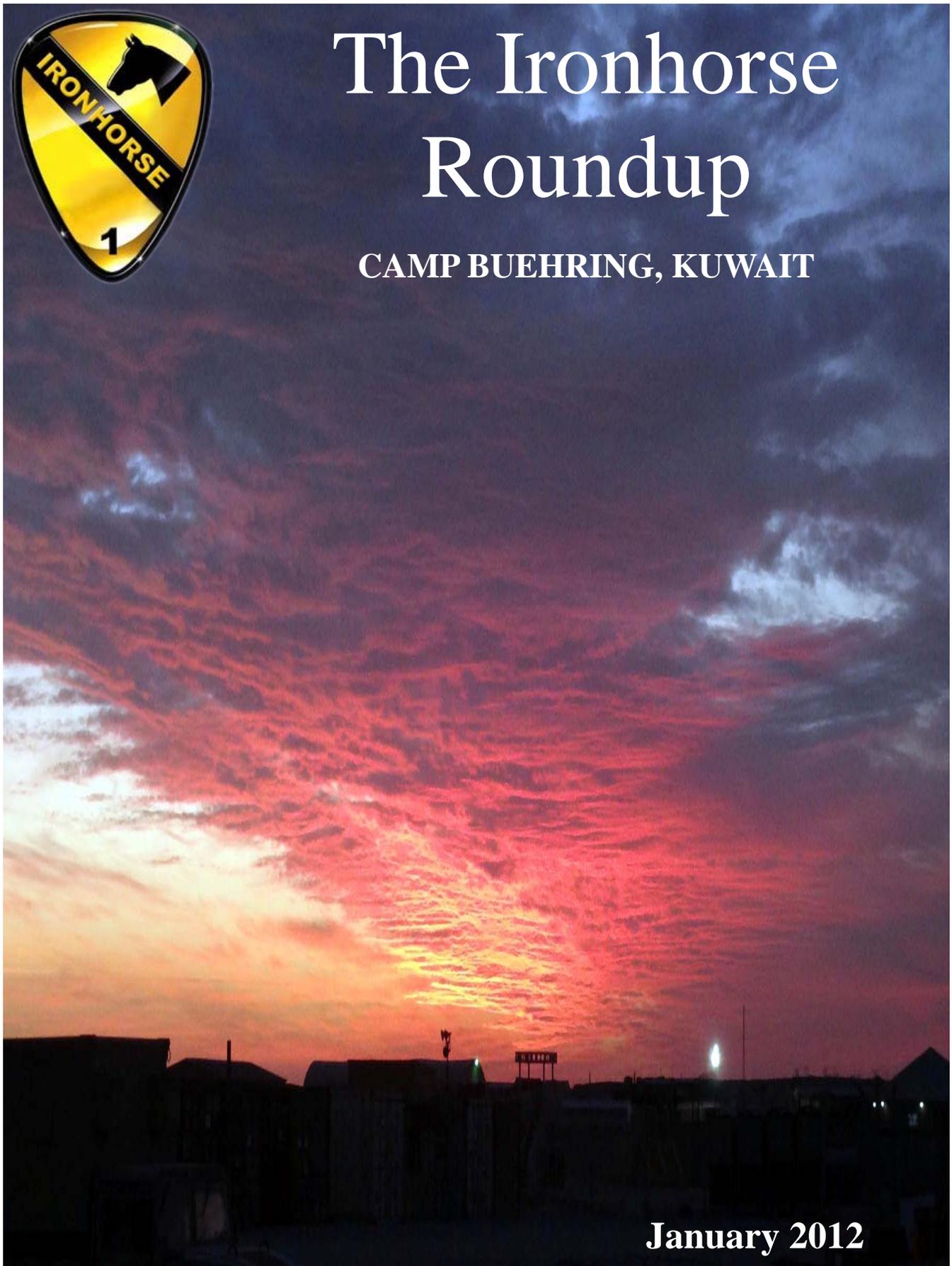




The Ironhorse Roundup

CAMP BUEHRING, KUWAIT



January 2012

Photo by 2nd Lt. Brittany Myatt

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1st Brigade Combat Team 1st Cavalry Division



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You've got mail

**By Spc. Bailey Jester
1st BCT Public Affairs**

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – It is 2:30 in the afternoon and Soldiers are lining up in front of a connex, excitedly waiting for the doors to open.

“The mail connex holds quite a bit of morale for Soldiers,” said Boise, Id. native, Pfc. Vinnie Angelos, mail handler for the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

Mail clerks begin their day by arriving at the post office around 9:30 to pick up any packages for Soldiers in the Ironhorse Brigade. After gathering all of Ironhorse’s letters and packages, they return to the brigade area to sort the mail by battalion.

“Lifting some of these packages feels like you get a work-out in,” Angelos chuckled about the three to four haour process.

Once the packages are sorted by battalion, representatives pick up the mail to distribute to their Soldiers.

While deployed, mail has always been the primary morale booster for servicemen and women.

“It makes you feel as though you are little closer to home,” said River Falls, Wis. native, Pfc. Koehl Heebink, a forward observer assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, of the Ironhorse Brigade, about the package he received. “It gives you something to look forward to during the day.”

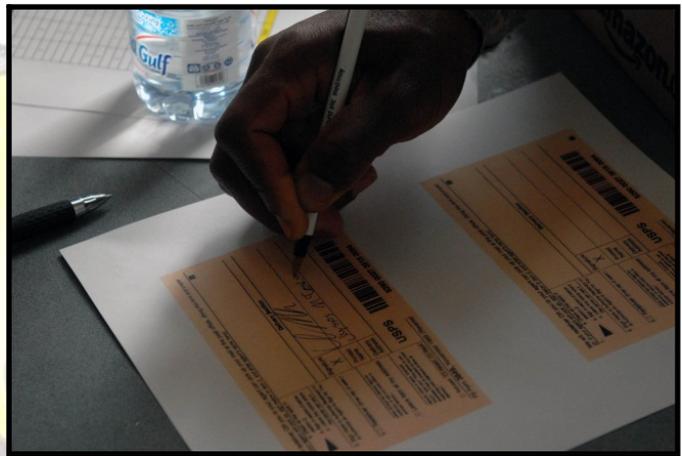
When a loved one from home sends mail to their servicemember overseas, it takes about five to eight days to receive.

Although the time frame to receive mail is short, it has not always been that way for

Ironhorse Soldiers. In Iraq, it would take anywhere from one to two weeks to receive a package from home.

No matter how long the wait is for mail, the reaction is always the same.

“When you give someone their package, getting to see the look on their face is priceless,” Angelos said about the effect of mail. “It makes their day.”



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – A Soldier signs for a package. “[Mail] makes you feel as though you are little closer to home,” said River Falls, Wis. native, Pfc. Koehl Heebink, a forward observer assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, of the Ironhorse Brigade about the package he received. “It gives you something to look forward to during the day.”



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Prescott, Ariz. native, Pfc. Jennifer Hamm, a resource specialist assigned to the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, prepares the paperwork required to deliver a package.

Lancers hold award ceremony

Photos by 2nd Lt. Thomas Morin 2-5 CAV UPAR



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Lt. Col. Jason Hayes (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Linton, prepare to raise their battalion colors during a ceremony.



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait—Pfc. Green (right), an infantryman assigned to Lancer's A Co., receives a Combat Infantry Badge for his actions while serving in Iraq.



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – 2nd Lt. Brian Huminsky (right), a Lancer officer, receives a combat patch from Lt. Col. Jason Hayes (left).

Surveillance equipment launch: Historic for Ironhorse

Photos by Sgt. John Couffer 1st BCT Public Affairs

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers assigned to A Co., 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, start the engine of an RQ7B Shadow, an unmanned aerial surveillance vehicle, Jan. 5. The launching of this Shadow represents an historic moment for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, as it is the brigade's first launch of a Shadow in Kuwait, and potentially the first launch of a Shadow on Udairi Army Airfield since 2003.



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Grand Haven Mich. native Pfc. Ross Martin, an unmanned aerial vehicle maintainer, assigned to A Co., 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, conducts pre-flight inspections and tests on the RQ7B Shadow, an unmanned aerial surveillance vehicle. The launching of this Shadow represents an historic moment for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, as it is the brigade's first launch of a Shadow in Kuwait, and potentially the first launch of a Shadow on Udairi Army Airfield since 2003.



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Lt. Col. Terry Meyer (right), the commander of the Airfield Operations Battalion on Udairi Army Airfield, aids in the launch of an RQ7B Shadow, Jan. 5. The launching of this Shadow represents an historic moment for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, as it is the brigade's first launch of a Shadow in Kuwait, and potentially the first launch of a Shadow on Udairi Army Airfield since 2003.

New mission,

**By Spc. Bailey Jester
1st BCT Public Affiars**

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – When Operation Iraqi Freedom began in 2003, it was the first war where frontline troops were equipped largely by the Army Prepositioned Stock, or APS.

APS's mission is to reduce the initial amount of equipment transportation required to support a Continental US-based unit, and to sustain Soldiers until traditional lines of communication are established.

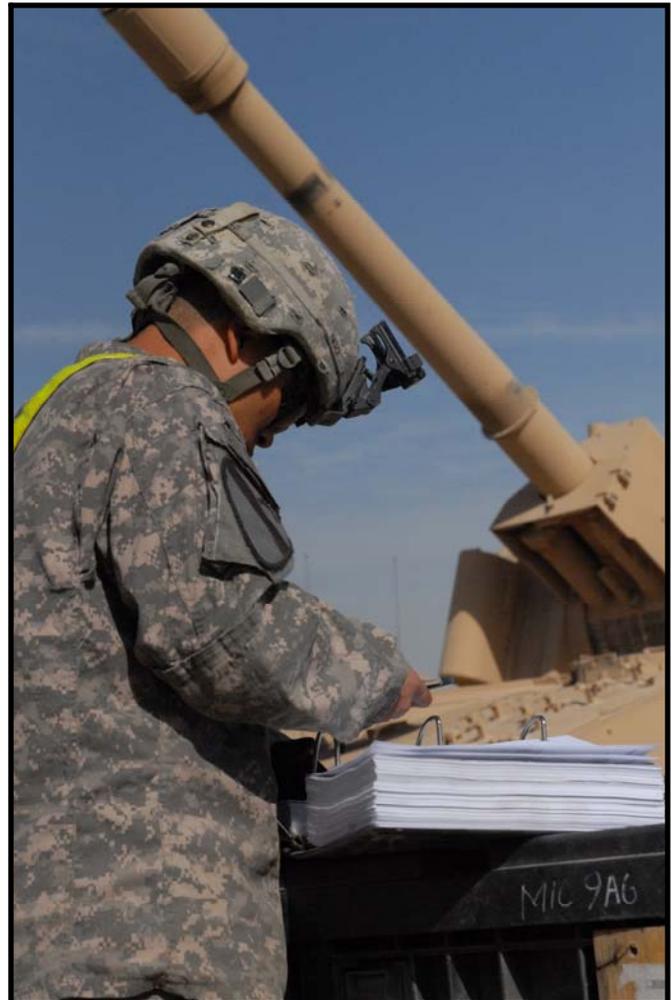
Across the globe there are five regional storage sites for U.S. troops: United States (1), Europe (2), Afloat (3), Pacific and Northeast Asia (4), and Southwest Asia (5).

The 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division is located in Southwest Asia, falling under APS-5.

“The quality of the equipment is far and above the standard,” said Rock Island, Ill. native, Col. Scott Efflandt, commander of the Ironhorse Brigade. “I’m excited to get back to our roots and begin training our wonderful Soldiers again.”

With a fresh set of equipment and a busy training schedule, Dragon Soldiers seem excited about their new mission.

“The majority of the Soldiers are looking forward to improving their MOS skills, they are going back to what



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Houston native, Staff Sgt. Duong Ngo, a section chief assigned to Battery A, 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, inspects property, Jan. 3. Dragons are drawing equipment to sustain themselves for their new mission in Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Bailey Jester, 1BCT Public Affairs, 1st Cav. Div.)

their job is,” Brown said about the Soldiers’ reaction to their future schedule.

The Soldiers aren’t the only ones excited for their future.

“I am very excited about this,” Brown concluded. “This is what they joined the Army to do.”

new equipment

Now with Ironhorse's mission changing, the team requires new equipment to sustain themselves.

"We are serving as part of the [Central Command area of operations]-security plan," said Honea Path, S.C. native, Lt. Col. Edmond Brown, commander of the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, explaining their new mission. "So we are going back to more of a traditional mission as a fires battalion that supports the brigade commander's intent for fires and for combat operations if that were to occur."

As a deployable force, a critical element is always being ready.

"We have the capability, we have the capacity, but for us to be truly ready to do our mission for this region, we have to increase our readiness," Brown explained. "So, to get there, we have to train."

Training is at the top of the Dragons to-do list.

"We are going to be able to shoot a lot of artillery," Brown smiled. "There is a significant amount of class work that has to be done to ensure people pass tests and are certified academically to do militarily what their [military occupational skill] job is."

Brown went on to explain they began the classroom training the day after they arrived from Iraq. With the majority of classroom training complete, the Dragon battalion is now moving on to crew-level drills.

"We are going to focus at the crew levels for the howitzer, the radar, for the metro section and for the fire directions center. We'll focus on the crew and then we'll continue to span that out to other collective groups: platoons, batteries, companies, and battalion," explained Brown.

The battalion plans on starting their training as early as Jan. 12.

In order to train and complete their mission, they needed to get the essential equipment, resulting in Dragon Soldiers spending three to five days drawing their equipment.

"We drew a battalion's worth of equipment," Brown said.

A battalion's worth of equipment is around 80 wheeled vehicles and 40 to 50 track vehicles with associated trailers, tool kits, automation and communication equipment, weapons, parts and repair parts.

Stallion Award Ceremony

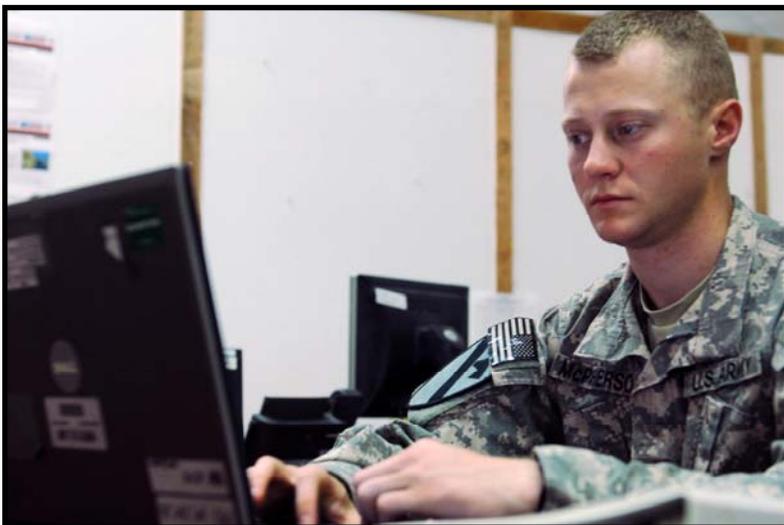
Photo by 2nd Lt. Brittany Myatt 2-8 CAV UPAR

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait- Lt. Col. Robert Rodriguez (center) and Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Austin, command team for the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, address Soldiers after the commencement of an Army Commendation Medal award presentation. More than 400 Soldiers received the honor for their support during Operation New Dawn.



Centurion Soldier competes for Military Intelligence Award

Photo by Sgt. John Couffer 1st BCT Public Affairs



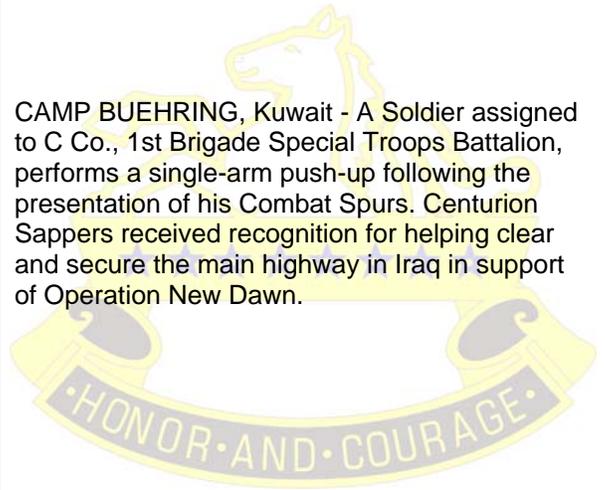
CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Apple Valley, Ca. native, Spc. Matthew McPherson, a military intelligence analyst, assigned to the A Co., 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, works at a computer terminal, Jan 9. McPherson was selected among five peers who competed in the Ironhorse Brigade for the Command Sgt. Maj.(Ret.) Doug Russel Award, an award given to those with outstanding achievements within the Military Intelligence community. He will now compete against fellow Soldiers at the Department of the Army level.

Army strong

Photo by 2nd Lt. Brittany Myatt 2-8 CAV UPAR



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait - A Soldier assigned to C Co., 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, performs a single-arm push-up following the presentation of his Combat Spurs. Centurion Sappers received recognition for helping clear and secure the main highway in Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn.



Dragons prep for live-fire

Photo by 1st Lt. Jonathan Dietz 1-82 FA UPAR

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – 1st Lt. Michael Schumacher (left), assigned to the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, supervises as his platoon conducts the Fire Control Alignment Test (FCAT) process in preparation for live fire training.



Contractor gives

**Story by Sgt. John Couffer
1st BCT Public Affairs**

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Sitting on the side of a short concrete t-wall, he sports blue jeans, a brown Carhartt jacket, and comfortable athletic shoes. Topping off the ensemble is a tan ballcap embroidered with his unit's insignia; it is a fitting outfit for his personality.

“I like to make people smile at least once a day,” said Charles City, Iowa native, Shawn McCumber, a civilian contractor assigned as the Digital Master Gunner to the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

McCumber said that he is a caring person and tries to make the working environment friendly.

“He tries to joke with people, and make sure you are happy,” said, Capt. Charles Gwynn of Gordon Nebraska, the deputy communications officer for the communications shop, assigned to the Ironhorse Brigade. “He’s just a great person to be around.”

Gwynn has worked on and off with McCumber over the past few years and knows the compassion McCumber shows to others.

“He’s always thinking of someone else. If you ever need anything, you can ask him and he’ll do his best to make it happen,” Gwynn said.

McCumber has been making Soldiers of the Ironhorse Brigade smile for about five and a half years, but before becoming a contractor, he was a Soldier himself.

He enlisted as an 11M, an infantryman assigned to a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, and was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. After devoting three and a half years to his country,



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Charles City, Iowa native, Shawn McCumber, a civilian contractor assigned as a Digital Master Gunner to the Ironhorse Brigade, smiles during an interview Dec 28.

McCumber medically retired.

“I wanted to stay in. I loved the military, I loved the life,” McCumber said. He mentioned that he tried everything in his power to stay in the Army.

After receiving an honorable discharge, he began searching for a job that would allow him to work as close to the military as possible. That is when he decided to become a contractor.

“Since I couldn’t be Soldier, [I wanted] to make sure they got supported as much as they could,” McCumber said sincerely.

One Soldier explained that McCumber is always willing to share his knowledge and experience with equipment to Soldiers who are willing to learn.

“He has given some demonstrations on his systems and some of the [other] systems he works on,” said Sgt. Bradley Rosborough, an Elgin, Ohio native and information systems operator assigned to the Ironhorse Brigade.

Rosborough said that McCumber helps people when they ask, right there on the spot,

to troops

aiding them in accomplishing their mission.

McCumber's support for the troops stretches beyond his job as a Digital Master Gunner.

Rosborough explained that McCumber also believes events held by the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center are for the Soldiers and not him. For example, according to Rosborough, McCumber won't attend concerts hosted by the MWR because McCumber claims those events are solely for the troops and not civilians.

Rosborough went on to say that McCumber feels all events and occasions should be for those who do the work and wear the uniform.

In addition to his support and work behind the scenes, McCumber said that raising people's spirits is also part of who he is. He said that it is this quality that led to his purchase and donation of the Santa and elf costumes for Christmas, and why he helped coordinate holiday events that benefited Ironhorse Soldiers who are currently deployed in Kuwait.

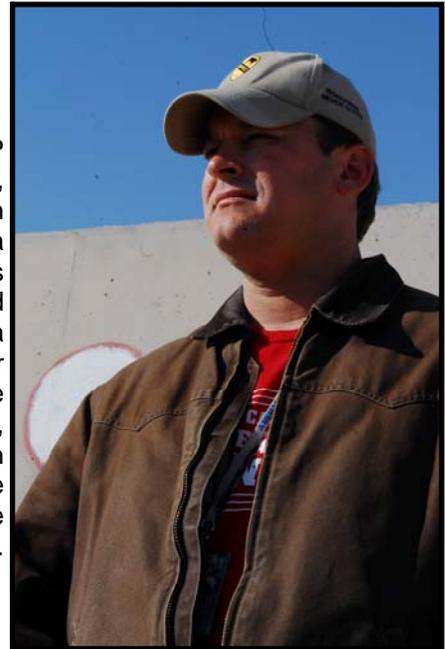
McCumber said he is proud to be part of something that helped Soldiers take a break from the normal routine of deployment.

"Seeing the Soldiers smile, point and laugh; for that instance, they forgot everything and saw Santa Clause," McCumber said with a genuine smile of giving on his face. "I can say that I had a contributing factor in making sure that Soldiers at least got a smile around Christmas."

For some Soldiers, seeing Santa was a relief and they took joy in knowing that Santa came to see them.

"When I stepped out the door and heard the helicopter, I knew Santa Clause was in

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Shawn McCumber, a native of Charles City, Iowa and assigned as a Digital Master Gunner to the Ironhorse Brigade, has worked with the Ironhorse Brigade for five and a half year.



there," Gwynn said with a smile. "I couldn't help but laugh and smile."

Gwynn went on to say that McCumber was the kind of guy that wanted to make sure that everyone had a good time at Christmas.

Thinking into the future, McCumber said there will be changes that he will have to make when it comes his career as a contractor. He said that the DSE program he is in is going to transition to the Department of Defense, which will eliminate his position. McCumber said that regardless of what changes are to come, he is glad to be where is - with the troops.

"I'm extremely happy with what I do. I like being down here with [Soldiers], I like being in the dirt," McCumber concluded. Gwynn and Rosborough both said that if McCumber is required to leave because of the changes in his job, that he will be missed because of his knowledge and experience, and his caring and giving attitude that he shows to the Soldiers.

Dragon Soldier re-enlists

Photo by 1st Lt. Jonathan Dietz 1-82 FA UPAR



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Staff Sgt. Brian Salvaggio (Right), assigned to the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, undergoes the oath of re-enlistment, Jan. 9, administered by Capt. James Belinga, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery.



GarryOwen's heavy hitters

Photo by CH (Capt.) Chris Weinrich 1-7 CAV UPAR

Lt. Col. Dolph Southerland leads the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, in a game of lieutenants versus captains and field grades in a monthly officer's sports activity, the Captains and field grade team won 17-4.



GarryOwen's command trains leadership

Photo by CH (Capt.) Chris Weinrich 1-7 CAV UPAR

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Lt. Col. Dolph Southerland, the commander of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, conducts a Leaders Professional Development for his lieutenants, troop commanders, and staff, here, Jan. 7. The LPD discussed Army Regulations and Field Manuals for administrative flags and bars. (Southerland also took the time to further the leadership skills of his lieutenants, platoon leaders and troop executive officers.)



GarryOwen trains at night

Photo by CH (Capt.) Chris Weinrich 1-7 CAV UPAR



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – A Troop, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, pose for a photo while at a night-fire range Jan. 6. Apache Troop will continue to train with different environments to sharpen the skills of their Soldiers.

Lancer brothers



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Pretoria, South Africa natives, Pfc. Jan-Karl, 23, and Pieter, 21, Van Rooyen, infantrymen assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, joined the Army not only to assist in their citizenship process, but to give back to the country that has given them so much. “We wanted to do something ambiguous, do something with our lives,” Jan-Karl said about his enlistment decision. “You know, give back what this country has given us.”

By Spc. Bailey Jester 1st BCT Public Affairs

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – It is common for Soldiers to meet up after years of being assigned to the same unit, but it is unique for two brothers to have the same timeline documented on their enlisted record brief.

Pfc. Jan-Karl, 23, and Pieter, 21, Van Rooyen have

followed each other throughout their time in the Army since their enlistment in 2010.

The Van Rooyen brothers were born and raised in Pretoria, South Africa; until 2000 when their father received a job offer in Florida.

His job sponsored the family’s move with a special visa allowing U.S. employers to temporarily employ foreign

workers in specialty occupations.

Although the brothers had gotten used to moving around and changing schools, moving to a new continent was a different challenge.

“The biggest fear I had was the readjustment,” Jan-Karl, at the time 12-years-old, said about his move to Florida.

stay together

“We were people from a foreign country, so I am sure it is the same fears any other immigrant would have.”

For Pieter, at the time 10-years-old, it was the change in language. He and his brother’s primary language changed from Afrikaans to English, and because of the large population of Hispanics, they were forced to pick up Spanish.

“It was a bilingual class, and I got lost pretty quick,” Pieter said about the language difference. “The teacher kept switching from Spanish to English, so it was pretty difficult.”

But overall it was an easy transition for the brothers.

“I’d say we adapted pretty quickly and it was small things that we had to overcome,” Jan-Karl said about the transition. “We were really reserved and it took us awhile to open up and get accustomed to how they perceived us, but we did it.”

About six months after moving to Florida, their father’s company moved them to their headquarters in Roswell, Ga., which they now call home.

With a divided home and forced transitions, the brothers

created similar interests and grew close.

“Our parents got divorced when we were pretty young, we moved quite a bit and changed schools often,” Pieter said about his bond with Jan-Karl. “He’s my brother and the only one I really had, so with all that we grew even closer.”

Not only do they enjoy the same interests, they also enjoy the company.

“Outside of the Army we pretty much did everything together,” Jan-Karl continued. “We had the same group of friends, always looked out for each other. We come from a divorced household and he has pretty much always been there for me. We just do everything together.”

The brothers also shared the desire of enlisting in the U.S. Army.

After two attempts to enlist, the first in 2007 and again in 2008, they were finally accepted in 2010.

“We tried to apply before, but we didn’t have our green card yet,” Jan-Karl said explaining the hold-up for their enlistment. “It had everything to do with the green card.”

Like many immigrants, the

Van Rooyen brothers joined the Army to assist in their application for United States citizenship, but it was not their sole intent for enlisting.

“We wanted to do something ambiguous, do something with our lives,” Jan-Karl said about his decision to enlist. “You know, give back what this country has given us.”

Although they enlisted in October 2010, they did not ship to their One Station Unit Training until February 2011 due to Pieter’s current college enrollment.

Upon completion of his semester, Pieter and his brother left for Fort Benning, Ga., to become infantrymen in the U.S. Army.

Once assigned to their unit, the brothers were placed in the same platoon, which surprisingly caused them very little grief.

“It was actually not too bad. I mean the drill sergeants kind of picked on us, but it was all out of good fun,” Jan-Karl explained.

“It wasn’t overdone and mainly out of fun,” Pieter added.

In their original contract, *Brothers*, continued on next page

Lancer brothers stay together

Brothers, from previous page they both selected to go to the United States Army Airborne School after completing their training, but changed their minds and decided to continue on with their military progression.

Jan-Karl originally obtained orders for Fort Riley, Kan., but their first sergeant offered his assistance in acquiring matching orders for Fort Hood, Texas.

On June 12, 2011 the brothers arrived to their first and current duty station, Fort Hood, Texas where they were then assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, of the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. Pieter was sent to Company A while Karl-Jan went to Company B.

Upon arriving to the Ironhorse Brigade, the brothers were informed they would be deploying to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn.

When the Van Rooyen's landed in Iraq, it was the first time the brothers were really separated.

Karl-Jan's company operated out of Contingency Operating Station Kalsu in Babil Province, and Pieter's was at COS Echo, just south of his

brother in Diwaniyah Province.

While deployed in Iraq, the brothers were only able to see each other once.

"We saw each other once during the deployment, and that was when I had to go to Kalsu to be fingerprinted for my citizenship application," Pieter said about their one-time reunion.

Although it was a first time for these young men, it was an experience for them.

"It's been a different experience," Jan-Karl said about their short-term separation. "Growing up, we've always been together. This is the first time we have been separated for a prolonged period of time."

Now the two brothers are permanently reunited at Camp Buehring for the duration of their deployment.

Jan-Karl explained this was their first Christmas away from family, so it was nice to have his brother there.

Not only for the holidays is it nice for the brothers to be here together, but being best friends it is nice have each other around.

"It's relaxing to have someone to talk to in your native language, and we talk

about stuff that we don't usually talk about with other people around," Jan-Karl said about him and his brother speaking in Afrikaans, their primary language from home.

Pieter said that after this deployment, he plans to apply for Special Forces selection. His brother said he has similar goals.

"It was what we initially wanted to do when we joined, but we aren't citizens so we had to wait," said Pieter.

Regardless of the career path they choose, the brothers have always been there for each other, and will continue to stay close.



Centurions re-enlist

Photos by Spc. Krystal Curl 1st BSTB UPAR

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Honolulu, Hawaii native, Spc. Tyrone Rechuld, a Combat Engineer Soldier assigned to Co. C, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, shakes the hand of Chief Warrant Officer Rude, his platoon leader, at his re-enlistment ceremony, Jan. 8.



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Fort Hood, Texas. Native, Sgt. Baltazar Lopez, a Chemical Corp Soldier assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, poses with Lt. Col. Stephen E. Dawson, his battalion commander, while receiving the Army Achievement Medal, Jan. 9. Sgt. Lopez was awarded the Army Achievement Medal for assisting with the Centurion Functional Academic Skill Training Class.

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Sulfer, La. native, Sgt. Lane Pickle, a Combat Engineer Soldier assigned to Co. C, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, shakes the hand of Lt. Col. Stephen E. Dawson, his battalion commander, after receiving a Combat Action Badge, Jan. 9.



Stallion medics

**Story by Sgt. John Couffer
1st BCT Public Affairs**

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – The sky was overcast and the climate cool as Soldiers donned protective body armor and helmets. These Soldiers steeled themselves, steadied their nerves and readied their weapons for the next life-saving ten minutes of their lives.

Medics assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, competed head-to-head for the coveted title of Best Medic during the annual Best Medic Competition held by the Stallions at Camp Buehring, Kuwait on Jan 13.

The leaders of the competition, although looking for a winner, were also hoping to send another message.

“I want them to know that they are capable of doing their job, that they can go out in a combat situation, save lives and bring Soldiers back home alive. That’s the end state I want [them to take] out of this,” said Staff Sgt. Christian Rohde a native of Fort Worth, Tx., a combat medic and platoon sergeant assigned to the Stallion Battalion of the Ironhorse Brigade.

Rohde said that this Best Medic Competition consisted of testing in four different areas: a written exam testing clinical knowledge, patient administration and Sick Call operations, patient emergency medical assessment and treatment, and casualty care in a combat environment. He added that the competition is the culmination of two weeks of formal training in these four areas.

Rohde attested that the tests the medics are being graded on are based off the Army training doctrine given to combat medics, and that it is not only a competition but also medic sustainment and certification training so the medics can retain or build upon their skill set.

Being a medic for some time, Rohde said that he hopes the medics walk away from the competition with the confidence of job perform-



ance, the importance of being in shape mentally and physically, and a better understanding of the rigors a medic may experience in combat.

This Best Medic Competition is different than the testing for the Expert Field Medical Badge, a skill badge similar to the Expert Infantry Badge that focuses on medical tasks. This environment allows the medics to exercise their own judgment.

“We’re testing the medic’s actual skills, giving them a little bit of freedom in taking care of the patient [by] using what they’ve learned over the years [and] their own techniques and common sense,” said Capt. Anthony Rakofsky, a native to Augusta, Ga., and the Physician Assistant for the Stallions. “We want these guys to think, to adapt as appropriate and use their own experience and common sense.”

compete for 'Best'



Rakofsky said that in this competition the medics aren't repeating something they have memorized. On the contrary, the medics are treating the wounds and reacting to the patient and the environment around them.

Rakofsky added that this competition is the first time in a while that all of the medics in the Stallion were able to assemble for training due to the types of missions they were running. He said that this is a great opportunity for the medics to get to know one another and build camaraderie.

"You get to spread the knowledge and the experience," Rakofsky said. "It's good team building and it's fun for everyone."

Rakofsky added that the medics, with their mentality and training, are the best medics in the Ironhorse Brigade, and he is willing to prove it anytime.

One medic in particular hopes to get some-

thing even better than winning.

"[I want] a greater knowledge, proficiency in the skill set. Even if you don't win, this kind of competition inspires a spirit of teamwork and competitive spirit, and it makes you a better at your job," said Los Angeles native, Spc. Dan Grove, a medic assigned to the Stallion's Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

Grove said that he was initially nervous when he heard of the competition, but that throughout the past two weeks of training, he received guidance and tips from fellow medics and leaders to calm his nerves.

Grove also said that he felt the competition added such a level of realism and that the only thing missing were real bullets. He was grateful for his leaders during the competition because they pushed him to complete the tasks within the time limit and supported him throughout the course. Grove especially liked the aspect of the teamwork involved in the competition.

"You have a chance to work as a team and [the competition] only makes you a better medic," Grove said.

Another medic who competed said that he was thankful for the training aspect prior to the competition.

"I wasn't the guy trying to get the bragging rights for being the Best Medic. I wanted to better my skill set so if I come across a casualty, I will be able to perform and help them get home," said San Antonion, Tx. native Spc. Richard Stevens, a medic assigned to A Co. of the Stallions.

Stevens said that running the course with all of its distractions and obstacles while wearing full protective gear, added a level of difficulty that forces one to focus both mentally and physically. He added that he is naturally competitive and even though the graders weren't pressuring him, he pushed through the course.

"I would like to see more of it," Stevens said about the training and competition.

In the end, this is a competition and only one can be named the Best Medic.

Lancer Soldier wins board

Photo by Sgt. David Webb 2-5 CAV UPAR



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait- Spc. Bryson from A Co, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, is Lancer's Soldier of the Month for January. Bryson came out ahead of his peers during the Soldier of the Month Board, earning the title of 'Soldier of the Month'.

Lancers prepare for gunnery

Photo by Spc. Alicea 2-5 CAV UPAR

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait- Capt. Danko (right) and Staff Sgt. Estrella (left), both assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, go through the process of validating tank crews for the up-coming gunnery. Validation is crucial when firing weapons in order to prevent unwanted collateral damage.



Apache conducts Scout Stakes training

Photos by CH (Capt.) Chris Weinrich 1-7 CAV UPAR

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers assigned to A Troop, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, conduct scout training for their upcoming scout stakes, on Camp Buehring, Kuwait Jan 18. The maneuvers gave the Soldiers and their leaders' valuable insights for communication and working together as a squad and platoon.



GarryOwen blazes Camp Buehring



CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Lt. Col. Grover Southerland (left), the commander of the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, and Command Sgt. Maj. Mervyn Ripley (right), the command sergeant major of GarryOwen, in a time honored tradition of the Squadron run on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan 20. The event takes place on a monthly basis and gives the troop command teams the ability to see their Soldiers running throughout the camp.

Explosives training for

Photos by CH (Capt.) Chris Weinrich 1-7 CAV UPAR and
Sgt. John Couffer 1BCT Public Affairs



Photo by CH (Capt.) Chris Weinrich

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers assigned to the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, trained on explosive demolition techniques with trainers from the 1st Brigade Support Training Battalion assigned to Ironhorse, on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 19. The training culminated with demolition explosions at a local range.



Photo by Sgt. John Couffer

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers assigned to the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, download explosives and detonation catalysts, on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 22. This marks the very first time that GarryOwen Soldiers have detonated explosives in Kuwait.



Photo by Sgt. John Couffer

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Long Beach, Calif. native Staff Sgt. Kawai Ngov, assigned to C Co., 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, demonstrates how to connect detonation cord to a blasting cap using a plastic holding clip, on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 22. This training opportunity allows Garryowen and its Soldiers to detonate explosives for the very first time in Kuwait.

GarryOwen Soldiers

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Boise, Idaho native Staff Sgt. Mitchell Anderson (left), assigned to C Co., 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, instructs a GarryOwen Soldier on how to properly pack explosives into a steel beam on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 22. This live-fire training marks the first time in history that GarryOwen detonated explosives in Kuwait.



Photo by Sgt. John Couffer

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers assigned to the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, connect detonation cords to the main detonation ring, finalizing the firing sequence on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 22. This is the first time in GarryOwen's history that explosives were detonated in Kuwait.



Photo by Sgt. John Couffer

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – An explosive detonation throws debris into the air during live-fire training by Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 22. This training provides GarryOwen the opportunity to detonate explosives for the first time in its history in Kuwait.



Photo by Sgt. John Couffer

LIVE THE LEGEND!!



**IRONHORSE NEVER
QUITS!!**