



Long Knife News



*Printed in the interest of the Soldiers and Families of the 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div.
www.hood.army.mil/1stcavdiv/units/4bct/4ID/index.htm*



Road to Iraq

Commander's Corner

By Col. Philip Battaglia
4th BCT Commander

Fellow Cobras: It is an amazing time to be a part of this unit right now.

The next few months will be full of challenges and opportunities for our brigade. This is the last time I will greet you as a Cobra.

On March 7 at 10 a.m., we will participate in a ceremony here at Fort Hood and officially become the 4th Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Cavalry Division.

We will then be known as the "Long Knife" Brigade. During that ceremony, we will recognize the traditions and history of both our former and new unit.

Our reflagging is part of a larger Army transformation which has been dictated by the Department of the Army.

The changes associated with reflagging will, for the most part, be transparent to Soldiers and Families. However, for those

minor issues that require changing the Soldiers' unit, we will repeatedly disseminate that information so all our folks know what to do.

Just as you have contributed to the history of the Cobra Brigade, you are now set to write the next chapter of the 1st Cavalry Division's history.

Our second key event is also in March: A rotation to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.

We all recognize this contributes to the high operational tempo and the sacrifices our Soldiers and Families will make, but I firmly believe it will be worth it because our level of training from the individual Soldier to the unit level will be superb. I realize it is not easy on Families to have had their Soldiers deployed to the National Training Center in November and the Joint Readiness Training Center in March.

However, by the time our unit deploys to Iraq, there will be

no brigade in the Army better trained and ready for its mission than ours.

I have absolutely no doubt that a couple of weeks at JRTC will pay huge dividends by enhancing the safety of our Soldiers and mission accomplishment during our upcoming deployment to Iraq.

The third and final momentous event is that scheduled deployment to Iraq early this summer. In addition to providing Soldiers with the training they deserve, we are working extremely hard to establish a responsive rear detachment organization for the families here at Fort Hood.

Our Family support personnel, Family readiness groups and rear detachment leadership are the best in the business at what they do. If you have any questions or concerns – large or small – ask somebody! Ask another spouse, a friend, rear detachment personnel, Family readiness group

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From the Front

Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Eger talks to his Special Troops Battalion Soldiers during the battalion's convoy live fire training Feb. 4. The training lasted Feb. 2-5. (4th BCT PAO photo by Spc. Creighton Holub)



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Cobras to become Long Knives

By Spc. Creighton Holub
4th BCT PAO, 4th Infantry Division

The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division is scheduled to become the 1st Cavalry Division’s 4th BCT at Cooper Field March 7 at 10 a.m. here.

The reflagging process involves three units that will shuffle their flags, guidons and unit historical items while their Soldiers will stay at their respective posts.

“We have proudly served in the 4th Infantry Division as steadfast and loyal Soldiers,” said Col. Philip Battaglia, the Cobra Brigade commander. “The unit is re-flagging after having contributed to the proud lineage and history of the Ivy Division. This brigade just went to war with the 4th Inf. Div., and when you think about the long and proud history of the division – including D-Day, World War II, Vietnam and Iraq – our Soldiers are very proud they contributed to the division’s legacy. Fortunately for this brigade, we are joining another division with an amazing history and proud traditions: The 1st Cavalry Division.”

The first of the three units to reflag will be Fort Bliss’ 4th BCT, 1st Cav., as it takes the colors of the currently inactive 4th BCT, 1st Armor Div. The Cobra Brigade will reflag as the 4th BCT, 1st Cav., this March. Finally, the 2nd BCT, 2nd Inf. Div., will reflag as the new 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., at Fort Carson, Colo.

While the Cobra Brigade’s unit designation and icons will move to new bases, the Soldiers and their equipment will remain at Fort Hood.

“The reflagging process will be transparent,” said Lynda Nash, the Cobra Brigade’s Family Readiness Group support assistant. “One day your Soldier will be wearing a new shoulder patch.”

However, she added that the brigade’s Soldiers and Families will use different facilities such as the 1st Cavalry Readiness Center instead of the 4th Inf. Div. Readiness Center after the reflagging is complete.

The brigade’s subordinate battalions are also changing their unit designation when the switch from

the Ivy Division to America’s First Team occurs. The unit currently known as the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment will become the 2nd Bn., 7th Cav. Regt. The 3rd Bn., 67th Armor Regt., will reflag as the 2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Regt. The 704th Brigade Support Bn., will reflag

into the 27th Brigade Support Bn. The 8th Squadron, 10th Cav. Regt., will become the 1st Squadron, 9th Cav. Regt.

The “Strong and True” Soldiers in the 4th Special Troops Battalion will maintain their current naming structure as the 4th Special Troops Battalion, but they will also receive new distinctive unit insignias along with all the other Soldiers in the battalions and the brigade headquarters.

Every Cobra Brigade Soldier is scheduled to receive new 1st Cav. Div. patches. They are set to receive camouflage Velcro patches, unit crests for their berets and Class A uniforms and Class A uniform patches.

The current Cobra Brigade will become known as the Long Knife Brigade after the switch.

“The traditions will also be different,” said Lonni Maddux, the FRG support assistant for 1-12 Inf. Regt. “But you won’t have to get a new identification card or move. Your children will go to the same schools.”

“The only thing that will change is your Soldier’s uniform,” Maddux added.

4th BCT 4th ID Reflagging Unit Designations	
Current unit name	New unit name
4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div.....	4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div.
1-12 Infantry	2-7 Cavalry
3-67 Armor	2-12 Cavalry
8-10 Cavalry	1-9 Cavalry
2-77 Field Artillery	5-82 Field Artillery
704 Support Bn.....	27 Support Bn.
4th Special Troops Bn.....	4th Special Troops Bn.



Cobra Brigade shoots rifles, carbines

Brigade's Special Troops Battalion completes marksmanship training

By Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore
4th BCT PAO, 4th Infantry Division

The 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team completed M-16 and M-9 weapons training, Jan. 18th at Fort Hood's Clear Creek rifle ranges to prepare for its scheduled deployment to Iraq.

For Spc. Johanna Blum, a native of St. Paul, Minn., and intelligence analyst for 4th BCT's headquarters company, the training couldn't have come at a better time.

"With the deployment to Iraq coming up, we are perfecting our Soldier skills in addition to our specialty skills," Blum said after she completed her initial brief on the range. "When I qualify with my weapon, it always makes me feel good; it's something I'm glad to work on."

It's Blum's job to keep track of where the enemy is while her unit is deployed in Iraq, and according to this Soldier with a little more than two years of military experience, it's the threat of enemy

contact which makes this training so important.

"Making sure we know how to shoot in case of emergency; that's what we're doing out here."

The 4th BCT's Special Troops Battalion has made sure its Soldiers are fully qualified on their assigned weapon. The battalion trained approximately 400 Soldiers with 18,700 rounds of ammunition.

"I'm a non-commissioned officer in this unit," said Sgt. 1st Class David Groce, a military policeman and range safety officer. "It's my job to train and lead these Soldiers and prepare them for combat."

The 4th Brigade Soldiers were thoroughly briefed by Groce prior to going onto the range, and every Soldier cycled through familiarization procedures with their assigned weapon before the qualification phase began. Now that Groce, Blum, and the rest of the battalion have completed marksmanship training, the unit is preparing for the 4th Brigade's scheduled training in mid-March at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.



Spc. Johanna Blum, a military intelligence analyst assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team's headquarters, checks her target during rifle zeroing Jan. 18. (4th BCT PAO photo by Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore)

Cobras scale rocks as team

4th BCT chaplains organize single Soldier retreat

Spc. Allison Churchill
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Approximately 40 single Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, gathered at Boulders Sport Climbing Center in Harker Heights for a day of team building Jan. 25.

The Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, and 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, enjoyed the day of rock climbing courtesy of their battalion chaplains who organized the retreat.

“Sometimes other battalions have ways of doing things that are better,” said Chaplain (Capt.) Edward Tolliver, 3-67 Armor Regt.’s chaplain. He pointed out that the two battalions are almost exactly the same, except that 1-12 Inf. Regt. has a commander from the infantry branch, and 3-67 Armor Regt.’s commander is an armor officer.

To encourage the Soldiers from the different battalions to work together, the Boulders staff started the day by teaching new climbers how to belay for their buddies, or control the amount of slack the rope has when the climber wants to come down the mountain.

As the Soldiers grew comfortable, 1-12 Inf. Regt.’s senior noncommissioned officer, Command

Sgt. Maj. George Zamudio, issued a challenge, announcing that he would give a coin and a day off to the first Soldier to climb a nearly straight, almost-bare section of the wall.

Pfc. Marcus Pearce, a forward observer assigned to the 1-12 Inf.

Regt. headquarters, immediately got on the wall, but started to tremble less than 10 feet from the top. The chaplains later told Pearce that Zamudio was still going to give him the prize for making it the farthest up the wall.

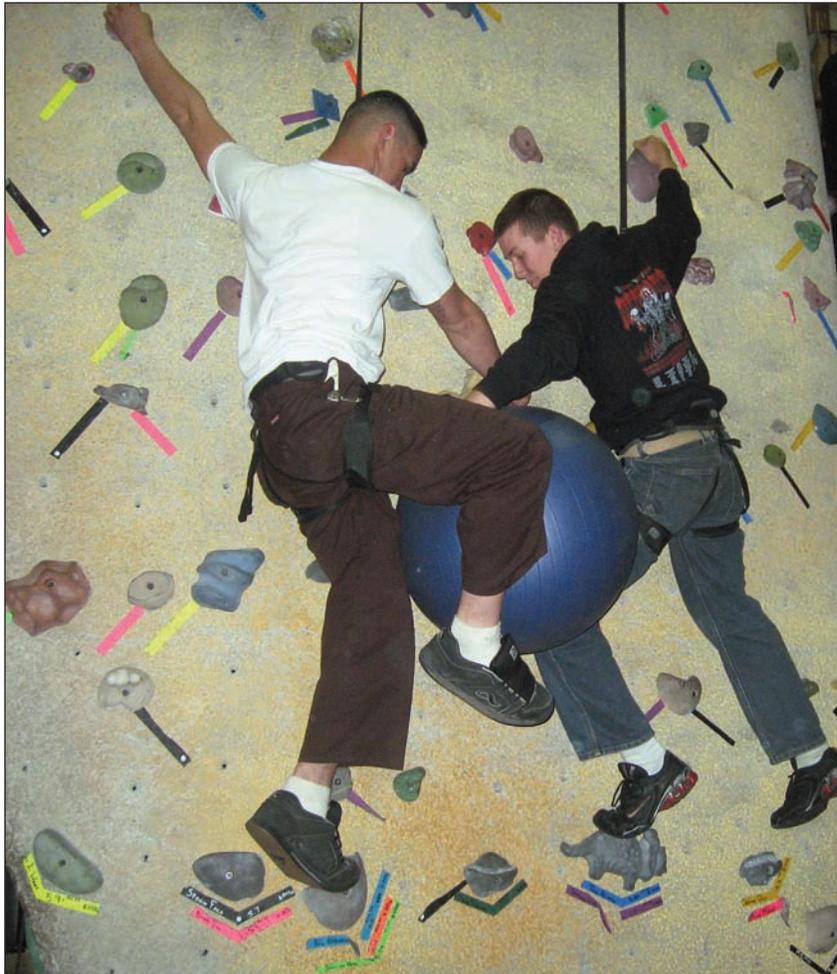
After some individual climbing, Tolliver gathered the Soldiers for the classroom portion and spoke to the Cobra Soldiers about building support teams and making sure family members know where to turn.

“This is not a solo sport,” the chaplain said about the ongoing war.

He reminded Soldiers to look out

for each other and to help a friend when they need a break from guard or other duties.

He also encouraged the Soldiers, especially those embarking on their first combat tour, to read up on



Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, on a rock climbing wall try to keep a ball with them as they climb in a communication exercise at Boulders Sport Climbing Center in Harker Heights Jan. 25. The Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, and 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th BCT, had the day away from the office courtesy of a single Soldier’s retreat sponsored by the battalions’ chaplains. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Allison Churchill, 41st Fires Bde. PAO)

Boulders continued on page 6

Gunnery prepares Cobras for Iraq

By 1st Lt. Daniel Zimmer
3-67 Armor Regt., 4th BCT PAO

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment's headquarters recently conducted an uparmored HMMWV M114 gunnery live fire exercise from Jan. 28 to Feb. 1.

Approximately 90 Soldiers, who make up the headquarters, fire support team, scouts, medic, and mortar platoons, participated in the live fire exercise.

During the gunnery portion of the live fire, crews successfully identified targets and executed proper fire commands during engagements from both the offense and the defense. Defensive engagements presented targets ranging from 500 meters to 800 meters. The offensive engagements



M114 HMMWV trucks stand ready for convoy training during the last week of January. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Daniel Zimmer, 3-67th Armor Regiment)

allowed the uparmored HMMWV crews to close the distance between themselves and the enemy to eventually destroy that enemy.

Each gunner had to qualify on the M240-B and the M2 .50 caliber machine gun before they

could go down range and engage targets.

"It was a good thing we were able to shoot and get some hands-on experience with the weapon systems we are going to

— **Gunnery** continued on page 7

From **Boulders** on page 5

war and battle so they'd be better prepared for the worst case scenario.

After the short class, the Soldiers headed back for an afternoon of team building exercises. In one area, teams had to get off the stairwell and across 10 feet of floor with only pot holders, or "lily pads," to stand on. The teams typically had two fewer pads than Soldiers, which made for creative crossing strategies.

Another station saw teams trying to keep a large ball on top of an open container with eight ropes attached. If one person pulled suddenly, the ball would fall off.

The exercises help teams build teamwork, communication and trust, said the center's general manager.

"Trust goes along with the battle buddy idea," said Trey Oliver, Boulders' general manager and a climbing team coach.

The general manager explained that more and more chaplains having been bringing Soldiers to the climbing center for retreats in recent months. Oliver has been working in climbing centers and designing team-building retreats throughout Texas.

The single Soldiers said they appreciated the attention paid to their particular issues.

"Most single Soldiers don't have their family here," said Sgt. Adiesa Hall, a truck driver assigned to Company F, 3-67 Armor Regt. She added that she planned to help her family research resources to make the brigade's upcoming deployment easier.

Other Soldiers saw the retreat as a much-needed networking tool.

"It gets people out of their rooms and around other people," said Pfc. Albert Ross, a combat engineer assigned to Company E, 3-67 Armor Regt.

The battalion chaplains added that all Cobra Brigade Soldiers should contact them for future single Soldier and married couples retreat dates.

Watch the new 4th BCT on 1st Cavalry Division's Cav. Country on the Pentagon Channel

Soldiers help Girl Scouts

704th Brigade Support Battalion helps renovate Girl Scout Program Center

By 1st Lt. April Baptiste

704th BSB, 4th BCT PAO, 4th Infantry Division

Soldiers and Family members of the 4th Infantry

Division's 4th

Brigade Combat

Team recently

donated their time

and efforts to help

renovate the Girl

Scout Service

Center in Killeen.

Fifteen

Soldiers and

Family members

of the Cobra

Brigade's 704th

Brigade Support

Battalion sanded,

painted, replaced

broken window-

panes, patched

cracks and fixed

water damaged

spots as well as

refurnished furni-

ture.

"I enjoy giving back to my community and want to help in anyway I can," Pvt. Martell Wilson said.

When program managers from a local Girl Scout center casually mentioned their 40-year-old building was in desperate need of renovations, members of the battalion jumped at the opportunity

From **Gunnery** on page 6 — went through multiple engagements with multiple targets, which allowed for dismounted operations.

The last three days of the exercise, were dedicated to a convoy live fire exercise. Platoons moved out in a standard convoy formation then

went through multiple engagements with multiple targets, which allowed for dismounted operations.

Platoons were engaged by simulated sniper fire from a two-story building. Later the Soldiers were engaged in a simultaneous attack from troops and trucks in the open.

to support the community that supports them.

"As a support battalion, our mission is to support the brigade in a variety of ways," said

Command Sgt.

Maj. Harry

Lockamy, the 704th

BSB's senior enlist-

ed Soldier. "But it's

also important and

fitting for us to

give back to the

community that

supports us."

The program

center serves as

office space for

project coordinators

as well as a meet-

ing and conference

center for ongoing

Girl Scout activi-

ties. Due to the

non-profit status of

the organization,

budgeting for reno-

vations and repairs was extremely limited. The organization was able to save considerably thanks to the time and service of the volunteers.

"We are all very excited about the help we received," said Rhonda Hersey, a program manager with the center. "The Soldiers' response and the outcome of the support are more than expected. We could not have done this as quickly without them."

As one section suppressed the enemy, another unit dismounted and engaged the enemy in the two-story building.

The training is preparing the 3-67 Armor Regiment's Soldiers for the real life combat they may see when they deploy to Iraq this summer.



Volunteers and Girl Scout Service Center members pose outside the Girl Scout Program Center of Killeen after completing the work for the day. Front Row: Pfc. Darwin Reyes, Pvt. Martell Wilson, Pvt. Jessica Lucas, Spc. Eric Williams, Sgt. Ronald Lakowski, Pfc. Eva White and Rachel Barnard. Back row: Rhonda Hersey, Spc. Shannon Black, Pfc. Curtis Dethample, Angela Lockamy, Spc. Dominique Fulton, Pfc. James Curtis, Sgt. Joseph Bonnette, Spc. Joseph Meinders, Spc. Jeremy Parker, Cindy Simerly and Pvt. Barbara Morris. (Courtesy photo from 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division)

Cobras give retreat

Cobra Brigade's Special Troops Battalion shifts training toward healthy marriages

By Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore
4th BCT PAO, 4th Infantry Division

"Give me one reason that would cause you to not love your spouse," asked Chaplain (Capt.) Walter Marshall, the chaplain assigned to the Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, during one of the classes at the unit's marriage retreat in Austin, Jan. 18-19.

"Adultery," replied Melissa Cates, wife of Staff Sgt. Ken Cates of the brigade's headquarters company.

Marshall fired back with a lesson from the King James Bible entitled, "agape love," which is the Greek translation for "true love." Marshall explained how according to the lesson, there is absolutely no reason to withhold love from your

spouse.

The Cobra Brigade's chaplain team utilized various lessons and techniques during the weekend retreat to teach 39 couples from the Special Troops Battalion how to establish and maintain a healthy relationship.

The two-day event consisted of a series of lectures conducted by Marshall, including communication techniques and pre-deployment.

"This is something we do," Marshall said. "We come together as a team of chaplains to help strengthen our Soldiers and their families."

Each battalion within the brigade has similar marriage retreats on their training calendar to complete prior to deploying to Iraq later this year. This retreat, held at the five-star Lake Way Resort and Spa was free to Soldiers and spouses courtesy of



Chaplain (Capt.) Walter Marshall, the 4th Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion chaplain, speaks to Soldiers and their spouses at a recent married couples retreat in Austin. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore, 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)

for married couples

III Corps and Fort Hood.

“This was one of the commander’s concerns,” said Chaplain (Maj.) Edgar Bennett, the 4th BCT’s brigade chaplain referring to the brigade commander, Col. Philip Battaglia. “This was important to him before we leave for deployment.”

Bennett also said the brigade has plans to do more couples’ retreats when the unit returns from Iraq.

For couples such as Tanya and Sgt. 1st Class Carnell Brockington, another retreat is something to forward to when the brigade completes its deployment.

“We both have a chaotic schedule,” Tanya Brockington said. “With two teenagers at home and both of us working full time jobs, along with our car-detailing business there is rarely any time for us.”



Staff Sgt. Carlos Hinojosa and his wife, Sgt. Valarie Hinojosa, a human resources specialist assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team’s headquarters, play pool at the brigade’s Special Troops Battalion’s married couples retreat in Austin. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore, 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)

Cobra earns top honors at WLC

4th BCT Soldier recognized as Distinguished Honor Graduate

By Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore
4th BCT PAO, 4th Infantry Division

According to Sgt. Jonathan Staab, Fort Hood's 15-day Warrior Leaders Course was like going through a second basic training.

The field artillery Soldier assigned to Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, was recognized as his class' distinguished honor graduate.

"We woke up at 4 a.m. every morning for physical training," Staab explained. "There was lots of good instruction; I thought it was going to be a bunch of field training, but it was more classroom orientated."

The WLC Soldiers were required to pass two exams on Army leadership, lead and instruct a physical fitness session and complete a land navigation course within a prescribed time.

Staab, along with 320 Soldiers between the ranks of specialist through sergeant graduated the course, at Fort Hood's Howze Theater as he earned the top honors Feb. 7.

"It felt good," Staab said, referring to being recognized as distinguished honor graduate. "I was standing there (delivering

"Sgt. Staab is an outstanding asset to the United States Army and especially Bravo Battery," said 1st Sgt. Jonathan

Ballard, the battery's senior enlisted service member. "I'm honored to have the distinguished honor graduate in my ranks, and not only did we have the distinguished honor graduate, but we also had three Soldiers recognized on the commandant's list during the same class.

"That lets me know we are leading our Soldiers in the right direction," he added.

Staab said when he's home on leave, he likes to hunt and go snow boarding, but when he's here at



Sgt. Jonathan Staab
Battery B, 2-77 Field Artillery Regiment

my acceptance speech) with all eyes on me and I felt like a stallion."

The 21-year-old field artilleryman from Lewiston, Idaho, graduated the course with a 99.85 grade point average and he broke the unofficial 45-minute record time for completing the III Corps Non-Commissioned Officer Academy's land navigation course by finishing in 44 minutes.

Fort Hood with his fellow Soldiers, his focus is on the 4th Brigade's scheduled summer deployment to Iraq.

"I try to lead from the front," Staab added. "That is something they teach at the course."

Staab received an Army Achievement Medal, two plaques and numerous certificates of achievements for his leadership during his III Corps' Warrior Leaders Course class.

I-12 Launches Mortar Training

By 1st Lt. David Collins
1-12 Inf. Regt., 4th BCT

The mortar platoon assigned the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, fired 330 rounds of 120mm mortars at Curry Mortar Complex from Jan. 30 to Feb. 1.

Cobra Brigade Soldiers directed and observed the rounds during day and night missions during the two-day long live fire exercise at Curry Mortar Complex.

“Training exercises like this one are an excellent way to reinforce the core abilities of heavy mortar and Fire Support Team assets,” said 2nd Lt. Jaison D. Desai, a mortar platoon leader assigned to the bat-

talion. “Combined training allows both battalion assets to enhance the lethality of immediate, responsive indirect fires.”

The training began with the weapon systems registration on the morning of Jan. 30. Company B’s fire support non-commissioned officer, Staff Sgt. Vincent Notto, registered the weapons before the observing Soldiers cycled through fire missions, adjusting rounds onto selected targets before requesting permission to fire.

As darkness fell on the impact area, fire supporters planned infrared illumination missions over suspected enemy targets. The Soldiers adjusted the rounds to deliver the desired infrared effect as observers

called in the missions.

The call for fire lasted well into the night as artillery Soldiers expended the infrared rounds while directing high explosive, point-detonating and multi-option fuse setting munitions underneath the illuminated impact area.

During the last day of training, observers directed priority targets and time-on-target missions before expending the remaining rounds.

With the 4th BCT’s scheduled deployment for early summer, the mortar training was particularly relevant. In Iraq, the mortar teams’ mission will be to deliver accurate, timely and safely coordinated indirect fire.

Change continued from page 2

personnel or an agency on post. Just like the Soldiers who look out for each other, so too must family members help each other during the deployment. Chances are that any issue you have has already been dealt with and someone knows the answer.

I encourage all Soldiers and Family members to register for the Virtual Family Readiness Group at www.armyfrg.org. See your Family readiness group representative for instructions on how to register. Once registered, you will be able to access all kinds of unit-specific information such as photos, videos, newsletters and redeployment information not open to the general public.

Additionally, our new public-accessible website has a wealth of valuable information material available at <http://www.hood.army.mil/1stcavdiv/units/4bct/4id/index.htm>. Our brigade personnel work diligently to

make these sites valuable sources of information to our friends and families.

In conclusion, I thank each Soldier and Family member in this brigade for your service and dedication.

As you go about your busy lives, I urge you to take a moment and think about what you do and how it makes a difference in the lives of others. For Soldiers, maybe that moment is when you put on the uniform each morning; for Family members, it may be when your Soldier returns home after a long day for a Family dinner.

Doing what you do – to include our Families – is something in which you should take great pride.

Our nation has issued its call, and you, unlike many others, have answered that call and done your part.

I am proud to serve with each and every one of you.

Cobra 6 out!

Spartans learn convoy tactics

By Spc. Creighton Holub
4th BCT PAO, 4th Infantry Division

The 4th Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion conducted convoy live fire training to familiarize the unit's non-combat arms Soldiers with convoys and battle drills.

While most of the Cobra Brigade's battalions are combat arms units, this battalion, nicknamed the Spartan Battalion, is filled with Soldiers in communication and military intelligence career fields, who regularly train in small but specialized groups, not the wide open fields of Fort Hood.

"The Special Troops Battalion Soldiers are great at doing their specialized jobs and creating the backbone of this brigade," said Maj. Lou Morales, the battalion's training and operations officer-in-charge. "But we need to stress the duality of our jobs."

He explained that the STB's personnel are both specialized technicians and Soldiers at the same time. The combination leads to accomplishing the mission

safely and effectively.

The teams left the battalion motor pool with blank rounds to use when dealing with simulated enemies and situations their commanders feel they may run across during the upcoming summer deployment to Iraq.

After working through several scenarios, the convoy reached the live-fire range, performed a dry run and then received fresh ammo for the live-fire portion of the training.

"This is good training because I'll be doing this as well as doing my mechanic job," said Pfc. Gabriel Hatches, a wheeled vehicle mechanic assigned to the Spartan Battalion's headquarters company.

Hatches and the rest of the Cobra Brigade have one more major training event to complete; a trip to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La., that runs from mid-March to mid-April. The brigade is also scheduled to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom this summer.

Bulgarian General visits Cobras

By Maj. Chad Carroll
4th BCT Public Affairs Officer, 4ID
The 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team hosted Bulgarian Lt. Gen. Ivan Dobrev at Sugarloaf Multi-Purpose Range as part of his visit to Fort Hood Feb. 5.

The purpose of Dobrev's visit was to gain a better understanding of how the U.S. Army has transformed and the importance of the non-commissioned officer to military operations.

"During briefings at III Corps headquarters, we managed to exchange opinions on the transformation of the U.S. Army," said Dobrev through his translator. "This experience has been very valuable for transformation of the Bulgarian Armed Forces. We are currently undergoing transformation also."

The Cobra Brigade's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment,

demonstrated their preparations for Iraq and specifically, convoy live fire training, to the general. Maj. Chuck Rush, 1-12 Inf. Regt., operations officer, and Sgt. 1st Class James Powell, a platoon sergeant from Company B, 1-12 Inf. Regt., briefed Dobrev, Brig. Gen. Frederick Rudesheim, III Corps rear commander and Lt. Col. Mark Nelson, acting 4th Brigade commander, before conducting the training.

"This is a great opportunity to showcase our Soldiers and NCOs to the Chief of Staff of the Bulgarian Army who is here, among other things, to get ideas for developing their own NCO Corps," said Rudesheim.

Rush first provided the generals with an overview of the live fire process and highlighted the role of NCOs in developing and executing the training.

"The training today was devel-

oped by NCOs because they are the ones leading patrols in Iraq," he said. Rush then turned the briefing over to Powell who demonstrated the best of what the NCO corps has to offer.

1-12 Inf. Regt.'s live fire was part of the brigade's larger training plan in preparation for the unit's scheduled deployment to Iraq in summer 2008. It is a time of tremendous change for the brigade, which is scheduled to reflag from 4th Inf. Div. to 1st Cav. Div. on Mar. 7 in a ceremony at Fort Hood. Three members of Dobrev's staff also attended the training: Brig. Gen. Dimitrov Torlakov, Col. Serguey Lalov and Lt. Col. Ivaylo Bratoychev. Their week long visit to various Army installations reaffirmed the value of the U.S.-Bulgarian military relationship and encouraged communication between the militaries' leaders.