



IRONHORSEMAN

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Communicating



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Chicago, Ill. Native, Spc. Gbenga Ayantade, a medic in Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, searches for hidden caches in Tarmiyah during a larger warrants and weapons cache operation in Nov.



The History of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment

1st Battalion, 5th United States Cavalry Regiment was formed in 1855. From its inception, it was an elite unit, with the Secretary of War Jefferson Davis hand-picking its members from a dozen states. In its 144-year history, the Battalion has participated in nine wars and has been awarded 62 campaign streamers. 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry and its companies have been awarded over 20 unit citations and boast 45 members of the battalion who have received the nation's highest award for bravery, the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The "Black Knights" have since transitioned from horseback to Bradley Fighting Vehicles, after serving valiantly in the Second World War, Korea, and Vietnam. In 1986, as the U.S. Army's only combined arms balanced Task Force, Task Force 1-5 CAV combined the sheer guts of the Infantry, the rapid firepower of the 25mm Bushmaster, and the awesome firepower of the M1 tank. The test of the Combined Arms Mechanized Battalion organization came in 1990, when the "Black Knights" deployed to Saudi Arabia and prepared to battle the Iraqi Army. 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry was the first unit to conduct a ground attack on the Iraqi Army on 20 February 1991 and went on to win more awards for valor than any other unit in the Division.

1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry received the Division order to deploy to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Forge. The "Black Knights" trained and prepared for this mission assignment. The Battalion participated in several training events, including gunnery, platoon and company STX, and culminated with a two week Mission Readiness Exercise at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Ft. Polk, Louisiana. This was done while the Battalion continued to support the no notice deployment requirement of the Division.

On October 7, 1998, The First Cavalry Division assumed authority of the Multi National Division (North) area of operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina from the 1st Armored Division. The division was the first CONUS based division to assume this mission. As part of the 1st Cavalry Division, 1-5 CAV's mission was to conduct operations to enforce the military provisions set forth by the Dayton Accords.

In order to conduct successful peace missions while in theater, soldiers were extensively trained on mine awareness, country and cultural customs and checkpoint and convoy operations. Training was conducted on all levels including individual readiness training, leader/staff training, and a Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE). During the six months, squads and platoons from the 1st CAV Division conducted over 9,000 combat patrols and escorted over 1000 convoy movements over some of the most rugged terrain and austere conditions.

The "Black Knights" were called upon once again to be America's Vanguard as it maintained 7 month's of DRB status for the 1st Cavalry Division. In Nov 2001, the Black Jack Combat Team (BCT) deployed to Kuwait as a participant in "Operation Enduring Freedom" as a direct response from the 11 Sept 01 terrorist attacks on the United States. The BCT returned to Fort Hood on 4 Apr 02 following an outstanding deployment.

The "Black Knights" stood combat ready when the order to prepare to deploy for "Operation Iraqi Freedom" was given. Black Jack was integral in assisting the 4th Infantry Division deploy to Iraq as well as preparing our soldiers and equipment to deploy to Iraq. The Brigade stood down for the Iraq deployment in April 2003 and soon followed this mission with an NTC rotation in July 03.

Returning to the Middle East, "Black Knights" deployed in support of OIF 06-08 and concentrated their efforts on improving security, local government, economics and essential services for the Iraqi people. By the end of their deployment, "Black Knight" Soldiers saw violence reduced in their areas by 85-percent, allowing the brigade to help the Iraqi people with the establishment of essential services, schools, medical care and local markets.

Most recently, the "Black Knights" deployed to Iraq to once again provide security and stability to the people of Iraq as they make the transition to a free and democratic government during OIF 09-10. The "Black Knights" were attached to their sister Brigade: 1st BCT in Baghdad. Aligned with the battalion's rich history, their deployment centered around a pivotal moment in the history of Operation Iraqi Freedom; that of implementation of the Security Agreement, realignment of U.S. Forces, and transition focusing on civil military relationships, economic development, and partnered security operations. During the tour, the battalion provided the foundation of a safe and secure future for three various geographic locations: Adhamiyah, Rusafa and Tarmiyah.

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Do you have a story to share?

The *Ironhorseman* welcomes columns, commentaries, articles, letters and photos from readers. Submissions should be sent to the BCT Public Affairs office at shejal.pulivarti@us.army.mil or brian.f.carlin@us.army.mil. Include the **author's name, rank, unit and contact information**. The *Ironhorseman* reserves the right to edit submissions selected for the paper.

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From the desk of Col. Tobin Green**To the Troopers of the Ironhorse Brigade:**

As we go through the holidays of Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas and New Years, I want every Trooper to know that although we may be separated from home, we can still appreciate and celebrate the Holiday season in Iraq, coming together as a family with brothers and sisters in uniform. At the same time, our loved ones know that even if physical presence is not possible, we are with them in spirit. Although half way around the world, members of the Ironhorse team are a close-knit bunch. And regardless of individual faith traditions, we can readily identify with one another because of all the things we share.

This holiday season we are not home with our families because we volunteered to serve our nation, we take pride in our service, and our country has asked us to be here in Iraq. The Iraqis need us. Host nation security forces, government officials, and the Iraqi people themselves have made incredible progress. But as events bear witness every week, the Iraqis are not yet ready to stand alone.

I know how hard it is for many Troopers to be away from loved ones right now. For some, this deployment represents their first Christmas away from home. For others, it is the third or fourth time they have sacrificed family for this mission. Our families miss us like we miss them – and they pay a heavy price so that Ironhorse Troopers can remain on point when our Nation needs us here. We do not question those orders. We do our duty – to the very best of our ability – while looking forward to reunion with the people we care for most in this world. CSM Norman and I could not be more sincere when we tell you how humbled we are to serve with fellow Ironhorse Troopers.

I encourage everyone to communicate regularly with family over the holidays. Take time to make contact with spouses and children, with parents and in-laws, with close friends and even family pets. Remove the anxiety for those back home by letting them know how we are doing in Iraq. While deployed in a war zone, there is no better gift for the people who love us than to reassure them that we are healthy, happy, focused on the tasks remaining to complete this deployment with honor, and committed to returning every Soldier back home. Our loved ones will also find comfort knowing that each of us has a support network in Iraq – a battle buddy or squad mate or caring NCO – who provides us a sense of family and safety in MND-Baghdad. So tell them about it. Positive communication is a morale booster for everyone.

Continued on Page 5

All of our Soldiers, and our families, are increasingly aware of our pending return to Fort Hood. There is good reason to be excited. We have accomplished incredible things here, and will depart having made our “slice” of Iraq a better place now than when we found it – which is what great organizations do. But to redeploy with the fullest sense of achievement, we must finish strong. And the period just prior to redeployment represents the window of greatest risk for accidents and injuries to our Troopers. Statistical data bears out time and time again that good units can lose their focus during their final days in theater, take shortcuts, fail to enforce standards, and suffer tragedy as a result. But we are not a statistic. We are a disciplined outfit, overflowing with dedicated and caring leaders. Our remaining time in Iraq has no predetermined outcome. Continued success will require vigilance and contributions from every Soldier and unit.

Have a great Holidays – and thank you for your extraordinary accomplishments on behalf of the American and Iraqi people. Remember - IRONHORSE NEVER QUILTS! We never quit on our mission. We never quit on our team-mates. We never fail our Soldiers. We never leave a comrade. And we never stop supporting our families at home. We are responsible to each other and to our unit. We stay in the moment, ready and able, pressing the fight, and giving our enemies no quarter.

May God continue his generous blessings on our Troopers and families in the coming year.

IRONHORSE!
TEAM FIRST!

TOBIN L. GREEN
COL, Cavalry
Commander, Task Force Ironhorse

“Lancers” Warrior Ac

By Pfc. Bailey Jester

JSS UR, Iraq – The students of the Warrior Academy, located at Joint Security Station Ur, conducted a foot patrol after receiving classes taught by the **Soldiers from Company A, 2nd “Lancer” Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.**

“This class is really good for our Soldiers,” said Capt. Moammer, the executive officer for the 2nd Battalion 44th Brigade Iraqi Army Division. “They are training and gaining experience from the U.S. Soldiers. The U.S. Soldiers know what they are doing, they have done this before, and my Soldiers respect that.”

“The Warrior Academy is designed to help the Soldiers from the 2-44th IA Division with basic soldiering skills, that way they can teach them to their Soldiers,” said San Antonio native Staff Sgt. Marzo Rosas, the company intelligence support teams noncommissioned officer in charge assigned to the “Lancer” Battalion. He hopes that training events like these will make the ISF more efficient and less dependent on the Americans.

The Warrior Academy is a three day course which teaches basic rifle marks-

manship, weapon handling and safety, basic tactical movements, first aid, and combat patrolling. Combat patrols are built into the curriculum to give the Soldiers a change to use the skills they have learned.

“I feel the patrol is one of the most important parts of the training,” said Moammer. “We use the patrol movements, searching techniques and everything else we have learned up to this point. We can see what we need to work on, and improve ourselves.”

On the evening of Oct. 20, one of the Warrior Academy classes went on a patrol mission to practice what they had been taught in class. They formed up and headed out the gates of JSS Ur. The Iraqi Soldiers led the formation, with the **“Lancer” Soldiers close behind.**

“We wanted them to feel in control of the patrol, this was their patrol,” said Saipan native Staff Sgt. Benito Santos, NCOIC of the Warrior Academy assigned to Co. A, “Lancer” Battalion.

As the IA led the way through the gates, they came across multiple obstacles: large mud puddles, rocks, traffic and children.

“They respected the civilians,” said San-

Academy leads the way

tos. “This will help them build better relations with them, and earn trust from most of them.”

Throughout the patrol the IA stopped several vehicles and searched them. The patrol is organized so that individuals and teams have separate tasks like searching vehicles and passengers. During their searches they open all doors and scan the interior for anything suspicious like seat covers undone, weapons hiding under the seats, or anything else out of the ordinary.

After searching the interior the IA move to trunk, where they thoroughly searched boxes or other containers found in there.

While searching civilians, they check pockets and look for anything that might cause harm to themselves or another civilian.

When the patrol came to a temporary halt, Soldiers used the opportunity to kneel and scan the area.

When they had returned the instructors sat the IA Soldiers in the classroom and started discussing what happened during the patrol, in the Army known as an after action review.

“Your first patrol went very well,” Santos congratulated the IA troopers after

the patrol.

They split the class into two groups and each team was required to determine three negative and positive actions performed during the patrol.

“Discussing what you did during your patrol helps you for the next time you are out there,” Santos told the students.

“It will better stick in your mind.”

“We want the IA to become more stable,” explains Rosas, “We don’t want to tell them how to fight, we just want to provide them with more options.”

There are different parts of patrolling that are already ingrained into the Iraqi Soldiers minds such as the hand signals they use for giving directions.

“Patrolling side-by-side with the IA helps show them the way we do things,” said Moore, Okla., native Cpl. Christopher Cannon, basic rifle marksmanship instructor assigned to Co. A, “Lancer” Battalion. **“We aren’t forcing the way we do things on them, but it helps show them that there are other options to consider.”**

“This course is helping the IA Soldiers advance in being Soldiers,” said Moammer, **“and this is helping to build a good relationship between the U.S. Soldiers and the IA Soldiers.”**

“Stallions” celebrate Halloween

By 1st Lt. Michael Neel

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – As the sun rose on Camp Taji, Iraq on the 31st of October, the Soldiers of Annihilator Company, 2-8 CAV, got a special Halloween treat this year from their new commander, CPT Matthew Burch. When CPT Burch took command a little more than a week before the end of October, there were plans for combat operations in the Taji area. But the Soldiers of Alpha Company took to the streets of Camp Taji looking for targets unknown to them since they first arrived in theater in February. Instead of terrorists they were in search of elusive First Sergeants and other items during a Halloween Scavenger Hunt.

The plan was simple enough, the Soldiers had just moved from their small Joint Security Station at Aqur Quf to the huge site of Camp Taji. And while many of the soldiers from 2

-8 CAV had been here on previous deployments, it was the new Soldiers that had no idea of where anything was on a camp site this large. So the command team of CPT Burch and ISG Rusty Owens developed the plan for a scavenger hunt on Halloween that would not only let the soldiers know different parts of the camp, but also conduct PT, and build esprit de corp. The hunt was step one in a plan of multiple competitive events throughout the rest of the deployment to earn points and compete for prizes which the command team is putting up. Other future events include a Thanksgiving football tournament and a talent show.

The hunt was an overall success in the eyes of the soldiers. Initially hesitant to buy in to the idea of a scavenger hunt, but as soon

as the starting pistol sounded it didn't take long for the Soldiers and their leadership to realize the possibilities and fun of the days events. Items ranged from the common black cat, to the sighting of an elusive First Sergeant from another company, to the ridiculous of trying to fit seven Soldiers into a portable latrine. The rules stated that all of the items found had to be documented through one digital camera, and in that same shot had to be that units Platoon Leader. While each of the Platoons did their best and were very creative with some of their items, it was the men of 3rd Platoon under 1LT Russel Raikes and SFC Michael Foote squeaked out a victory for the day. Overall the event was a rousing success and all of the men are looking forward to future combat operations as well as the many alternative exercises their new commander has for them.

Father and son serve second tour together

By 1st Lt. Josh Risher

JSS ISTIQLAAL, Iraq – A father and son serving in the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division got to spend some rare time together on 14-15 Nov., when the **son's platoon conducted training at Joint Security Station Istiqlal.**

Although they are neighbors in Killeen, Tex. Staff Sgt. James R. Byington, a cavalry scout platoon sergeant in C Troop, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, and Sgt. James B. Byington, a combat medic in Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, have rarely seen each other since both deployed to Iraq in February. With 2-8 CAV spending the first half of the deployment separated from the rest of the brigade, and 1-7 CAV residing at a remote JSS, they have not had an opportunity to spend any time to-

gether.

The Kingsport, Tenn. natives had a similar experience during Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08, when their lodgings were only 200 meters apart. However, their mission schedules frequently kept them working at separate outposts, and they only got to see each other every other week. Aside from taking leave at the same time, this recent visit was the first time they had seen each other since February.

The father, a veteran of Operation Desert Storm, returned to active duty in 2004, just as his son was entering his senior year of high school. The family moved from Kingsport, where both had grown up, to Fort Hood, Texas. During leave the following spring, the younger Byington enlisted at the same recruiting station where his father had joined sixteen years earlier.

Serving in the same brigade, they see each other on a regular basis at Fort Hood, but family time is a rare occasion in theater. They enjoyed the time together while it lasted though, as it added a welcome break from the often hectic schedule of a deployment. When asked if they planned to spend a lot of time together their first weekend back at home, they both chuckled, **“We'll probably just catch up on sleep for the first bit.”**



JSS ISTIQLAAL, Iraq-Sgt. James B. Byington and his father, Staff Sgt. James R. Byington, pose together at JSS Istiqlaal on Nov. 14.

The Free Shot!

Q & A with CSM Norman, Ironhorse BCT Command Sergeant Major

Q: Do you have dates for block leave yet?

A: Nope. All we have are tentative dates, and I would rather wait until we have a firm date. A lot goes into consideration for this and it is not as easy as you may think. Flight dates are just one consideration.

Q: When is the Brigade Ball, will there be one, and is it mandatory?

A: Since I am an "Old Trooper", I thought we would bring back an old tradition in the Army and do a Dining In instead.

Q: BDUs, ACUs, or Multicam— which is better?

A: I am still partial to OG's. No hiding the "Fat" in that uniform. And they hold starch a heck of a lot better and go well with "spit shined" Jump Boots.

Q: Would you come back to Iraq in 10 years on vacation?

A: I don't know. Do they have a golf course or a micro brewery somewhere?

Q: Since the Army is family oriented, why is there less time spent with your family before deployment? What does our redeployment schedule look like and will we be able to have more time for our family when we aren't training?

A: The Army is a great family oriented institution. But you have to remember that just prior to a deployment is when the last bit of training and validations for that deployment take place. That is when you do the last little bit of things to ensure as much as possible that you are ready as a team and that you possess the skill to enable you to return to your family.

Q: What is your favorite unofficial 1st BCT Motto?

A: That's easy....."Ironhorse Never Quits!"

Q: What is the real reason we have to wear reflective belts?

A: Like everything else in the Army, there are things put in place because someone else was too stupid to follow common sense rules. We have to wear these dumb reflective belts because retarded people walk down the middle of the street and get ran over or hit by vehicles.

Q: What do you plan on doing when you retire?

A: Relaxing and finally enjoying the company of my family.

Q: Are we authorized to have a reorganization day before redeployment?

A: What is a "Reorganization Day"? If you mean Organization day, then you are a little late, since the Regiments in this Brigade were all constituted in July to September. Learn your unit history!

Q: After retirement, if there was a viable, safe golf course in Iraq would you entertain the thought of coming back here to work as a civilian contractor?

A: I don't care if Tiger Woods himself invited me over.....



Q: Do you really believe we'll receive 18 months dwell time after redeployment?

A: Sure do.

Q: When will Special Recruiter Assistant Program (SRAP) be reopened for SM to apply?

A: To be honest, I have no idea. If you stop and think about it though, and look around at what all is going on, do we really need this program anymore?

Q: What is your favorite sport? Sports team?

A: That would be "America's Pastime". BASEBALL. Is there another team other than the Yankees?

Q: If you could be any animal, which would you be?

A: A cheetah.

Q: What is your favorite car?

A: The 627 horsepower Mercedes Benz SLR McLaren. But since I don't have \$600,000 to spend on a car.....I have to settle for the C350.

Q: What is your favorite ice cream?

A: Pralines and Cream.

Q: Who shot J.R.?

A: Sue Ellen's sister....what was her name? Kristen!

Q: Why do all of the polices and standards only seem to apply to E-6 and below? Are only E-6 and below able to be injured or assaulted?

A: No, they apply to all.

Q: Why are there more NTVs driving around than military vehicles?

A: I have no idea. I walk everywhere.

Q: Why do we have to wear eyepro to the shower trailer?

A: Ask your squad leader.

Q: Why are there so many dogs and cats roaming around?

A: I don't know, let me see...the birds and the bees have something to do with it.

Q: Why are there four Brigade TOC buildings? They all have the same sign and it's confusing.

A: It is funny that you should mention that. I am looking for someone to paint the signs on the front of each one.



What are YOUR questions for CSM Norman?

Send them to shejal.pulivarti@us.army.mil and next month CSM Norman will answer some more of your questions.

CSM Norman's answers are not official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of the Army or the 1st Cavalry Division.

Cavalry, IA troopers earn Silver Spurs

By Pfc. Adam Halleck

CAMP TAJI, Iraq-In order for a trooper to be inducted in the Order of the Spur, and earn the privilege of wearing silver spurs, he must survive a demanding test of tactical and technical knowledge.

Known as a “Spur Ride”, the twenty four hour plus event is considered one of the most physically and mentally grueling Army traditions that dates back to the beginning of the United States Cavalry.

On Oct. 7, ninety seven troopers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, along with six Iraqi Army Soldiers from the 37th Brigade, 9th IA Division, challenged themselves for their chance to earn the coveted silver spurs.

In the former days of the cavalry the uninitiated Soldiers were called “shave tails”, a reference to the shaved tails of their horses which symbolized that the troopers inexperience and unproven skills.

During the event, candidates are pushed to their physical limits during a ten mile road march. The experience is conducted by the troopers’ peers, superiors and subordinates, all of whom earned their silver spurs during a previous spur ride.

“Come on ops! You know you want this,” shouted spur holder 1st Sgt. William Aimes to the battalion operations sergeant major, Sgt. 1st Class Ward Wright, who was participating in hopes of receiving his induction.

“You can’t task me out here, but I can make you low crawl,” joked Aimes.

The spur holders pull no punches when testing the candidates. The basis behind a “Spur Ride” is to test the versatility of a cavalryman to work as a member of a team under extreme levels of stress and fatigue.

“They [the spur holders] make it very tough to earn your spurs,” said Spc. Phillip Hobbs. “Not only do you have to road march ten miles, you have to survive the physical and mental stresses the spur holders put on you,” added the Louisville, Ky. native. “It’s a great feeling when you’re done though, because you and your team have proven yourselves as cavalrymen.”

As a cavalryman, being inducted into the Order of the Spur provides legitimacy in troopers’ abilities and experience.

“A long time ago, not having spurs meant you were an amateur, unskilled and unproven,” said Lt. Col. Eric Schwegler, commander of the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment. “It was only through training, preparation, and testing did the candidate emerge as a peer among real troopers.”

“Last night was a sort of validation,” Schwegler added, during the Order of the Spur induction ceremony. “You qualified yourselves to stand among a lot of great cavalry troopers that have earned the right to wear these silver spurs.”

Maintaining the tradition of the Order of the Spur is one way that Soldiers here connect to the history of the United States Army. Sharing their traditions with their Iraqi counterparts leaves a lasting impact and strengthens camaraderie between both security forces.

“It was a great experience to do this with our American friends,” said Pfc. Ayad Madhloom Husain, an IA Soldier who earned his spurs during the event. “I hope that we in the Iraqi army can one day have our own traditions as well.”



CAMP TAJI, Iraq-Los Angeles, Calif. Native Sgt. Jose Martinez (left) and Sgt. John Noval, both assigned to 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, sing the Army Song during a “Spur Ride” on Camp Taji Nov. 7.

December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 AIDS Awareness Day	2	3	4	5
6	7 National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8	9	10 Human Rights Day	11	12 Hanukkah Begins
13	14	15	16	17 Wright Brothers Day; Pan American Aviation Day	18 Islamic New Year; National Regifting Day	19
20	21 First Day of Winter; Forefather's Day	22	23	24	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa Begins; Boxing Day
27 Islamic Ashura	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		

3			4	2	9	8	5	
	4						6	
5		7	6		4			
	8		3	6				
7	1		8		4		5	2
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		9			5	8		1
8							6	
1	5	6	9	2				7

Easy

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	3	6			7	2	
	9		1				
		4		8		7	9
8				1			2
	6	7		4		5	
					3		8
		1	4			9	2
		9					5

Medium

2				4	5		
			1		8		
		3	5			7	6
	5			6			
			7	8			
			3				1
6	2			5	4		
		4		9			
		9	4				7

Hard

Don't go too fast! The game is easy to play but difficult to master!

SUDOKU
*It's easy to play Sudoku!
Simply fill every column so they contain every number between 1 and 9.*

“Garryowen” Soldiers take training out in sector

By 1st Lt. Josh Risher

JSS ISTIQLAAL, Iraq—Soldiers in Troop C, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division taught their Iraqi Security Forces partners from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Federal Police Division, dismounted movement tactics at Joint Security Station Istiqlaal.

The training focused on maintaining tactical intervals and utilizing formations appropriate to the terrain they encounter. This special training gives the FPs the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct operations in the Istiqlaal Qada.

Noncommissioned officers from Troop C, 1st Sqdn., 7th Cav. Regt., introduced the concepts of staggered columns and wedges to the FPs during the classroom instruction. After instructing the techniques for both team and squad sized elements, the class went outside, where the pupils practiced using hand signals to communicate changes in formation.

They also practiced their bat-

tle drills as supporting elements, conducted bounding exercises, and reacted to enemy contact.

The training concluded with a combined patrol to the rural area of Rashidiyah, where they implemented their newly learned skills. They moved down the streets of the local town, across fields, and through dense brush along the riverbank, maintaining tactical intervals and silently communicated through hand signals for several miles.



JSS ISTIQLAAL, Iraq— Cpl. Timothy Bennett, a cavalry scout from Killeen, Texas, reminds the Federal Policemen to watch the roofs of buildings for possible threats during dismounted movement training at JSS Istiqlaal. The Soldiers conducted team and squad movement training with their Iraqi partners from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Federal Police Division. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Josh Risher)

Familiar Faces



“Lancers” enhance education opportunities in Adhamiyah

Story By 2nd Lt. Robert Kelly

BAGHDAD, IRAQ— Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division and the 1479th Civil Affairs Army Reserve Company from Queens, N. Y., are working around the clock to provide civil capacity support to the Adhamiyah area of Baghdad.

“The Civil Affairs team is currently the main effort of how we support the Iraqis” said Colorado Springs, Colo. native, Capt. Daniel Lichlyter, commander of the Company D, 2nd Bn., 5th Cav. Regt.

This support comes in many forms, from projects to rebuilding local schools, to providing monetary grants to local businesses in the area to promote economic growth.

The civil affairs team is at the center of improving the quality of life in Adhamiyah. The team consists of Chief Warrant Officer Joseph Berdis, Staff Sgt. Abel Torres and Staff Sgt. Frank Halstead, all natives of Queens, N. Y.

Since hitting ground in Adhamiyah in August 2009, and incorporating with the 42nd Super Military Transition Team, this civil affairs team has completed over 20 projects and processed 42 micro grants in the Adhamiyah, Su leik, and Sha’ab areas.

Every week, the civil affairs team attends the Adhamiyah District Council meetings, alongside security forces representatives and local sheiks, developing ideas and courses of action to improve civil capacity in the area. The Adhamiyah Project Working Group sends a list of possible candidates for civil affairs projects.

The civil affairs team conducts site assessments and develops scopes of work, then bids out the projects to local contractors. They will then run the packet through their chain of command for approval and receive funding. The civil affairs team frequently visits the respective project sites to conduct quality assessments or quality control of the work. When the work is complete, they coordinate and conduct opening ceremonies and pay the contractor.

Many of the larger projects are schools being remodeled to accommodate a more modern classroom or building new schools to increase the opportunities for the younger population to actually take advantage of the educational benefits.

“Doing these projects and working with the local leaders in the area really allows us to help make a difference in the Adhamiyah area” said Berdis, the sMiTT team leader.

Micro grants, small money grants given to local businesses in the area that are struggling to stay afloat, are also a big part of the civil affairs work in Adhamiyah. There are several ways to find candidates for micro grants, anything from getting suggestions from local sheiks, Sons of Iraq leaders or just walking down a crowded market area and talking with the local population.

After going through an interview and selection process, the money is given to the business owner to make improvements on their business or hire new employees. Employing more locals provides alternate means of making an income, rather than resorting to terrorist activities for money. It also shows that the U.S. Forces are here to help.

These micro grants and projects allow the Soldiers of Co. D to interact with the local population in a positive manner.

“I think without the dedication and persistence of our civil affairs team here in Adhamiyah, civil capacity would almost be non-existent, and the local population knows that, and even the 42nd Iraqi Army Brigade is catching on to how important civil capacity is in their area of operation,” summed up Eagle River, Al. native, Maj. Sidney Topf, chief of the 42nd MiTT team.



BAGHDAD, Iraq-Children participate in class at a local Adhamiyah school recently renovated by the 1479th Civil Affairs Team, attached to the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. The school was a commander’s emergency relief program project intended to enhance the education opportunities for the local populace. (U.S. Army Photo)



BAGHDAD, Iraq-Staff Sgt. Abel Torres, from Queens, N.Y., assigned to the 1479th Civil Affairs Team attached to the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, interacts with children at an Adhamiyah school that was recently renovated through commanders emergency relief program. (U.S. Army Photo)

“Black Knights,” IA patrol to discourage criminals



JSS TARMİYAH, Iraq– Holly Hill, S.C. native, Staff Sgt. Gerald Bush, a squad leader for Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, searches through dried reeds for weapons and ammunition during a cordon and knock in Tarmiyah Nov. 11. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)



JSS TARMİYAH, Iraq– Chincoteague Island, Va. native, Pfc. David Hill, a driver for Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, walks through Tarmiyah during a cordon and knock in Tarmiyah Nov. 11. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)



JSS TARMİYAH, Iraq– Holly Hill, S.C. native, Staff Sgt. Gerald Bush, a squad leader for Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, clears an AK-47 that was found at a house in Tarmiyah during a combined cordon and knock conducted with Iraqi Army counterparts Nov. 11. The search was conducted to eliminate the possibility of insurgents residing in the neighborhood and rid the area of any illegal weapons. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)

“Centurions” conduct small arms training with IA



JSS WAREAGLE, Iraq— Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, instruct and train Iraqi soldiers from the Field Engineering Regiment, 11th Iraqi Army Div. as they fire the M16 rifle on Joint Security Station WarEagle Nov. 21. (Photo by Spc. Bryce Ponce)



JSS WAREAGLE, Iraq— Fort Lauderdale, Fla. native Sgt. Loretta Saint-Remy, a trainer assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, inspects the gear and armor of an 11th Iraqi Army soldier before he fires on the range during a session of small arms training conducted with their partners from the Field Engineering Regiment, 11th Iraqi Army Div. on Joint Security Station WarEagle Nov. 21. (Photo by Spc. Bryce Ponce)



JSS WAREAGLE, Iraq— Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, provide instructions to their partners from the Field Engineering Regiment, 11th Iraqi Army Div. during small arms training on Joint Security Station WarEagle Nov. 21. This is the third training event between the 11th IA soldiers of the FER and the Soldiers from HHC, 1st BSTB, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. (Photo by Spc. Bryce Ponce)

“Muleskinner” maintenance leads the way

By Bravo Company

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Today in Bronco land, we had a special guest mechanic come down to our motor pool to get dirty with the Soldiers. Lt. Col. Gregory Holmes, Battalion Commander of 115th Brigade Support Battalion, was on the shop floor assisting two Bravo Company mechanics in the replacement of a hub seal on a MRAP. Pfc. Andrew Locklear and Pfc.

Joshua Odonnell got a chance to put the “Big Boss Man” to work. This very tough job requires attention to detail and not to mention a little bit of muscle. The Bravo Company mechanics witnessed firsthand the display of both skills from the Battalion Commander. And lastly for everybody that wanted to ask the age old question- “Yes, He got DIRTY!”



CAMP TAJI, Iraq– Lt. Col. Gregory Holmes, commander of 115th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, assists two mechanics replace a hub seal on a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle at the Bravo Company maintenance bay on Camp Taji. (U.S. Army Photo)



CAMP Taji, Iraq– Pfc. Andrew Locklear, mechanic for Company B, 115th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division replaces a hub seal on a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle on Camp Taji. (U.S. Army Photo)

“Ironhorse” celebr



JSS ISTIQLAAL, Iraq— Compton, Calif. Native Command Sgt. Major James Norman, command sergeant major for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, carves the turkey for Thanksgiving Dinner at Joint Security Station Istiqlaal Nov. 26. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)



JSS ISTIQLAAL, Iraq— Leaders from the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, Thanksgiving Dinner at Joint Security Station Istiqlaal Nov. 26. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)

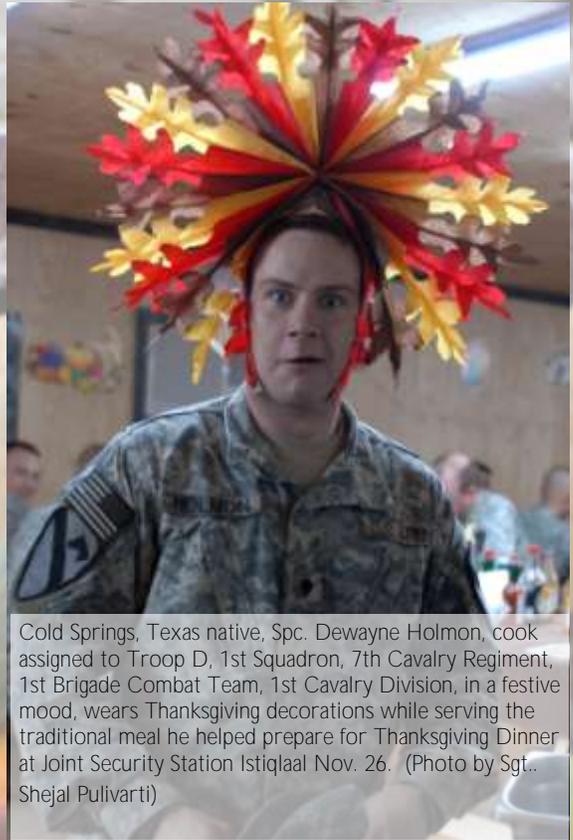


JSS TARMIAH, Iraq— Soldiers from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, play a friendly game of touch football during their Thanksgiving celebrations on Joint Security Station Tarmiyah Nov. 26. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)

brates Thanksgiving



1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, serve Soldiers a special Thanksgiving meal. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)



Cold Springs, Texas native, Spc. Dewayne Holmon, cook assigned to Troop D, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, in a festive mood, wears Thanksgiving decorations while serving the traditional meal he helped prepare for Thanksgiving Dinner at Joint Security Station Istiqlal Nov. 26. (Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti)



JSS MUSHADA, Iraq— Soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, compete with each other in a pie eating contest during their Thanksgiving celebration at Joint Security Station Mushada Nov. 26. (Photo by Pfc. Bailey Jester)

Photo by Sgt. Shejal Pulivarti



IRONHORSEMAN