

HEARTBEAT

The Official Magazine of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division



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Col. Arthur Kandarian, outgoing Strike commander and Col. Dan Walrath, commander, 2nd BCT, embrace each other during Strike's Change of Command Ceremony on Fort Campbell's division parade field, July 15



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Words from the Top



During this Thanksgiving season I am reminded of the many blessings secured by the service and sacrifice of STRIKE Soldiers and Families.

One year ago this month this brigade was in the final stages of Operation Dragon Strike – a three month operation to clear key districts surrounding Kandahar City and the most significant action of the brigade's deployment. This operation seized control of areas previously dominated by the Taliban insurgency, reversing the momentum of the insurgency in Kandahar province, and creating the beginnings of a stable environment that remain in place today. This brigade's action one year ago is the most recent example of many where the STRIKE brigade has answered the nation's call for a disciplined Air Assault Brigade Combat Team that fights where told and wins where it fights.

Since redeployment we have focused on resetting the brigade team. I have been honored to serve as the commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team and the historic 502nd Infantry Regiment every day since my change of command last July and I welcome every new STRIKE Soldier and Family to the team. Each of you will play an important role on our next rendezvous with destiny.

Every Soldier and Leader has done a phenomenal job resetting the brigade's equipment and systems as evidenced by our strong performance on the recent division command inspection. I congratulate all of the STRIKE Soldiers who have excelled in individual skills training, earning Expert Field Medical Badges, Expert Infantryman Badges, Air Assault badges, Warrior Skills Training, Sustainment Gunnery Training, and Eagle Marksmanship Academy and Eagle Tactical Athlete Program training. These critical skills will form the foundation for disciplined, fit and trained small units as we now begin training paths to retrain and prepare our squads, sections, platoons and companies/troops/batteries over the next 15 months for an anticipated return to Afghanistan in early 2013.

With STRIKE Soldiers and Families such as you, CSM Smith and I are confident that together we can accomplish any mission regardless of difficulty, and we are thankful for the dedication and service you exemplify on a daily basis.
Happy Thanksgiving!

-Col. Dan R. Walrath



The Doctor's Orders with Capt. Christopher Forbush

I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself to the Soldiers and Families of Strike. I am Capt. Christopher M. Forbush, the new Strike Brigade surgeon.

I recently arrived here from my last assignment at Tripler Army Medical Center and I am glad to be returning to Ft. Campbell. I am a DO (Doctor of Osteopathy) board certified in Family medicine. For those who may be unfamiliar with the different medical degrees, a DO is a type of physician who receives MD training while as well as training in musculoskeletal manipulation(chiropractic). As a family medicine "Doc" I have a very wide scope of practice covering everything from general practice to surgical procedures and obstetrics.

In the few short months since

my arrival, one of the issues that has come to my attention is the way in which our Soldiers go about receiving routine health care. The majority of our Soldiers have recently returned from a deployment where they may have sustained injuries or developed other health concerns that need to be addressed. Understandably, all Soldiers wish to receive care as quickly as possible, but it is important to follow the established procedures.

These established protocols ensure all soldiers receive an appropriate evaluation and treatment as quickly as possible. The key to accomplishing this is the unit aid stations. Going to the unit aid station will not only ensure you receive appropriate care in a timely manner, but it is also a requirement. All Soldiers who need

medical care must go to sick call first (unless it is an emergency). The unit medics and physician's assistants are highly trained and can most often treat medical issues right there at the aid station.

When soldiers do not follow these procedures, by-passing the unit aid station and going straight to Lapointe, they take a valuable appointment slot away from their battle buddy. There are only a designated number of appointments per day at Lapointe Medical Clinic and a Soldier's five minute intervention to receive a medication at Lapointe, wastes a 30 min appointment slot needed to treat other Soldiers with more complex medical condition. Assist yourself and your buddy, go to sick call and see your unit medics and physician's assistants first. Doctors orders!

The Chaplain Says... by Chaplain (Capt.) Dana Krull

Have you ever felt like the holidays are more trouble than they're worth? Like visiting family and friends shouldn't result in so much stress? Like you can't remember the last time you had a "normal" Thanksgiving or Christmas without some knock-down, drag-out fiasco that's worthy of a daytime drama? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then congratulations: you're human!

Ever since Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden and got themselves evicted from paradise, human relationships have been continually

strained by the problem of sin. Therefore, it shouldn't be a surprise that so many people find the holidays to be incredibly stressful!

But just because it's common doesn't mean we're helpless. Turning to God in prayer, both personally and with a community of like-minded believers, will equip you to not only endure the holiday season, but to actually enjoy it. Attending worship services will provide the spiritual basis for reconciliation to take place. Breaking bread and sharing stories with the people you love will likewise inspire mutual affection that will sow the seeds of

forgiveness to begin the long process of breaking through the rock.

No, STRIKE brothers and sisters, it isn't January yet: but that's a good thing. There's still time to make a conscious choice to rise above the fray if conflict does break out, and to decide to love the people around us even when they seem unlovable. After all, that's what God does for us when we sin! I am praying that as you read these words, regardless of the forecast for your holiday season, God will shine a ray of hope into your life and that He will provide for you and your loved ones in amazing new ways. Happy holidays!

STRIKE Physical Therapy

In this issue of the Heartbeat, I'd like to address a growing problem, hip pain. Ruck marches are increasing in distance and I can always tell when a unit has had a 12 mile ruck, because my doorstep is covered in "hip pain" the next day. The hips are the foundation for all movements done with the lower body. Everything from rucking, to rope climbing requires dynamic hip strength. For the purposes of this article, when I refer to hip strength, I'm referring to all muscles that attach to the hips and perform movements of the hips to include hip flexion, extension, outward and inward leg movement, not just the muscles used at the club.

Think of it this way, every time you are using only one leg for support (like, every time you take a step) the muscles in the standing leg's hip are contracting and tightening. This works to keep your hip from popping out like a teen-age girl with too much attitude. The amount of strength required is dramatically increased when you add weight and/or increase stride length, like during a ruck march.

In addition to forward propulsion, we all rely on our hips to get us through life, which doesn't always come at us head on. During intense activities our power comes from the hips; be it going forward, sideways or backward. TC3-22.20, the new training manual for Army Physical Readiness Training, has started to pick up on the need we have for this type of activity in the Army. They have a section called "Hip Stability Drills" that target all 4 planes of hip motion and strength. I fully recommend adding them to your routine. In the gym, I would include side lunges and rear lunges. The lunge is such a functional exercise anyway, and when you add additional planes of movement it brings it to a whole new level. To progress, I would include plyometric activities that go from a mid to deep squat and down again; jumping to the sides and backwards, double leg and then progressing to single leg.

You all work too hard to let a training weaness get in your way. Include multi-planar hip strengthening in your routine. If you need more ideas, come find me. If you make it a priority to take care of your body, it will take care of you. Do the work and stay out of my clinic.

STRIKE Family Readiness Group

Dear Strike Families,

As the Thanksgiving Holiday approaches, I am filled with gratitude for the privilege to be part of an amazing and historically heroic brigade. After the change of command in July, I have been honored to meet so many Strike Soldiers and fellow Strike Spouses who warmly welcomed me into the Strike Family. I have truly enjoyed getting to know you and meeting so many of your precious children!

Our three children, Jacob, Isabella, and Gabrielle (ages 12, 11, and 8) are also thrilled to be part of the Fort Campbell community and enjoy going to Mahaffey Middle and Lucas Elementary School. After being in a civilian school in Rhode Island for the past year, they missed being with other military children who understand their way of life!

Danny and I have been together for almost 20 years. Having endured multiple deployments during many stages in our marriage, I have the deepest respect for the tremendous sacrifices you make as an Army Family. Military children, who exemplify courage and strength at such a young age, especially continue to be a source of inspiration to me as well.



Although my involvement in the Family Readiness Group started as a young bride with unconditional love for my husband, through the years it has evolved into an unconditional love for all military families. During the last few years, attending almost 50 memorials for our fallen heroes has strengthened my resolve to continue to serve those who demonstrate selfless service every day.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my battle buddy, Sandra Smith, spouse of our legendary Strike Brigade CSM Alonzo Smith, a true great American hero! As the Strike Brigade FRG Advisors, Sandra and I, along with all our wonderful Battalion FRG Advisors, are dedicated to using the resources available to serve our Strike Families, and we look forward to serving beside you in the future.

Warmest wishes for a blessed Thanksgiving Holiday!
Strike Spouse Strong!

-Christine Walrath



STRIKE's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (STRIKE BOSS) is a program that supports the overall quality of life for single STRIKE Soldiers. STRIKE BOSS identifies well-being issues and concerns by recommending improvements through the chain of command.

STRIKE BOSS encourages and assists single Soldiers in identifying and planning for recreational and leisure activities. Additionally, STRIKE BOSS provides single Soldiers the opportunity to participate in and contribute to their respective communities.

Meetings are soon to be held every month to discuss current issues, upcoming events and how to better the lives of STRIKE's Single Soldiers.

To get involved and/or to become a representative for a battalion, squadron, battery, company, troop, contact Sgt. Joe Padula, the new STRIKE BOSS President at: joseph.padula1.mil@mail.mil

"Together, we will learn and then implement how to better ourselves and our battle buddies around us, absolutely."

-Sgt. Joe Padula

Safety Standards With Safety Charlie

As winter set upon us, we realize it's harder for us to maintain some sort of physical activity we are accustomed to.

With Winter's plummeting temperatures and shorter days can compel even the most dedicated fitness enthusiast to just "skip it," many people find themselves at a loss for how to stay active during the colder months. It's important we come up with a plan to stay active in winter. Think of opportunities to get active as much as possible. Attitude is also important. Working out in winter doesn't mean you have to go out in the cold, as each Unit has a gym. Don't use the temperature as an excuse to hibernate. Winter activity is important if you want to stay healthy all year round.

If you look at winter exercise as inconvenient, it is. Instead, think of it as an opportunity to stay healthy. Walking is very good exercise. In winter, using a treadmill is a great substitute for walking and running outdoors. Stairs are also very useful; up and down the stairs for 10 minutes is a good option.

Now, try to increase the intensity if you can. Climbing stairs is another good exercise option. Doing it three times a day at 10 minutes per session can provide you with your daily cardio requirement.

Most organizations have basic gym equipment i.e. dumbbells, jump ropes, an exercise ball and even hula hoops. Having your own equipment at your organization makes it so much easier to workout. You can't find a more convenient set up. It also promotes consistency which is very important in exercise. This will keep the boredom out of exercising in winter.

Combine exercise and TV time. Do sit-ups, push-ups, jumping

jacks or lunges during commercial breaks of your favorite movie or TV show. You can also buy a yoga or aerobics DVD and follow along with the program.

If you'd rather go out and have some winter fun, go ahead. Just remember a few safety tips:

1) Warm up your muscles before going out. Cold weather makes your muscles stiff. Not warming up adequately can make you prone to injury.

2) Exercising in daylight is safer than nighttime activities. If you can't avoid it, wear reflective materials. It would be much easier for motorists to see you.

3) Layering your clothes will effectively keep you warm. You can just take off the top layer if exercising gets you too hot. Avoid sweating as wet clothing can easily get you chilled. The cold weather may fool you into thinking you're not thirsty; Truth is, you need to hydrate even if you don't think you need it. Drink plenty of water throughout the session.

4) When lifting weights, always use the buddy system to help prevent injuries.

5) Also remember to end your exercise session by stretching out properly.

The excesses of the holidays make themselves evident in winter. Skipping your winter exercises can worsen your post-holiday weight gain even more. You have many winter workout options. Find one that suits you best. And always remember assess the situation and be safe!

***STRIKE* Retention Update** by Sgt. 1st Class Cesar Andujo

The new Fiscal Year is upon us and with it some remarkable changes to the retention program. Traditionally Soldiers had a two year window in which to reenlist and could rest assured that they could receive a reasonable bonus for reenlisting in a critically short MOS. Or, if they were in a support or balanced MOS, they could historically expect to be able to wait until they deployed to reenlist and get a tax free "Deployed Bonus" No longer. Senior Department of Defense leadership has purposed to cull the force and retention is feeling the effects. This year has brought remarkable and unprecedented changes in the way retention does business.

This year's retention mission will be executed in two phases. Phase 1 captures those Soldiers with an ETS of Jan. through Sept. 2012 and the opportunity window will close on Jan. 31. Soldiers who do not reenlist prior to Jan. 31, 2012 will ETS. Exceptions to policy will not be considered. Phase 2 captures all Soldiers whose ETS falls from Oct. 2012 to Sept. 2013. These Soldiers' opportunity window will commence in Mar. 2012 to a date to be determined by Retention Management Branch.

But the reenlistment window is not all that has changed this year. The Reclassification In and Out Calls (MILPER MESSAGE 11-278/280) have identified an unprecedented number of Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) as Over-Strength. This means that many Soldiers cannot stay in their MOS, they must reclassify into a shortage MOS. The list of Shortage MOSs grows small as well. Compounding the challenge for those Soldiers who want to remain on active duty is the fact that there is limited training seat availability for most MOSs.

The overwhelming message that Big Army wants to communicate to Soldiers is that you are well advised to make a decision to stay earlier rather than later. The Strike Retention team is committed to reenlisting quality soldiers and will assist any qualified Soldier in the reenlistment window. Our offices are located in building 4062 directly behind the Strike Dining Facility.

Our Retention Staff includes:

MSG Milhauser - Brigade Senior Career Counselor
SFC Robinson - 1-502ND IN Career Counselor
SFC Andujo - 2-502ND IN Career Counselor
SSG Mack - 1-75TH CAV Career Counselor
SSG Hunte - 526 BSB Career Counselor
SSG Sineath - 1-320TH FA Career Counselor
SFC Jones - 2BSTB Career Counselor



Equal Opportunity for STRIKE - Sgt. 1st Class Ta Mouton -

Equal Opportunity Program's mission is to ensure equal treatment of Soldiers and Family members without regard to race, color, religion, gender or national origin and provide an environment free of sexual harassment. Also to serve as the commander's representative and primary staff advisor on EO matters concerning all assigned or attached personnel within 2BCT-STRIKE

Sexual assault can be prevented. As Soldiers, our core values demand that we act. There are no passive bystanders. We must protect our Team Members. When you see or sense the risk of sexual harassment or sexual assault, it is your duty to intervene and protect your fellow Soldiers.

VICTIM'S RIGHTS

- The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for their dignity and privacy.
- The right to immediate and effective medical care and attention, including long-term follow-up treatment, if eligible.
- The right to be reasonably protected from the accused offender.
- The right to be notified of court proceedings.
- The right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the offense. (unless the court determines otherwise)
- The right to talk with the attorney for the Government in the case.
- The right to restitution, if appropriate.
- The right to information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender from custody.
- The right, if desired, to confidential or restricted reporting of the sexual assault incident.

POINTS OF CONTACT ABOUT ANY QUESTION OR CONCERNS

2BCT EOA/DSARC (SFC Mouton) (270)798-7317
DIV SARC (Ms. Christina Lopez) (270)798-6383

Dog Handlers Return to Fort Campbell



Dog Handlers with 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), rest their Tactical Explosive Detection Dogs after landing at Fort Campbell Army Airfield, Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 24. This is the first of two flights bringing the handlers back to Fort Campbell.

After many months in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom 2010-2011, Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division finally returned home.

Dog Handlers and Tactical Explosive Detection Dogs with Strike Brigade returned home to Fort Campbell, Aug. 24 and Sept. 15 as part of the brigade's redeployment.

The majority of Strike Brigade returned to garrison status from April to May, while the TEDDs and their handlers remained behind in support of 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division. This gave the 10th Mtn. Div. the same edge in combat patrols that Strike Brigade had, finding more explosives, ordnance and illegal drugs.

"We went out on over 200 missions," said Pfc. Ryan Scroggins, a dog handler with Strike Brigade and native of Wichita, Kan. "With my dog, [Boris], we found a lot of stuff."

After eight weeks of training stateside, the TEDDs and their handlers deployed to Afghanistan where they escorted combat patrols throughout Strike Brigade and then 3/10s area of operation. The dogs sniffed ahead of the main

group, searching for buried items. On many occasions, TEDDs helped Combined Task Force Strike locate hidden weapons caches.

"Marko [the dog] found a lot of hidden weapons," said Pfc. Monty Garmon, a dog handler with Strike Brigade and native of Deer Park, Texas. "He found four caches, with things like 25 rocket-propelled grenades, 10 crush detonation boxes, remote control detonation devices, trip wire and detonation cord."

Removing the items saves the lives of Soldiers and local civilians as the weapons can't be used to harm anyone, said Garmon.

"It was an awesome experience," Garmon said. "Having a dog on the battlefield is a morale boost to Soldiers. You feel safer knowing the dogs can find hidden explosives and most people like dogs anyway."

The transition from combat to garrison gives Soldiers time to unwind and relax following the stress of deployment, said Scroggins.

"This is an emotional time for all of the dog handlers," said Scroggins. "It's really overwhelming. We helped a lot of Soldiers out there and saved lives by finding dangerous things before they could hurt someone. But coming home, no

word can really describe it."

Upon returning to Fort Campbell, the handlers said good-bye to their four-legged companions. The TEDDs were provided by Von Liche Kennels, based in Ind., and were given back to their original handlers.

"I'm glad to be home but sorry to give Atilla back," said Spc. Mason Brown, a dog handler with Strike Brigade and native of Whittier, Calif. "We both worked hard out there. [We] went on a lot of patrols and helped find explosives and components. He's a really good dog."

Following the hand-off of the TEDDs, the handlers were greeted by their families and command staff of Strike Brigade at Hanger 3. After a brief welcome-home ceremony, Soldiers reunited with their family members before regrouping and finishing their reintegration process.

The Dog Handlers and TEDDs return home marks the end of Strike Brigade's first deployment to the Afghan theater.



Dog Handlers with 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), reunite with loved ones after a welcome-home ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky., Sept. 15.

STRIKE FORCE'S DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE REGIMENT

Soldiers dedicate much time and energy into training, service and sacrifice every day. 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) always recognizes and remembers those who served with honor and distinction throughout its ranks.

Strike Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, inducted 35 Soldiers into the Distinguished Members of the Regiment, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 4.

"The DMOR honors Soldiers who distinguished themselves through their service while serving under the regimental colors," said Capt. David Forsha, commander of Company A, 2-502nd. "This is a great honor for me and everyone else here. All the Soldiers today worked hard and fought bravely in Afghanistan. I'm proud to serve alongside Soldiers such as these."

Forsha distinguished himself in Afghanistan during Strike Brigade's recent deployment. While on a mission with elements of Co. A, Forsha and his men were injured by multiple house-borne homemade explosive devices. Forsha refused medical evacuation, assisted in the recovery and care of wounded Soldiers and helped establish and maintain security to help fight off insurgent small arms fire. Forsha's action earned him the Army Commendation for valor in combat and a place in the DMOR.

"I was just doing what I was supposed to be doing," Forsha said. "Being inducted into the DMOR is the highest privilege I could receive here, I couldn't be more honored. This is something I will be taking with me for the rest of my life."



Col. Daniel Walrath, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), attaches the Distinguished Member of the Regiment pin to the lapel of CSM Troy Henderson, command Sgt. Maj. with 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT at a ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 4.

Forsha's story is just one of many who deployed to the Kandahar Province of Afghanistan. Other Soldiers worked under fire as well.

"I helped in the defense of a strong point," said CSM Troy Henderson, command Sgt. Maj. of 2-502nd. "We came under attack pretty hard but we pushed [the insurgents] back and were able to evacuate our wounded Soldiers and damaged vehicles."

Henderson earned the Army Commendation for Valor in combat for his actions in aiding the defense of the strong point. Henderson also earned a Purple Heart when his patrol was hit by a homemade explosive device.

These are just some of the stories of Soldiers who served with distinction in service to their country. Soldiers will continue to be recognized for their service throughout the Strike Brigade.



Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), stand with their Distinguished Member of the Regiment awards at a ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 4. The ceremony inducted 35 Strike Force Soldiers into the DMOR to recognize their service during Strike Brigade's recent deployment to Afghanistan.

STRIKE IRON CHALLENGE



A four-man team made of Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, drag a Skedko medical litter 100-meters on Johnson's Field during the Strike Iron Competition, July 21. The competition's combat focused events are designed to prepare and strengthen Soldiers for future combat operations.

The six battalions of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), sent four of its best Soldiers to Fort Campbell's Johnson Field on Tennessee Ave., July 21, for a combat focused physical training competition called the Strike Iron Challenge.

The battalion teams raced against each other and time in full battle gear, flipped over-sized tires, drug towing chains, carried full medical litters, pulled weighted down Skedkos and hauled logs for a total of 500 meters. The intense competition is designed to build camaraderie between the Strike battalions and prepare the competing Soldiers for future combat operations.

"This is good for cohesion and esprit de corps and the whole event is combat oriented," said Staff Sgt. Craig Jordan, the operations noncommissioned officer with Strike's Headquarters and Headquarters Company. "I've personally pulled a Skedko down the side of a mountain for 300 meters when a guy got shot in the leg in Afghanistan and this definitely prepares you for that."

The Strike Iron Challenge is held on the third Thursday of each month and the Strike Soldiers involved were impressed by the latest competition's physical demands.

"It was a smoke-fest, but it definitely showed me and tested my ability for where I am and if I am ready for combat or not," said Spc. Anthony Oliver, an infantryman with Company B, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment. "This helped build a better relationship with

my team and we now know where each other are at physically and know what we need to work on."

The month of July's winning team came from Strike's 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment. The "Strike Force" team earned a brigade challenge coin, a four-day pass and a brigade certificate of achievement. The Strike Brigade recommends other units in the division hold similar sweat pouring and bond building competitions.

Other brigade's should follow suit and there is a challenge put out there to see a Rakkasan, Bastogne or Currahee Iron Challenge, said Jordan.



A four-man team made of Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, the winning for the month of July, pose for a picture on Johnson's Field after the Strike Iron Competition, July 21. The competition's combat focused events are designed to prepare and strengthen Soldiers for future combat operations.



**STRIKE
Iron
Challenge**



**July 21st
&
August 18th**



TEAM TOP GUNS WINS AUGUST CHALLENGE

Recently, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, won the Strike Iron Competition, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 18.

The competition focused on teamwork as Soldiers from different battalion teams within Strike moved through a challenge course for best time. Soldiers were also graded on their combat equipment, as each Soldier was required to wear body armor, helmet and personal medical kit throughout the event. Soldiers found to be missing anything from their required equipment were docked points from their performance.

The Soldiers lined up at the starting point at Johnson Field and began their rotations through the course. Teams from the Strike battalion took turns on the field.

After all the battalion teams completed the tire flip, tow assembly drag, medical litter carry, medical litter drag and log carry, the Top Guns team was declared the winner of the competition and awarded a four-day pass for their achievement.

"We did great out there," said Staff Sgt. David Creighton, a field artillery section chief with 1-320th, native of Tampa Bay, Fla., and winning team member. "Our team won a battalion-level competition and was selected to compete in this brigade-level event."

The team only had one week to prepare for the event, but pushed themselves to win the contest, said Creighton.

"It was difficult," said Staff Sgt. Estuardo Torres, a fire directions center chief, native of Los Angeles and winning team member. "We all stayed focused, though; I got my motivation from my teammates and that helped carry me through."



A four-man team made of Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, the winning team for the month of August, pose for a picture on Johnson's Field after the Strike Iron Competition, Aug. 18. The competition's combat focused events are designed to prepare and strengthen Soldiers for future combat operations.

STRIKE FRG's APPRECIATED



Lt. Col. Johnny Davis, commander of 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, Command Sgt. Maj. Brandon Haywood, command sergeant major of First Strike and the First Strike Family Readiness Group leaders, pose for a picture with their certificates of appreciation during a Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at Cole Park Commons, July 11. Strike gave its gratitude at the event towards the brigade's FRG leaders for its efforts and accomplishments during Strike's deployment to Kandahar, Afghanistan.

No matter where the war may be, there are always two types of fighters. One of course is in the combat zone, physically confronting the enemy threat. The other is here at home providing concerned family members and loved ones with the support needed during a time of great sacrifice.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), recognized these fighters at home, known as the Family Readiness Group, with a Volunteer Recognition Ceremony for its FRG members at Fort Campbell's Cole Park Commons, July 11. The brigade expressed its gratitude towards the FRG's dedication and accomplishments during Strike's deployment to southern Afghanistan.

"You can't place enough emphasis on having quality volunteers like we had in the FRGs," said Command Sgt. Major Andre Johnson, the command sgt. major of 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Squadron. "The job that we did would not have been capable of doing if it not for our strong FRG leaders."

While Strike Soldiers were fighting the insurgency in Kandahar, Afghanistan, the FRG volunteers provided the families of deployed Soldiers with official, accurate command information, helped solve family problems at home, reduced stress and prepared families for deployment and redeployment.

"The FRGs were invaluable to us while deployed by creating a critical link between the deployed Soldier and their family back home, supporting them in whatever they needed," said 1st Sgt. George Fitzke, the first sergeant of Strike's Company B, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment. "Not only in times of need or in times of crisis, but in general keeping them informed in what was going on and how the Soldiers were doing. They are a critical asset to any unit deploying," said Fitzke.

In total, 59 Strike FRG members were recognized and given a certificate and awarded for their public service. The recipients enjoyed the brigade-sponsored event, but do not volunteer to be rewarded.

"To me, I didn't do anything extra special, I just did what was expected of me; being there for the wives when they needed me and hopefully that gets passed along and they'll be able to help somebody down the road," said Julie Hulsizer, an FRG leader for Co. C, 1st Btn., 502nd Inf. Regt. and wife of First Strike Soldier Spc. Chad Hulsizer, an infantryman in the company. "We do this because the FRGs are extremely important to the mission."

The selfless service of Strike's FRG has without question, made a strong Army family even stronger during 2nd Brigade's latest deployment and recognizing their accomplishments is a priority for Strike.

"This makes me feel proud and it is really one big happy family," said Sandra Lee Smith, the wife of Command Sgt. Maj. Alonzo Smith, the Strike command sergeant major. "We help each other, we lean on each other and we are stronger because of it. It is really great to recognize all of their hard work and let them know how we truly appreciate them."

STRIKE Holds Marriage Retreat in Nashville



Strike's Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion and 526th Brigade Support Battalion, attend a marriage seminar with their spouses at a Strong Bond sponsored marriage retreat in Nashville, Tn., July 16.

An Army married couple is a strong married couple. The Soldiers and spouses of today's Army typically deal with more stressors than the average married pair. They face separation and anxiety during deployments and also confront demanding training schedules while at home. Making Army matrimony successful takes dedication. To help its married Soldiers, two battalions in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), held a Strong Bond sponsored marriage retreat the weekend of July 15, in Nashville at the Millennium Maxwell House Hotel. The retreat's goals were to build stronger relationships for the couples while providing a relaxing environment for the recently redeployed Strike Soldiers.

"One of the reasons we do marriage retreats is to give couples an opportunity to talk about an issue or some things they want to work on in their marriage," said Chap. (Capt.) Jeff Sheets, Strike's 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion chaplain. "We've created an informal environment at a hotel in civilian clothes



A Strike couple participates in an exercise helping each other find out more about each other during one of the provided classes. The retreat's intent is to create stronger Army marriages within the brigade.

and let the couples 'let their hair down' and spend intentional time together and getting away from Fort Campbell for a bit helps allow that."

The retreat had classes and exercises for the attending Strike couples that touched upon topics focused on today's married Soldiers.

"A class like this can definitely help an Army marriage; it takes everything on the inside and puts it on the outside without the fighting and arguing," said Spc. Josh Lundy, a mechanic in 2nd BSTB's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, who attended the retreat with his wife Janette. "You also get the perspective from Soldiers who have been married longer, so it could help younger marriages. I think it's a real good course."

Some of the couples agreed the classes are useful for the spouses new to the Army family and provide answers to questions.

"I think this is very good especially for my wife because she is just coming into the military life," said Sgt. James Burnett, a military police sergeant with the Strike Brigade and who recently married his wife Elizabeth in June. "A lot of questions were answered for me just by listening to the wives who have had the Army life style for quite some time now," said Elizabeth.

The three-day retreat brought the Strike couples closer together as the brigade continues to face some of the issues concerning today's married Soldiers.

"Marriages can be under a lot of stress, especially after a deployment, but going through a weekend like this and investing in your relationship is what speaks the most," said Chaplain (Capt.) Dana Krull, Strike's 526th Brigade Support Battalion chaplain. "The spouses here have shown that they want a successful marriage and this program will help them achieve their goal."



Chaplain (Capt.) Jeff Sheets, chaplain, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), discusses some of the issues concerning the Strike spouses at the Strong Bond sponsored marriage retreat.

TOP GUN SOLDIER HALTS SERIAL ROBBERS

Something as simple as a Soldier cashing a check at a certain bank on a particular day at just the right time helped stop serial robbers causing some Clarksville businesses a lot of grief.

Pfc. Preston Clayton, Company G, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, decided that he and his buddy, Spc. Justin Armstrong, also with Golf Company, wanted to meet their wives for lunch Aug. 9.

So, the two Soldiers agreed to meet their better halves at U.S. Bank on Fort Campbell Boulevard in order for Clayton to cash a check before their meal.

"I was at the third or fourth teller down, and this guy walked in wearing a baseball cap, sunglasses, a thick coat and a backpack," said the soft-spoken Clayton. "At first, I didn't think too much of it, but did think it looked a bit funny with it being summertime."

Clayton said he was waiting on the teller to

return his military ID from his transaction when he looked around and the man was gone within just a few seconds of being in the bank.

"After he walked out, the teller ran around telling everyone she'd just been robbed," Clayton said. "It took a second for it to click, but I ran out the door after him."

Clayton said his wife later informed him the bank robber went left and he went right around the building, but both men ended up near a privacy fence behind the bank.

"As I was rounding the building, I saw him jumping the fence, so I ran toward him and started to jump the fence right behind him," he added. "I was close enough to him to hear him hit the ground after he jumped the fence."

Clayton said as soon as he got to the top of the fence, the robber had already jumped into a waiting taxi van.



U.S. Bank on Fort Campbell Blvd. was robbed Tuesday, August 9th around 12:40pm. Suspect was caught due to the quick actions of a Clayton.



Pfc. Preston Clayton, HHB, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, was honored by the City of Clarksville in an award ceremony held during the Sept. 1, City Council meeting. Mayor Kim McMillan recognized Clayton for his heroic actions.

"They peeled off when they saw me coming," Clayton said. "So, I went back in the bank, and the police had gotten there by that time."

Clayton said he had to give a written sworn statement at the bank, and while he was filling it out, police called in that they pulled over a taxi van at Firestone on Fort Campbell Boulevard near Burch Road.

"Detective Jim Knoll then took me down to the Clarksville Police Department to interview me," Clayton added. "Actually, they took my wife, too,

because she saw him coming out of the bank, but they took us in separate vehicles."

"They asked us if we could identify the guy, but both of us couldn't say for sure it was him as we caught only part of his face," he said. "By the time we left CPD, though, Mr. Knoll told us both that the guy had confessed to not only that bank robbery, but the Wal-Mart robberies that have taken place in the area, too."

Arrested for the robberies were, Ted Russell Morse, Alpharetta, Ga.,

Terry Louis Morse, Oak Grove, Ky., and Carson Lynn Poore, Clarksville, Tenn.

Knoll added that Clayton's actions were brave and selfless.

"His actions resulted in the arrest of three men linked to our Wal-Mart pharmacy robbery," said Knoll. "Oak Grove wanted them for their Wal-Mart robbery, too."

Knoll said these guys showed no signs of lying low and were committing more crimes with very little time in between each one.

"It's a rule of thumb that the more robberies a person or group commits, the higher the probability of the escalation of violence," added Knoll. "Clayton was a key element in keeping these men from whatever their future intentions were before we had to find out whether the robbers were willing to seriously injure

or possibly kill someone." Clayton said when he was returned to the bank, the teller told him the robber told her he had a bomb in his bag.

"Funny thing is, my buddy was sitting in his car with his wife by this time and he saw me busting out of the building, he didn't know what was going on," he laughed. "My wife even said she thought I was running after someone I knew."

Clayton said he found himself running after the perpetrator without considering the consequences.

"Consequences" is something Knoll wants local citizens to consider, however.

"Clayton was uninjured and the bad guys were caught, but it could have turned out tragically, too," said Knoll. "If the suspect had a gun or truly had a bomb and wasn't concerned about his own life,



Pfc. Preston Clayton, HHB, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, is interviewed by local media in front of Clarksville's City Hall building, Sept. 1.

the result could have been much different."

Knoll said he just wants to present both sides of trying to stop a crime.

"Too many situations have been documented where a Good Samaritan, a store clerk or someone trying to do the right thing, have been severely injured," added Knoll. "We can never in good conscience recommend that someone put themselves in harm's way over material items." Even so, Knoll and the Clarksville Police Depart-

ment are proud of Clayton.

"He certainly helped the citizens breathe a little easier knowing this group is behind bars," he said. "We see Clayton's actions as another shining example of how the military willingly and without regard for their personal safety step up to protect us around the world and in our neighborhoods." Clayton was undaunted by the risk he took chasing the robber.

"We're told that we're Soldiers all the time, in uniform or out, on-post or off-post," he said. "Well, I was in uniform and I just reacted."

Clayton said he agreed with Knoll that if someone ever finds themselves in that situation and feels like it's not safe, he wouldn't advise going after them. "In my case, adrenaline was part of it, but it was more about me doing the right thing," he added.



Pfc. Preston Clayton, HHB, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment and his chain of command, poses for a picture in front of Clarksville's City Hall building, Sept. 1. Mayor Kim McMillan recognized Clayton for his heroic actions.

Secretary of Army Meets with Mighty Strike



The Secretary of the Army, Hon. John McHugh, stands with Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), at Strike Rock at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11. McHugh toured Strike Brigade's headquarters and ate lunch with the command team and select Soldiers from each battalion during his visit to the brigade.



Col. Daniel Walrath, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), greets Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, upon his arrival to brigade headquarters at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11



Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, reviews a monument to fallen Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), during his visit to Strike Brigade headquarters at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11.



Col. Daniel Walrath, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, review a memorial to fallen Strike Soldiers from Afghanistan, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11.



Col. Daniel Walrath, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, review a memorial to fallen Strike Soldiers from Iraq, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11.



The Secretary of the Army, Hon. John McHugh, eats lunch with Soldiers and command staff of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11. McHugh visited with selected Soldiers from each battalion within the brigade during his visit.



Col. Daniel Walrath, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), briefs Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, on equipment at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11.



Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, greets Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at the brigade's dining facility at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11.



Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, is served lunch by Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at the brigade's dining facility at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11.



Col. Daniel Walrath, commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), visits with Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, during a lunch at the brigade's dining facility at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 11.

FIRST STRIKE VIETNAM VETERANS REVISIT FORT CAMPBELL

The war in Viet Nam made an indelible mark on American military history. From combat tactics and training methods to weapon technology, the battlefield of Southeast Asia set the stage for warfare practices today.

American Veterans from the Viet Nam war visited Fort Campbell and 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Sept. 15.

The twelve service members were hosted by the Family Readiness Support Group and 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT. The group of veterans, including several who weren't able to make the event, meets together regularly and requested to visit the base for one of their get-togethers.

The veterans began their visit with a trip to the Sabalauski Air Assault School, where they were presented demonstrations on obstacle course training and repelling

methods. This highlighted some of the differences between the older styles of Air Mobile tactics versus today's Air Assault tactics.

"In Viet Nam we didn't get to repel out of the helicopters," said former Sgt. Ron Burboa, who had been an infantryman with 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Abn. Div. and native of Oxnard, Calif. "Back then we would jump from 10 or 15 feet above the ground in full gear. We were lucky; no one ever broke a leg or got hurt badly doing that."

This was a special experience, since even though having served with the 502nd IN, he had never been to Fort Campbell before, Burboa said.

"I went to the 101st in Viet Nam straight out of Basic Training," said Burboa. "After my tour ended there, I went to Fort Bragg, [North Carolina] with the 82nd Airborne Division."



Lt. Col. Joseph Power, First Strike Commander and Command Sgt. Maj. Brandon Haywood, First Strike CSM, talk with former Staff Sgt. Wayne Dugger, formerly with 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Mobile)

From there the group moved to the Pratt Museum, showcasing the history of the 101st Airborne Division from its beginnings to present day. Former Staff Sgt. Wayne Dugger, who had served with 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, and a native of Greenbrier, Tenn., paused to review some of the displays of weapons.

"We were issued the original M-16 rifle," said Dugger. "The first model had several problems, like jamming and bad barrels. Over the years [the Army] fixed those issues and added a lot of improvements."

Many Soldiers issued the first generation M-16 rifle would agree it had severe deficiencies in performance and functionality, said Dugger.

"There were many issues with rifles jamming back

then," said former Staff Sgt. Larry Goodwin, who had served with 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 11th Infantry Division, and a native of Springfield, Tenn. "[The M-16s] were issued without cleaning kits and had problems with the bolts. It was a serious issue; many Soldiers died because their rifle jammed and they couldn't clear the round or shoot to defend themselves."

A modern M-4 rifle, with its technology improvements over its predecessor, would have been greatly appreciated during their time in Viet Nam, said Dugger and Goodwin.

The veterans reminisced about their war-time experiences and swapped short stories about their time in the jungles.

"You had to watch out for snakes," said Burboa.



Viet Nam veterans watch as an instructor demonstrates an obstacle course maneuver at the Sabalauski Air Assault School, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Sept. 15. The veterans toured the facilities of the base and had lunch with Soldiers and command staff of 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment.



Viet Nam veterans pose in front of the Air Assault wall, Sept. 15. The 12 veterans from different units during the Viet Nam war, toured Fort Campbell and had lunch with members of the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

“Bamboo vipers would be hanging from vines right in front of us as we cleared the way. We had to kill them so they wouldn’t bite us.”

Sometimes the wildlife was more dangerous than the Viet Cong fighters they were facing, said Burboa.

After the museum, the Veterans met with Soldiers of 1-502nd at the Strike Brigade’s Dining Facility. The First Strike Soldiers shared their experiences from their recent deployment to Afghanistan. Together, the veterans and First Strike Soldiers compared differences between Viet Nam and Operation Enduring

Freedom.

“We lost a lot of men once because either someone called in the wrong coordinates or the artillery simply missed its target,” Dugger said. “Either way, it was a big loss for us.”

The unit continued to fight despite heavy losses from the incident, said Dugger.

“I can’t imagine losing a lot of Soldiers at once because of accidental artillery fire,” said Staff Sgt. John Diem, a squad leader with 1-502nd and native of Swartz Creek, Mich. “In Afghanistan an incident like that would affect everyone.”

The veterans and Soldiers also discussed the Army in its current structure and how it related to previous formats. One aspect differed greatly from the 1960’s format and stood out during the day’s events.

“Things have changed a lot since 1968 when I served,” said Dugger. “The most notable difference is the relation between the officers and enlisted. In my time, there was a large separation between the two; they didn’t interact very much at all. Today, they both communicate more. They’re much closer today, like a real family working

together.”

Visiting Fort Campbell and meeting some of the Soldiers was a good experience and hopefully something that could be repeated, Dugger said.

The veterans visited and had lunch with First Strike Soldiers, were presented demonstrations of modern weapons, training and tactics and given a walkthrough of the Division’s history. The Viet Nam veteran’s example and experiences could help today’s Soldiers continue to serve with distinction on the modern battlefield.

STRIKE BCT Changes Command



Col. Arthur Kandarian, outgoing commander, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Col. Dan Walrath, commander, 2nd BCT, stand in front of Maj. Gen. John Campbell, commander, 101st Abn. Div. (AA), during Strike's Change of Command Ceremony on Fort Campbell's division parade field, July 15. Kandarian led Strike for 28 months to include their historic deployment to Kandahar, Afghanistan and now passes the torch to Walrath.

The last 28 months for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), has seen a leader bring proficient training to the 2nd BCT and an effective surge against enemy insurgents. Col. Arthur Kandarian, the 16th commander of the 101st's historical Strike Brigade, prepared his Soldiers for war in one of the toughest fighting areas in Afghanistan and brought them back as victors and heroes. Kandarian now moves on from Strike as he passed the regimental colors during the brigade's change of command ceremony, July 15.

"Commanding this brigade has been the highest privilege of my life," said Kandarian. "Strike fought, seized, cleared, held and won against the savages in the spiritual homeland of Taliban. Our sacrifices mattered and we provided the Afghan people a chance and opportunity."

With pride in his voice, he spoke

to the audience gathered on Fort Campbell's Division Parade Field about the missions and accomplishments of each Strike battalion during Operation Enduring Freedom 10-11. He did the same about the Strike Noncommissioned Officers and Leaders and listed some of those that made him proud.

Kandarian said it was an honor to train, deploy and watch the Strike Leader team win; to serve with magnificent combat battalion commanders and command sergeant majors. Kandarian said it was a privilege to be with 30 of the finest company commanders and first sergeants I had ever served with, said Kandarian.

Taking the reigns of Strike is Col. Dan Walrath, who complimented the brigade for its endeavors in southern Afghanistan.

"Your recent deployment as the lead surge brigade to Afghanistan is historic; I am privileged and honored to join arms with you for our next rendezvous," said Walrath. "I would like to thank the Soldiers, Leaders and Families of this brigade combat team for your service and sacrifice, you are the reason I continue to serve."

Speaking at the ceremony was Maj. Gen. John Campbell, commander of the 101st Airborne Division.



Kandarian and Walrath salute the Colors and the 2nd Brigade Combat Team Soldiers march by.

sion. He complimented the past and present Strike commanders and spoke about Strike Soldier.

“Although we are here to honor both of these commanders today, we also honor the men and women, past and present, who have served and continue to serve with Strike,” said Campbell. “Their bravery, their courage, their commitment and their fighting skills are unmatched and the recent deployment to Afghanistan further built upon this already great legacy.”

Kandarian and Walrath are friends who’ve trained and fought together. They’ve commanded Ranger rifle companies and were Ranger battalion executive officers together. Kandarian leaves Strike in good hands.

“There is no better infantry officer, warrior, commander or leader in our Army that I know and he will command this historic brigade and regiment with distinction,” said Kandarian. “Strike, it was my honor and privilege to be your commander and we will never forget... Strike! Air Assault!”



Col. Arthur Kandarian, outgoing Strike commander and Col. Dan Walrath, commander, 2nd BCT, walk together during the Strike Change of Command Ceremony on Fort Campbell’s division parade field, July 15.



Col. Arthur Kandarian, Col. Dan Walrath, and Maj. Gen. John Campbell, at Strike’s Change of Command Ceremony on Fort Campbell’s division parade field, July 15. Kandarian led Strike for 28 months.



Col. Dan Walrath, commander, 2nd BCT, hands the Strike Brigade’s Colors back to Command Sgt. Major Alonzo Smith during Strike’s Change of Command Ceremony on Fort Campbell’s division parade field, July 15.



Battalions Change Command



The 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), changed command at the Division Parade Field, July 15. Lt. Col. Joseph Power succeeds Lt. Col. Johnny Davis as commander of First Strike.



The 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), changed command at the Division Parade Field, July 14. Lt. Col. Jose Devarona succeeds Lt. Col. Peter Benchhoff as commander of Strike Force.



The 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), changed command at the Division Parade Field, July 13. Lt. Col. Tarpon Wiseman succeeds Lt. Col. David Flynn as commander of Top Guns.



The 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), changed command at the Division Parade Field, July 13. Lt. Col. Sean Davis succeeds Lt. Col. Thomas Spenard as commander of Best By Performance.



The 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), changed command at Strike's Johnson Field, July 11. Lt. Col. Sean Williams succeeds Lt. Col. Alan Preble as commander of One Team One Fight.



The 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), is scheduled to change command in the upcoming months. Currently, Lt. Col. Thomas McFadyen is the commander of Widowmakers.

THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION (AIR ASSAULT) CHANGE OF COMMAND



Maj. General John F. Campbell passes the 101st Airborne Division guidon to Forces Command's Acting Commanding General, Lt. Gen. Howard B. Bromberg at the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) change of command ceremony at Fort Campbell's Division Parade Field Aug. 12, 2011. Command is given to Maj. Gen. James C. McConville.



Maj. General John F. Campbell shakes hands and says goodbye to Command Sgt. Major Alonzo Smith, CSM, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), after Campbell's change of command ceremony, Aug. 12, 2011.



Maj. General John F. Campbell, Lt. Gen. Howard B. Bromberg and Maj. Gen. James C. McConville inspect the Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), on the division's parade field during the Screamin' Eagle's change of command ceremony.



A member of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Parachute Demonstration Team lands on the Division Parade Field before the ceremony.



The booms of artillery rounds kicked off the division's change of command ceremony, Aug. 12. Maj. Gen. James C. McConville is the newest Eagle 6.

THE 11th DISTRICT

WEEK OF THE EAGLES -2011-





STRIKE Runs for its Fallen



The 601 flags represented the division Soldiers who lost their lives during the recent deployment to Afghanistan and were part of the division's 'Run for the Fallen' remembrance event. Soldiers and their families ran and walked to remember their fallen comrades and show support to families who lost loved ones in combat.

Honoring fallen Soldiers is a tradition within 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). From World War II, to Viet Nam, Iraq and most recently Afghanistan, Strike Soldiers always remember and honor their fallen comrades.

Soldiers of Strike Brigade attended the 101st Airborne Division's 'Run for the Fallen' at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 7.

The event was conducted at division parade field, where about 5,000 Soldiers and family members from throughout the division took part in either the one mile walk or three mile run. This program honored the fallen 101st Airborne Soldiers who gave their lives in service to their country.

"I'm here to pay respects to Pfc. Jacob Carroll, Spc. Jacob Carver and Staff Sgt. Juan Rivadeneira," said Spc. Joseph Malady, an infantryman with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT. "I was with them when they were killed by a suicide bomber."

Malady expressed his gratitude for all the people who showed up to pay respects to the fallen Soldiers.

"I think this is great," Malady said. "Having this many people here shows how deeply the loss of these Soldiers affects everyone in this community. These people really care; you can see that just by them being here."

Participants wore paper markers with the names of who they were running in memory of, from specific fallen Soldiers to the division as a whole. One Soldier had a specific name on his back, representing a fallen comrade.

"I'm running for the memory of my best friend, Cpl. Jorge Villacis," said Pfc. Angel Torres, an infantryman also with 2nd Battalion. "He died in 2010 from an improvised explosive device. I am in contact with his family almost every day and will never forget him."

The event shows unification of the division and the values it stands for, said Torres.

"I'm here to show support to the families of the fallen," said Staff Sgt. Robert Douglas, a mortarman with Strike's Troop A, 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment. "Everyone here has been affected by the loss of a friend or family member, but in the Army we're one big family, giving each other support."

The event began with a few words to the crowd from Maj. Gen. John Campbell, commander of the



Soldiers and family members of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, walk and run together in support of the division's 'Run for the Fallen' at Fort Campbell, Aug. 7. The event featured a one mile walk and three mile run for Soldiers and their families to remember their fallen comrades and show support to families who lost loved ones in combat.

101st Abn. Div. Then Soldiers and family members lined the outside of the field at the starting line and began the run or walk through the designated event area. Upon completion, people visited, viewed the parade field full of small American flags to represent the fallen, or left the area.

“This is all about camaraderie,” said Lt. Col. Jose Devarona, commander of the Strike Force Battalion after completing the three mile run. “We will never forget our fallen comrades and their sacrifice.”

Devarona said it was inspiring to see Soldiers running to complete the full three-mile distance despite the heat of the late afternoon sun.

“See the Soldiers pushing themselves helps push you forward too,” Devarona said. “I wasn’t about to let the heat stop me.”

Strike Soldiers represented their brigade and helped show support to those who have lost friends and family during combat. 2nd BCT will always remember and honor those who gave their lives in service to their country.



Staff Sgt. James Holmes and Melissa, run together at Fort Campbell, Aug. 7. They ran in support of the division’s ‘Run for the Fallen’ event.



The 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), ran for its fallen brothers from Operation Enduring Freedom 10-11. Combined Task Force Strike suffered 66 losses during its deployment to southern Afghanistan.



Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) wore shirts and labels with the names of the fallen Soldiers from Combined Task Force Strike. Combined Task Force Strike deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan.



Soldiers of Strike pay homage to the American flags at the division parade field at Fort Campbell, Aug. 7. The flags represented the division Soldiers who lost their lives during their recent deployment to Afghanistan.

101st SOLDIERS COMPETE IN 'TOUGHEST AIR ASSAULT SOLDIER' COMPETITION

Soldiers from the 101st competed in the Toughest Air Assault Soldier competition at the Sabalauski Air Assault School at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 9

The event was held as part of the 101st Division's 'Week of the Eagles' competition. The 'Week of the Eagles' comprises a series of events where Soldiers from each brigade compete against one another in physical challenges.

"The Soldiers began the challenge at 3:00 A.M. this morning," said Sgt. David Camara, an instructor at the school

and native of New Bedford, Mass. "They started a twelve mile foot march in full gear to complete in less than three hours. It was very physically demanding on them because of the high humidity."

Out of an initial 25 teams of two Soldiers each, ten teams fell out of the competition during the foot march, said Camara.

"The march was very physically demanding but we finished it well under time," said Capt. Kurtis Evick, a medical evacuations pilot with Company C, 7th Battalion, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Abn. Div. "The obstacle course after it was definitely a challenge too."

Soldiers navigated the obstacle course to complete it as quickly as possible. The course contained events such as a rope climb, weaving in and out of boards above the ground, low-crawling through sand under barbed wire and jumping short walls.

"This has been a decent day for us," said Capt. Doug Jones, executive officer with Company D, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Abn. Div. "I practice a lot of this form of physical fit-

ness every day, so the foot march and obstacle course wasn't too much for me or my teammate. I think we'll hold strong in this competition to the end."

Soldiers also tested on their ability to repel off of the training tower at the school.

"This is definitely a challenge," said Spc. Andrew Travis, a scout with HHC, 1st Battalion, 502nd

Infantry Regiment and native of Ventura, Calif. "You have to pay attention and stay focused on everything you do."

Part way through the competition, the Soldiers were spoken to by Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Dayton Herrington, honorary Sgt. Maj. of the school. He praised the Soldiers for their achievements and persistence despite the hot and humid weather and difficult conditions.

"When I graduated from the air assault school in 1978, it wasn't easy then either," said Herrington. "But you wouldn't want it to be. You want to be the best



Soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), fast rope down the tower of the Sabalauski Air Assault School at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 9th.



Soldiers with the 101st climb ropes during the obstacle course portion of the Toughest Air Assault Soldier competition at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 9.

when you do this sort of thing and the best isn't easy."

Herrington said he enlisted in the Army in 1948, training at Camp Breckinridge, Ky., with the 101st as a replacement for Soldiers in Korea. After 30 years of service, he retired shortly after graduating from air assault school, but continues to visit Soldiers at Fort Campbell.

The Toughest Air Assault Soldier competition is designed to test Soldiers on their warrior skills and the dedication, persistence and competitive spirit are examples of what it means to be a 'Screamin' Eagle'.

Strike Softball Team Honors Fallen During Week of the Eagles



Master Sgt. Frederick Jones, brigade communication chief with Headquarters and Headquarters Command, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, hits a softball during a game at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 8. The softball game is part of the series of competitions between the brigades of the 101st, during its 'Week of the Eagles' competitions.

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)'s 'Week of the Eagles' gives Soldiers a chance to compete against one another in various sporting events throughout the division. The 101st's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, encourages its Soldiers to perform their best during training, competition and recreational activities.

The Strike Brigade softball team competed in a single-elimination softball tournament during the Week of the Eagles, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 8.

The competition involved teams from the division facing off against one another. The "Strike" Brigade played against the 101st's Sustainment Brigade for their first game of the series. The Strike Team honored one of its fallen, who you ran the 2009 Week of the Eagles team for the 2nd BCT.

"This year our team shirt has Sgt. Kyle Stout's name on the back to honor his memory as last year's softball coach," said Capt. Calvin Taetzsch, the intelligence officer-in-charge with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd

BCT, and native of Rochester, N.Y. and the coach for team Strike. "Our team is playing to honor Kyle and all the other Soldiers who died during our last deployment. We have a solid team this year and I'm sure we will do well."

Stout, who was assigned to HHB, 1-320th FAR, was killed while on patrol by a homemade bomb in Afghanistan, July 30, 2010. For his actions in combat, Stout received the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart. This year's uniform features the black heart crest of the Strike Brigade, with Stout's name stenciled above.

"It's important to remember those who can't be here," said Taetzsch. "We're going to play our best this year."

The game was held at Fort Campbell's North Sports Complex and as the two teams competed against each other, Strike held top position with 20 runs to Sustainment's 7, by the fifth inning. The game was called in Strike's favor and the team prepared for its next game an hour later.

"This is just the start," said Master Sgt. Frederick Jones, brigade com-

munication chief with Headquarters and Headquarters Command, 2nd BCT, and a native of Birmingham Ala. "We're just getting warmed up and there are about three more games to play."

Family members also came out to support the teams playing in the competition.

"I'm here to watch my husband play with his team," said Jewel Snyder, wife of Sgt. Jeremy Snyder, an infantry Soldier with Company C, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, and a native of Modesto Calif. "It's good to be out here supporting the team."

The second game pitted Strike against the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade's team as Strike continued to wear their dedication jerseys remembering their friend while playing the game he loved.



Sgt. 1st Class Armando Prescott, non-commissioned officer in charge of tasks, with Headquarter and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), pitches a softball to a team member of 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), during a softball game at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 8.

STRIKE COMPETES IN COMMANDER'S CUP MARKSMANSHIP COMPETITION



Lt. Col. Thomas McFadyen, Strike Cav commander and Command Sgt. Major Andre Johnson, Strike Cav CSM, run the 200 meter event portion of the Commander's Cup M9 Pistol competition, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 9.

Weapons skills are a valuable asset on the battlefield.

Whether nine-millimeter pistols or 5.56 mm rifles, Soldiers train in firearms on a regular basis as part of their regimen. Some Soldiers also practice for competition purposes, using their skills and knowledge to compete against one another in tournaments.

2nd Brigade Combat Team, competed in the Commander's Cup 9mm Pistol Marksmanship competition at Fort Campbell, Aug. 9.

The competition was part of the division's 'Week of the Eagles'.

"It's all about remembering the basics," said Command Sgt. Maj. Harold Reynolds, the command sergeant major for Strike's 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion and native of Clarks Grove, Minn. "I went to the range to practice about a week and a half ago to brush up on the fundamentals of marksmanship. No matter what you do or how hard you train, it all comes down to remembering the basic principles of shooting."

The competition surprised many Soldiers as no one was expecting the 200 meter run and multiple shooting positions, said Reynolds.

"We had some surprises thrown our way," said Reynolds. "But we have great adaptive leaders who are always able to make the best in any situation."

Soldiers competing in the tournament first had to run 500 meters for battalion-level shooters, and 200 meters for command team shooters in full combat gear. The teams then moved to the firing line to finish the second half of the

competition, the shooting.

"I won first place in 2009," said Capt. Hannah Leadbetter, officer in charge of operations for 526th Brigade Support Battalion. "I shot 29 out of 30 today; that's the best of our team for battalion-level."

Regular practice with a firearm leads to proficiency with the weapon, said Leadbetter.

"We're pretty solid out here today," said Leadbetter. "Our run times are good; our shooting scores are from 25 to 27 on average, so overall we're doing very well today."

The range was composed of multiple targets at intervals of between ten to 30 meters. Soldiers fired ten rounds each in the standing, kneeling and barrier-protected positions, for a maximum score of 30 possible points.

"This competition is a real challenge," said Lt. Col. Thomas McFadyen, commander of 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd BCT. "But the Soldiers are representing well out here today."

Strike Brigade's own commander, Col. Dan Walrath, competed alongside his teammate, Command Sgt. Maj. Alonzo Smith, command sergeant major for the brigade. Together they ran the 200-meter course and fired their pistols to collect points for the brigade.

"We're doing really well here today," said Walrath, "Strike Brigade stands a good chance of winning with these scores. I think it's great that we're scoring high."

The marksmanship portion of the 'Week of the Eagles' allows Soldiers to demonstrate their warrior skills through the use of small arms firing. The Strike Brigade demonstrated its abilities on the firing range and continues to compete in other events throughout the week.



The Strike competitors shot targets at the Commander's Cup M9 Pistol competition, at Fort Campbell's Range 9, Aug. 9. The competition was part of the division's 'Week of the Eagles', where Soldiers from every brigade compete against each other in physical events.

STRIKE Wins 1st Place in Fort Campbell's 'Week of the Eagles' Combatives Tournament

Many Soldiers train in Army fighting techniques, called Combatives, on a regular basis. These Soldiers sometimes face off against each other in competitions to see who the best combatant in their unit is. During the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)'s 'Week of the Eagles', Soldiers have a chance to see who's the best across every brigade in the division.

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), won first place in the 'Week of the Eagles' combatives tournament at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 10.

Soldiers faced-off against each other in three days of caged matches. These Soldiers fought using Army combatives regulations, trying to win first place for their brigades and as individuals.

"I worked hard for this," said Capt. Michelle Laforest, an intelligence



Staff Sgt. Leonard Lane, with Battery G, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), moves to fight another Soldier during a combatives tournament at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 10. Lane lost due to a knock out, and received the 2nd place for the cruiserweight category in the tournament during the 'Week of the Eagles'.

officer with 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd BCT, after winning first place in the finals for the bantam weight class. "As a woman I wanted to represent what we can do in the Army."

Other Strike Soldiers took lower places but were still optimistic about their victory.

"It was hard but it was worth it," said 1st. Lt. Joseph Halter, an officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd BCT, and a native of Hackensack, N.J., in the light heavy-weight category. "I came in 3rd place for my weight class but I think I did a good job."

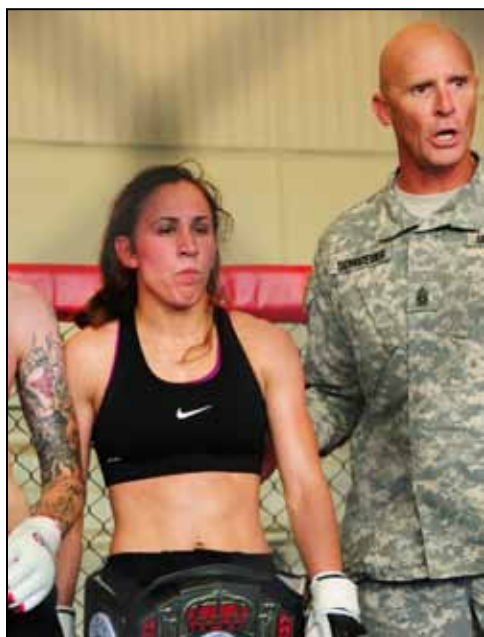
Coming in third place is an exciting thing considering how many people came to compete, said Spc. Alex Forse, with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd BCT, and a native of Frisco, Texas.

"I did three fights and I'm now

ranked third in the bantam weight class," said Forse. "I'm excited to have made it this far. There was a lot of competition and good fighters but I kept fighting and made it this far."

Strike Soldiers represented their brigade and brought back top honors in the combatives tournament, placing 1st with 215 total points. Runners up were 1st Brigade in second place, and 3rd Brigade in third place.

Strike Brigade Soldiers continue to train in fighting styles and combatives for their next competition or real-life combat situation.



Capt. Michelle Laforest, with 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder, command Sgt. Maj. with 101st Abn. Div., stand for her belt after a combatives tournament, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 10. Laforest won 1st place in the bantam weight class during the 'Week of the Eagles'.



Eagle Six Recognizes Strike Brigade's Four-Tour Veterans

Most Soldiers expect to deploy at least once within their time in the Army. Two, maybe even three deployments are somewhat common for today's Soldiers as well, but then there are the others who have deployed more.

Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, who served four deployments with the Strike Brigade, were recognized at Strike Academy earlier this month by Maj. Gen. James McConville, commander of the 101st Airborne Division.

McConville commended 12 Soldiers who had went with Strike to places like Mosul, Iraq, Baghdad twice and most recently Kandahar, Afghanistan. McConville then awarded Division Challenge Coins to the select group and thanked them for their service to their country, the Strike Brigade and the 101st Airborne Division.

"We knew everyone would do one tour," said McConville. "We thought that most [Soldiers] would do two, but when it came to three we thought it'd be a real challenge. But then we see folks like you who did four tours; that's just a tremendous sacrifice."

McConville encouraged the Soldiers to thank their Families for the support



Soldiers with 2nd Brigade Combat Team, who served through four tours, stand around Strike Brigade's monument to its fallen Soldiers of Operation Enduring Freedom 2010-2011, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Aug. 31. The monument contains the names of 66 personnel serving with Strike Brigade, and the locations of key facilities maintained during the deployment.

they showed during these multiple times of separation and encouraged the Soldiers to be proud of their history.

"We have a great history in this Division," said McConville. "[Strike Brigade has] a very proud history too, and you are a part of that history."

During Strike Brigade's previous deployments to the Middle East, the unit was exposed to heavy kinetics. During Strike Brigade's most recent deployment to southern Afghanistan, Soldiers were tasked with establishing security and governance in that part of the world, which was the birthplace of the Taliban and its strong-

hold. Gen. David Petraeus, ISAF commander, at one point even called Strike "the tip of the spear" in the War on Terror.

"We did something great," said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Dorsey, one the Forward Operating Base designers and builders with Strike's Headquarters and Headquarters Company. "We basically started with nothing and made something at FOB Pasab. It makes me pretty proud to be with this group."

Some recognized by the division commander have served in the same battalion during their four tours and enjoyed the appreciation.

"It's nice for everybody to be recognized," said Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Wawryk, who has been with 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment for each of his deployments. "I have three tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan; all with the 1st of the 502nd [Infantry Regiment]."

McConville shook each hand of the vets and is grateful to have such dedication within his ranks.

"We're very proud to have folks like you in our division that are willing to do these types of things and I thank you and your families," said McConville.

TOP GUNS SOLDIER PLACES 3rd IN ALL ARMY COMBATIVES TOURNAMENT



Staff Sgt. Leonard Lane, a wheeled mechanic with Company G, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, displays his trophy from the All Army Combatives Tournament. Lane came in 3rd place at the Fort Hood hosted tournament.

Soldiers train every day to perform at the best possible level, from physical abilities to more specific job-related skills. Army training provides Soldiers with the skills needed to accomplish their goals and succeed in life. Strike encourages friendly competition between Soldiers to enhance their training and practice good sportsmanship.

Staff Sgt. Leonard Lane, with Company G, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd BCT, won 3rd place in the All Army Combatives Tournament at Fort Hood, Texas, July 21-23.

Lane, a native of Rockford, Ill., and wheeled vehicle mechanic with his company, trained since the last AAC Tournament a year ago.

"I lost last time," Lane said. "But this year I trained to be better and more focused, more in control."

Lane competed for three days against Soldiers from other bases throughout the Army. His challenge was to overcome his opponents in the 185lb weight class of the tournament using his skills and training.

"The first day we just grappled" said Lane. "I won four matches on the first day by putting my opponents in submission moves. After that things began to get much more physical and challenging."

Day two had more complex fighting techniques added to the tournament. The combatants were allowed to go for body blows and punches, increasing the physical demand on all those involved.

"I had to stay focused," Lane said. "I had to keep pushing forward and remember my training."

Lane lost the first battle, which dropped his ranking

in the tournament. Lane won the next fight, staging himself for the 3rd and 4th place finals on day three. It was during his final battle Lane faced his hardest opponent.

"I was facing off against a hometown favorite, a Soldier from Fort Hood," Lane said. "He was favored over me and had the home field advantage."

Lane lost the first of three rounds in the caged mixed martial arts match but came back to overwhelm his opponent. This fight allowed for more advanced fighting tactics than the previous two days and allowed for head punches and more leg fighting than before.

"When I won, I was ecstatic," Lane said. "You get out what you put in to combatives training. I was proud to bring something back for my battalion."

Lane's victory came as a surprise to Capt. Michael Baron, assistant operations officer with HHC, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, who organizes and runs the combatives training for Strike Brigade.

"I was placed in charge of organizing a combatives group for Week of the Eagles at Fort Campbell," said Baron. "We were training to compete in the week-long division competition starting in August. We weren't really working toward anything else at first."

After recently returning from Afghanistan and with only a couple of weeks of training under their collective belts, the combatives team merged with the division team and went to Texas, said Baron.

"Staff Sgt. Lane had previous experience unlike most of our guys," said Baron. "Most of the other teams had a year or more of training. I wasn't sure how anyone would do. Lane did an excellent job, especially considering the short notice we were all on."

Lane was able to rise to the challenge and bring home a trophy to his company and Fort Campbell, Baron said.

"I'm going to keep training to improve my fighting technique," said Lane. "I used to wrestle in high school and this is about as close to that as I can get. I want to compete in the All Army Combatives Tournament again and try to do better next time."

Strike Brigade continues to enhance its Soldier's skills through competitions and training exercises designed to improve individual performance throughout the brigade.

Former NFL Football Star Visits Top Guns

Oftentimes people feel alone in life due to circumstances beyond their control. Soldiers are not exempt from feelings of isolation, depression and despair. The Army encourages Soldiers and their families to seek proper medical help and attention when necessary, and 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), offers assistance at all times.

Herschel Walker, former National Football League player, visited Strike Brigade's 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment at their headquarters at Fort Campbell, Ky., Sept. 28.

Walker was invited to speak by the Top Guns' command team following his presentation to the division as a whole. This marks the 34th visit Walker has made to military facilities across the country.

"I'm here today because I want to thank you for everything you do for me, for the country. I owe you for everything."

Walker spoke to the Soldiers about his experiences in seeking mental health assistance following some hard times in his life. For Walker, the process of recognizing he had a problem and looking to fix that problem changed



Herschel Walker, former NFL player and mixed martial arts fighter, speaks to Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at the battalion's headquarters at Fort Campbell, Ky., Sept. 28. Walker autographed personal items for the Soldiers and posed for individual photographs after his presentation on mental health.

his life for the better.

"I was angry a lot," said Walker. "My wife told me I would threaten her. I didn't remember any of the arguments or threats."

"Today, I'm seeing some faces smiling who haven't smiled in several days,"
- Spc. Christian Cheatham

Looking back through previous writings, Walker said he saw a pattern of aggression and blank spaces in his memory where he had no realization or recollection of his actions.

"I went to a mental hospital then," Walker said. "I was diagnosed with multiple personality disorder. At first I lied to everyone and told them that there was nothing wrong with me; I thought I was being tough. Then I realized I really needed help, this was serious. I opened up and really got help."

Walker said the hospital helped stop personally destructive behavior, such as playing Russian roulette with a loaded hand gun, fits of blinding rage and physically harming people around him.

This event coincided with the recent suicide of a Top Guns Soldier, recently

returned from deployment to Afghanistan. Walker expressed his concern for the health and well-being of the Soldiers within the battalion and Army as a whole.

"Some people have a misconception that admitting you have a problem and getting help means you are weak," said Walker. "But it's not. It shows you have internal strength to be able to identify the problem and get help. We all struggle in life, we all fall. It takes strength to get back up again."

Walker's message hit home to the Top Guns as they move forward through their recent loss.

“His visit was definitely a morale boost,” said Spc. Christian Cheatham, an automated field artillery tactical data systems specialist with Battery B, 1-320th and native of Cloverdale, Ind. “After the recent suicide there are a lot of guys here who are feeling down about a lot of things. Today, I’m seeing some faces smiling who haven’t smiled in several days.”

Walker’s visit was a good reminder that people outside the military genuinely care about the welfare of the Soldiers, said Cheatham.

“This is actually what we’ve needed for a long time,” said 1st Sgt. Jimmy Sadler, first sergeant with Headquarters and Head-



Herschel Walker, former NFL player and mixed martial arts fighter, autographs personal effects of Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, at the battalion's headquarters at Fort Campbell, Ky., Sept. 28. Walker spoke to the Soldiers about his experience and benefits in seeking mental health care.

quarters Battery, 1-320th FAR and native of Anderson, S.C. “It’s good to have someone from outside the Army saying ‘if you need help, get help’. It

reinforces the message we always tell our Soldiers.”

It’s good to see the Army is proactive by inviting speakers such as Walker to address the Soldiers and

the positive support shown by the outside community, said Sadler.

Walker’s personal example shows that everyone has the ability to heal from their invisible wounds if they take the opportunity and reach out for aid.

Options for mental health and welfare treatment are readily available upon request and have multiple forms to suit the needs to the patient. Strike Brigade encourages its Soldiers to receive any medical attention they need, both physical and mental.



Herschel Walker, former NFL player and mixed martial arts fighter, speaks to Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at the battalion's headquarters at Fort Campbell, Ky., Sept. 28. Walker shared his personal struggle through mental health care problems, his rebound and recovery and encouraged Soldiers to seek help whenever it is needed.



STRIKE FORCE RIDES FOR ITS FALLEN



Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, fill Highway 41-A during its 'Ride for the Fallen' starting in Clarksville, Tenn., Aug. 26. The event combined a motorcycle safety class with a ride to Nashville, Tenn., in remembrance of their fallen Soldiers from Operation Enduring Freedom 2010-2011.

Motorcycles are a common recreational mode of transportation for Soldiers and civilians alike. Bikers have many reasons for why they ride; from enjoying the freedoms the bike can provide to the mechanics behind it, bikes are represented throughout the area. Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), ride motorcycles for a reason closer to their heart.

The Soldiers of Strike Force gathered in support of the 'Ride for the Fallen' motorcycle-training event in Clarksville, Tn., Aug. 26.

The ride was dedicated to their Soldiers who died during Operation Enduring Freedom 2010-2011 and the recent death of a fellow Strike Force Soldier in a motorcycle accident. About 40 Soldiers met in the parking lot of The Great Escape Cinema Theater to review motorcycle safety before the ride. From there, the bikers lined up, rolled out together and traveled along Highway 41-A toward Nashville; forming a line of Soldiers honoring their fallen friends.

"It is very important for us as a unit to remember those who are

no longer with us," said 1st Sgt. George Fitzke, first sergeant of Strike Force's Company C and who was deployed to the Zharay district in Kandahar and a riding instructor at the event. "Today we ride in remembrance of the sacrifice many Soldiers made during our last deployment."

Before the ride, bikers would go through a checklist and inspect their vehicle, proper motorist insurance and state registration for their vehicles. The battalion training focused heavily on proper procedures and safety.

"Safety is a big concern out here, especially on bikes," said Fitzke. "There are only two wheels on a bike so if something goes wrong with one wheel that means trouble for the biker."

Soldiers and instructors examined their motorcycles to ensure each component and detail was in good working order. Then they lined up to test their maneuverability, braking and basic handling skills.

Throughout the training, Soldiers visited with each other. Though the focus of the event was to educate Soldiers, it also presented them an opportunity to socialize with other

personnel from different shops and offices in Strike Force.

"This helps build camaraderie," said 1st Sgt. William Wilson, 1st Sgt. of Co. A, a native of Bloomington, Ind. and a riding instructor at the event. "The training also helps Soldiers learn to be aware of their surroundings at all times."

This instruction is good for bikers because it focused towards hands-on training and real road experience, said Pfc. Cord Robedeau, a mortarman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, native of Prescott, Ariz., and trainee at the event.

"This is a good hands-on course for [motorcyclists] to learn from," said Robedeau. "We're all getting good instruction on bike safety and handling. It should be an easy ride so we should all do fine out there today."

Strike Force Soldiers turned a practical training event into a memorable ride to honor the fallen Soldiers of their battalion and their brigade carrying on the Strike tradition of never forgetting the Soldiers who have made the ultimate sacrifice and gave for their country.

STRIKE 6 PT - STRIKE 6 SETS PHYSICAL TRAINING STANDARDS

Physical training is a cornerstone of the Army. Whether in combat or garrison, a Soldier's physical fitness helps them complete any mission they are assigned. 2nd Brigade Combat Team believes in setting and maintaining standards for the physical fitness of its Soldiers.

Command staff of Strike Brigade participated in Strike 6 Physical Training at Fort Campbell, Ky., July 20-22 and 26.

Col. Daniel Walrath, the new brigade commander and Strike 6 of 2nd BCT, led the PT session which began with a review of Strike Brigade's history, followed by stretching in preparation for the workout. Depending on the schedule, five or six events are held with running between each event to help Soldiers develop stamina to prepare for the hard work expected during a deployment.

"This is physically and mentally demanding work," said Sgt. Joshua Brown, a non-commissioned officer in Strike Brigade's air defense systems and assistant NCO in charge of the PT session. "There is a lot of running, jumping and heavy lifting. It's definitely a challenge."

The Soldiers split into teams prior to the events. These teams compete against one another to see which one completes the course first. This allows the command staff and senior non-commissioned officers to interact and bond with one another.

"The commander's intent is to set the standard for physical training for the brigade and build camaraderie between the command staff personnel," said Sgt. Maj. Jaime Guarino, operations sergeant major for 2nd BCT and senior non-commissioned officer in charge of the Strike 6 PT program. "When we deploy again these commanders will have a better connection with each other and work together better."

The PT program was set in place two and a half years ago by Col. Arthur Kandarian, former commander of the brigade, and is regularly held on each Friday, said Guarino.

Conducting multiple sessions of Strike 6 PT gave the new



Command staff of 2nd Brigade Combat Team group-carry a towing harness across a field during Strike 6 physical training at Fort Campbell, Ky., July 20. Col. Daniel Walrath, commander and Strike 6 of 2nd BCT, leads the sessions to set physical training standards and increase the bond between the battalion command staff within Strike Brigade.

commander a chance to meet and bond with his command staff.

"I want to get to know you better," Walrath said, addressing the Soldiers before the start of training. "It's important that we learn how to work together, both here and on deployment."

Walrath also talked about the importance of leaders being an example for their Soldiers, especially in physical training.

"How a Soldier performs during physical training will tell a leader a lot about how they will perform during a mission," said Walrath.

Push-ups, wall climbing, running, weight lifting, medicine ball tossing and other assorted exercises not only strengthen the body, but the mind as well. As Soldiers condition their bodies, their minds grow accustomed to pushing the limits of their physical and mental tolerance, reaching to complete a set of push-ups, or a more complex goal during a mission.

"This is great training," said Capt. Robert Kinney, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd BCT and participant in the Strike 6 PT. "It's very challenging. The training isn't just for the physical aspects. When we deploy again it will be easier to work together now that we all know each other's names and faces."

At the end of each session, Walrath talks to the officers and senior enlisted Soldiers about their roles and importance in the Army. Focusing on strengthening both body and mind, command staff of 2nd BCT lead their Soldiers by setting the example for physical fitness within the brigade.

STRIKE Soldier Remembers His 9/11

A Leaf Chronicle Contribution written by
War Correspondent Philip Grey

Sgt. Joe Padula's memories of 9/11 are not made of televised images.

For him, the images in his head are three-dimensional - 360 degrees of hell in every direction, complete with the sounds, the smells and the feel of fear-sweat on the skin.

On Sept. 11, 2001, Padula, now a combat correspondent and photojournalist in the 101st Airborne Division's Strike Brigade, was 21 years old, working for his father on a crew refurbishing an abandoned warehouse just two blocks from Ground Zero.

He had just begun working when a coworker came in and said that a plane had hit the World Trade Center.

Like nearly everybody, Padula's first thought was, "what kind of an idiot does this?" He remembered the day as gorgeous, with clear blue skies. How do you miss that tower?

Padula told the story in a thick New York accent that seemed nearly theatrical, unless you know him and realize that's the way he always talks. But the voice, which earlier was so good-natured and happy over coffee, took on a different tone. The machine-gun staccato slowed as the story began to build in a Clarksville apartment room that suddenly seemed far away.

What seemed closer at the moment was New York City of nearly 10 years ago to the day. Padula looked down at the pictures spread before him and talked to no one in particular.

"All of a sudden we hear this roar over our head and BOOM!" Padula described it as feeling like an earthquake and he remembered the workers struggling to keep their balance. He looked at his boss, Jeff Lane, and then the two of them broke for the stairs and the side doors.

"You open the doors and your body just goes into shock," Padula remembered. "You just stop and you can't do anything. You got papers and pieces of furniture and equipment just dropping down - boom, boom, boom. You're just looking at it and people are coming behind you and they do the same. They freeze and go, 'Oh my God!' It was like a movie set, for crying out loud. It just wasn't real."

Padula described looking straight up with his neck aching, transfixed at the massive towers looming overhead with flames and smoke pouring out. He and his boss had an idea to go help but were turned back by a policeman telling them to go south.



On September 11, 2001 at 8:46 a.m., five hijackers crashed American Airlines Flight 11 into the World Trade Center's North Tower (1 WTC), and at 9:03 a.m., another five hijackers crashed United Airlines Flight 175 into the South Tower (2 WTC)

As he hesitated, he remembered being sickened at the tourists who didn't get it yet. They were flexing and posing in front of the smoldering buildings where people were being incinerated behind them. "Freaking stupid." Padula almost spat the words out.

"You saw some things that day that weren't so good, but that was the minority of it," he said. "A select, minimal few. You saw the better half later on."

A radio was going in a car that had the windows rolled down. The reports came like artillery shells on the consciousness of the people gathered, listening. The Pentagon was hit. Twenty-five planes were unaccounted for. Padula's voice rolls like a spool of tape, "Me and Jeff looked at each other. 'We have to get out of here. We have to get home.'"

From the nearby South Tower, the silhouettes of people appear, arms flailing as they float down and out of sight behind another building.

"All of a sudden we hear this enormous crack up in the sky. Everyone looks up and you see the South Tower go down, down, down..." Padula's hands are palms down, moving in small increments, down, down, down.

"People are standing, staring, running... There's this whoosh, this whistling noise coming at you."

Turning a corner like something alive, being driven from behind, the enormous cloud of smoke, ash and soot barrels down the street, moving fast. "It just engulfed the entire

area,” Padula said in awe, “as wide as the blocks were and six-seven stories high, this solid wall of soot. It was so fast.”

They ran. “So we’re running south toward the tip of the island,” he said, “and we’re jettin’. Women are kicking off their high heels. There are high heels everywhere in the street. They’re taking the kids out of the carriages... purses... they were dropping their purses and just running.

The image is straight out of the old Orson Wells radio broadcast of “War of the Worlds.”

“People were on the line of the Hudson River; they’re hanging over; they’re jumping in the river. I’m following Jeff, and people are following us. What a great leader, Jeff. Not a soldier but... he’s heading... he’s taking us to the Staten Island Ferry. But the cloud caught us.”

Padula felt the ping, ping of what felt like hundreds of BB’s as the cloud engulfed them. “You’re thinking, ‘Is this it?’ Oh no - ping, ping - and you’re just engulfed - can’t see, can’t breathe, coughing, people screaming.

“We get into the ferry and they close the doors. That’s when the full mess, the soot, just covers us.”

In the river, six or seven boats couldn’t see either and the crews were blasting the foghorns to communicate their positions. And that’s when Padula saw the best of people. It was the moment that rescued something good out of the raw horror of the day.

“I see people helping each other,” he recalled with the

first hint of a smile. “Using their shirts to bandage wounds. That was a good sight to see.

“I don’t regret being down there. I saw the best of people. I wish that day had never happened, but I was proud of the people. Not only New Yorkers helping each other, but Americans making sure other Americans were OK - this guy from Connecticut, this lady from Jersey, these people from Pennsylvania...”

Padula’s voice starts to wind down.

“Such selfless acts on such a selfish day,” he said. The word, “selfish,” was aimed at the terrorists. In contrast, the selflessness all around him was the beginning of his personal healing. “It put confidence in you to be able to say, ‘We’re going to be OK.’ Why? Because of these people surrounding us.”

“I just did a tour in Afghanistan,” he said. “Kandahar, the birthplace of the Taliban. Being there made the biggest difference for me.”

How often did he think about 9/11 over there.?

“Must have been every day,” he said, his voice mellowed considerably from just a few minutes before. “Every time I was outside the base, every time I was out there where the terrorists trained and prepared people to do stupid things. Every day I stepped on their dirt and said, ‘Yeah, never again.’

He repeated it like a prayer: “Never again.”



The South Tower collapsed at 9:59 a.m. after burning for 56 minutes in a fire caused by the impact of United Airlines Flight 175. The North Tower collapsed at 10:28 a.m. after burning for 102 minutes.



The front page of the New York Post one day after the attacks pictures United Airlines Flight 175 before it hits the South Tower, September 11, 2001. Media coverage was large as millions watched the events unfold live on television.

TRADITION, COMBAT TRAINING...

STRIKE CAV SPUR RIDE



Spur Riders from 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), load into a CH-47 Helicopter during an Air Assault mission in the unit's latest Spur Ride held at multiple locations on Fort Campbell, Sept. 22-23. Strike-Cav combined tradition and combat focused training for its Spur Ride.

“Earning your Spurs” has been a part of the Army Cavalry units since their foundation. It began when newly assigned Cavalry Soldiers were given their first horse with a shaved tail and trained until the horse’s hair fully grew back, being nicknamed Shaved Tails during that period of time. Once proven, the Cavalry Soldier joined the Order of the Spur, dropped the nickname and was awarded their much-respected Silver Spurs.

The 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), held its latest Spur Ride at the Strike footprint and at Training

Areas 6 and 13, Sept. 22-23. Today’s Strike-Cav Soldiers earn their Silver Spurs with a combination of honoring the Cavalry heritage and incorporating today’s combat focused training.

“Here at 1-75 we have a blend of Cavalry and Infantrymen both and we honor that by making this Spur Ride combat focused with EIB (Excellent Infantryman Badge) and Warrior Skills Training,” said Lt. Col. Thomas McFadyen, squadron commander. “This Spur Ride has been set up a little differently from ones in the past and I’m very proud on how they (the spur riders) have done for the two days of continu-

ous movement and training; they all have earned it.”

The Shaved Tails started the ride in the dark early hours wearing full combat gear and conducted Strike PT, a series of physically demanding challenges to include tire and log flips, litter carries, rope lifting,



Troopers of modern day US Army cavalry regiments will often wear the stetson on ceremonial occasions in place of the ACU patrol cap or beret.



Inductees into the Order of the Spur receive gold (usually brass) spurs if they have earned their membership through combat, or silver (usually nickel) spurs if they complete a rite of passage.



Sgt. Alexander Conyngham, a Spur Holder and a Spur Ride testing lane operator with Troop A, observes Spc. Matthew Chaney, a Spur Rider with the squadron’s Company C, throw a dummy grenade.

wall climbs and low crawls, combined with exercises involving the Soldiers addressing the Strike Cav history out loud. The spur riders then conducted day and night land navigation on a course at Training Area 6, a six-mile route designed by the squadron. The night navigation then led into the following morning with an actual Air Assault mission where CH-47 Helicopters loaded up the Spur Riders at Strike's Johnson Field and flew to training Area 13.

"The CH-47 training is important for multiple reasons, not only for today, but for our upcoming deployment to Afghanistan," said Capt. Michael Gold, commander of the squadron's infantry company, Company C. "I was surprised to see how many new hands of Soldiers went up when asked, 'who's never flown on a helicopter,' so it's a great opportunity for training, not just for the Spur Ride, but overall for our mission."

Once Air Assaulted to TA-13, the Spur Riders dismounted to established training lanes monitored by Spur Riders of the past and conducted drills seen during the EIB competition. Tasks such as weapons knowledge, reaction to and the reporting of roadside bombs, employing hand grenades, first aide and calling in artillery fire; better preparing those involved in next month's EIB competition. Upon completion of the lanes, the Spur Riders conducted a 12-mile road march back to the Spur Ride starting point of Strike Field, where at midnight and in the pouring rain, the no longer Shaved Tails received the Order of the Spur certificate from their squadron commander and their

squadron command sergeant major.

The new Spur Holders pushed their bodies and minds to their limits for two straight days and understand the importance of both upholding tradition and training to meet today's combat demands.

"The Spur Ride tradition is real important and I'm glad to see we're out here doing it, being pushed physically, mentally and training up on the things we need to know," said Pfc. William Westley, an infantryman with the Squadron and a new Silver Spur owner. "I'm proud that me and my team went through it; it was hard, but definitely worth it.



Cpl. Eriks Reyes, a Spur Holder and a Spur Ride testing lane operator with Troop A, instructs Pfc. Christopher Hughes, a Spur Rider with the squadron's Company C, on movement techniques during the unit's latest Spur Ride held at multiple locations on Fort Campbell, Sept. 22-23.



Spur Riders load into a CH-47 Helicopter during an Air Assault mission starting from Strike's Johnson Field in the unit's latest Spur Ride.

I am a STRIKE Soldier...



...I fight where told...



...and win where I fight...



...I am a STRIKE Soldier.



FACES of STRIKE





STRIKE ZONE AFGHANISTAN



STRIKE Zone Afghanistan is the brigade's Tv show dedicated to keeping its viewers up to date with unit's events and missions during its deployment to Kandahar Afghanistan.

Learn about each company, battery and troop and be a part of their high-speed missions by checking out the STRIKE Zone Afghanistan. Look for it on the Brigade Facebook Page.


STRIKE HONORS



*A weekly look
at STRIKE's History*

The Brigade Facebook Page

The STRIKE Brigade is in the social networking world with the Brigade Facebook Page. On it are images and videos of the great missions and actions involving the 2nd Brigade Combat Team. Join to start conversations and leave comments about everything the Team is doing. Watch the Brigade's Tv show, the 'Strike Zone' with monthly updates of our time in Afghanistan, read about the illustrious history of 2nd Brigade in the weekly edition of 'Strike Honors'. The page is an awesome way to stay close your Soldiers, even while they are far away.

To be a part of the STRIKE Brigade via the internet; log onto your Facebook page, click in the search box and type 2nd Brigade Strike. When the 502nd  comes up click on it and then click 'like'. Join the already thousands of viewers keeping up with the STRIKE Brigade!

1 am Select Sex: [v]
[v] Today [v] Months [v] Days [v] Year: [v]