explained. “It is a point of pride to represent Soldiers.” With 40 percent of the Army's total force in Iraq, including National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, it was inevitable that a combat reserve component unit patch be introduced in the academy's representation of the total Army. The Georgia Army National Guard's 48th BCT just happened to be first. The decision to make the ‘*Lightning Brigade*’ the first was by request and it came with a desire for the wearer to be a Georgian. There are several underclass players from the Peach state, but none would see any significant time on the turf.

“When our team manager asked me if I would be willing to wear the 48th patch on my uniform I told him I would be happy to represent y'all,” Clamon explained. “The patch gives me a sense of tradition and lineage. It is an accountability issue. There are soldiers wearing the same patch and being shot at. If those soldiers have the courage to go to the desert, I better have the courage to run down the field and hit somebody no matter how big or fast they are.”

Clamon was an obvious choice. Although not a Georgia resident, he prides himself on the credentials that put him in an honorable position to represent the 4300 men and women of Georgia's Army National Guard. The short list:

1. His distinctive drawl leaves no doubt which side of the Mason-Dixon line he was raised.
2. He knows all the words to Charlie Daniels Band, *The Devil Went Down to Georgia*. “My favorite line from that song is when Johnny (the character in the song) says, ‘I told you once you SOB, I'm the best that's ever been,’” Clamon laughs when he says this and apologizes for using the ‘B’ word.
3. An avid outdoorsman, he loves to hunt and fish.

The latter is such a passion that he mounted the tail-feathers of a 20-pound turkey he shot in his locker. A stereotype he has no shame in perpetuating. Clamon admits, however, that he originally placed the mount there because he was going to train in Ft. Sill, Okla. and did not want anyone to bother it. But, he admits that “it made for some interesting conversation.”

Always involved in athletics, the young man who dons the black and gold's number 53, says that sports is where he has learned to interact with people.



THE LITTLE SECTION THAT COULD

48th BCT motor pool maintenance keeps 'em rollin' with a positive charge

Staff Sgt. Britt Smith
48th BCT PAO

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq -- The 48th Brigade Combat Team's motor pool is not fancy, it's not even paved but it's the place to be when the brigade's vehicles need some attention. The maintenance section is made up of mechanics and dispatchers. The hours are long and the air conditioning is defiantly in short supply but the men and women who work there don't mind, they know they have a job to do. Staff Sgt. Terrence Williams, an 18 year veteran from Milledgeville, Ga. knows how important his job is. "It feels good getting troops vehicles ready, their lives depend on it."

The key to success in Iraq is mobility and that can't happen if the Army can't roll so it's up to Soldiers like Milledgeville, Ga. resident Staff Sgt. Danny Sallad a mechanic who has but a single standard to adhere to. "Our goal is have them (brigade vehicles) 100 percent combat ready when they move out of the wire." Going out of the wire requires that a Soldier is prepared and with everything that can be thrown at them on any given day, the last thing they need is to worry about, is their transportation.

Sallad understands this fact well. "We are a key component to the Brigade" Headquarters and Headquarters Company's First Sergeant Barry Smallwood, 41 from Griffin, Ga. puts it simply, "without those Soldiers to check and fix our vehicles we are broke." "They are HHC's firefighters, on call 24 hours a day, you call they haul."

"Our goal is have them (brigade vehicles) 100 percent combat ready when they move out of the wire."

Staff Sgt. Danny Sallad
HHC, 48th BCT Mechanic



SpC. Guiesel "Gussie" Wilson prepares the necessary paperwork in order to dispatch one of HHC's many vehicles. Wilson, a native of Warner Robins, Ga., is the ULLS (Unit Level Logistics System) administrator. (photo Staff Sgt. Britt Smith, 48th BCT PAO)

The business of maintenance is a numbers game, take 16 Soldiers and put them in charge of maintaining 82 pieces of rolling stock and you have a section that not only meets the standard, but by all accounts far exceeds them. "They are a company size element functioning at a battalion level" that according to HHC's Commander CPT. Michael Lipper, 45 from Macon, Ga. CPT Lipper knows how important it is to keep things rolling, and to repair them if they break. "It's amazing how fast they fix vehicles." With the number of missions that run daily, everything from combat patrols to mail pick-up, each equally important in the function of the 48th BCT's mission.

Team work, real team work is not always an easy thing to make happen. Staff Sgt. Michael Price 42, of Thomaston, Ga. is in charge of the section and his method seems easy enough. "One person putting out the instructions and everybody else follows it." Price adds "we are good at working as a cohesive team, we have a good attitude and we pick each other up when we are down." The maintenance section meets twice a week and one important item on the agenda is simply looking out for the other guy. "Sometimes it's as simple as who seems to be getting mail and who's not, if somebody gets a package and can share they do," Price adds that they set the standard and stick to it.

When Soldiers perform their pre-combat checks before heading out of the wire, it's good to know that the 16 Soldiers of HHC Maintenance have exceeded the standards.



Staff Sgt. Ron Deloach, a resident of Glennville, Ga., performs maintenance on a fuel truck. Deloach a 19 year veteran with the Georgia National Guard is assigned to HHC, 48th Brigade Combat Team as a mechanic.

(photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith, 48th BCT PAO)

Inspirational Thoughts



It is hard to believe we have been here over five months. In some ways it seems the time has dragged; then again it seems as though we just arrived. As we prepare for a new mission there is a touch of sadness about leaving here. Here we lost some of our good friends, brave Soldiers that we will never forget and we will always honor. Some of our friends were wounded. Some of them are back in the States, others returned to duty. We will always remember what they have done for us.

As you read this, November is upon us. For Americans this month starts the Holiday Season. The Muslim building supervisor told me two days ago, 'Chaplain, God willing, the new chapel tent at Camp Striker will be ready before Thanksgiving! I am so happy to work on this new House of God.' His pleasure in his work was evident and it drove home to me that people of other faiths join us in Thanksgiving. Here are some of the things for which I am grateful.

I am grateful that I am aware more than ever before each day is a gift. As is often prayed in our Headquarters early Morning Prayer sessions, 'O God, thank You for letting us see another sunrise.' I know now more than ever before 'to whom much is given, much is required.' I am grateful for the many new friends we have made. God promised to set the lonely in families (Psalm 68.6) and now our 'family of faith' is much larger for each of us sisters and brothers on this journey. Many of you know that both of my sons are also on this rotation. I am grateful that if we all had to be here, in some way we have been here together.

Join me as our thoughts turn toward this Thanksgiving, our families and friends at home. We miss all of you. In our daily prayers, let us 'Enter His gates with Thanksgiving' (Psalm 100). As some wise believers wrote long ago, 'Prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us. This is true because God gives His grace and Holy Spirit to those who pray continually...asking God for these gifts and thanking him for them.' God Bless each of you in the 48th Brigade and all of your family and loved ones at home.

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Stanley Bamberg
48th Brigade Combat Team Command Chaplain

Camp Striker Religious Services

<u>Time</u>	<u>Worship Services</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Location</u>
0900	Catholic Mass	M W Sun	Striker Chapel
1115	Catholic Mass	Friday	TOC conference room
1845	Catholic Mass	Saturday	Pad 6, Tent 410
0900	Devotional	Sunday	TOC conference room
1000	Contemporary Protestan	Sunday	Striker Chapel
1115	Traditional Protestant	Sunday	Striker Chapel
1030	Protestant	Sunday	Pad 6, Tent 410
1630	Protestant	Sunday	Striker Chapel
1800	LDS	Sunday	Striker Chapel
1900	Praise Service (Gospel)	Sunday	Striker Chapel
1930	Praise and Testimony	Sunday	Pad 6, Tent 410
<u>Bible Study & Praise Choir</u>			
0630	TOC Prayer Service	Mon – Sat	TOC conference room
1800	LDS Bible Study	Wednesday	Striker Chapel
1900	Prayer/Bible Study	Wednesday	Striker Chapel
1930	Prayer/Bible Study	Wednesday	Pad 6, Tent 410
1700	Purpose Driven Life	Thursday	Striker Chapel
1900	Praise Choir Practice	Thursday	Striker Chapel

Soldiers In Action



A Soldier from 2nd-121st Infantry Bn. PSD patrols an area suspected of insurgency. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)



Major Carang, 490th Civil Affairs, from Honolulu, Hawaii, prepares for the mission by taking care of the little details. Seeing is believing as he cleans his windshield prior to a Civil Affairs Mission. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)



Brig. Gen. William T. Nesbitt, Commander of the Georgia Army National Guard, Lt. Col. Carl White and Sgt 1st Class Shaun Herron, 490th Civil Affairs, discuss the new CMOC clinic with Nesbitt. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)



Soldiers from the Service Battery, 1st-118th Field Artillery fire artillery rounds in what was formerly known as the "Triangle of Death", however now according to the 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division Commander, COL Husain, "It is now known as the Triangle of Peace, thanks to the Soldiers of the 48th Brigade." (See next issue for a full story on the 1st-118th FA BN) (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)



48th BCT Command Sgt. Major James Nelson joins in the celebration of the CMOC opening by assisting an Iraqi youngster and his father with a donated wheelchair. The chairs were constructed by 48th BCT Soldiers and distributed at CMOC by "Charlie Med", 148th Support Bn., and 490th Civil Affairs Soldiers. (photo by Sgt Charles Cloud)



A young Iraqi girl shows her appreciation for toys and hugs by giving back a big smile. The youngster and her mother visited the 'Charlie Med', 148th Support Bn., 48th BCT manned Radwanayah Civil Military Operations Center clinic. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)

Soldiers In Action



Spc. William Bryan and Sgt 1st Class Gregory Edwards, Soldiers with HHC, 2nd-121st Infantry Bn., prepare for a final mission with their 2nd Bde., 101st ABN counterparts as they assume control of the area of operations. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)



(above) Children from the Al Mashnk Al Alabe School give the thumbs up as the 2nd-130th Infantry Bn., deliver school supplies to their school. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)



(above) Soldiers of HHC, 2nd-121st Infantry Bn. PSD conduct a cordon and search near a canal in the Radwaniah district. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)

Captain Joseph Kalisek (below), a resident of McHenry IL, and member of HHC 2nd-130th Infantry Bn., delivers school supplies to children at an elementary school in Southwest Baghdad. Al Mashnk Al Alabe School. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith, 48th BCT PAO)



Staff Sgt. Mark Decarlo Tallahassee FL. HHC -2nd-121st Infantry Bn. heads out on a patrol at the wheel of his up armored HUMVEE. (photo by Staff Sgt. Britt Smith)



Lt. Col. Jeff Edge and Sgt. Emeline Felix (above), 148th Support Bn., sort through packages of 'goodies' donated by various volunteer organizations such as the Macon Volunteers & sponsors from the City of Forsyth. Under the moniker, "Operation Uplift", started by Mrs. Connie Ham the group successfully donated over two thousand boxes of toiletries, food and snacks, (enough to fill two 5-ton trucks - see photo at right), that were distributed to Soldiers throughout 48th BCT. (photos courtesy of Sgt. Emeline Felix)





TAKE **10**

Ten Questions for *48th BCT Effects Cell Coordinator*

LB: What does the title Effects Cell Coordinator mean?

Basically I am charged with creating the battlefield “effects” directed by the Brigade Commander. The effects cell coordinates the application of resources to develop and engage lethal and non-lethal targets.

LB: How is your cell integrated into Operations?

In layman’s terms, we identify the “good guys” and try to leverage them to influence the behavior of the people they control. We also target the “bad guys” and assist the staff in the application of combat power to kill or capture them. When we effectively leverage the “good guys” to identify the “bad guys” for us, we can generally create the overall effect that the commander directs. Our cell includes Intelligence, Targeting, Information Operations, Psychological Operations, and Public Affairs.

LB: Winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqis... can you explain that concept?

Yes, however it will never happen. In fact, it is not important that we win any hearts and minds. In my opinion the average Iraqi would really like for us to complete our mission and turn the country over to them. They also want us to stay until the security situation is under the control of the Iraqi Security Forces. We have made tremendous strides in this area. Most Iraqis want the same thing we want... A free and sovereign Iraq that can secure and govern without outside assistance. We do not need to win their hearts or minds to accomplish this mission.

LB: What is a Sheik?

Sheiks are tribal leaders. Iraq is a tribal culture ruled by 67 “General Sheiks” and countless sub-Sheiks all the way down to the individual village level. Sheiks are important to us because they can help us influence the behavior of the segments of the population they control.

LB: Describe the relationship between the 48th BCT and the local leadership?

The Brigade has built relationships with tribal leaders in our area previously thought impossible because our area is dominated by Sunnis. Our Commanders from the Brigade to the Company level have done an outstanding job of engaging local leaders. This effort has saved countless lives of both our Soldiers and innocent Iraqis.

LB: Do you think the relationship that you and your team helped build made a difference during the referendum?

Yes... The most important component of our effort was the direct involvement of the Brigade Commander. During the initial stages there was no plan to open polling sites in our Sunni dominated area. This would have caused some serious problems. Thanks to the Civil Affairs Officer, this problem was addressed in time to prepare for the vote. We leveraged the local leaders to get out the vote. The results speak for themselves. It was a successful event.

We identify the “good guys” and try to leverage them to influence the behavior of the people they control.

LB: What has been the most challenging aspect of your job?

We are fighting a faceless and cowardly enemy that will not stand and fight. These terrorists dress, look, and act like every other Iraqi. This makes it difficult to identify our enemy. Once we find our enemy, killing or capturing them is relatively simple. Our enemy tries to melt into the population and our

challenge is to find them and stop them before they can do harm to our Soldiers or innocent Iraqis. This is the challenge for us and any other unit fighting an insurgency.

LB: What has been the most rewarding?

In many cases my section has planned, prepared, and participated in the execution of combat operations that have either disrupted or defeated terrorist cells. In addition, we have developed relationships with locals that have led to them telling us where terrorist operations are planned or the exact location of an improvised explosive device. In these cases, we have acted before the terrorist saving lives of coalition forces and/or innocent Iraqis. In my opinion, this is absolutely the most rewarding feeling a human being can experience.

LB: What would you like to say to the families back home about the difference we are making here?

Our families can be proud of what the soldiers of the 48th BCT have and will do to win this war. We have great leaders and Soldiers at every level. Everybody here looks after one another. More importantly, I would like to thank the families for the sacrifices they are making so that we can focus on doing our jobs here in Iraq.

LB: How will the new mission change your job within the Brigade?

At this point, I am not exactly sure how my day to day duties will change. However, like everyone else in the Brigade, we are here to close with and destroy our enemy. I will spend every available second trying to find a better way to accomplish this mission.



Lt. Col Thomas Carden, with the Iraqi Army 2nd Bn., 4th Bde., 6th Div. commander during a recent press conference with Iraqi press.

photo by Sgt. David Bill, 48th BCT PAO

Quick Strikes

Notes from the Staff

During this first half of our deployment we have had several media embeds as many of you are aware. We would like to remind you of the documentary and specials that are scheduled to air this month. Please have your family members tune in or record the programs for you or if you are home on leave, take a moment to view what you and your fellow Soldiers are saying and doing.



- **WAGA-TV (Fox5 News – Atlanta)**

Will air four separate series the second week of November, on a Wednesday and Thursday at six and ten. They will feature 48th BCT Daily Operations, as well as:

- *The MiTT Teams*
- *1-108th Armor Battalion*
- *2-130th Infantry Battalion*



- **CMT (Country Music Television)**

Their documentary is scheduled to air during the week of Thanksgiving. They will have several repeats during this week if you miss it the first time! They will also feature 48th BCT Daily Operations, as well as:

- *148th Support Battalion*
- *2-121st Infantry Battalion*

NOTE – Atlanta Journal Constitution has embedded with the 48th since the very beginning and are planning to keep rotating their reporters until the end of our deployment, on behalf of the 48th...Thank you AJC embeds! We appreciate your sacrifices in order to tell our story to the world.

ATTENTION!!

All Soldiers going on R&R Leave must attend the mandatory briefings held at the main Chapel. Briefings are held Tuesday at 0800 and 1900. The Chapel is located next to the Mayor's Cell on North Striker.



Stop and Think!
IEDs are deadly killers.
Conduct 5 and 25 meter checks around your position.

0001 IEDs HILL



Courts-Martial Results

A soldier from Co. C, 2/130th IN was found guilty at a Summary Courts-Martial on 16 Oct 05 of one specification of conducting larceny (Art. 121); and one specification of conduct prejudice to good order of the Army (Art. 134). The soldier was sentenced to reduction of E4 to E1, forfeiture of \$815.17, and confinement for 30 days.



48th Brigade Combat Team....

Remembering our fallen Soldiers

Weep Not For Me

Weep not for me
though I am gone
Into that gentle night
Grieve if you will,
but not for long
Upon my soul's sweet flight.

I am at peace,
my soul's at rest
There is no need for tears.
For with your love
I was so blessed.

There is no pain,
I suffer not,
The fear now all is gone.
Put now these things
out of your thoughts,
In your memory I live on.

Remember not
my fight for breath
Remember not the strife
Please do not dwell
upon my death...

...But Celebrate My Life

Spc. James T. Grijalva

Burbank, Ill.

October 2005

2nd Bn., 130th Inf. Bn.

Staff Sgt. Dennis Paul Merck

Evans, Ga.

October 2005

648th Eng. Bn.



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He finds himself drawn to the camaraderie of the non-commissioned officers and squad leaders that occasionally train with the cadets. Clamon is at ease with the team atmosphere and the fact that these driven warriors make every effort to do, and be, their best.

It was no surprise that on his big day of decision, October 12, when it was time for the human and regional geography major to prepare for his commission he chose a branch that represents what embodies an Army field leader.

“I selected infantry,” Clamon, announced without apology or hesitation. “I want to be in a team atmosphere. The enlisted Infantry Soldiers pull the hardest and are the salt of the earth. They represent how I want to lead so why not be a part of their ranks.”

Clamon is a tough guy but wants to be the officer, or rather **That Soldier**, who always puts the team first and that his Soldiers will always feel comfortable approaching. He hones that prioritization principle through his playing style on the football field. “I’m not a flashy player. I don’t go out with the intention of scoring touchdowns. I just want to do a good job and make my team what folks look at and are proud of.”

In a line-up, he finds himself situated between the Black Knights number 54 representing the United States Army Special Forces and number 52 – the Army Rangers. Not easily ignored he gets some curious looks, and interesting questions, when he dons his jersey.

“Some guys asked me, ‘what the hell is that?,’” the 6’2” linebacker says with a deep laugh as he recalls the first time he stepped on the field against Boston College wearing the Lightning Bolt sewn on his jersey’s right shoulder.

“I told them the things the 48th is doing in Iraq ain’t getting on CNN but you are my teammates in that country and it is a heck of a compliment to me to have folks that put themselves in harms way, everyday, allow me to represent them on our playing field.”

Prior to each game, Clamon pays private homage by touching the 48th Brigade patch before taking the field.

He realizes that with a five-year commitment, after graduation, he will inevitably see action in Iraq or Afghanistan. This humbles him, but does not deter his determination to do his best to represent the citizen Soldiers of Georgia on the football field.

“I am a southerner through and through and I am a long way above the Mason-Dixon Line. I am just proud to be representing the fine people of Georgia and the ones we have lost in this war on terror. When you look down at the patch on your shoulder, no matter what it is, it motivates you to play hard because real Soldiers in harm’s way are wearing the same thing. A Soldier is a Soldier and deserving of the highest respect.”

Would he consider furthering his representation of the 48th BCT by commissioning in the Georgia Army National Guard?

“I chose the Academy for the chance to play football and the chance to become an officer and do something great for this country. The biggest thing I have to look forward to is leading soldiers and getting the chance to do something for this country and what I believe in. I have five years to think about it so you never know which way the Lord leads you. In the meantime I just want y’all to give ‘em hell and show those who stand against us how tough a bunch of ticked off southerners can be.”



“**Lightning Strikes!**” - Black Knights Number 53 is displayed between the jersey’s representing the Army’s Special Forces and the Rangers.

(photo courtesy of West Point Academy PAO)

Soldiers In the Sand



“What is your most memorable experience since arriving in Iraq?”



“For me, it was a visit out to FOB Falcoln. I met members of the Iraqi Army, including the IA Commander of the 4th Brigade at the time, Gen. Ali.”

*Sgt 1st Class Stanley Walker
48th BCT Plans NCOIC*



“The first group of Soldiers who died in combat, their memorial service was very touching to me. To see everyone come together and support one another like that, I will never forget it.”

*Sgt. Anethra Adderly
HHC 48th BCT Admin NCOIC*



“All the rumors that I heard, and the people that believed them...NO we are NOT going home early.”

*Spc. Jason Abercrombie
2-121st Scout Platoon, 48th BCT*



“The worst dust storm we had, when everything was orange, it looked like a scene from the movie, Constantine.”

*Spc. Keneisha Florno
248th MICO, Maintenance Section*



“My friends and I being interviewed on the radio (STAR-94). I have pictures and actual radio feed.”

*Spc. Emily Wegrzyn
248th MICO All Source Analyst*



“The second time our convoy was hit by an IED, because I was the gunner in the second vehicle and looking out for the other vehicles coming through the cloud of smoke, it seemed like forever, what a relief to see them drive through it.”

*Spc. Chris Belvin
Driver/Gunner for the security platoon*

**HAPPINESS IS IN
MY REAR VIEW MIRROR**

