



# Long Knife News

ISSUE 10

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# Enabling The Force



# Commander's Corner

By Col. Philip Battaglia  
4th BCT Commander

What a great month! I congratulate you on your focus to accomplishing our mission at hand. I'll share some "old man" thoughts this month on 3 of your favorite topics: family, money and leave.

The first weeks after redeployment can be a difficult and dangerous time for many of us. Your commanders and I have planned a comprehensive safety campaign to best prepare you to stay safe upon our return. Some of the training will be done here, while more is scheduled when we get back to Fort Hood and before block leave.

Your family has had to make some adjustments since you've been deployed and perhaps you have changed some



Col. Philip Battaglia

as well. It is absolutely normal to go through a period of readjustment. Make the time to sit down with your family and loved ones to talk about your experiences and theirs as well. It will be time well spent. If you are having difficulties reconnecting, the Army has many resources and people at your disposal to help – use them!

Financially, you have been making a little more money every month and perhaps saved some for redeployment travel plans or big purchases. Before you go spending the "big bucks," I urge you to make sure you can comfortably afford your purchases. It will save

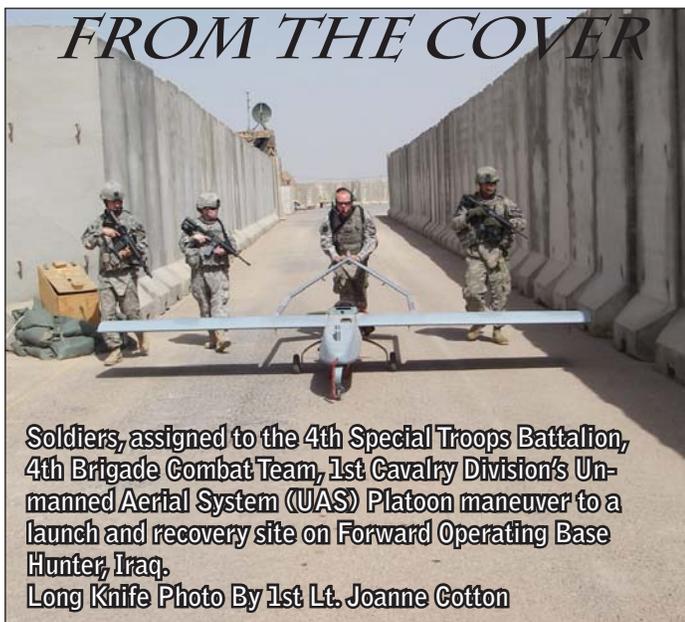
you significant financial headaches in the future if you go see a financial counselor on post to assist you plan your readjusted budget.

Make plans now for block leave – approximately the third week of June through the third week of July – in order to maximize your time with family and friends. I want you to enjoy your leave and celebrate with your friends and family – plan early and make safety part of your plan! You and your family will enjoy every day of block leave and deservedly so.

You have done a truly magnificent job – be proud and maintain your professionalism and dignity as we get back to "The Great Place."

Long Knife!  
First Team! 🇺🇸

## Long Knife News



### FROM THE COVER

Soldiers, assigned to the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division's Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Platoon maneuver to a launch and recovery site on Forward Operating Base Hunter, Iraq.  
Long Knife Photo By 1st Lt. Joanne Cotton

- Col. Philip Battaglia ..... 4th BCT Commander
- CSM Edwin Rodriguez ..... 4th BCT CSM
- Maj. Chad Carroll ..... Public Affairs Officer
- 1st Lt. Nathan Hunter .. Deputy Public Affairs Officer
- Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore ..... PAO NCOIC
- Spc. Creighton Holub ..... Photojournalist
- Spc. Rebekah Lampman ..... TV Journalist
- Spc. Terence Ewings ..... Long Knife News Editor

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# Spartans provide watchful eye in southern Iraq

By Spc. Stephen Rayleigh  
4th BSTB

COB ADDER – Since 1950, the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) was used for reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering by the Department of Defense.

Today, the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division's Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Platoon is using the high-flying, remotely-piloted aircraft to provide real-time imagery.

"We're not wasting our time out here," said Spc. Nicholas Taylor of Casper, Wyo., a UAS pilot with two years of military experience.

The UAS troopers were initially stationed here at COB Adder when the brigade first took responsibility for southern Iraq's tri-prov-

ince areas of Dhi-qar, Muthana, and Maysan in late June of 2008. But as the brigade began to expand operations, the Spartan Soldiers deployed to Forward Operating Bases Garryowen and Hunter using their extensive 'eye in the sky' visuals to monitor the brigade's ground troops, and provide increased force protection capabilities.

"Our Soldiers were up to the task," said Lt. Col. Timothy Norton, the 4th STB, 4BCT, 1st. Cav. Div. Commander. "They realized how important their role was, so relocating wasn't an issue at all."

The platoon initially moved a section to FOB Garryowen in September to support the 2nd Bn, 7th Cav. Regt.

In early October, the 21-man platoon was on the move again to FOB Hunter in the southern-

most area of Maysan. The 1st Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. Soldiers worked closely with the UAS platoon, while the Soldiers provided aerial coverage for the entire Maysan province.

In a way, the 1-9 unit adopted the UAS platoon by requesting all the necessary equipment and supplies needed to take an area from a barren patch of dirt, and turn it into a functioning launch and recovery UAS site.

"There was a lot of cooperation with 1-9; running through courses of action to find possible solutions," said Chief Warrant Officer Two Adam Morton, of Brownsville, Texas.

The challenges of the deployment have strengthened, honed and refined the skills of this group of Spartans that provide crucial aerial intelligence for their brigade.



Long Knife photo by 1st Lt. Joanne Cotton

Spc. Roy Bankhead, a trooper assigned to the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division's Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Platoon prepares an aerial systems launcher recently.

# Garry Owen troops train for victory in Fight House

By 2nd Lt. Christopher Sanchez  
2nd Bn., 7th Cav. Regt.

COB ADDER – Eighteen U.S. Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, also known as Garry Owen troops, and the 988th Military Police Company, achieved level-one certification in Modern Army Combatives March 19 after training six nights a week in a simple canvas tent here.

The troops grappled in a controlled hand-to-hand fighting style taught inside the tent, referred to as the 'Fight House.'

"The Fight House is a great way to release some of the frustrations of a deployment," said Spc. Jared Warner, a Garry Owen troop from Bakersfield, Calif.



Troops assigned to 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, grapple during a level-one Modern Army Combatives course held on Forward Operating Base Garry Owen March 19.

**Fight continued on page 5**

## Reinvestment Act of 2009

By Capt. Daniel Santander  
Long Knife Legal Office

COB ADDER – Due to the nationwide mortgage crisis, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as the stimulus plan, expanded the Department of Defense's Homeowner's Assistance Program (HAP) by providing assistance to military homeowners who try to sell their homes when they permanently change duty stations or PCS.

If a Soldier is PCSing or has in the past, they may be eligible for financial assistance if they plan to sell their home or if their home is sold after 1 July 2006. It is expected that DoD will establish policy guidance sometime in April 2009. However, now would be the time to enroll in this program if a Soldier believes they could benefit from this legislation.

Eligibility requirements for this program are:

1. Permanent reassignment requires move of more than 50 miles.
2. Reassignment ordered between 1 February 2006 and 30 September 2012 ( or earlier date designated by Secretary of Defense).
3. Property purchased (or contract to purchase signed) before 1 July 2006.
4. Property sold by owner between 1 July 2006 and 30 September 2012( or earlier date designated by Secretary of Defense).
5. Property was the primary residence of the owner.
6. Owner has not previously received these benefit payments.

To download the application packet and complete the application (DD Form 1607) go to <http://hap.usace.army.mil/homepage.html>.

Soldiers should read all instructions, and mail their completed application to the USACE (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) district responsible for the area in which your home is located a map is on the website.

Once DOD implementing guidance is received, the district should contact the Soldier concerning eligibility and benefits.

HAP benefits offset some of the losses incurred when homes are sold, purchased by the government, or foreclosed upon.

Applicants should understand that an approved HAP claim and benefit will still result in some financial loss.

The purpose of HAP is to reduce the magnitude of the housing sale losses to a level that does not wipe out an applicant's finances and credit.

Since HAP is a DoD program, Soldiers must await DoD program guidance prior to processing applications. It is anticipated that DoD guidance should be complete by mid April 2009.

Once program guidance and funding are received, benefit payments normally should take 90 to 120 days to complete, depending on numbers of applicants and staffing.

## From The Pulpit

**Dr. A. C. Dixon, once a well-known pastor in Boston, found his church needed \$2000.00 to square accounts. He and his deacons prayed about it. One deacon arose and said, "Brethren, God has answered our prayers. God will send the money in next Sunday's collections." That Sunday it rained very much, and some deacon suggested not taking the collection. The other replied, "I did not trust the weather; I trusted God!" The collection amounted to \$2600. Faith is the victory!**

**Joseph T. Larson.**

*By CH (Capt.) Walter Marshall  
4th BSTB Chaplain*

COB ADDER – Many times we will find ourselves in need of help from God, and scripture tells us the way to receive help is through faith and trust in Him. Our God is a loving God, and He wants the best for us. He wants us to be blessed wherever we go. He wants to protect us from our enemies. He wants us to be a prosperous people. He wants to pour blessing down upon us that will overflow in our lives. He wants all of this for us and much more because he is our Father. To receive His blessing and have our needs met; we must be obedient and have faith in Him. Real faith is an active faith.

Returning from a combat zone can be times of joy and times

of stress. Reconnecting and re-energizing our relationships can tax our abilities to interact with others, and cause us to react improperly. Whether we anticipate good times or difficult times, this is a time to rely on our faith. When it seems like we may come up short in "squaring our accounts," we need to look beyond ourselves and find other resources to help us through. Realizing that others, our Families, our Friends, and even God are there to help us when times get tough, and when times are good, gives us the faith to keep going.

There were two men going ice fishing one day. One of the men was experienced and went ice fishing for most of his life. The other inexperienced man knew nothing about ice fishing. The experienced

man told the inexperienced one to go on out on the ice and cut a hole in the ice. He started to do as he was told. He took four careful steps out on the ice. Nervously he took another, then two more very slow but became afraid and turned back in fear. The experienced man went out on the ice cut a hole in the middle of the ice, sat down and enjoyed his time fishing. The moral of the story is the experienced man knew the ice. He knew it would hold him.

As we redeploy let us strengthen our faith, communicate with our Family and Friends, and prepare ourselves so that we can walk the slippery "ice" of reintegration with confidence. God Bless you.

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### Fight from page 4

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A typical session in the Fight House began with a round of stretching as Soldiers talked with each other about their difficulties from the previous day's training. Following a brief after-action review, the troops proceeded with a vigorous warm-up, explaining proper procedures for falling and escaping during a fight while minimizing the risk of injury.

An experienced instructor conducted the classes each night, followed by a practical exercise in

which participants paired off and tried new techniques step-by-step. As with all other structures on the battalion's outpost, the Fight House was built from the ground-up by Garry Owen Soldiers.

Master Sgt. Daniel Pilewski, a level-four master trainer in Modern Army Combatives, and his team of noncommissioned officers, erected a spare tent and found a local Iraqi businessman who could supply mats, gloves and headgear for the training.

"We are training soldiers to build warrior spirit and regain aggressiveness sometimes lost throughout a long deployment," said 1st Sgt. Robert Bowman, a combat-ives trainer. "It's also a great way to relieve stress, keep busy and stay fit."

The instructors have certified their first batch of combative students and 12 more are expected to graduate next month. The training may be grueling, but the Garry Owen troops said the rewards are clearly seen in the Fight House.

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## Black Dragons and 10th IA Division locate weapons cache in Maysan marshes



Long Knife photo by 1st Lt. Bryan Hammond

An Iraqi Soldier secures the far side of a shallow stream while Soldiers from Battery A, 5th Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and 2nd Battalion, 41st Iraqi Army Brigade, cross the stream near Forward Operating Base Hunter during a search for weapons caches March 18.

*By 1st Lt. Bryan S. Hammond  
5th Bn., 82nd FA Regt.*

COB ADDER – Iraqi and American troops found a weapons cache during ‘Operation Chattahoochee,’ a cooperative effort to search the Maysan Province by ground, water and air for illegal munitions March 18.

The 2nd Battalion, 41st Iraqi Army Brigade, with assistance from Battery A., 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, located a collection of rocket fuses, electronic timers and

printed technical data for launching rockets during the operation.

“This is a big find for the Iraqi Army,” said Staff Sgt. Richard Butler, a platoon sergeant with Battery A and a native of Vidor, Texas. “They (10th IA) were ahead of the game and had this stuff located before we were on site. I was impressed.”

Criminals in this area have previously launched rockets toward FOB Hunter and other nearby bases. Coalition Forces responded by conducting a full-scale operation with various modes of travel to

cover as much terrain as possible.

“We have brought the rocket firing to a standstill,” said an Iraqi Soldier. “The criminals fear us.”

The troops also spent time asking local farmers for information about any unusual activity in the area and gathering valuable information for future operations.

This operation demonstrated the improving capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces and the strides they are making in keeping their country safe while leading the way in missions.

*Live The Legend*

## Romanian 'Red Scorpions' assume authority from 'White Sharks'

By Maj. Chad Carroll  
Long Knife PAO OIC

COB ADDER –The Romanian Army's 26th Infantry Battalion 'Red Scorpions,' assumed authority from the 341st Infantry Battalion, 'White Sharks,' at Camp Dracula here March 3.

"The White Sharks have set a very high standard, one we will maintain and, of course, try to better," said Lt. Col. Toma, the incoming commander of the 26th Inf. Bn. "We will be great partners (with U.S. and Iraqi forces) and the relations between us will prove that we are a team that can accomplish any kind of mission."

The 341st Inf. Bn. completed a six-month deployment in Iraq that began in September. The Red Scorpions are also scheduled for a six-month rotation.

"You had many great accomplishments over the last six months



Romanian soldiers from the 26th Infantry Battalion 'Red Scorpions' participate in a transfer of authority ceremony with the 341st Infantry Battalion 'White Sharks' at Contingency Operating Base Adder.

Long Knife Photo By Maj. Chad Carroll

and made huge positive impacts both for the Iraqi people and toward the success of the Coalition Forces," said Lt. Col. Mark Nelson, deputy commander of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division and a native Orem, Utah.

"Simply put, this is a great day for Romania, a great day for the Iraqi Security Forces in Southern Iraq and a great day for the Iraqi

people," said Nelson.

Located on COB Adder near Nasiriyah, the 26th Inf. Bn. will conduct missions in the Dhi Qar province working with the 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div., Long Knife Brigade. The 26th Inf. Bn. will conduct similar missions to those performed by the 341st Inf. Bn., to include convoy and key infrastructure security.

## Spartans become garrison, provide base protection

By 2nd Lt. Devan Pierce  
4th BSTB

COB ADDER – During this current deployment, we've often heard the slogan "Force Protection is everyone's business."

Our screen savers constantly flash messages to remind us about the importance of operational security. But what are individual Soldiers doing to protect the force on the operating base here?

"Often times information will come from local citizens working on post or Soldiers conducting patrols," said Spc. Dustin Smith, assigned to the 4th Brigade Special

Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

Smith, from Vincennes, Ind. and his battle buddy, Pfc. Jamie Saculla of Stockton, Calif. serve as intelligence analysts for the Spartan Battalion. The two troopers are at the center of our force protection efforts.

The battalion assumed garrison responsibilities for the base here during early January.

In addition to routine operational functions, the approximately 500 Spartan Soldiers help the brigade's ground forces to operate effectively in southern Iraq.

"In order for the garrison

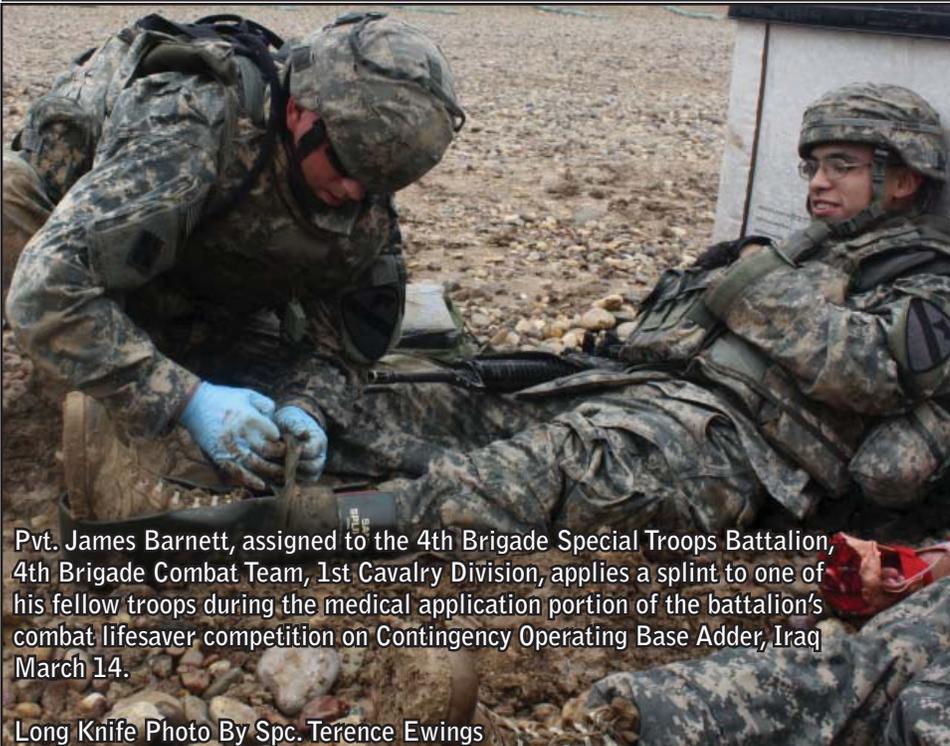
and the battalion to operate efficiently and effectively, it takes each and every Soldier we have, said Command Sgt. Major Dennis Eger, the battalion's senior enlisted leader. "It's the Soldiers that ensure the missions are a success; they are the brigade's enablers that allow the brigade to communicate and gather intelligence."

As the Spartan Soldiers prepare to complete the final two months of their deployment, it's Soldiers such as Smith and Saculla who are entrusted to make predictions about what actions the enemy could take to provide protection for coalition forces on COB Adder.



Soldiers assigned to the 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion render a hand salute during the battalion's combat patch ceremony.

Long Knife Photo By Spc. Creighton Holub



Pvt. James Barnett, assigned to the 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, applies a splint to one of his fellow troops during the medical application portion of the battalion's combat lifesaver competition on Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq March 14.

Long Knife Photo By Spc. Terence Ewings



Sgt. Maria Camacho, supply sergeant assigned to the 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, received her U.S. citizenship during a ceremony (in background) on Camp Victory March 3..

Long Knife Photo By 1st Lt. Aileen Farrell



Staff Sgt. Kristen Poe, an intelligence analyst assigned to the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division 'Long Knives,' delivers a school bag to an Iraqi girl at the UR Primary School, located in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah.

Long Knife Photo By Sgt. 1st Class Damian Steptore



o Co. A., 4th Special Cavalry Division, at the Al-Faw Palace



Maj. Jose Laguna, the Executive Officer for the 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, and Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Eger, the battalion's senior enlisted non commissioned officer, award 1st Sgt. Eric Fowler's Alpha Co. Soldiers with a physical training streamer on their guidon, recognizing that company for the highest scores on their PT tests throughout the entire battalion.

Long Knife Photo By Spc. Terence Ewings

# Spartans test medic skills in southern Iraq

By *Spc. Terence Ewings*  
*Long Knife PAO*

COB ADDER – Seven combat lifesavers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division participated in a unit medical competition here recently to determine who could provide the best combat casualty care.

Spc. Matthew Varns, an information systems specialist with the 4th Special Troops Battalion ‘Spartans’, won first place in the contest, his third major accomplishment during this deployment. The Birmingham, AL, resident also won his company’s Soldier-of-the-Month Board, then the battalion Soldier-of-the-Quarter Board, which tested the Spartan Soldiers’ mental and physical capabilities in combat readiness techniques, leadership skills and military knowledge.

“This is some of the best



Long Knife photo by Spc. Terence Ewings

Spc. Matthew Varns, an information systems specialist with 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, ‘Spartans’, aids a fellow troop during the medical application portion of the combat lifesaver competition on COB Adder, Iraq.

training I have ever received,” said Varns, who has proudly served with the U.S. Army the past two years.

The CLS competition, which included an Army Physical Fitness

Test, 5-kilometer road march and a medical identification and application exercise, was created by junior enlisted Soldiers to test their familiarity on providing combat care

UAV continued on page 11

## West Point sends priest to deploy with Long Knives

By *Spc. Creighton Holub*  
*Long Knife PAO*

COB ADDER – The United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., sent one of its own, a Catholic priest, to the front lines to minister to the border-watching Long Knife Brigade.

Chaplain (Capt.) Timothy Valentine is the only Catholic priest assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division to provide spiritual fitness to Soldiers at the many bases and outposts in the tri-province areas of Dhi Qar,

Maysan and Muthanna.

“I have a great relationship with the chaplains out here,” Valentine said. “The (battalion-level) chaplains have to be all things to all people. They take care of not only their (denomination) but all other denominations.”

Forward-deployed battalion chaplains provide religious services, which are open to troopers and civilians of all denominations. However, when Valentine is expected to arrive, the word is quickly spread throughout the remote bases be-

cause he conducts a bi-weekly Mass for Soldiers.

Valentine commonly encounters a familiar face during his visits. He worked at West Point while 2nd Lt. Walter Gradzik was a student there, and was happy to see his old friend at the forward outpost.

“I was wondering what services I could get out here,” explained Gradzik, new platoon leader of B Troop, 1st Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. “It was extremely refreshing for me to see him.”

*Re-Up Stay CAV*

# Head Hunters receive comic relief in Iraq

By Spc. Terence Ewings  
Long Knife PAO

COB ADDER – Soldiers assigned to the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division ‘Head Hunter’ Battalion took a break from their normal routine to enjoy performances of the ‘Comics Ready To Entertain’ tour that visited the troops at Contingency Operating Base Wahab, March 8.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to be able to do this for the Soldiers out here,” said Scott Kennedy, the headline act of the comedy tour. Kennedy said he has traveled overseas more than 27 times performing for troops in both Iraq and Afghanistan. “I feel that it brings a little of home to the Soldiers, and it allows them to take a break from the mission, to just sit back and have a laugh.”

After the show, the comedians toured the military installations, where the laughter and smiles

————— **UAV from page 10** —————

during highly stressful scenarios.

Most of the Spartan Soldiers said the competition was a welcomed break from routine operations the battalion performs here.

“I think all Soldiers should have this type of training,” said Varns. “It helped break the monotony, and was actually good training.” Spc. Cecilia Sarabia, one of the Spartan’s combat medics who was responsible for creating the medical training event, said the competition is important because it identifies



Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division share a laugh during a comedic performance from the ‘Comics Ready To Entertain’ tour that visited the troops at Contingency Operating Base Wahab, Iraq, March 8. This was the first Morale, Welfare and Recreation event at the remote military installation in al Sheeb, Iraq.

continued to roll as the performers spoke with some of the deployed Soldiers.

“This is definitely one of the better days of the deployment,” said Pfc. Nathaniel Chance from Sacramento, CA. “It’s always good to see

people from home, makes you feel special.”

With the Head Hunter’s comedy show complete, the comedians prepared to travel to their next destination to entertain troops during their three-day stay in Iraq.

how a Soldier would react in real life combat-care situations.

“The Soldiers will be able to take vital information from this event and apply it in future situations,” said the El Paso, Texas native. “This started as just a contest for CLS qualified troops, but it’s just as informative as it is competitive.”

“When I become a noncommissioned officer, I want my troops to have these skills and techniques because I would like them to be successful,” added Varns, who said he

always strives to exceed the Army’s basic standards.

Varns was awarded a battalion belt buckle, a 1st Cavalry Division Jersey and received his third Army Achievement Medal for winning the CLS competition.

Varns said he plans to change stations to Germany within the next year and is prepared to teach other Soldiers the invaluable medical skills he learned during the battalion’s CLS course, which could possibly save a life one day.

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[www.dvidshub.net/units/4bct-1cd](http://www.dvidshub.net/units/4bct-1cd)



# Handling legal issues before redeployment

By Capt. Steven Suchomsk  
Long Knife Legal Office

COB ADDER – Many legal issues may have arisen during the deployment which could make redeployment more difficult and less enjoyable. The Legal Assistance office, however, can help provide advice on most issues. Additionally, for those mobilized Servicemembers, legal assistance is available for two years after demobilization for issues that arose during mobilization.

If you made a will before deployment, it is still valid. You may need a new will if a significant personal event occurred, such as a divorce, the birth of a child, an inheritance or any changes you wish to make to your beneficiaries.

Likewise, if you made a power of attorney, it is still valid unless it has expired or has been revoked. Any unnecessary powers of attorney should be revoked and destroyed. If your power of attorney has been misused or abused during deployment, come see your legal assistance

office for help. Other common issues that legal assistance can help with include identity theft, being charged for items you did not purchase, consumer problems, mortgage and lease issues, divorce and child custody questions.

Has your personal property been lost or damaged during the deployment because of your service? This includes bags lost during C-130 flights or damage to your household goods while it is in storage. If so, you are entitled to file a personal claim. You have up to two years to file a claim.

To avoid issues with shipping your personal items in a container or milvan, first make sure your unit has authorized you to do so. Use a securely closed tuff box, sealed in front of someone from your unit, with a complete DD 1750 signed by two E6s or above. It is in your best interest to hand-carry or mail via insured mail any high end items to avoid loss or theft. Loss of TVs and other large electronics are not covered under a personal claim if it

is included in your personal items shipment. Remember, most war trophies are prohibited from being brought back from theater. Ask your chain of command for guidance.

As a deployed Soldier, you have gained additional legal rights. One of these rights is an exclusion from paying federal income taxes for all enlisted Soldiers and warrant officers. Commissioned officers are excluded if their total pay is equal to or less than the base pay of the Sergeant Major of the Army plus hostile fire and imminent danger pay. Bonuses and leave pay are also excluded. The exclusion starts the day of arrival in country and ends the first full month after redeployment. It is recommended to write "COMBAT EXCLUSION" at the top of your tax return. All deployed Servicemembers have an automatic 180 day extension, plus the number of days deployed between 1 JAN and 15 APR, to file your income taxes, not to exceed 285 days. If you have a tax issue, please e-mail [combatzone@irs.gov](mailto:combatzone@irs.gov) with your

— Legal continued on page 13 —

## MNF-I Commander visits southern Iraq



Long Knife photo by Spc. Terence Ewings

Gen. Raymond Odierno, Commanding General of the Multi-National Force – Iraq, compliments an Iraqi Policeman on the tactical training he has given the IPs at an Iraqi Police Station in Maysan Province March 25.

# Rough Riders become U.S. Citizens

By Sgt. Shannon Black  
27th BSB

COB ADDER – Four U.S. Soldiers legally became American citizens during a ceremony at the al-Faw Palace on Camp Victory in Baghdad, Iraq, recently.

Pfc. Grace Wanjie, assigned to the 27th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division 'Rough Rider' Battalion, was collectively part of the 250 men and women from 65 different countries who were sworn in by Lt. Gen Lloyd Austin, the Multi-National Corps – Iraq Commander.

"It felt like a new day had dawned for me and a new chapter had opened in my life," said Wanjie, a native of Nairobi, Kenya. "It was a dream come true because this means that I have access to the privileges that Americans have. Serving in the military and having the right to vote in America, which is the greatest country in the whole world, gives me a sense of pride and honor."

Wanjie successfully completed the long process with three of her fellow 27 BSB battle buddies;

Spc. Eduardo Reyes, Spc. Rosemarie Narvaez and Pfc. Dianne Hurtado also received their citizenship.

By joining the Army, they instantly became eligible for U.S. citizenship four years earlier than those who chose not to serve.

After the ceremony, Wanjie shared the experience with her family members by calling them in Kenya.

When I called them, they were so overjoyed, and my dad told

me that I was like an open door for my other siblings," said Wanjie. "He told me to make sure that as soon as I get home, I should fly the flag that was given to me during the ceremony because it represents the country that I now belong to."

When the Rough Rider battalion's newest American citizens return to Ft. Hood, Texas in a few months, they'll be stepping off the plane in a country they serve and can now say they're a citizen of.



Long Knife photo by Sgt. Shannon Black

From Left to Right: Spc. Eduardo Reyes, from Guayaquil, Ecuador, Spc. Rosemarie Narvaez, from Subic-Zambales, Phillipines, Pfc. Dianne Hurtado, from Quito, Ecuador, and Pfc. Grace Wanjie, from Nairobi, Kenya, received their U.S. citizenship during the ceremony held at the al-Faw Palace on Camp Victory in Baghdad, Iraq recently.

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## Legal from page 12

name, home address, date of birth and date of deployment. DO NOT INCLUDE your social security number.

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act gives all active duty and activated guard and reserve Servicemembers additional legal rights. If you exercised any of those during deployment, such as a stay in a court proceeding, you must check with the court as soon as you return for a court date. The protections you

have during a deployed status ends upon your re-deployment. Additionally, if a default judgment was entered against you while deployed, you have 90 days to apply for relief to re-open the case and set the judgment aside.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects National Guard and Reserve Servicemembers' ability to return to their civilian jobs at the same pay

and comparable position. For help with USERRA issues, contact the National Committee for Employer Support of Guard Reserve at 1-800-336-4590, or [www.esgr.com](http://www.esgr.com), or the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) at 1-202-693-4701, or [www.dol.gov/vets](http://www.dol.gov/vets).

For more information or help, contact Legal Assistance on COB Adder at 833-1231 or Fort Hood at 254-287-7901/3199.

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# Thunder Horse conducts IA training at Cedar

By 1st Lt. Patrick Dunn  
2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Regt.

COB ADDER – Over a three-day period, Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12 Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team trained their counterparts from the 3rd Battalion, 40th Iraqi Army Brigade on how to enter and clear a room, sensitive site exploitation and various other tactical formations on Forward Operating Base Cedar, March 2-4.

The American troops, also called the ‘Thunder Horse Battalion’, led the important training event to help the IA increase their tactical knowledge, become more confident and operate independently.

“I am very impressed with all the classes my men have received from the American Army,” said 2nd Lt. Mohammed, an Iraqi Army platoon leader. “I think that the sensitive site exploitation class was the most valuable training my platoon re-



Long Knife Photo By 1st Lt. Patrick Dunn

Sgt. Lorenzo Luna, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, instructs troops from the 3rd Battalion, 40th Iraqi Army Brigade on how to enter and clear a room during a three day training exercise on Forward Operating Base Cedar, Iraq.

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## Hitting the road with motorcycle safety

By Mr. William Cox  
Brigade Safety Officer

COB ADDER – As we get ready to go home, many will hit the roads on their motorcycle. However, remember that the road can be deadly if you don’t ride safely.

In 2007, the most recent year for statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 5,154 motorcycle riders were killed in accidents. In Texas, 375 motorcyclists were killed, the 3rd

highest in the nation. The Army statistics are no different. In 2008, the Army lost 55 Soldiers killed in motorcycle accidents and Fort Hood lost eight.

Motorcycle riding has become a more popular activity and the number of Soldiers killed while riding has also risen. Fort Hood just recently went over 100 days without a fatality. To start the fatality-free period, the last accident-ironically a motorcycle fatality-was on Novem-

ber 10th. Unfortunately it ended at 113 days February 25 by a Soldier killed while riding his motorcycle.

There have been some policy changes that motorcycle riders must be aware of on redeployment back to Fort Hood that Soldiers must comply with prior to riding. All riders that were licensed and had a motorcycle before deployment must take the two hour Motorcycle Refresher Training Course prior to operating their motorcycles.

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*Long Knife, First Team*



Long Knife Photo By 1st Lt. Patrick Dunn

2nd Lt. Mohammed, an Iraqi Army platoon leader assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 40th Iraqi Army Brigade, coaches his Soldiers through a room clearing exercise during a three day joint training exercise with their American counterparts from the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division on Forward Operating Base Cedar, Iraq.

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ceived because up until now we had no training involving sensitive site exploitation.”

“I think that the Iraqi soldiers learned a lot in a short amount of time,” said Sgt. 1st Class Benito Flores, a Thunder Horse platoon sergeant.

“The best way for them to learn is to teach each other and to continue to conduct the training as

many times as it takes for everyone to know every man’s job on their team. If we can get their (leaders) to do this, the Iraqi Army will be much better off professionally and tactically,” said Flores.

During the training, the Soldiers were visited by Command Sgt. Maj. James Redmore, the Multi-National Division - South command sergeant major, who was very impressed

with the joint training the Thunder Horse troops were conducting and emphasized how important it was to strengthen the Coalition Forces/Iraqi Army partnership for the future of Iraq and its people.

The Thunder Horse Battalion will continue to train the Iraqi Army throughout the remainder of the deployment, as well as setup future training with the Iraqi Police.

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The Motorcycle Safety Foundation courses now consist of the Basic Riders Course and the Experienced Riders Course. These courses are sequential and all riders must take both to comply with the new III Corps policy. Also there is a Sports Bike Riders course for those who own a sport or sport touring

bike.

All PPE requirements of an approved motorcycle helmet, gloves, long sleeve shirt or jacket, long pants, over-the-ankle boots or shoes, eye protection and a high visibility vest still apply. It is important for all motorcycle riders to understand that the Army requirements

for motorcycle operators apply both on and off post as well as on or off duty.

These requirements are not intended to harass riders but to help ensure their safety. No one should be the cause for the signs at the Fort Hood gates to be changed.

*Vigilant and Always Ready*

# Spartans attend Signal University while deployed



Long Knife photo by Spc. Jessica Galloway

Spartan troops from the 4th Brigade's Special Troops Battalion train on a 15M-mast satellite dish. The Soldiers learned how to properly install and emplace the dish to provide optimal coverage for the brigade's network communications system at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

*By 1st. Lt. Stephanie Worlund  
4th BSTB*

COB ADDER – Four U.S. Soldiers took time away from their current deployment in southern Iraq to receive specialized signal training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait recently.

Spc. Anrew Fryman, and Sgt. Joshua Martin, 4th Brigade's Special Troops Battalion, attended the Army CENTCOM Signal University where they learned how to better enable voice-and-data communication by accessing a PROMINA, which is a component of the brigade's Joint Network.

"I believe all Soldiers in the Signal Corps would benefit greatly from the professional and detailed instruction offered at the Signal University," said Fryman.

Spc. Jorge Castro and Pfc. Gabriel Resto, also assigned to the Spartan Battalion, completed the coveted Basic fiber Installers Course to gain expert knowledge of how to expand communications networks and provide the combat team with the ability to interface from unit to unit throughout the brigade's area of operations.

The Soldiers were selected to attend the courses to sharpen their proficiency as Signal Specialists, and to provide their units with critical communications tools here on COB Adder.

"We're already benefiting from the training in Kuwait," said Spc. Jorge Castro, from New York, NY. "Hopefully we can use this knowledge to help the next unit

when they take over for us this summer."

The Spartan Battalion is planning to send additional Soldiers to attend the unique university, which offers more than 30 courses on various communications skills. The instructors are often retired military veterans, who understand how to effectively communicate with Soldiers.

The Signal Soldiers received a certificate-of-completion and civilian college credits after completing the course. They also received credits toward promotion to the next higher military rank.

The training at the university is free to military units, and anyone can enroll at <http://www.cflccsignaluniversity.arifjan.arcent.army>.