

THE DAGGER EDGE



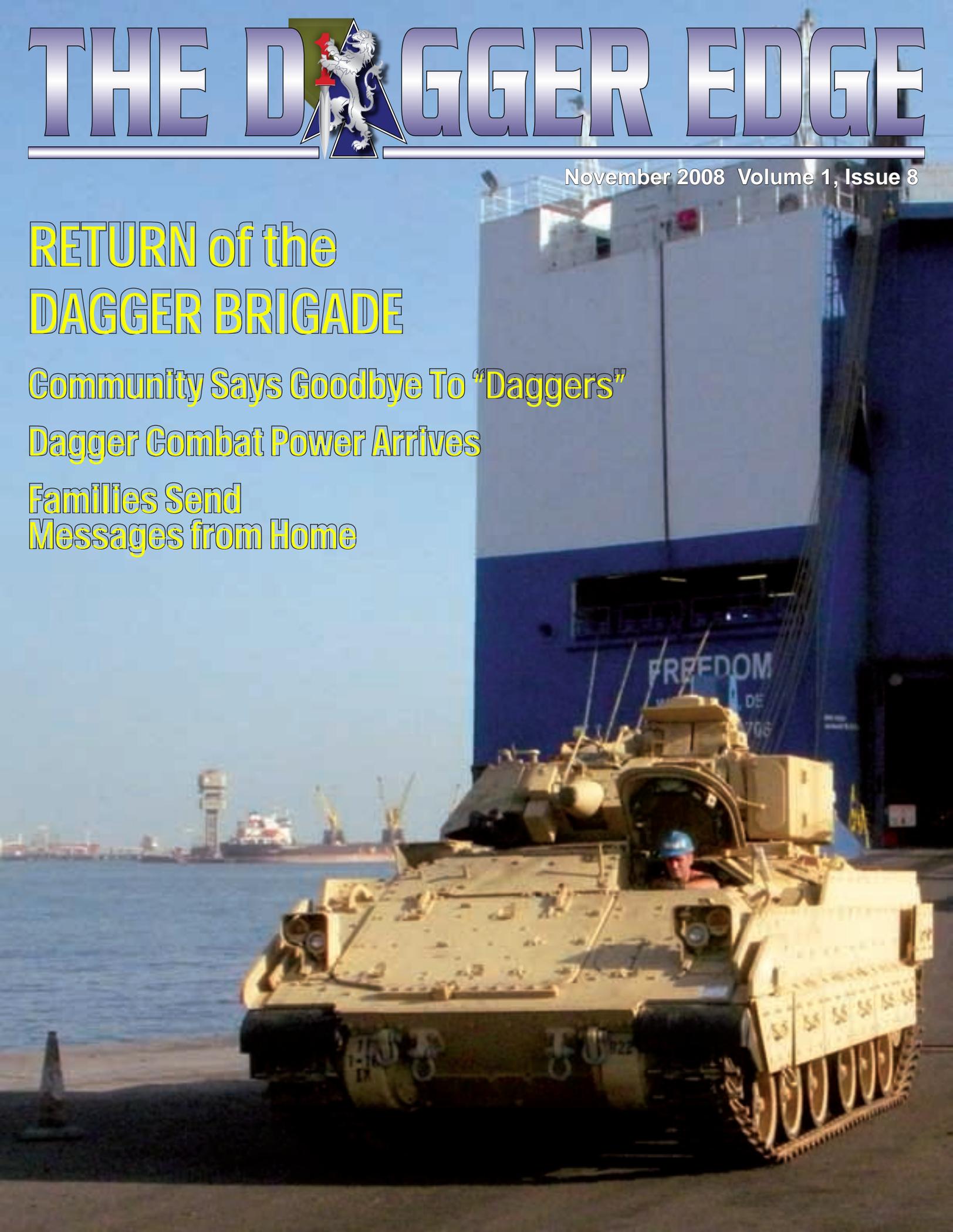
November 2008 Volume 1, Issue 8

RETURN of the DAGGER BRIGADE

Community Says Goodbye To "Daggers"

Dagger Combat Power Arrives

Families Send
Messages from Home



What's Inside...

▼ Photos by 2nd Lt. David Williams, 5-4 Cav 2HBCT PAO The average life expectancy of a camel is forty to fifty years. A fully-grown adult camel stands 6 ft 1 in at the shoulder and 7 ft 1 in at the hump. The hump rises about thirty inches out of its body. Camels can run up to 40 mph in short bursts and sustain speeds of up to 25 mph.



▲ Photo by Maj. Koné C. Faulkner An M2A2 ODS Bradley Fighting Vehicle is driven off of the transport ship which carried the equipment of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team 1st Infantry Division to the Middle East.

▼ Photo by Sgt. Brian Tierce Soldiers from the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment fire the M2 50 Caliber machine gun during crew served weapons training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.



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The Dagger Edge and FRG Update Informing the Dagger Community on the issues and events throughout the brigade.

August 2008; Vol. 1, Issue 8

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A NEW CHAPTER IN DAGGER BRIGADE HISTORY

I continue to be extremely proud of DAGGER Soldiers. From Camp Buehring, through BIAP and Camp Liberty, and out to your JSS and FOBs, you're continuing to set the pace while maintaining standards and discipline. As CSM Battle has said, "Standards and Discipline will be the difference between a good unit—and a great unit; a good rotation in Iraq—and a great rotation in Iraq; and it will allow us to accomplish every mission while protecting Soldiers." Maintain your aggressive and confident attitudes as we continue to replace the great 2nd "STRIKE" Brigade of the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division. They've set the pace here in Multi-national Division (Baghdad), and now it's our turn to sustain the successes in our area of operations, and to enjoy some new ones as we operate here.

▶ Colonel Joseph M. Martin, Commander, 2HBCT, addresses "Dagger" Brigade Soldiers following their arrival in the Middle-east.



they've established. Get to know your Iraqi counterparts, what they're concerned about, and what they're confident about in their duties as Iraqi Security Partners—both Army and Police. Be polite—respect their customs and culture while trying to learn their language if you can. You're not the first U.S. Army unit that they've encountered. Be Professional—maintain your standards, always be manage risk and induce safety into every relief task and mission as we assemble here in Baghdad. Take time to assess your new environment, the hazards, and then take on the challenges of keeping every Soldier safe and mission-ready. The #1 threat to our Soldiers while we're deployed is actually Negligent Discharges as we are constantly uploaded with live ammo each day. Leaders will supervise Soldiers as they upload and clear weapons—no excuses or shortcuts! Be professional in the way you approach the relief of STRIKE Brigade—they've earned the respect of the entire Multi-national Division

in Baghdad. Finally: Be Prepared to Kill, if the situation changes, and you've identified a hostile force or discover hostile intent: don't hesitate to engage with lethal, appropriate force. For example, we're seeing a trend of insurgents throwing armor-piercing grenades at trucks, so the gunners must remain alert and vigilant and act quickly, decisively. If you keep these principles in everything that you do, you'll be READY NOW for our mission in Iraq!

I'm extremely proud to be commanding this historic unit. I can't wait to see you in action in Baghdad, working alongside our Iraqi Security Partners to bring sustainable security to the region.

COL Joe Martin

*Dagger 6
Polite, Professional, and Prepared to Kill—Ready Now!!*



▶ Command Sergeant Major Donald L. Battle, 2HBCT Command Sergeant Major, speaks with members of the Brigade PSD after arriving at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Daggers, The Soldiers of the Dagger Brigade have executed our deployment into the Iraqi theater of operations with skill and precision. The many months of training and preparation to deploy have surely paid off with our seamless integration into our areas of operation. The key to our successful deployment resonates from the high standards set forth by all the leaders of the Dagger Brigade down to the lowest level where Soldiers are accomplishing each and every mission. Maintaining this standard throughout the deployment will be crucial to ensuring our success before we leave the country of Iraq.

Another key to our success in Iraq will be the high standards of discipline which are enforced by every Dagger Soldier. From exercising the cultural understanding of the Iraqi people to patrolling to secure your operation environment, no matter what the task; disciplined Soldiers are what makes good units GREAT. I have complete trust and confidence that Dagger Soldiers are and will continue to enforce the highest standards and practices of being disciplined throughout our deployment.

Finally the well being of the Soldiers of the Dagger Brigade is crucial to mission readiness and

accomplishment. I will work tirelessly to ensure that Soldiers are being taken care of in every way that Warriors deserve. Don't be surprised to see me in your operational environment constantly, you are what make the Dagger Brigade great and you deserve nothing less than the best while you are deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. We are following in the footsteps of greatness here in Northwest Baghdad. From our legacy Dagger Brigade to the Strike Soldiers of 2/101 the blood, sweat and tears of Americas finest has been shed to bring peace to the region. We will carry on this great legacy and ensure these valiant deeds were not in vain, through our actions we will prove the Dagger's Edge is sharp and through our skills we will execute day to day.

I would like to wish you all Happy Holidays and I look forward to serving alongside you for the next year.

Dagger 7,

Command Sgt. Maj. Donald L. Battle



Chaplain (Maj.) Peter Johnson (Left) speaks with a Dagger Brigade Soldier while deployed to Camp Liberty, Iraq.

“Our Character” Shaped in Community – Tested in Isolation”

No great man or woman has had a free ride; their strength of character was proven through adversity. Daggers, we have been tested to a degree through our rigorous training cycle, but we now face the ultimate test of our profession – a yearlong combat deployment.

We are well aware of the dangers that exist within our operating environment. It is no joke that wherever we go someone is watching with the intent to kill us. As Soldiers we not only expect

this enemy, we try to anticipate his every move and defeat him on our terms. We need to be aware that there is another enemy out there that is far more subtle and covert. This enemy shadows us day and night, whether we're inside the wire or out on patrol, in a meeting or in our CHU, walking to chow or working in the TOC. This enemy is COMPLACENCY and its effects are devastating. It can kill or wound; it is able to reach and destroy our marriages and families back home; and it can easily crush careers and hard earned reputations. Complacency not only erodes the readiness of the brigade, but it can also erode the core of our very character.

For your local worship service coordinate with your unit chaplain for location and times.

We must keep in mind that our character is shaped in community and it is tested in isolation. Be aware that twelve months in a combat zone will put each one of us to the test in a variety of ways, but we must endure and rise above the trials which can quickly discredit what we have worked so hard to earn. One day we will be on a long plane ride home. Will we feel pride and honor in what we accomplished or shame? God's word tells us that “endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame.” So let us make the steadfast commitment now to redeploy with a sense of pride and honor – not shame.

Stiches: Action Saves Lives

It was mid-afternoon in the summer of 1996. I was a young medic working an inner-city ambulance in Williamsport, PA. We received a call for a middle-aged man who collapsed at a shopping center. His heart had suddenly stopped beating and he had just six minutes before irreversible brain damage set in.

We raced across town; sirens blaring. It took five minutes to get to the mall and another

five to get to the patient. There we discovered 30 or 40 people huddled around his pasty body. They studied his death with the arm-crossed curiosity of museum goers; interested, but fearing an unspoken rule not to touch the delicate display .

We crashed into their huddle barking polite but frustrated orders to move out of the way. He was motionless. The blue tint of anoxia circled his mouth and the whites of his eyeballs slowly desiccated in the mall air. My partner began rescue breathing while I exposed the chest with scissors. A pack of cigarettes fell from his breast pocket.

We worked on the patient all the way to the hospital. We tried IV's, atropine, epinephrine, but the patient's condition never changed. The window of opportunity to begin CPR had passed.

The onlookers never understood

that their hesitation robbed the fallen man of any hope for rescue. His heart and brain were dead.

For many Americans, life is a spectator sport. We don't want to get involved with medical emergencies, politics, or volunteering in our communities. Those things all involve risk and hard work. Soldiers, of course, are a different breed. We already know about volunteering for service that involves risk and hard work, but let's not let our guard down. As our exhaustion, frustration, and stress rises, we naturally begin to focus more and more on our own needs. We cannot allow this tunnel vision to develop in the coming year. We must be vigilant.

If Soldiers don't take care of Soldiers, no one else will. If you see a Soldier in distress, whether it be physical or emotional, it's your responsibility to help them. Ask them what's going on and contact medical personnel if suspect they need it. Emergency medical teams can be contacted by any phone on post by dialing 822-7777. Mental health personnel are available at the Riva Ridge Clinic, and can be contacted for emergencies 24 hours a day at 822-7777

Get involved, get your chain of command involved, and keep your Dagger's Edge.

◀ Capt. Kenneth “Trip” Johnson
2nd HBCT Surgeon



MESSAGES FROM HOME

While attending the Division Volunteer Recognition ceremony the other night, I began to realize how well 2nd Brigade was represented. It always amazes me how Army spouses can send their soldiers on a deployment, take care of their families and still manage to share their talents with a variety of organizations. I feel so blessed to be surrounded by such dedicated, strong spouses. I want to thank all of you, those who are recognized publicly and those who work behind the scenes, for your dedication to this unit, community and especially to your soldier. You are truly an inspiration to all!
Leann Martin

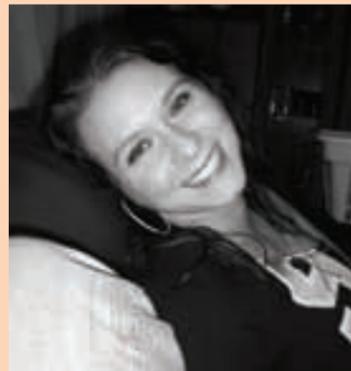


Tyrell Crawford (1-18) We are doing ok here @ home. Hope that all is well in your part of the world. We just want you to ALWAYS know that WE are PROUD of you and ALL that you do for our country! We LOVE you, and MISS you very much! Stay safe and come home soon :) Love Your Family, Jannene, Jordon & Lundy Crawford



PFC Carlos Mediano (299) We love and miss you very much. Hugs and kisses from your family. Thanks for everything you are doing for us. I love you!!!! Love Nancy, Deija and Alana

SFC William Collins, (HHC 2nd BDE) "We love you and miss you very much. Your Girls are very proud of you. May God bless you and keep you safe. Love Chris, Lily, and Kiley"



SGT Curtis, Charles M. (1-18) Hello Michael, I love you, see you soon! I am so proud of you, stay strong and be safe. Kisses, Jacqueline

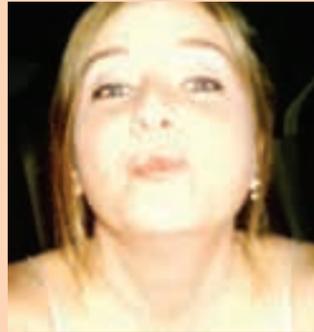
Lopez: Hi daddy hope your doing ok. We love and miss you so much! Love- your yfe and babies



CPL Jeff Guymon (5-4) I reary reary ruv roo my dido baby boy, the moon is ours! XOXO I miss you. Love, Your Little Girl *N <3 W/ Jeff*



SSGT Rainwater, (PJ) (5-4) Just wanted to let you know how proud of you we are. You are the best soldier, father, husband, and best friend anyone could ask for. Just make sure that you keep your head up. We all are always thinking about you, and miss you very much. Tristan wanted to say something (like always) lol.. Hi daddy, I miss you very much. We are going to waiting for you in Kansas when you get there. Hope that you are having fun. Oh, and don't forget to get me a present from Iraq. Mommy and Bingo miss you very much. We love you very much. Tracy, & Tristan



My husband PFC Wakester, (5-4) Babe ~ Thank you, and all our WONDERFUL soldiers for doing an awesome job protecting our country. Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers each and ever day. I LOVE YOU and will be waiting for your return with open arms ... Love Maddy



Tong (299) We love and miss you and very proud of everything that you do. Hugs and Kisses from your loving wife and kids Robin, Mikayla and Haydyn.

SPC Esteban Vasquez, (HHC Company 2/1 ID STB) "Hi Daddy! I love you and miss you. I can't wait to see you! Love, Jade"



Koelder: Hi Thomas! I'm getting ready to visit all our NTC friends over the next few weeks. They all send their best and promise to take care of me while you're gone. Mom and Mark send their love (and say that treats are on the way)! Ike is doing well (eating all our furniture) and keeping me VERY busy. Just thought I would send a note and tell you that I miss you so much..never forget how much you are loved! Be safe and be good! Love, Erica



SGT Whitton: We are proud of you and we love and miss you very much daddy!!! Thank you for keeping us safe. Love, Matthew, Jessica, and Christian



SPC Benjamine (1-18) Hey baby... SURPRISE!!!! Just wanted to let you know that I miss and love you so very much. Be safe and stay strong, 1000000 Kuesse von deiner Carolin =)



Chovancek (1-18) Hello there our Angel, We have a little message for the "Messages for the Daggers." Andrew, we love you and miss you very much. You are our Hero, best Friend, Husband and Father. Stay safe and we will see you later!! Your Wife Tanja and daughter Isabella

SGT Paradiso, (HHC 2nd BDE) "I Love you sweetheart. Stay safe and know that you are loved and missed by all of us! Love Lea, Makaila, Jaden, and little Mortimer."



SPC Damon Baker (299) We three love you and miss you Daddy! "Even though I know how very far apart we are, it helps to think we might be wishing on the same bright star". Alexis says "Do I look like I sell slurpees?...NO". We will be here waiting for you to come home and we left the light on for you. Take care of yourself and be safe. Shake on it? ~ Shake on it ~ Kiss, kiss, hug. Samantha, Alexis and Dallas



Sgt Shoope: (1-18) Dear Steve, Happy 8th Anniversary!!! I love you. Monica

PFC Todd, Eacock (1-18) I think about you everyday and love you more then you'll ever know! Hang in there baby, you'll be home before you know it! Marnie Eacock



SSG Canine (1-18) Hey, I just want to tell my best friend that I miss you so much. I frequently think about how lucky I am to be married to an absolutely great guy! I really couldn't have gotten any luckier! Although, we could work on the shopping and cooking area haha! I've always admired your motivation, integrity, intelligence, and commitment to doing your best. You're a great friend, husband, father, and soldier and I couldn't ask for a better person to have in my life! Stay busy and positive and time will pass faster. I'm proud of you, love you, and be safe! Love, your bestest

SGT. Blade Hey baby, I wanted to let you know the kids and I miss you so much. We are extremely proud of you and cannot wait until this deployment is over so our home can be complete again. We love you!! Sonya Blade



Community Says Goodbye To “Daggers”

By Lyndsey Born Staff Writer Fort Riley Post

Almost half of the approximately 3,700 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team Soldiers who will deploy this October in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom have previous combat experience. The Soldiers will have the primary mission of protecting Iraqi freedom but will also assist with the development of Iraqi security force capability. The Soldiers took one more step closer to their deployment at a deployment ceremony Sept. 30 at Cavalry Parade Field. “Some spouses have commented to me that today’s ceremony is in fact a relief in some cases,” said Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley commanding general, “It finally starts the deployment clock, and in fact some of these Soldiers standing on the field today have actually mentally been deployed for several weeks now. And if you are like my wife Annette, right about now she is ready to punt me out the door with my bags packed just so I can get on with it.” The ceremony marked the newest chapter in the

brigade’s history, said Col. Joseph M. Martin, 2nd HBCT commander. “If you didn’t know it, today marks the day in the newest chapter of the brigade’s long historic history, as we launch into a one year journey to enhance the security and prosperity of the Iraqi people and our assigned area of operation,” Martin said. “As I speak, 276 ‘Dagger’ Brigade Soldiers are on the ground setting conditions for our arrival into Kuwait and Iraq. Additionally, today marks the end of an 18- month period full of our good work and tenacious determination by Dagger leaders who prepared the Families and Soldiers of this brigade for our deployment.” The mission for 2nd HBCT entails working side by side with Iraqi partners, Martin said. Many have said it will be difficult because the year will be marked with change and transition, he said. “I say to them that you are prepared for the challenge because you have been training and are confident about your skills. Essentially, as the brigade motto says,

‘you are ready now,’” Martin said. “Each day you will watch your Iraqi partner improve, knowing that their success is linked to our success. So I want each of you to know we are committed to bring each and everyone of you all home. We will leave no one behind.” As the Soldiers and Family members prepare for the deployment of the 2nd HBCT, Wiggins said there was no doubt in his mind that the Soldiers are prepared to accomplish their mission. “Although getting to this point has not been a simple task, you’re certainly more than prepared to accomplish this mission,” Wiggins said. “I can tell you from my observation that you are more than ready to accomplish this task. The professionalism and confidence that I saw in the sands in the Mohave Desert made me absolutely proud to wear these ACUs and to wear this patch on my left sleeve, the patch of the 1st Infantry Division. Daggers, your nation has called you and you have answered that call.”

◀ Soldiers from the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division board buses bound for an air field in Kuwait which transports the Soldiers into Baghdad.

▼ COL Joseph M. Martin, commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division alongside Command Sgt. Maj. Donald L. Battle, Brigade CSM, case the Brigade colors on Cavalry Parade Field. The Dagger deployment ceremony drew the largest crowd in Fort Riley history.



Dagger Combat Power Arrives!



M113A3 APC



M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle



M992A2 FAASV



M1A1 Abrams



M88A1



M109A6 Paladin

1-18th Combined Arms Battalion "Vanguards"

Vanguards Continue To Prepare For Iraq

Story & Photos by Sgt. Brian Tierce 2HBCT PAO

One of the most difficult scenarios Soldiers face on today's battle fields is conducting combat operations in urban environments. The enemy works to blend in with the local populace and Soldiers are left trying to decide who the enemy really is. For this reason, Soldiers from Co. A. 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment honed their skills by conducting MOUT training, or Mobile Operations in Urban Terrain training. "Basically what is going on is we're sending our platoons through an urban environment," said Capt. Nathan Williams, commander, Co. A. 1-18th CAB of Durham, North Carolina, "The Soldiers are facing real opposing forces, not just targets and they are tightening up on training that has previously been done." The mission begins with a situational report, which is briefed to the leaders of each platoon. Following the briefing the leaders then plan the mission and move to the MOUT site to begin rehearsals for the upcoming Assault. "Given a situation that has been briefed to them, the Soldiers plan their maneuver into the urban complex and

must then detain or kill a high value target," said Williams. Another aspect of the training here at Camp Buehring that adds to the realism of the training was simulation rounds called UMT rounds which are fired from the Soldiers and opposing forces weapons which make the training close to the real thing. "The UMT rounds are little silver rounds that actually require a special bolt in your weapon," said Staff Sgt. Allen Cottone, Squad Leader, Co. A. 1-18th CAB of Virginia Beach, Virginia, "the closer you are to the person firing a UMT round at you them more it stings" added Cottone. To

add to the complexity of the mission and better prepare each and every Soldier in the company for future missions, not just infantry Soldiers conducted the training but also the company's medics, fire support Soldier and even a few mechanics participated in the training. "Today we incorporated a variety of Soldiers into an infantry environment, so it was a little tougher but they got good training out of it," added Cottone. Throughout the day Soldiers rotated into the village running through a number of different scenarios so that the leaders of the company were confident that the Soldiers were ready to face the real thing in a few short weeks. "I think the Soldiers are doing outstanding, overall the company down to the last man is ready for movement north," said Williams.



▲ Soldiers from Co. A. 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, tactically move between houses during training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The Soldiers were honing their Mobile Operations in Urban Terrain or MOUT Training skills prior to moving north in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

▶ Soldiers from Co. A. 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, practice room clearing procedures prior to conducting Mobile Operations in Urban Terrain or MOUT training at Camp Buehring. The Soldiers are continuing to train at Buehring in preparation for movement into Iraq.



▶ Soldiers with CO. A. 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, secure the 2nd floor of a building after clearing rooms looking for enemy fighter during training held at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The Soldiers continue to train in preparation for movement into the Iraqi theater of operations.

1-63rd Combined Arms Battalion "Dragon"

Dragons Saddle Up In MRAP

Story & Photo by Sgt Brian Tierce 2HBCT PAO

When it comes to protecting Soldiers on the battlefield, the Army is sparing no expense to get the best and safest equipment possible to its Soldiers on the front lines. One example of this initiative could be seen as Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armor regiment of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division took to the streets and training grounds of Camp Buehring, Kuwait in Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles or MRAPs. The MRAPs utilize a number of different safety features to help keep the Soldiers inside safe from the dangers such as their V shaped hull or their extensive armor packages. "I like the vehicle a lot, I feel confident in it," said Private First Class Chance Thomas, HHC 1-63 CAB of Salt Lake City, UT., "It is a good feeling to know I will be operating in a vehicle like this in Iraq." With movement into Iraq coming closer by the day the Soldiers participating in the training were aware that training on an important piece of equipment like the MRAP could



▲ Soldiers of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division perform maintenance checks on their Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles prior to familiarization training on Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The Soldiers are preparing to move into Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

be the exact thing they need to stay out of harm's way up north. "The vehicle I was driving in today weighs more than 38,000 pounds, it's what you want to roll out side of the wire in," said Private First Class Josh Howell, HHC 1-63 CAB, of Jackson, GA., "I hear the MRAP is doing really good up north and I like the armor that comes with the vehicle," added Howell. The training on the MRAP spanned over three days just like many of the other training events offered on Camp Buehring,

Kuwait. The first day is seen by most Soldiers as the worst day since it consist of all power point presentations or as the Soldiers lovingly call them "death by PowerPoint." Day two brings a little more excitement as the Soldiers get their first chance to get hands on with the vehicles for the first time. "The best part of the training was definitely the driving and getting a feel for it," said Howell. As for the instructors of the course who are on the job seven days a week, the importance of the training is never far from their minds. "I believe the MRAP is the most protection the Army has to offer to its Soldiers right now," said Phillip Clapper, MRAP Instructor, "The Military wants their Soldiers trained up on the MRAP and that's what we're doing." On the final day of the course the Soldiers must navigate the MRAP during a night drive to prove they can handle the vehicle in any situation, and in most cases this proves to be most memorable part of the training. "We have the night drive portion of the course coming up and I think it will be a little more interesting than the day drive," said Howell, "The training is real good, it's HOOAH training."

Dragon Mortar-men Bombard Desert

Story & Photo by Sgt Brian Tierce 2HBCT PAO

Mortar-men from Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Combined arms Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiments Mortar Platoon recently put their skills on display at the ranges of Camp Buehring, Kuwait during a mortar live fire exercise. The training which involved high explosive mortar rounds gave these Soldiers a feel for what their job could be like once they arrive in Baghdad. "If a mortar platoon is out in sector and they happen to witness a target of opportunity or something like that., they can lay rounds directly on a target using their mortar tube and sights," said Staff Sgt. Jeffery Eaken,

1-63 Mortar Platoon, "It's one of the most basic skills a mortar-men can do added the Charleston, SC native. The training did not only allow the Soldiers to sharpen their skills in accuracy it also allowed the Soldiers the rare opportunity to fire a special type of round. "The rounds we were firing were actually the high explosive mortar rounds," said 1st Lt. Cameron Mays, HHC 1-63 of Marion, KY. "Getting to see the rounds go up in the air and impact the target is an awesome sight," added Mays. A number of different mortar crews were given the chance to put rounds on target

during the training and as the shots became more accurate the morale of the Soldiers began to rise. "It's good for the guys to get out here and see the effects of a mortar round," said Eaken, "I think they liked that and I think we had a good day out here today." Once the last of the platoons rounds had been fired down range and the Soldiers were preparing to depart the range the consensus among the Soldiers was that training such as this is hard to duplicate. "The Soldiers get the self satisfaction of knowing they did their job well, and that's the most satisfying feeling for a mortar-men," added Eaken.



1-7 Field Artillery "Lightning"

Dagger Field Artillery Soldiers Showcase the King of Battle in Kuwait

Story and Photo by Sgt. Brian Tierce 2 HBCT PAO

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division recently brought the thundering roar of their M109A6 Paladin Self Propelled Howitzer to the sands of the Kuwaiti desert. The Soldiers conducted a live fire exercise in which the goal was simple, put the big boom on target. "Today we brought out one M109A6 paladin to practice shooting direct fire at a target group down range," said 1st Lt. Brett Thompson, A. Battery 1-7 FA of Las Vegas NV, "We hit some targets and glanced some targets, so overall it went really well." Although the use of heavy artillery in the Iraqi conflict is extremely

rare this does not mean that the Soldiers of 1-7 FA are going to let their skills subside. "The training keeps the Soldiers sharp on their job," added Thompson, "We will not be doing a lot of direct fire in Iraq but we wanted to get out and test the guns." For the First Lightning Soldiers of 1-7 FA the chance to get out to the range is rare but once they are on the range it is all about one thing. "My favorite part of today's training was shooting rounds," said Spc. Jordan Buckley of Washington, NC, "The training went pretty good."



◀ An M109A6 Paladin Self Propelled Howitzer blast a round down range during a live fire exercise held on Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment were test firing the cannon to ensure it was ready to move into Iraq and sharpen their accuracy skills before moving north.

5-4 CAVALRY "LONG KNIFE"



Troopers Prepared To Protect Leadership

Story by Sgt. Brian Tierce, Photos by 2nd Lt. David Williams, 5-4 Cav 2HBCT PAO

Being the Commander or Command Sgt. Maj. of a Squadron or Battalion sized element comes with its perks. In most cases it means you get a security detail that are trained and prepared to protect you at all cost. For a group of select Soldiers of the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait the importance of this mission was brought home by a three day exercise which taught the principles of keeping the Command staff out of harm's way. "It was really great training, we learned a lot of things that we had not thought about before," said Private First Class Ryan Weeks, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 5-4 Cav, of Falls Church, VI, "It also reinforced some of the principles we learned at the national

training center and during training at Fort Riley," said weeks. The training consisted of a three day process which took place in the field to bring more realism to the scenario. "The first day focused a lot on mounted maneuvers and learning to keep the commanders vehicle safe," said Private First Class Irving Argon, HHT, 5-4 Cav of Riverside, Ca. "As a gunner I have to be constantly aware, you have to be sharp and alert," said Argon. The second day of the course focused on Soldiers dismounting their vehicles and learning not only close quarter's marksmanship techniques but also advanced marksmanship techniques which are crucial when operating in an urban environment. "The training did a good job of getting my adrenaline flowing, it gives you a chance to build confidence in the Soldiers around you and build cohesion," added Weeks.

The third day of training put the Soldiers to the test by putting them in situations where they had to apply what they had learned in the previous days training in an intense training situation. "The third day of training is where it all comes together. It is where we apply all the lessons learned in a worst case scenario, it turned out to be very good training," said Argon. With just a matter of weeks to train in Kuwait prior to moving into Baghdad in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom Soldiers of 5-4 Cav know that these types of training events could make all the difference in successfully completing their mission in Iraq. "The training was a great experience, not just for me but for everyone who attended," said Weeks. We all train well together, they're my brothers and I wouldn't have it any other way."

▲ Troopers from the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry regiment bound through a mock iraqi village at Camp Buehring, Kuwait during Personal Security Detachment training. The troopers are currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division "Dagger" Brigade.

▶ As part of Personal Security Detachment training, troopers from the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment practice MOUT operations to sharpen their skills in urban combat. The troopers who are currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom are a part of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. The greatest Brigade Combat Team ever formed.



▼ 299th BSB Soldiers ride in a roll-over simulator as they are observed by instructors.

This is How 299th Rolls in Kuwait

Story and Photos by MAJ Koné Faulkner, 2nd HBCT, 1st ID - PAO

Camp Buehring, Kuwait – As elements of the ‘Life-Line’ Battalion, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, arrived in Kuwait they along with all the units of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division began training in preparation for their mission in Iraq.

One piece of training equipment the unit begun to have their Soldiers execute at Camp Buehring, Kuwait is called HMWV Egress Assistance Trainer (H.E.A.T.). The scenario of this training is Soldiers react to a vehicle rollover. The condition involves a five-man crew traveling in a HMMWV vehicle and the simulator provides a glimpse of what the occupants would have to do in the event of a rollover.

The training is in two-parts. The first begins when the vehicle appears to be headed into a rollover and the driver must react to avoid it. The second drill puts the vehicle into a spin one-and-half times (540 degrees) and the occupants must safely make it out with all necessary items to carry-on their mission while verifying the status of their fellow Soldiers. The standard for the training is the crew is trained to minimize injuries to personnel in the event of a rollover and all know how to vacate the vehicle without further injury.

“It sounds easy on paper, but try withstanding the forces of a 3-ton vehicle tumbling to an upside down stop in a flash,” said Maj. Bryce Pringle, 299th BSB Executive Officer, whose home town is Albany, GA. “This training is used to teach Soldiers how to save lives before the situation presents it self.”

The occupants have to disconnect headsets, release their seatbelt; Unlock combat door locks, exits the vehicle with their weapons, assist fellow crew members to exit, assess injuries, checks for fire, provide security, provide first

aid, account for sensitive items, report accident, and then assists in vehicle recovery. And by the way, in the HEAT this is all done by the Soldiers after finding themselves hanging up-side-down when the vehicle rollover has stopped.

“The name of the game is teamwork,” Pringle said. “During OIF, 20 out of the 31 Up-Armored HMMWV accidents involved roll overs. 17 Soldiers have died in M1114 Up-Armored HMMWVs and 16 of the 17 fatalities occurred in a rollover. Most Soldiers wearing seatbelts in an accident received only minor injuries.”

“Our guys executed the drill flawlessly and set the example for others to follow,” continued Pringle. “The consensus from the Soldiers was that this was very good training and gave them additional situational awareness on what to do if a roll-over occurs. A few Soldiers were gluttony for punishment and went through it twice.”



▲ While participating in vehicle roll-over simulator training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Maj. Bryce Pringle finds his way out of the vehicle.



Dagger Security Detail Hits The Streets

Story and Photos by Sgt. Brian Tierce, 2nd HBCT, 1st ID - PAO



▲ *Soldiers from Co. C, 2-1 Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, secure the balcony of a house during training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The engineers of Charlie Company are preparing for their upcoming mission in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

The streets of Baghdad are sprawling with business. As a sense of security takes hold in the Iraqi capital Soldiers of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division Security Detail are hitting the streets with their counterparts.

The purpose of their current mission is to get familiar with the routes they will be navigating over the next year as

the Dagger brigade works to provide security and transition even more of that security to their Iraqi counterpart. “Situational awareness is one of the most basic, fundamental assets Soldiers can have to keep themselves safe,” said Staff Sgt. Galo Roman, HHC 2HBCT of New York, NY. “We need this time to learn these routes to ensure we don’t make a mistake

which could cause Soldiers undue harm” added Roman. A typical day for the Soldiers currently consists of early morning briefings followed by a full schedule of convoys throughout the brigade area of responsibility. “It is a lot different now than the last time I was here, that is for sure,” said Sgt. Dustin Lerch, HHC 2HBCT of Farmersburg, IA, “Even with the

added security it is still a war zone and you have to be prepared for anything at any time.” Another aspect of the current mission of personal security is the mission the Soldiers will face in the coming year. A key part of the rebuilding process involves key leaders engaging the local leaders of the community, which involves trips out into the community to conduct

these exchanges. “We will definitely get to see Baghdad up close and personal during this deployment,” said Roman, “But for me I think there will be more handshakes than fire fights this time around.” It is only a matter of weeks now before the Daggers assume full responsibility of their area of operations from the 2nd Strike Brigade of the 101st Airborne

Division (Air Assault) but with the knowledge that is being exchanged between the Soldiers the transition is expected to be smooth. “This is actually the unit I served with during my last tour,” added Lerch, “They are top notch and we consider ourselves to be just as good so I expect no problems as we take over the area.”

There are things we can do to ensure that we do not take ourselves out of the fight. Accidental losses drain vital resources and seriously impact combat readiness. Preventing these losses; fatalities; injuries, and mission essential equipment damage due to accidents, falls on each and every one of us. All Commanders are Safety Officers and all soldiers are Safety Stewards.

ELECTRICAL

1. If it has a heating coil, motor, or compressor, it probably demands a high amount of electricity. Plug these items into a dedicated outlet. This includes: refrigerators, heaters, air conditioners, coffee pots, and irons.
 2. Never exceed the amperage rating of the outlet (12 amps max is common)
 3. When using power strips, know their limitations
 4. Never daisy chain (connect cords to each other in a series)
 5. Never splice, repair or jerry rig a broken electrical cord (replace the cord/item)
 6. If the electrical demands of your creature comforts exceed your room's wiring capacity, unplug something.
 7. If your wires are hot to the touch, unplug it, ASAP.
- No one wants to burn down their office or living quarters. But you can start a fire by overloading electrical wiring.



CAUTION: HIGH VOLTAGE

Military Improves Education On Electrocution

By Kimberly Hefling - *The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military is creating an electrical code for U.S. facilities in Iraq as part of an effort to prevent future electrocutions there. The deaths of at least 18 U.S. service members and contractors in Iraq are under investigation as possible electrocutions.

The code is being created by certified electricians hired by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gen. David Petraeus wrote in a letter to Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa. Petraeus wrote the letter in early September to Casey before he stepped aside as top commander in Iraq to be commander of U.S. Central Command.

Casey's office released a copy of the letter Tuesday.

The letter also spells out other actions taken to prevent electrocutions, such as creation of a media campaign to educate soldiers about working with electricity. Petraeus said 86,000

facilities are being inspected, and it will be next year before all repairs and improvements are made.

Petraeus added, "All leaders understand the urgency of completing the required actions."

One of the soldiers killed was Green Beret Sgt. Ryan Maseth of Pittsburgh, who was electrocuted in January while showering in his barracks in Iraq. That prompted inquiries on Capitol Hill about the electrical work done by contractors in Iraq charged with maintaining facilities used by U.S. troops.

Many of the electrical deaths have been deemed accidents because

they involved situations such as coming into contact with power lines. But others have occurred when individuals were repairing air conditioning units, doing generator maintenance or using a shower.

In a statement, Casey praised the changes, but said he'd like them to be implemented in Afghanistan as well.

"While these measures represent a significant step, the Congress must continue to exercise strong oversight to ensure these steps are carried out," Casey said.

OUTPUT TERMINALS

end frame...

*"Daggers on Target for
Mission Success!"*

- Lt. Col. Christopher Beckert
2nd Brigade 1st Infantry Division Deputy Commanding Officer

THE DAGGER EDGE
2HBCT/11D AND FAMILY READINESS GROUP UPDATE