



1-188th ADA RAID

# Vintela Times



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## More Than Just A Team



The 39 Soldiers of the 1-188<sup>th</sup> ADA Raid Unit came together for the first time at the Grand Forks armory on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2006 as a diverse group assembled from several different units across North Dakota. Making them even more unique is the wide array of job specialties ranging from supply, communications, mechanics, cooks, & air defenders to name a few. Since arriving at Fort Hood, TX this group of 39 individuals, has bonded together as a family and a team.

The unit completed training and testing on tasks such

as land navigation using a map and compass, rifle and pistol marksmanship at ranges from 25 meters to 300 meters, driving the M1114 Up-Armored HMMWV, and spotting and reacting to improvised explosive devices (IED's) to name a few. For many of us, the most challenging obstacles have proven to be the numerous briefings and blocks classroom instruction that include long, dry computer slide-shows jokingly referred to as "death by PowerPoint". Most have been able to stave off the involuntary sleepiness with massive amounts of caffeine. Our instructors have quickly learned that we North Dakotans aren't fond of sitting around and that the time scheduled to complete most of our assigned training has been excessive to some degree. We've also had two groups of thirteen soldiers sent to Redstone

Arsenal in Huntsville Alabama for one week each to train on the equipment we will be using. I'll be the first to admit that the hotel room and restaurant food was a welcome break from the barracks bunk and chow hall food at Fort Hood.

Everyone is in good spirits and is eager to reach Afghanistan to begin our mission. Soon we will have our send-off from the Fort Hood leadership as well as some of our own from North Dakota and then we get one last 48-hour pass to celebrate the completion of our training. The most eagerly anticipated aspect of reaching Afghanistan is being able to send our own friends home to be with their families as we begin our 365 day count-down while we protect our fellow soldiers.

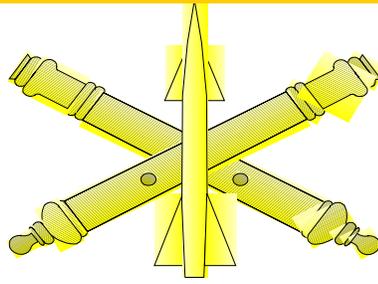
**"VINTELLA"**

Justin Steiner



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## Combat Lifesaver (CLS)

Combat Lifesavers, dependable soldiers, saving lives everyday on the battlefield. A Combat Lifesaver is a soldier trained and skilled in advanced first aid, required to act quickly and efficiently to save their battle buddies life. Combat Lifesaver (CLS) certified soldiers learn many effective ways to treat a casualty. They must learn the proper way to treat wounds, clear airways, apply field dressings, apply a tourniquet, stabilize a collapsed lung, call for a medical evacuation, and give a proper IV. Learning these tasks has been proven to save lives in combat. The CLS class is very knowledgeable skill to have and will defiantly help soldiers in the future.



**MAJ Erickson & SFC Martin**  
**More pictures on pg 3**

Selected soldiers from the 1-188<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Artillery, deploying to Afghanistan, were enrolled in the CLS class. Major Erickson, Sergeant First Class Martin, Private First Class Olson, Private Broyles and 23 other soldiers all took part in the 40 hour class which took place December 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> in North Fort Hood, Texas. These soldiers worked very hard and took in all the information they could during the dura-

tion of the class. The class was a lot of fun and a lot of hard work. The soldiers had training on the tasks for two and half days then tested on the training they learned on the last two days. The very last day they had to administer an IV to one another, which for most was a nerve racking experience because of several conditions. Major Erickson and Sergeant First Class Martin were paired up together to give IVs to each other.

Sergeant Martin, unfortunately, had very small deep veins that were hard to find. After a few sticks with the needle they both got the IV in and working properly. Major Erickson ended up with a crooked catheter inside of his arm. When Sergeant Martin pulled it from his arm, it came out in an S shape, which was very painful for the Major. Private Olson and Private Broyles had very similar complications. When Broyles started his first IV, he accidentally curled the catheter in an arc inside of Olson's arm. He had a very large lump on his arm and it was very painful for him. The two of them shook it off and tried a few more times and Broyles did an excellent job with the IV. Both groups had a lot of fun and got a good learning experience.

The soldiers graduated later that day and are now CLS certified. They now have the ability to save lives and help other soldiers if they ever go down in combat. The training they learned will benefit them for the rest of their military careers and rest of their lives out in the civilian world.

PFC Olson, Matthew

1-188<sup>th</sup> ADA



## Solider Gets Married

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 2006 at Ft. Hood, TX at 1200 I was released on leave for four days. I had been waiting for this pass since the day we arrived on North Ft. Hood. We have been very busy since day one but all the training hadn't stopped the anticipation of my Christmas leave. For the past month my wife had been planning on driving to Ft. Hood to see me before we leave and planning our wedding.

It was the greatest experience I have ever had in my life. My wife is from Crystal City, TX about 5.5 hours away from Ft. Hood. She has about 25 relatives from Crystal City consisting of her grandma, 3 aunts, 1 uncle and a lot of cousins and their children. Crystal City is a very small town. It has a handful of restaurants and some stores. Ajos relatives live close to each other, most of them are neighbors. Her family has lived in Crystal City for many years as her grandfather used to be a business owner for many years and is very well known and respected there.

Ajor picked me up at the Killeen airport on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. and it had seemed like so long since the last time we had seen each other. The whole way I was sort of nervous because I was about to get married and meet her family whom I knew is a very tight knit family. The drive seemed very short because we had so much to talk and the time flew by so fast. I had never been outside of Ft. Hood before, and was amazed at how nice some of the various cities were. We stopped in Austin and ate dinner then continued our drive. We arrived in Crystal City just before sun-down. We stopped at our hotel and checked in and then drove to her grandma's house.

The second I walked in the door; I was greeted by a room full of her family with lots of hugs and glad to meet you. We sat around and talked for a couple hours and got to know each other. They told me how proud of me they are for going over seas and serving my country and that they are all praying for my safe return. On Christmas Eve we checked out of our hotel and went to her grandma's house. When we arrived there everything was set up for us and it all looked nice. We talked for a while till most of the guests arrived. A couple hours before our ceremony we separated and got ready. Of course I was not allowed to see her before the wedding so I talked with the guests.

I was so nervous my hands were sweating, and time seemed to slow down while I was standing in front of everyone waiting for my bride to join me, she looked amazing. The ceremony was in Spanish and translated to me. After the wedding we enjoyed a Mexican meal. After all of excitement we headed off to San Antonio for a few days. Her parents purchased us a hotel downtown on the river walk. This time of year the river walk is very beautiful and the weather was perfect. We toured downtown and ate at some very fancy restaurants and also road on some of the river boats.

The ride back to Ft. Hood was tough that I didn't want to come back. I was having too much fun with my new wife. She was very understanding though and knew it was my duty. We said goodbye to each other and she drove home to Fargo.

SPC Estes



## A Night Off

Over the sounds of the tumbling pins, piercing laughter, and arguments over who has the bizarre bowling technique, one could hardly tell the 1-188<sup>th</sup> ADA RAID soldiers just finished a 35 hour uninterrupted series of training exercises.

Through the 30<sup>th</sup> and the 31<sup>st</sup> RAID soldiers spent engaging several exercises in order to better prepare them for Afghanistan. Among the exercises were combat patrol and convoy training. RAID traveled in eight HUMMVs and were attacked with simulated IEDS, mortars, and direct contact. For most of these soldiers it was their first time ever experiencing any replication of an IED. They were also tasked with maintaining communications over the radio and combat lifesaving skills. As soon as a vehicle was down, a recovery team was sent to recover it, then when in a safe zone, a team was sent to treat and collect the casualties. The recovery teams treaded through inches of mud and carried the injured soldiers over there backs.

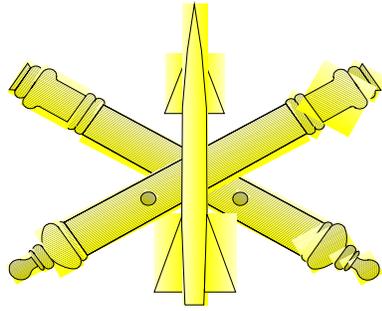
The following training was entry control point and hasty checkpoint. The soldiers executed these missions throughout the night and the next afternoon. When 2:30 in the morning rolled around the soldiers were once again reminded of the nights of North Dakota, seeing as they could see their breath when they exhaled and their toes were numb. During the entry control point the soldiers dealt with mobs of upset Afghani's. The RAID commander was able to initiate deals with their leader to keep peace. The soldiers searched personnel and vehicles throughout the night.

Nearly before supper the next day the soldiers were released from training in just enough time to get on their civilian clothes to go bowling. The North Dakota MWR provided RAID with ten lanes for bowling, blow horns for midnight, and a continental breakfast. RAID is very thankful for their support. RAID enjoyed bowling through the new years. It was a nice taking a break from training, eating snacks, and mostly the company of their new brothers and sisters.

The best part of the New Years for the soldiers was the fact their First Sergeant let them catch zzzz's later than usual the next morning.

### SPC Lundgren





## Our Final Days

On our last day of training several soldiers were promoted by Major Adjutant General Sprynczynatyk. Those soldiers were Boyer, Broyles, McKenzie, Olson and Shelquist. With the soldiers getting promoted it was a great way to end our training at Ft. Hood, TX. After all of our hard work of training, Ft. Hood had a Farwell ceremony for the soldiers of the 1-188<sup>th</sup> RAID. In attendance were several of the North Dakota state leadership consisting of Col. Dohrman, Col. Anderson, LTC Boesflug, LTC Trenda, CSM Boschee, SM Shuchard, and 1LT Chaplain Schmidt. With the state leadership leaving to head back home the soldiers were given the privilege to go on a 2 day pass which relieved some stress for the soldiers. As the soldiers returned after their 2 day pass they sit and wait anxiously for their departure of Ft. Hood.

SPC Kuntz



“TOPS” Corner  
(1SG John T. Waters)

I appreciate everyone's hard work on this news letter. One of the Commanders goals is to continue on with this and address stories from every FOB. So that family members are informed on their Soldier or Soldiers are as well informed as the rest of the RAID family. We have trained most all of the RAID soldiers in UPAR (Unit Public Affairs Representative) prior to leaving Grand Forks so that this would take effect smoothly and get everyone involved writing stories.

I would like all the families at home to know I am very proud of everyone of our Soldiers. As you read on the front page we started molding from day 1 and have become a family and top notch team. Since being on ground here at Ft. Hood, TX we have been noticed by everyone. You can say that we've set the stage here on the North Ft. Hood FOB. From day one we started marching, singing cadence, doing PT (physical training) and always moving with at least a battle buddy. The attitudes are awesome and very contagious as no matter what we do we give it 110% and the instructors always comment on it. I know a little heavy, but I'm honest and very proud.

I'm looking forward to arriving in Afghanistan and very confident that we can do the job to its fullest and replace our Sister unit. We look forward to seeing them and of course they are excited to see us. The Soldiers will perform what they call the "right seat ride" a short train-up from the 1-188<sup>th</sup> ADA JLENS/RAID teams we are replacing. Communications amongst our selves as well as those we are replacing has been very good.

In closing the commander and I are usually the last Soldiers in the barracks at night. As I walk through the 50 man open bay whether its lights out or not I am always greeted and love to chat a little about the days training and what's happening at home. Just so you know if the Soldiers do it the Commander and I do as well. There is no special treatment due to ranks as we are all Soldiers. HOOAH!

TOP



**CDR's Comments**

Greetings from Fort Hood! This is the first edition of a monthly newsletter focused on our Soldiers writing our story; sharing our experiences with all of you. A big "thank you" goes to our Soldiers who wrote articles this month and to SPC Boschee & SPC Duran who put it all together. General Patton once said "the Army is a team; it lives, sleeps, fights as a team. This individuality stuff is a bunch of crap." I can honestly tell you we are a team; and a pretty darn good one at that. We've trained hard for our mission. We've been challenged time and time again; and each time, we have risen to the occasion. We've shared some good times and some not so good times; but what we have experienced, we have experienced together as a team, all of which has made us ready both mentally & physically for our mission and the challenges ahead. The Fort Hood leadership has praised our Soldiers numerous times for their dedication, motivation, and zeal. You have much to be proud of! You'll hear more from us next month as we settle in on our new locations in Afghanistan. Until then, stay safe and God bless.

Vintela!

MAJ Erickson