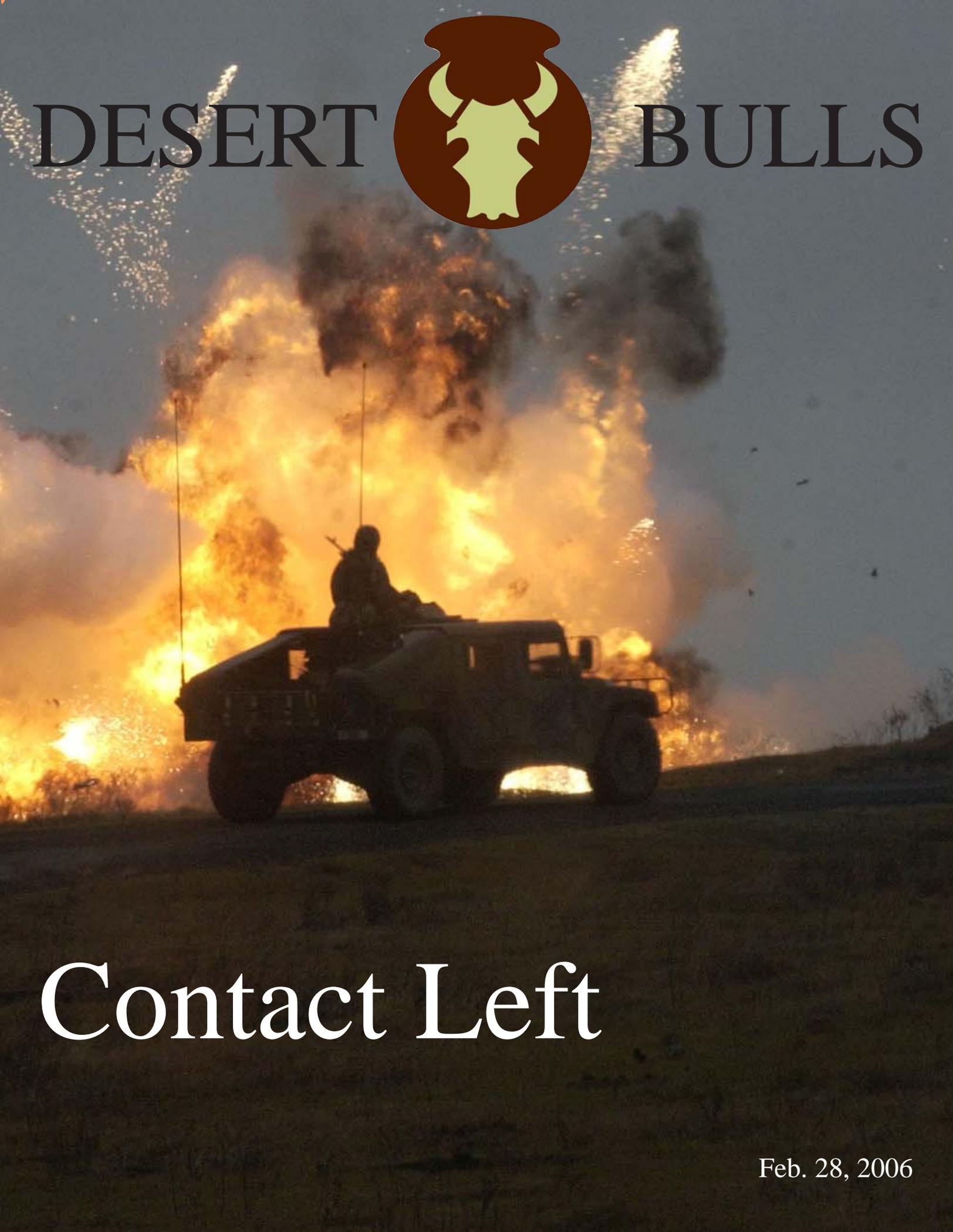


DESERT



BULLS



Contact Left

Feb. 28, 2006

NO BULL: Answers to frequently asked questions

By Capt. Mark Lappegaard

1/34 BCT PAO

1. My family can't find a hotel room or is staying far away. What can I do? Good news- some hotels are freeing up rooms. Call around. Be sure to talk to the LOCAL reservation desk (not a national, 1-800 desk). Call back the next day to confirm they have you in the system.

2. Is the Soldier Readiness Check taking a long time? It depends. If you are one of the first in and move quickly, you could get done in a couple of hours. If you are late or don't stay engaged (take frequent breaks or leave), it could take two days or more. Tips: arrive early, have your paperwork ready before you see the clerk, be friendly even if the clerk is not, move to the shortest line first (don't wait for your buddy to clear his or hers before you move on), and bring a book or magazine to pass the time (no headphones or games, please). Remember, a No-Go in DARTS is a No-Go for pass or deployment.

3. Any feedback from the Joint Readiness Training Center Civilians of the Battlefield? Yes. They were all impressed by our professionalism and speed on civil military operations. The one suggestion they had for all of us before we go over is to understand the golden rule applies to COBs



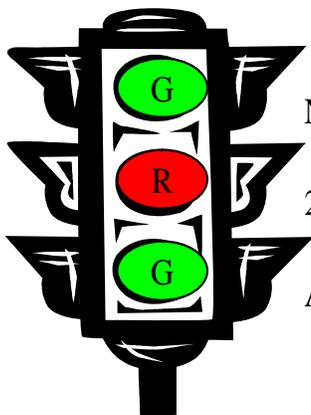
Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 1/34 BCT PA

Civilians on the Battlefield at Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La., cheer as Col. David Elicerio left after attending a police station opening in Takira during the Mission Rehearsal Exercise. The COBS said Soldiers need to understand that the Golden Rule applies to them also during these exercises.

too. They react harshly if treated harshly (sunglasses, disrespect, and aggressive weapon posture). Said one COB at an After Action Review "You say you are here to help provide a safe and secure town for me and my family but you point your weapons at us? If you are protecting the town, shouldn't the weapons point out and not in? How can I try to trust you if you don't try to trust me? You must understand the vast majority of Iraqis don't want to kill

Americans. They are living in a war zone, trying to make a better life for their kids, just as you would do back home. But how would you feel if you were treated the way some COBs were treated? Especially in the Arab culture where respect is so important? I bet you'd be upset too and think about revenge. Don't make any more enemies. Remember the golden rule and build friendships for information and safety."

BCT Drinking Lamp



Now until 2000 15 March

2001 15 March until departure ceremony

After ceremony until TBD

by SFC Wood

Soldiers being sought for stress study

Soldiers of the 1/34 Brigade Combat Team are being sought for a stress study conducted at building 1909 from Wednesday through Sunday.

The studies will be conducted during the following hours between Wednesday through Sunday: 8:30 a.m. until 10 a.m., 12:30 p.m. until 2 p.m., 3 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

For more information call 1st Lt. Matt Majeski at (601) 467-7815.

www.redbullweb.com

Day in Red Bull history

Monday, Feb. 21, 1944

Near the village of **Cassino, Italy**

Both Platoons again started firing on the south slope of Hill 193, rate of fire is again 144 rounds per hour. Visibility is fair, with a cloudy sky, but no attempt to rain as yet.

1520 hours. Orders came from Regiment that we will be relieved tonight and also return to the rear. Our column is to pass the I.P. [Initial Point] at 0300 hours.

Lt Silverstein returned from Regiment with convoy instructions at 1615 hours.

Both Platoons are still firing at the same rate of fire on Hill 193; they will fire until midnight, as most of our Regiment's troops will be relieved by then. To look at the large amount of brass and shell cases behind the platoon, one can tell that *a staff sergeant* and the ammunition crew have done a wonderful job getting ammo to the guns. [144 rounds, at 14 pounds per round, is about one ton per hour.] Enough credit

and praise cannot be given to the men on the guns who have had fire missions at all hours of the day and night, through wet and cold weather. Everyone can use the much-earned rest. Behind each gun set up on the hill, the large 'flow' of cases and brass runs down, resembling in a way lava flows.

Everyone is preparing to move, nets from the guns were taken down just at dark, and our CP vehicles will pick up most of the OP crews at 2100 hours.



DESERT BULLS FEB 28, 2006 Issue 13

1/34 Brigade Combat Team
Commander: Col. David Elicerio
Command Sgt. Maj. Doug Julin

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For more information
on the 1/34 BCT
go online to www.redbullweb.com

On the cover: A "car bomb" explodes near a 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Humvee during a Convoy Live Fire Exercise at Peason Ridge near Fort Polk, La. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 1/34 BCT PA.

The Desert Bulls is an official publication of the 1/34 Brigade Combat Team. It is produced by the 1/34 BCT Public Affairs Office. This Soldier newsletter is in compliance with the provisions of AR 360-1. Any questions, comments, photos, story ideas that you would like to present should be forwarded to the 1/34 BCT Public Affairs Office. E-mail Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood at clinton.wood@us.army.mil.



8 SECONDS

This week's full ride

On Page 6 of this newsletter, there are several points to ponder when engaging the media.

I wanted to tell what I know about the media considering I'm a photographer and motorsports writer for the Brainerd Dispatch in Brainerd, Minn.

First, most local media, not from international organizations like Associated Press or Reuters, will tell the truth and want to tell your story.

This is how a story assignment goes. A reporter receives the assignment from an editor. The editor states what kind of questions the reporter should ask.

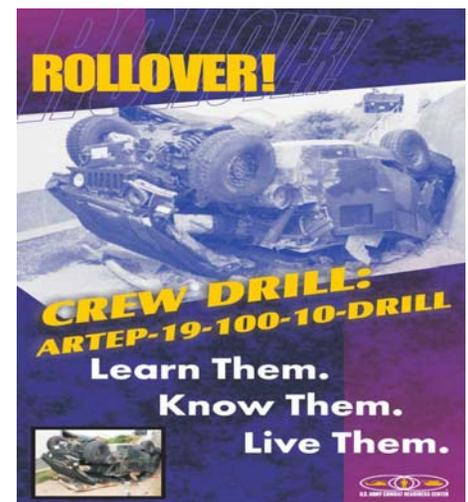
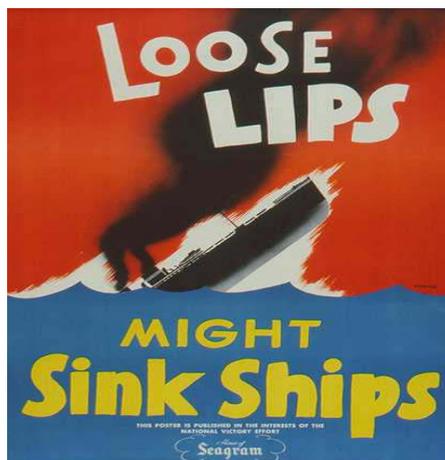
So when the reporter returns to the paper, those questions better be answered.

If you don't give your name you will not be quoted. Another thing to remember is you don't have to talk to the reporter.

The Dispatch for one will not run stories with quotes from an anonymous sources.

Just for your information also, there are close to a 100 articles on us in the press. Our webpage, redbullweb.com, broke 40,000 hits in its first fourth months. We have commitments for on going coverage throughout our deployment by three different organizations. As a unit, we have not suffered one poor experience, misrepresentation, or OPSEC violation. So, in most cases, you are better off to stay and talk to the press.

-- Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood



Setting the Standard

1/34 BCT performs well at JRTC

Story and Photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood
1/34 BCT PA

The 1/34 Brigade Combat Team started its Mission Rehearsal Exercise at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk last month by being the first BCT to bring more than 1,200 vehicles to the 10-day exercise. And the Soldiers of the BCT kept rolling through the exercise that cost a million dollars a day.

“By all accounts that I’ve seen by every after action report that I’ve seen and by every subjective and objective measure that we’ve been able to capture, the brigade did as well or better than most active duty brigades that attend the JRTC,” said Col. David Elicerio, commander of the 1/34 BCT. “So we set the mark high on the wall and we went in with high expectations and every Soldier in this Brigade delivered.”

Elicerio said the MRE is a standard by which that the Army measures success and readiness to go to battle. “I think the

Army has seen now that the First Brigade is as ready as any other unit they prepared for war,” he said.

The tasks included convoy escort missions, personnel security detachment missions, cordon and searches, mortuary affairs, civil affairs operations centers, meetings with “local Iraqi citizens” and tactical operations center operations.

The Soldiers lived on five Forward Operating Bases; FOB Forge, FOB Anvil, FOB Spirit, FOB Comfort and FOB Warrior. These FOBs were set up similar to what the Soldiers will be living at in Iraq.

The 1/34 BCT also was the first unit to use the buildings on the these newly constructed FOBs.

There also were more than 700 local citizens assuming the role as Iraqi role players or Civilians on the Battlefield.

Elicerio said each Soldier also now knows that he or she is ready to deploy to Iraq and be prepared for combat.



Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 136th Combined Arms Battalion, rush an "injured" fellow Soldier to the battalion aid station during the Mission Rehearsal Exercise at Fort Polk, La.

“And able to fine tune the skills that they are going to need,” he said. “Their first contact with the enemy now will have been rehearsed in a realistic setting so I think it gave them that chance to test their mettle on tasks that they have been training on for the last six months here (at Camp Shelby, Miss.),” he said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Doug Julin, the 1/34 BCT Command Sergeant Major, said his Soldiers have proven they can “do the job.” “The morale was very high and the Soldiers wanted to complete the task,” he said.

The Soldiers are still completing tasks, said Elicerio.

He said they are still moving vehicles from Fort Polk and to Iraq flawlessly.

When asked why his Soldiers are doing so well, he said they bring their Midwest work ethics, professionalism, and consider this deployment as something that has to get done.

“That is one reason these Soldiers do so well,” he said. “I think another one is just their professionalism as a whole. These Soldiers understand that they’ve got a mission to perform. They want to get after business. I think they understand that the sooner and better we get it done the sooner we all come home.”

Come home as one of the most well-trained brigade combat teams in the Guard.



Two 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Humvees approach a "car bomb" during a Convoy Live Fire Exercise at Peason Ridge near Fort Polk, La.

Red Bulls return

1/34 BCT Commander, Command Sergeant Major visit Oakdale woman

Story and Photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood
1/34 BCT PA

OAKDALE, La., — The last time this Oakdale woman was visited by a Soldier of the Army's 34th Infantry Division was early in World War II when the "Red Bulls" were training at the former Camp Claiborne, La. Elaine Williams, who was only 17, was able to meet these Soldiers because her father invited them home for dinner.

On Feb. 22, the "Red Bulls" returned to Williams and her husband's house north of Oakdale. Col. David Elicerio and Command Sgt. Maj. Doug Julin, both of the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the Minnesota Army National Guard's 34th Infantry Division, presented a certificate of appreciation to Williams and her family for their support to the division.

"I feel like I'm part of the family," Williams said after she was presented the certificate and a Commander's coin. "Like I said, I'm at home with you Red Bulls."

None of this would have happened if not for an article in the Alexandria, La., Town Talk newspaper. The article reported that the 1/34 Brigade Combat Team was training at Fort Polk, La., early in February. Williams wrote a note to Elicerio telling him the history of Camp Claiborne and how her parents invited several of the Red Bulls home for Christmas dinner.

"It really touched our hearts when you sent me the letter," Elicerio, the commander of the 1/34 BCT that is headed to Iraq later this spring, told Williams.

Williams said she was expecting a thank you note. "I'm not a publicity hound but I had to (write the letter)."

Williams has been writing letters to Soldiers since she was 17 years old. She said as she

and her classmates would walk to school, trucks hauling Soldiers would drive by.

"They would see some schoolgirls and here come the paper (their addresses) out of the trucks," she said. "I would pick the papers up and write letters to them," she said. "And I enjoyed writing to them. They always had stories to tell me."

She said the Soldiers usually wrote back to her and sent her their photographs.

One Red Bull Soldier she wrote to and dated has a special place in her heart, Harlan Neil

Hercher of Hecla, S.D. The last time she saw him was after they went to church Dec. 7, 1941, the day that Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. They heard about the attack on the radio.

"He had to go," she said. "That was the last time I saw Neil. (The Red Bulls) were out of here when they announced the war."

The Red Bulls were the first American Force sent to the European Theater.

Williams said she wrote two to three letters weekly to Hercher and sent him several boxes.

Hercher's uncle told Williams that a letter saved Hercher's life. Hercher's uncle said Hercher walked away from his unit that was "just lounging around" to lean against a tree to read a letter. A mortar round landed near Hercher, killing his unit. He received shrapnel wounds.

"I hope it was a letter from me that saved his life," she said. "That was God's work there. He was supposed to live."

She said Hercher spent several weeks at a hospital in Hot Springs, Ark. (she has a photograph of him and another Soldier walking down Main Street in Hot Springs). When Hercher called Williams while at Hot Springs, she was already engaged.

Hercher was discharged from the Army, joined the Navy and retired. He died in

1956 and is buried in Sturgis, S.D.

Letters weren't the only way for Williams to correspond. She and her cousin also worked at the camp's post exchange. Williams said she manned the beer side of the horseshoe-shaped counter (soda, ice cream, candy and tobacco was also available at the counter). She sold the 10 cents a bottle beer to the Soldiers but they had to open their own bottles.

"By the time the PX opened, the line went all the way across the street to the mess hall and it was coming around to my counter," she said.

She said her girlfriends and her also met Soldiers at the Soldier's Center in Oakdale and dances at the camp's sports arena where famous entertainers, including the Gene Krupa, Tommy Dorsey and Benny Goodman Orchestras played. Williams and her girlfriends were escorted by teachers from their high school.

"We had out nights to work," she said. "We danced with the boys, got refreshments and conversed. Later if they asked you for a date, that was your business."

Williams didn't marry any of these Soldiers she dated. She and LeRoy Williams, who retired from the Air Force after 31 years of service, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary March 16. They are both on their second marriages. They have four children, six grandchildren and a great grandson.

Reflecting back on the past, Elaine said living through the war as a teenager was a lot of fun but she knew that it was a "bad time."

"I'm one to relish the past and hang on to everything from the past I'm good for that," she said.

"And now the Bulls are back," said Elicerio. And on their way to another war.



Elaine Williams hugs Col. David Elicerio, commander of the 1/34 Brigade Combat Team, after Elicerio presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation.



Elaine Williams and her husband, LeRoy Williams, and their dog, Mardi, pose by his Ford Ranger pickup. The Williams have followed the 34th Infantry Division "Red Bulls" for more than 60 years. Notice the bumper sticker.

Upcoming events

- **27 Feb to 7 March:** *Weapons Familiarization (all).* Last chance to practice on all weapon systems.
- **2 March until completion:** *Solider Readiness Check.* The #1 requirement to take pass or leave Camp Shelby.
- **4 March:** *56th Brigade Combat Team and Company A, 194th Armor - Operation Iraqi Freedom lessons learned.* Senior Leaders invited to hear from Col. Red Brown, commander of the 56th BCT, and crew on their experiences.
- **8 March:** *Stop mail to Camp Shelby.* You can restart upon arrival at your Forward Operating Base in mid to late April.
- **10-13 March:** *Pass #1 for first half of 1/34 BCT.* Must have cleared SRC and not have pending disciplinary actions.
- **14 March:** *Ceremony rehearsal and Red Bull Crest photo at parade field in a.m. Concert in Post Exchange parking lot at 5 p.m.**
- **15 March:** *Steak Picnic at Rapid Fielding Initiative Tent for lunch.**
- **16 March:** *Departure Ceremony at Parade Field at 2 p.m.**
- **17-20 March:** *Pass #2 for last half of BCT.* Must have cleared SRC and not have pending disciplinary actions.
- **TBD:** *Deployment to OIF.* Do NOT mention specific dates, locations, or missions! Tell your family and friends there will be limited contact for four to six weeks!
- * go to www.redbullweb.com then “news”, then “departure ceremony” for more information.

FREE TAX ASSISTANCE

For: Mobilized Soldiers, Mobilized Soldier's Dependents, and DOD Civilian Personnel at Camp Shelby

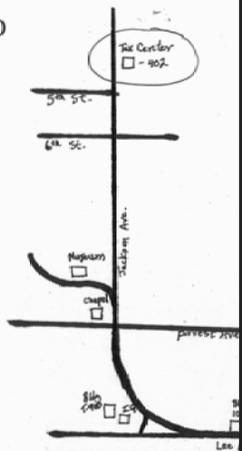
Call and make an appointment TODAY!

601-558-4025 OR 601-558-4026

BLDG #402

OIC - CPT WILLIAM DREHER

NCOIC - SSG MICHAEL ANDERSON



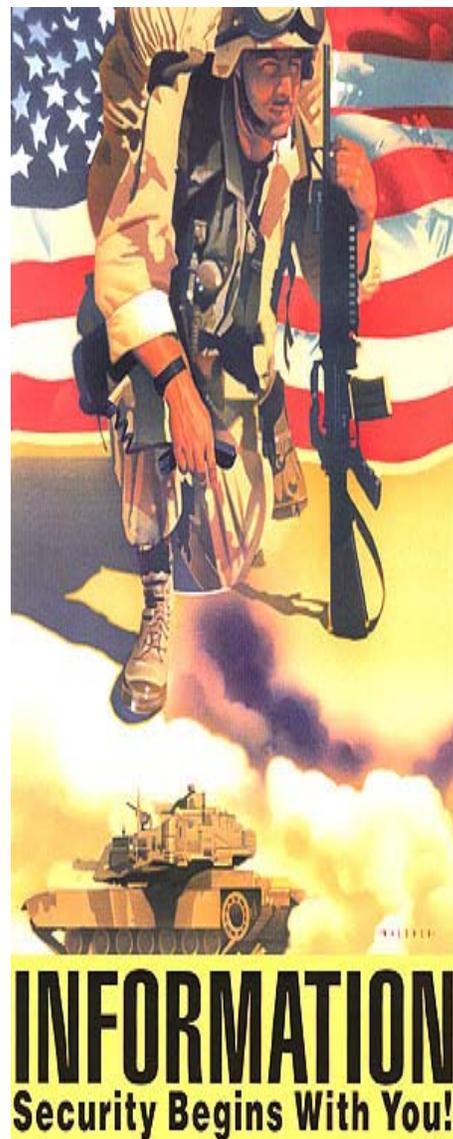
Soldiers reminded to contact Unit Mail Clerk

1/34 Brigade Combat Team Soldiers are reminded to contact their Unit Mail Clerk for their APO and Unit Number. Unit Numbers are assigned through their servicing AP via the Theater Postal Operations Directorate

The last four digits (Zip+4 add-on) of a Soldier's zip code will consist of his or her last four digits of

their “Unit Number” e.g. Unit 60000 = 0000.

Never include a geographical location such as Camp or country name. Never include Soldier's SSN. It is very important that correspondents include a complete return address on all mail.



What to do when the press calls?

By Capt. Mark Lappegaard

1/34 BCT PAO

Your decision to talk with the media is an important one. Whether your photo makes the refrigerator or the dart board depends mainly on your honesty and accuracy (and somewhat on your personality). Points to ponder:

They Love Me (do it):

1. You owe it to your country. The US Military is commanded by a civilian voted into office by civilians who donate a percentage of their pay (called taxes) to keep us going. America makes no stronger statement than sending its sons and daughters to fight when politics fail. Its citizens therefore have a right to know what and how their troops are doing. So long as it does not violate security, we owe it to our neighbors to let them know all we can, as soon as we can.

2. You owe it to your family. The vast majority of stories Soldiers tell are positive. Even hardship and sacrifice can be motivating if they reflect on character and determination. Much like you are now motivated by memoirs from the Civil War or World War II your grandchildren will see your letters, press clippings, and photos. Share your story. It is important.

3. You owe it to your buddies. The activist's call of "If not you, who? If not now, when?" applies here. If you get a chance to speak with a reporter, it'll probably be your only one. Take it. Reporters live and die by the clock (it's called a deadline for a reason) so step up and tell one for the team.

4. If you don't do it, someone else will. There are two sides to any

story. If you don't tell yours the enemy wins by default. It is not as if the press will not do the story if you don't speak. They will just add in "Soldier refused to comment" to the story and continue on.

5. Honesty is the best policy. "You can't do wrong and get by" is a wise adage. Sooner or later the truth always comes out. Maintaining ones credibility is key in our age of information for no longer must anyone rely on only one source for



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 1/34 BCT PA

Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Schultz, 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry was among Soldiers interviewed by media role players at Fort Polk, La.

their news. Sources are cross checked, googled, and blogged. The pain of telling the truth in an embarrassing situation is a paper cut compared to the ax blow of an exposed cover up.

6. The earth continues to rotate. Like it or not, news marches on. Lose the ostrich stance and your bias about media bias. Deal with reality- they were there before us, will be there with us, and will remain after us. The only way to "win" is to get your story in print before the enemy does.

They Love Me Not (don't do it):

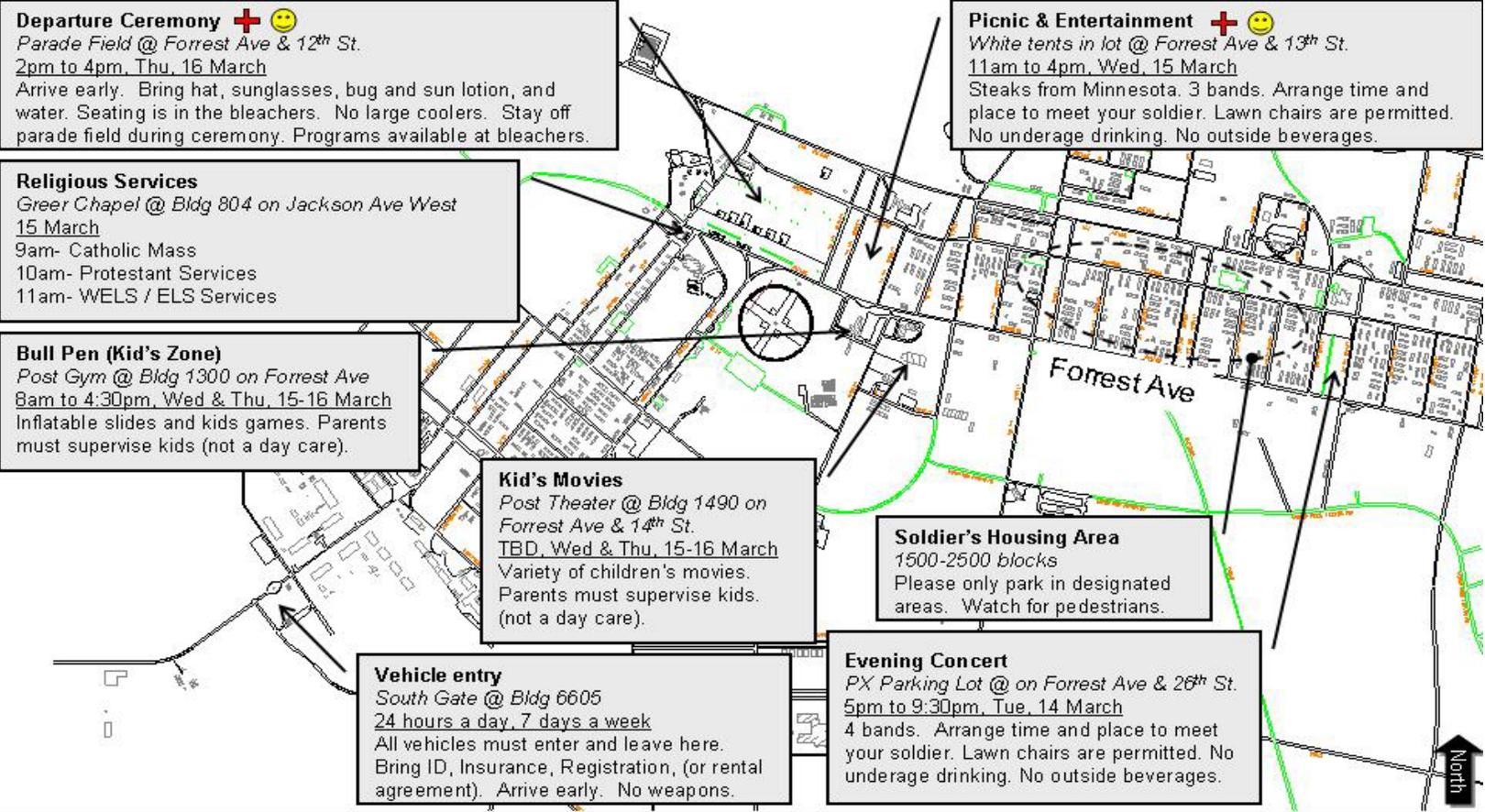
1. They are not credentialed. The only press you'll want are those from a creditable news organization and who promise to respect OPSEC. How can you tell? They

will have a Department of Defense issued Press Pass around their neck. EXAMINE IT! If they don't, kindly decline their questions and point them to the Brigade Public Affairs Office.

2. You're busy. Never grant an interview if it will distract you from your mission or endanger your safety. This is especially true if you are at an Entry Control Point when the press shows up unannounced. An "Ambush Interview" is a favorite of mischievous interviewers. They want to catch you unprepared in the hopes you'll give away OPSEC or drama for the camera. Simply report them to higher and maintain your professionalism while you wait for a response.

3. Vengeance Shall Be Yours. If you've got an ax to grind with a person or a unit, the press is a dangerous choice for a co-conspirator. First, any good reporter will see what you are trying to do. They will simply use your words to work their angle. Second, the press is a for profit business with all that such a status implies. Your anger will be used for maximum sales with little consideration to any final resolution you may personally seek. Drama sells and you'll be the disposable prop. Third, accuracy, for any respectable press, is the watch word so they will go to your opponent to get the other side of the story. Fourth and finally, bash your unit in the press and you'll be just like the former Staff Sgt. Doug Heller of Company E, 216th Air Defense Artillery from Cloquet, Minn., used as propaganda on an anti-US Islamic website (www.albashra.net), shunned at your "Welcome Home" ceremony, and forever remembered as That Guy.

4. You have a headache. If you don't want to talk to a reporter or have your photo taken, simply say so. Give them drama and they'll stay. Ignore them and they will leave. Remember- they have a deadline.



**1/34 BCT
Departure Events Map**

- Almost all events are just off Forrest Ave.
- Look for parking and shuttle signs the day of the event.
- Drive defensively. Watch speed in housing areas.
- Please do not throw trash in porta potties.
- Parking will be tight- carpool if possible and arrive early.
- Soldiers: No alcohol 152000MAR06 until after the ceremony. Be sure to hydrate and rest up.

Legend

First Aid +

Refreshments 😊

This map also is available on the 1/34 BCT's Web site, www.redbullweb.com. Look in News, Departure ceremony.



The sun sets on Blackhawks

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 1/34 BCT PA

The sun sets on two Blackhawk helicopters after their arrival at Forward Operating Base Forge at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La., during the Mission Rehearsal Exercise last month.

JRTC IN OUR SIGHTS



Convoy escorts like this were a common sight at Forward Operating Base Forge.



Sgt. Chad Mager was among the personal security detachment gunners.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 1/34 BCT PA



The wash rack was a 24/7 mission after the Mission Rehearsal Exercise.



Blackhawk and Apache helicopters supported several of the operations



1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Soldiers like Spcs. Ben Dickerson (left) and Brian Bailey were kept busy carrying their 50-caliber machine guns to their Humvees daily.



Spc. Brian Nuth, 2nd Battalion, 136th Combined Arms Battalion, put eyes on Mosalah during the Mission Rehearsal Exercise.

