

**DESERT**



**BULLS**

**AUGUST 25, 2006**

**CITIZEN SOLDIERS**

**RED BULL SOLDIERS, THEIR  
LIVES BACK HOME**

**IMPACTING IRAQ**

**SPOTLIGHTING THE 1ST  
OF THE 34TH'S CIVIL  
MILITARY OPERATIONS**



# OPSEC AWARENESS

## Maintaining communications security

**W**hen one thinks of the great inventions of the 20th century that have made various aspects of our lives more convenient, the computer has to rank near the top of the list. One of the truly amazing things about computers is how rapidly the technology has evolved. Actually, it's more annoying than amazing when the desktop you paid \$2,000 for in 2001 is already obsolete, but I digress.

What is really amazing is the realization that it has been just within the past 40 years that data storage media has evolved from punch cards and reel-to-reel tape to the modern USB flash drive, more commonly known as a thumb or jump drive. These devices that can hold anywhere from a couple hundred megabytes to eight gigabytes (roughly 8,000 large books or four million pages) can be easily carried in a shirt pocket or on a key chain. While the size of the drives makes it much easier and more convenient to transport large amounts of data, it also makes that data more susceptible to theft or loss.

Just this past April, a front page story in the Los Angeles Times reported the appearance of hundreds of thumb drives at a bazaar outside Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. The reporter purchased a number of drives and discovered that many of them contained the personal information of Soldiers and Airmen stationed on the base as well as classified information about sensitive operations. From this it was determined that most of the drives had been stolen from offices by the local national janitorial crews and then sold to the local merchants.



Some methods to protect yourself from the compromise of your personal and classified, information include:

- Do not use your personal flash drive on public or government computers. Use on a government system is forbidden by AR 380-5 and use on a public system such as one at a local library could result in the unintentional transfer of information.
- Maintain positive control over your drive by wearing it on a lanyard or a keychain. This will decrease the chance of losing or misplacing the drive.
- When possible, use a network to post documents to a shared directory where others who have been approved for access can reach it. This eliminates that need for physically transporting the data on a flash drive.
- Avoid placing personal information such as Social Security numbers on flash drives.
- Destroy any flash drives you no longer intend to use. Data that has been erased can still be retrieved.

By taking these steps and exercising good electronic discipline, you can enjoy the convenience of your flash drive without risking the compromise of your sensitive personal information.

*Capt. Kevin R. Schooler  
HHC 1/34 BCT  
Electronic Warfare Officer*

# Day in Red Bull history

Wednesday, July 26, 1944  
Vicinity of Rosignano, Italy

The Company started back to the Rest Area at 0700 hours, arriving in the vicinity of Rosignano at 0900 hours. This area is very close to the coast and everyone plans to get in a lot of swimming. We are in a very nice area; most of the ground around us is cultivated and there are plenty of trees to give sufficient shade.

**27 July, Thursday to 5 August, Saturday**  
Rest Camp: no training, cleaning unit and personal equipment the first day.

**5 August, Sunday to 3 September, Sunday**  
We're now on a drill schedule every day with Sundays off. Most of the afternoons are devoted to athletics and swimming. PFC Sidwell and Pvt Franklin L Clark went to the Hospital, while T/5 Walter G Moeller

returned. We received one new replacement today, Pvt Levi A Anderson. Pvt Ward of K Company came into our Company to replace Pvt George W Heath who was transferred to K Company. Pvt Tom S Detwiler went to Service Company on Detached Service for Guard duty.



## Heads up

### From the editor: A look at issues, trends and things to watch

By Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

This issue of Desert Bulls is the second one designed and laid out by my print journalist Spc. Brian Jesness after he was tutored by Sgt. Mary Ferguson for two days earlier this month. Ferguson of the Third Corps Support Command Public Affairs Office at Logistical Support Area Anaconda was a recipient of the Outstanding Young Journalist of the Year.

In the next issue, expected stories are: the 1/34 BCT Soldier of the Quarter and NCO of the Quarter, 1/34 BCT Soldiers gain their citizenship at a ceremony in Kuwait, the Command Judge Advocate will discuss the Soldiers and Sailors Act, the history of the 12th Iman and the Army of One slogan will be discussed.

#### Air Force rank

This week we will learn some of the Air Force's noncommissioned

officer's rank compared to the Army's (see chart at right). An Army sergeant is equal to an Air Force staff sergeant, an Army staff sergeant is equal to an Air Force technical sergeant and an Army sergeant first class is equal to an Air Force master sergeant.

A little tidbit from last week's lesson on Navy rank.

I learned that a Chief in the Navy is comparable to an Army sergeant first class. Chiefs and above also are appointed by Congress.

There also is a three year wait for a Chief to be promoted to a Senior Chief despite him or her being eligible for the rank.



#### Iraqi language lesson:

Would you like a water = Ah toread maa

Are you OK if you're talking to a man? = Anta man Bekhair (pronounced Antah be higher)

Are you OK if you're talking to a woman? = Anti Bekhair (pronounced antea be higher)



Issue #24

About the cover: Sgt. Anthony Smith, Headquarters and Headquarters Company 2 Battalion, 136th Combined Arms Battalion prepares for a convoy escort mission at LSA Anaconda.

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



The 1/34 Brigade Combat Team is commanded by Col. David Elicerio. Command Sgt. Major Doug Julin is the 1/34 BCT command sergeant major. The Desert Bulls staff is Capt. Mark Lappegaard, public affairs officer; Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, editor; Sgt. Kent Westberg, broadcast journalist and Spc. Brian D. Jesness, production editor. 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](mailto:clinton.wood@us.army.mil).

## Team Panthers

### Super CET

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

LSA ADDER, Nasiriyah, Iraq – The final mission of the Team Panther Convoy Escort Team that included a bricklayer, banker and an assistant manager of a restaurant meant the difference between life and death Aug. 1.

About 30 minutes southwest of Logistical Support Area Anaconda near an infamous check point, this team of four Humvees or “The Super CET” was hit with a complex attack (an Improvised Explosive Device detonation followed by strike of a rocket propelled grenade and small arms fire). After an estimated 20 minute firefight, nine enemy were confirmed running to a building (heat from their weapons were detected from an infrared camera). Three of the team members suffered only minor injuries and one of its Humvee gun trucks had a blown rear tire and minor shrapnel damage.

Pfc. Kyle Schmidt, a gunner on the CET’s third Humvee and weigh station technician at Koch Refinery in Rosemount, Minn., said the Soldiers had been trained and told what to expect if attacked.

“When it did happen, everybody knew what to do,” he said. “It happened second nature. Everybody reacted.”

Also reacting was Sgt. 1st Class Troy Smith, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 1/34 BCT Tactical Command Center at LSA Anaconda. He said he dispatched an AC-130 gunship, two F-16 Fighter jets, three Kiowa helicopters and an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle as soon as he learned of the attack.

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Knoblach, the truck commander for the second Humvee or lead vehicle, was the first to be attacked. An IED detonated next to his door. Seconds later, a RPG landed about three feet behind the scout vehicle driven by Spc. Joseph Derrane. Small arms fire from both sides of the convoy erupted simultaneously.

The IED and small arms fire also triggered responses from every CET vehicle. The third vehicle driven by Sgt. Richard Smith raced to assist Knoblach. The fourth vehicle driven by Sgt. Ashley Kerr surged from the rear of the convoy to assist in getting the convoy moving.

“There was green tracer fire coming in at the convoy from both sides and red tracer fire going out,” said Sgt. Jim Norton, the scout vehicle’s commander and a banker in Madison, Wis.

Knoblach said seconds before the IED blast; he was scanning the right side of the road for IEDs. The next thing he saw was a “flash next to his door” and his truck began taking small arms fire from the same side.

He said it was obvious that his Humvee was damaged. He originally thought all four tires were blown out.

At about the same time, Knoblach said he noticed his gunner, Spc. Christian Blaisdell, hunched over in the turret for a “couple seconds.”

Knoblach said he noticed Blaisdell was bleeding. He had been hit in the wrist by shrapnel.



Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Knoblach (right) briefs members Blaisdell and Cpl. Christopher Walton. For more photos

A bricklayer in Zumbrota, Minn., Blaisdell said he saw a wall of fire come towards him on the open side of the turret.

“I covered my face with my arms,” he said. “I didn’t notice I was wounded right away until Knoblach told me. Blaisdell said he shook “the cobwebs out” turned his 50 caliber machine gun toward the small arms fire muzzle flashes about 50 meters away and engaged the enemy in the treeline.

“At times, there were just blankets of tracer fire,” Knoblach said.

Knoblach, who suffered a mild concussion, also radioed the scout vehicle for assistance. Little did he know that Norton’s gunner, Spc. Stephen Major, suffered a mild concussion from the RPG blast.

“I smacked my head against the glass and immediately I was being engaged by small arms fire from the left and right side of the road,” said Major. He said his head’s contact with the turret’s glass really hurt and all he could hear was “ringing in his ears.”



Members of the Team Panther Super CET, including Spc. Joseph Irrthum (left), Spc. Christian Schmidt (middle) and Spc. Joseph Walton (right). For more photos on this story please see "Photos", page 19 at [www.redbullweb.com](http://www.redbullweb.com).

"I bent down (in the gunner's turret) and screamed," said Major. "There was tracer fire so I had to engage the enemy."

Norton said he was "screaming his head off" to talk to Major.

Norton said Knoblach originally told him to leave the area or "kill zone."

But seconds later, Knoblach radioed again asking for Norton's assistance. Norton said he had his driver make a U-turn and head down the northbound lane.

When Norton's vehicle did reach Knoblach's, Major said his ears were still ringing. But he said his adrenaline "kicked in" and he relieved Blaisdell on engaging the enemy. As Blaisdell reloaded his 50-caliber machine gun, Major laid down suppressive fire. Several hundred feet away from these two vehicles, the third vehicle was also engaging the enemy.

"As soon as the IED went off instantly there was a barrage of fire coming from the left side," said Cpl. Christopher Walton, the vehicle's commander

and an assistant manager of a bar and grille in Brooklyn Park, Minn. "Private Schmidt started engaging the enemy."

Schmidt said he saw a flash before the IED's boom. He said upon receiving contact from the left side, he turned his gunner turret to the left side, waited for an oncoming convoy to clear and engaged the enemy. He said he estimated he expended 250 rounds of 50-caliber ammunition and two magazines from his M-4 carbine.

Walton said while this was happening, he noticed that the second part of the convoy wasn't moving.

"I turned my truck around and went back into the belly of the beast and realized that the (Third Country National) drivers were under their vehicles.

"I had the Humvee stopped; I jumped out on the non contact side and physically grabbed a TCN and threw him in his truck."

Maj. Timothy Kevan, who was riding with the CET, also laid down suppressive fire.

Walton said he told this driver "let's move out." "The whole time this is going on, we were being engaged," he said. "There were bullets flying everywhere."

Walton said he returned fire with his M-4 carbine but Schmidt was doing a "great job" with his 50 caliber machine gun.

Schmidt's vision was assisted by flares thrown up by the fourth vehicle's gunner, Spc. Andrew Goerdt.

Kerr said upon observing "the big blast with the IED" she immediately drove to the left side of the convoy. She said she thought this was the only side where the enemy fire was coming from. She said as she passed each truck, she flashed her lights and honked her horn to get the drivers moving.

As she was driving, 1st Lt. Brad Jamison, her vehicle commander, said he noticed a big gap between the sixth, seventh and eighth trucks. At the same time he said he saw headlights approaching these same vehicles (it was Walton's Humvee).

Norton's vehicle also raced the length of the convoy. He said he thought he heard on the radio that Kerr's vehicle had four flat tires.

His trip did allow him to see a bird's eye view of the attack.

"It was a pretty surreal picture that we got from being a couple hundred yards in front of the convoy being turned around and watching the whole fire fight in front of our eyes," he said.

This "picture" also bothered Troy Smith.

In some ways, you're not prepared to hear it is your friends under fire," he said.

But his friends were prepared.

Like Walton said, "It was kind of weird; it was like second nature. Everything I've been trained on my entire career just kind of fell in place."

Knoblach agreed.

"It was like we had done this a thousand times," he said.

But for this Super CET, it was their first and last time.

**Got your own story? Please send story and photo submissions to the Desert Bulls Managing Editor at [clinton.wood@us.army.mil](mailto:clinton.wood@us.army.mil)**



*I am proud this issue to share the story of one of our citizen soldier JAG Corps assets. Sgt. Steven Kane represents the depth of experience that makes the National Guard like no other military organization in the world.*  
- Maj. Tom Hagen, Command Judge Advocate

## From corporate powerhouse to front lines of global war on terror

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

As the Task Force SABER legal noncommissioned officer, Sgt. Steven Kane definitely has skills to help simplify some of his office tasks.

Back home in Omaha, Neb., he is the Senior Manager for Customer Finance at Conagra Foods, one of North America's largest packaged food companies serving consumer grocery retailers as well as restaurants and other food service establishments.

Kane, who has been in the Nebraska Army National Guard for seven years, manages seven customer finance teams of the company's customer service center (each team has a manager and 10 to 15 employees). Conagra consumer brands include Banquet, Chef Boyardee, Healthy Choice, Hunt's and Marie Callender's.

"I spend a lot of time gathering information and then making decisions based on that information," Kane said of his job at Conagra. "Conagra was always in a constant search for improvement, so we spend a lot of time planning and implementing upgrades to our processes as the operating environment changed."

Kane, who joined the Guard for tuition assistance, spends his time at Logistical Support Area Anaconda in Iraq dealing with military justice and administrative law.

"I work with the unit commanders and first sergeants to ensure that they are doing things 'by the book,' he said. "Most of my daily activities involve making sure everything is documented properly and also reviewing the regulations to make sure the military is in compliance.

Kane said his daily activities at Conagra included several meetings, planning the direction of his department, setting goals and reviewing progress against those goals, reporting to upper management and resolving complex issues between departments or between the company and its customers.

He admitted that being the legal NCO is not as stressful and demanding as his civilian job.

"Being away from my family is the biggest challenge for me of being deployed," he said. "The nice thing about being in the military is that there are lots of great resources



**Sgt. Steven Kane gives a legal presentation.**

to help you guide your work."

## Military Justice Log

A Soldier from Task Force Wolverine received a Company Grade Article 15 for sleeping while on guard duty. He was reduced from specialist to private first class (suspended).

A Soldier from Task Force Wolverine received a Company Grade Article 15 for being late on three separate occasions. He received a forfeiture of \$80, extra duty and restriction for 10 days.

A Soldier from the 7th Transportation Battalion received a Field Grade Article 15 for having a negligent discharge. He was reduced from specialist to private first class (suspended), and a forfeiture of \$200 per month for two months.

A Soldier from Task Force Wolverine received a Company Grade Article 15 for being out of his uniform while at his staging area. He received a forfeiture of \$530 (suspended), and extra duty for 14 days.

# IRON men keep it cool in the desert

## CITIZEN SOLDIERS

Story and Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Carl Spoerl, Task Force IRON

CAMP AL ASAD, Iraq – Iowa Army National Guard Spcs. Russel Higdon and John Keller dealt with heat daily as welders for manufacturing companies back in Iowa.

Here in Iraq, they are ensuring their fellow Soldiers from Task Force IRON are kept away from the blistering heat as much as possible.

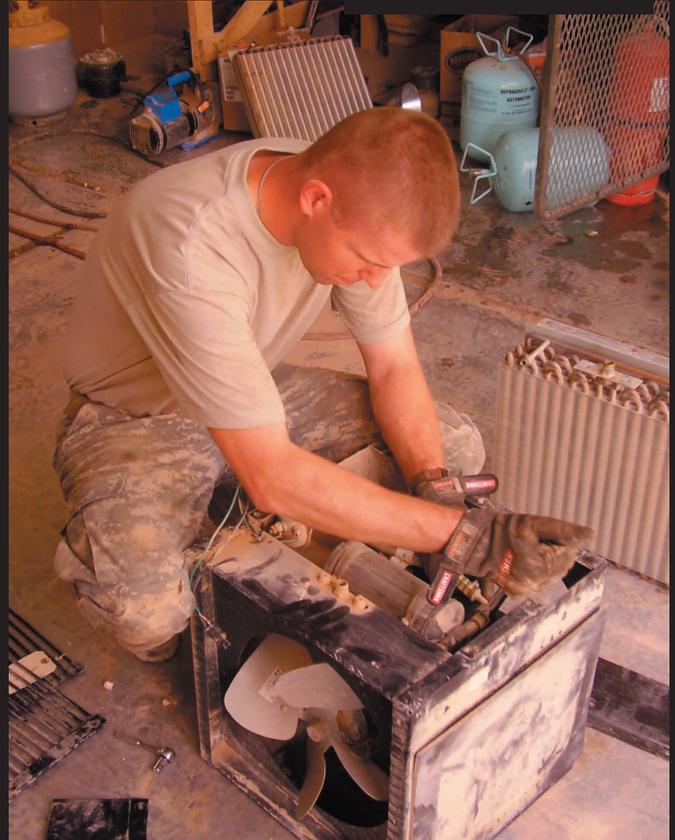
Higdon and Keller are keeping busy maintaining air conditioner systems in Humvees and other vehicles.

Higdon, who has been in the Guard for more than four years as a wheeled vehicle mechanic, is teaching Keller the ropes.

Higdon enrolled in several correspondence courses for the Utilities Equipment Repair Military Occupational Specialty while the Task Force and the entire 1st of the 34th Brigade Combat Team, trained up at Camp Shelby, Miss., last year. His studies helped him complete Phase 1 of the Military Occupational Specialty School.

“For his age and experience, (Higdon) is very knowledgeable and catches on quickly, said Keller who has been in the Guard more than 14 years. “He also is quite resourceful when it comes to making things work.”

Higdon has actually reversed the polarity in the condenser boxes for the Palletized Loading Systems, to make them work more efficiently. This alleviated a vacuum in the area where



**Spc. John Keller works on a Humvee air conditioner**

the box was sitting because it was actually pushing the air instead of sucking it through the coils.

This has been used on one Humvee and so far it has been working very well.

Higdon has worked with the Medium Tactical Vehicles as well to create more air dams in the evaporator to create better output air for the cabs. They also have had to adjust a lot of thermostats and thermal expansion valves to ensure proper refrigerant flow.

The pair said the hardest part is educating the operators about the importance of keeping their evaporator and condenser coils cleaned out. They can do this with compressed air and a nozzle, or pour water through them over night to clean the coils.

Higdon said he has observed quite a few Soldiers taking more of an interest in keeping their systems cleaned regularly.

Higdon and Keller’s hope is that this will cut back on the amount of trucks that they have to look at that just need to be cleaned. That way they can focus on the ones that actually need repairs.



**Spc. Russel Higdon works under the dash of a Humvee to repair the vehicle’s air conditioning**

# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

**A**fter I left the active Army in 1988, I moved to Orlando, Fla., where I met my beautiful wife, became a professional student, lived in a wonderful home and had a secure job. Life was good!

Now, ever since something named Andrew in 1992, Florida has become notorious for those little storms called hurricanes. Anyone who owns property in Florida and has to pay insurance on it will know that.

Yet over the 17 years, many hurricanes have come and gone. We've had many close calls. And for 16 of those years we lived secure from the fact of hurricanes, or at least we thought.

In our last years there, Orlando was hit dead on by three hurricanes in six weeks.

Getting hit by three hurricanes was not fun. In fact, we were a little surprised

we actually got hit. Why? because we had become complacent.

Complacency is the excessive feeling of self-satisfaction to the elimination of the cares and concerns that generally do and need to mark our lives.

We don't live in a perfect world. In fact, our world is pretty downright dangerous right now. There are thousands of evil individuals who desire to intentionally kill innocent people. We know. We see them all the time.

Colin Powell once said: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it, is the slogan of the complacent, the arrogant or the scared. It's an excuse for inaction, a call to non-arms."

We have been here in Iraq for five months now. And the Lord's mercy and grace in protecting us has been more than what we hoped for. And we are grateful!



**We don't live in a perfect world. In fact, our world is pretty downright dangerous right now.**

But we are still at war. We can't afford to let our guard down. We have to stay on top of our game and maintain the level of professional conduct that we have come to expect from the Soldiers of the 1/34th BCT. If we don't, then we do so at our own peril. The same applies to our families as well. There is much that each of us needs to give our attention to during this time of deployment and separation.

However, we also have a wonderful opportunity during this deployment to develop a lifestyle of responsibility and consideration. Being ever pursuant to a life of contentment while at the same time being ever mindful to care, serve and maintain the things in our life that matters most.

Take stock of what matters most to you. What are you willing to invest to ensure its preservation? Do not be drawn into a false sense of security simply by the absence of any perceived threats.

You've heard it said: "If you value something, you'll make the time for it" Now read that backwards, add a negative and throw in a conclusion. "If you don't make the time for something, then you don't value it and you'll lose it."

You think about that!

*Chaplain (Capt.) Chuck Williams  
7th Transportation Battalion*

# Al Batha City Road

before



after



By Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

Did you know that the 1/34 Brigade Combat Team assisted in improving 10 kilometers of the Al Batha City road? This project enabled commercial expansion and other infrastructure upgrades to be conducted.

This also is one of the numerous civil military operations projects the 1/34 BCT has been involved with near Logistical Support Area Adder. Because of this, these projects will be highlighted with photographs and stories on this Impacting Iraq page in every issue of the Desert Bulls

Upcoming projects include the East Al Fawaz Road improvement project that will provide mobility for 2,000 to 3,000 Iraqi vehicles. This treacherous road becomes impassable during the rainy season. This project also will be completed by local labor.

So sit back and read about the great things the 1/34 BCT is doing over here in Iraq.

To date the 1/34 BCT has worked with Iraqi officials and local laborers complete a series of civil projects totaling \$600,000.



Staff Sgt. Erika Lee, HHC 1/34 BCT plays with an Iraqi girl while handing out toys and school supplies. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 1/34 BCT PA.

**SPOTLIGHTING THE 1ST  
OF THE 34TH BCT'S CIVIL  
MILITARY OPERATIONS  
EFFORTS IN IRAQ**

# IMPACTING IRAQ



Spc. Mitchell Corrado, Task Force SABER, mans the designated marksman shack at LSA Anaconda. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 1/34 BCT PA. (left)  
Command Sgt. Maj. Joel Arnold and Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Aarhus, Task Force IRON, listen during a pre-mission brief. Photo by Staff Sgt. George Murphy. (below)



# IN OUR SIGHTS



Spc. Myunggil Lee, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, provides security south of LSA Adder. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood. (center)

Spc. Sean Flaherty, Task Force WILD, plays "Taps" during a Memorial "Tattoo" Ceremony for the fallen warriors of LSA Adder including Spc. Benjamin Slaven of the 7th Transportation Battalion and Sgt Brent Koch of Task Force Wild. Photo by Spc. Brian D. Jesness. (right)

Spc. Derek Tucker, Task Force WILD begins a mural at the Company C, 1st Battalion, 194th Armor area at LSA Adder. Photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Lentz. (below)

