The IronHorseman

1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division
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On the front cover

Sgt. Nadeau, assigned to the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division flips a tire during their squadron spur ride, here, Sept. 25. (Photo by Spc. Bailey Kramer)
Ironhorse Brigade

The Ironhorse Brigade is a unit rich in heritage with cavalry, artillery, and logistic units dating back before the Civil War era. The brigade has proudly served in the Pacific during WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, and deployed most recently four times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn. The Brigade was one of the last units out of Iraq in December 2011 as operations ended.

The Ironhorse Brigade is a disciplined Brigade Combat Team that deploys on order, executes any assigned mission successfully, and wins every fight. We excel in conditions of uncertainty and stress, and we possess the physical and mental toughness to overcome every form of hardship and obstacle. We always expect to win, regardless of the difficulties caused by enemy actions, the environment, or available resources. We share ownership in all that the Ironhorse Team does and we will always protect the reputation of this unit. We have high expectations and trust of our Leaders, our subordinates and our comrades. Family members, Cavalry Troopers, and Leaders in Ironhorse Brigade are winners!

For more information on the Ironhorse Brigade, please visit:
http://pao.hood.army.mil/1stcavdiv/units/1bct/default.aspx
Growing up, his dream was to be a United States Soldier.

Even with two hip surgeries only months apart, Kearny, N.J. native, Sgt. 1st Class Oscar Ayala, a platoon sergeant assigned to D Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, “Ironhorse” 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, still manages to outperform his Soldiers.

“I always wanted to be a Soldier,” Ayala explained. “When I was in high school I told my recruiter I wanted to join the Army. I didn’t ask for anything, I just joined.”

Joining the National Guard in 1999, Ayala enlisted as a tanker. After a year and a half, he switched to active duty.

Serving in the position of platoon sergeant is special to Ayala.

“I never pictured myself being in the position I am in now,” he said. “I mean, I am just one of many at my position, but going back to my childhood, I never thought I would have this impact on other Soldiers, or even [noncommissioned officers].”
After converting to active duty, Ayala was stationed at Fort Lewis, Wash. where he stayed for two years before moving to Fort Hood, Texas in 2003. When arriving to Fort Hood, Ayala was assigned to the Ironhorse Brigade.

Since 2003, Ayala has been deployed four times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn and the most recent in Kuwait, Operation Spartan Shield.

Although he has deployed numerous times, he has not let it affect his attitude towards the Army.

“I know I have younger Soldiers looking up to me,” Ayala said, explaining his source of motivation. “I have to show my Soldiers that even though we go through tough times, we are still Soldiers and that’s what we get paid to do. We have to get the mission accomplished whether we are going through good or bad times.”

Chicago native, Spc. Sam Garcia feels as though he can look to Ayala for guidance and leadership. “(Ayala) has always been approachable,” Garcia said about his respected mentor. “He’s (seasoned) and I know I can count on him to help me when I need him most.”

During the OIF ‘06 to ‘08 deployment, Ayala sustained a hip injury. While getting it checked out, the doctor informed him of a crack on his hip that needed to be fixed. During his check-up, problems were found in both hips resulting in a dual surgery.

Ayala’s first surgery was April 2011 with his second following less than two months later in June 2011.

Even with the surgeries in such a small time frame and the amount of pain that comes along with it, he has not let it stagger his motivation.

“I am still motivated, probably a little more,” Ayala said about the emotional impact of the surgery. “I learned to ignore the majority of the pain. Whether I am injured or not, I still go up there and lead my guys.”

Even after two hip surgeries, Ayala still receives a perfect score, of 300, on his physical fitness test, consisting of two minutes of push-ups, sit-ups and a two-mile run.

“I feel as though I set the bar for my platoon,” Ayala said about his success. “If I can do it, they can too. A lot of my guys see me trying and they get behind me, it keeps me and them motivated.”

This past year, Ayala was the tank commander of the Ironhorse tank team that participated in the prestigious Sullivan Cup, a competition testing tanker’s skills across the United States Army. During the competition, the first event was a PT test. Ayala was one of only two competitors to earn a perfect score of 300. “It made me feel that although I am on the older side of the competitors, that age is just a number,” Ayala said about his physical condition. “It’s all in how you maintain yourself.”

Garcia finds his leader to be strong-willed and highly respected, but he isn’t the only one who recognizes his determined personality. Ayala’s wife of 25 years, Katherine, is also aware of his self-motivation.

“(Katherine) keeps telling me to slow down on the physical side of work, exercising and such,” Ayala chuckled. “But I remind her I am a leader and I can’t lead my Soldiers from the rear. She understands and is very supportive of my choices.”

With everything that has happened, Ayala has a supportive wife helping him push through his obstacles.

“It’s a little bit hard,” Ayala said, talking about maintaining his positive attitude in front of his Soldiers. “But like I tell my guys, even though we go through tough times, I am a Soldier.”
1-82 promotes drug awareness

Story by Spc. Bailey Kramer

“We are…Drug free. We are…Drug free.”

This chant along with several similar ones were widely echoed across the J L Williams Ledger Elementary Campus during a Red Ribbon Walk.

Red Ribbon Week is a nationwide alcohol, tobacco and other drug and violence prevention awareness campaign normally observed in October.

Drug Enforcement Agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena spent 1981 to 1985 working undercover in Guadalajara, Mexico, before being kidnapped, tortured and murdered. In honor of Camarena’s memory and his hard work against drugs, his family, friends and neighbors began wearing red badges of satin.

According to the DEA and the National Family Partnership, approximately 80 million people participate in Red Ribbon events every year.

This year, nine Soldiers from the 1st “Dragons” Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, joined students from J L Williams Ledger Elementary School to conclude Red Ribbon Week, here, Oct. 26.

“We are excited to be a positive figure for the children,” said Leesville, La. native, 2nd Lt. Kathleen Rojewski, the assistant intelligence analyst for the Dragon Battalion. “To show the importance of no drug use and we hope to continue to be a strong influence on the kids and give them the support that they need.”

Although the weather was less than desirable, it did not affect the enthusiasm of the children. They still high-fived, saluted and waved at Soldiers as they passed them during their walk around campus.

“I love kids,” said Sgt. Kemelia Campbell, a power generator equipment repairer assigned to Forward Support Company G of the Dragon Battalion. “I believe they need positive role models. Plus they look up to us like we are superheroes, it’s just awesome.”

Students were holding signs reading: ‘Say no to drugs’, ‘Hands off drugs’, ‘Sock it to drugs’ and many more.

“I have zero tolerance for drugs,” Campbell said. “Don’t do it, if you can’t think clearly, don’t do it, they are just really bad.”

Due to the cold weather, the march was shortened and made its way to the school gymnasium where they conducted a mini-pep rally.

Once in the gymnasium, the children filed in and started dancing to upbeat, encouraging songs, like ‘Shout’. Upon concluding the event, the students recited ‘drug free’ spirited chants.

“I have zero tolerance for drugs,” said Valley City, Nev. native, Pfc. Dillon Bishop a cannon crew member assigned to the Dragon’s B Battery. “It’s awesome to see them so enthusiastic about this event; I hope they keep that enthusiasm about staying drug free their whole lives.”

Although the day had to end, the administration does not believe the Soldier’s presence will leave with them.

“We love having our Soldiers come spend time with our students,” concluded Daniel Dodson, assistant principal for J L Williams Ledger Elementary School. “The students find them very inspiring, and look up to them, so having (Soldiers) here sets a good example for the younger children.”

“I had fun spending the afternoon with the chil-
Ironhorse hosts Trunk or Treat

Story by Spc. Bailey Kramer

“Trick or treat!”

Yes, this seasonal phrase is back and Soldiers assigned to the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division are celebrating.

The Ironhorse Brigade hosted the second annual Trunk or Treat, here on Mudd Field, Oct. 27 to help foster family support and establish esprit-de-corps throughout the brigade.

A haunted house, pumpkin bean bag toss, pumpkin launch and a dunk tank are a few of the 21 kid-friendly events provided by the battalions. The battalions also provided about 190 volunteers to operate the fun-filled activities.

The favored event seemed to be the haunted house, provided by the Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, of the Ironhorse Brigade. “They had the largest groups of people waiting outside for their turn,” said the officer in charge of Trunk or Treat, Capt. Angel Jackson-Gillespie.

There was no way to accurately count the number of participants, but with all 3000 to 4000 pounds of candy passed out, it was easy to see the event was a success.

“It was a huge success,” Jackson-Gillespie concluded. “I can’t wait for next year’s celebration.”
Ironhorse Soldier sole

Story by Spc. Bailey Kramer

Joining the Army a little more than a year ago, one 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Soldier has already made a name for herself.

Union, Mo. native, Pfc. Christina Garcia, a combat medic assigned to Company C, 115th Brigade Support Battalion of the Ironhorse Brigade, was one of 230 medical Soldiers to participate in the Expert Field Medical Badge Competition, here, Sept. 29 to Oct. 4.

Upon completion of the EFMB Competition only 22 competitors remained, Garcia not only being one of the few, but she stood as the sole 1st Cav. Div. “First Team” finisher.

“I could not be more proud of her,” said Garcia’s first sergeant, Summerville, S.C. native, Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly Leonard. “With 234 candidates only 22 passed, only 22 got the badge.”

Earning the highly coveted EFMB is not an easy task Leonard explained.

One afternoon the command team entered C Co. and asked who wanted to compete for the badge.

“After (the command team) asked, all of us new medics were just like, ‘I don’t know what it is, but I’ll do it,” chuckled Garcia.

Soon after volunteering to compete for the badge they began training, which lasted about two weeks prior to the event.

“Every day we were practicing a different task,” Garcia said about their unit training.

The morning of Sept. 24, Garcia and 21 other Ironhorse Soldiers stood ready to compete. “I wasn’t a primary candidate, I was only an alternate,” Garcia said about her first day. “I wanted to be like, look, I can do it.”

Medics are a natural competitive group, Leonard said about Garcia’s competitive personality. “They are competing against themselves. There are so many criteria in a technical and tactical portion; you have to not only be a good medic, but a good Soldier.”

The first five days of the competition was familiarizing the participants with the standards of the competitions.

“The events are a sequential thing,” Leonard said about the importance of attention to detail. “You can get a no-go for going steps 1-3-5 instead of 1-2-3-4-5.”

The competition included many of the tasks they covered during their unit training: litter carries and putting them on the back of different military vehicles, assembling and disassembling radios, M-4s, M-16s and M-9s, and various medical skills.

“I really enjoyed doing the medic lanes,” Garcia said about her favorite event. “I was actually getting to use the skills I learned in (Advanced Individual Training). It was the one I was most comfortable with and it was fun.”

Although there were many memorial events for Garcia, and she enjoyed herself, it wasn’t an easy adventure for her.

“The (evacuation) lane was physically challenging,” Garcia said about the most trying event. “There was a lot of moving, over and under objects and we had to do a low crawl with a litter under barbed wire.”

Upon completing the event, Garcia now has a newfound confidence in herself and medical abilities.

“This competition gave me a lot of confidence in myself as a medic. I worked really hard for it and it’s something no one can ever take away from me.”

“Earning her badge as a PFC she has set herself well above her peers.”

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“Earning her badge as a PFC she has set herself well above her peers.”

“Earning her badge as a PFC she has set herself well above her peers.”
said, remembering the rain, mud and falling in a creek. “I feel as though this competition has opened a lot of doors for me.”

Garcia isn’t the only one who believes in the number of opportunities this accomplishment has opened for her.

“Earning her badge as a (private first class), she has set herself well above her peers,” Leonard said about her Soldier. “She is setting herself more competitive for her career.”

When crossing the finish line of the final event, a 12-mile road march, Leonard was standing there waiting for her.

“I literally caught her as she crossed the finish line,” Leonard said of the exhausted participant. “I realized she was the only one from our unit left, I couldn’t have been more proud.”

Upon arriving at the field to receive her badge, Garcia learned she was not only the sole Ironhorse recipient, but also the only Soldier from the First Team to earn an EFMB during this testing.

“It felt pretty good,” Garcia said about her feelings on learning her standing throughout the division. “Everyone did a really good job, I just happened to get a little further than they did. This whole experience has been a confidence booster.”

While Garcia is still new to the Army, completing the EFMB was a big motivator for Garcia to excel in the military, but she hasn’t quite decided if she wants to make it a career.

“I don’t know what I want to do with the Army,” Garcia said about her thoughts on a military career. “It is really kind of quick to tell, I have only been in the Army for a year. So far, I love it, I love the camaraderie. I could definitely see myself making it a career.”

Garcia has a slot waiting for her at Air Assault School once her feet have healed. She also hopes to attend flight medic school and become airborne qualified.

“I really appreciate all the help and support I got from my chain of command and fellow Soldiers,” Garcia concluded. “I wouldn’t have been able to do it without them.”
2-5 assists WWII Veterans

Story by Spc. Bailey Kramer

“We can’t all be heroes. Some of us have to stand on the curb and clap as they go by.” These words, once spoken by Will Rogers, are the motto of the Honor Flight Network.

Fifty World War II Veterans from Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop and Caldwell Texas counties flew to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C., from the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport here, Oct. 9.

Fourteen Soldiers assigned to A Company, 2nd “Lancer” Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division spent time with the veterans before they left the airport.

The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created to honor America’s veterans for their many sacrifices, by transporting them to Washington D.C. to visit their memorials.

“It goes without saying we would not be here without (veterans),” said Allen Bergeron, chairman of the Austin, Texas chapter of the Honor Flight Network. “I can’t thank (veterans) enough.”

The Honor Flights began in the 2004 to 2005 timeframe when Air Force Retired Col. Earl Morse started flying a few World War II Veterans at a time.

“The Honor Flights soon became a national movement,” Bergeron said, describing the quick growth of the program.

Starting out with only three or four World War II Veterans, the Honor Flights have now taken more than 85,000 veterans to Washington D.C. to see their memorial, stated Bergeron.

“It is great to be going to visit the memorial,” said 94-year-old World War II Army nurse and veteran, Isabelle Cook.

Cook worked as an Army nurse for three years during World War II, serving in North Africa, Italy and France.

“I think it’s wonderful that the younger Soldiers are here, just to see them here and how helpful they’ve been,” Cook said of the Lancer Soldiers assistance. “I’m very appreciative of it. I don’t think they quite understand how much it means for them to be here.”

The assistance of the younger generation of Soldiers meant a lot to the veterans, but they aren’t the only ones who were grateful to be there.

“It is an honoring experience to help and talk to these veterans,” said Austin, Texas native, 2nd Lt. Rob Wilson, an infantry officer assigned to the Lancer Battalion. “They have done so much, and sadly you don’t know how long these men and women will be around. It’s always a great experience to talk to veterans and get younger Soldiers involved.”

Bergeron expressed his gratitude to the men and women for their sacrifices, “again, I can’t thank you enough, from the bottom of my heart, thank you so much.”
Story by Spc. Bailey Kramer

“We are at war with the most dangerous enemy that has ever faced mankind in his long climb from the swamp to the stars.”

President Ronald Reagan made this statement about the Vietnam War in 1964. Although Reagan claimed the Vietnamese Soldiers to be one of the most dangerous enemies, it wasn’t uncommon for ‘tunnel rat’ Soldiers to meet face-to-face with North Vietnamese Army Soldiers.

Tunnel rats were Soldiers who volunteered to search a network of tunnels, generally pitch black, with only a flashlight and .45-caliber weapon as gear.

One American tunnel rat, Cohasset, Minn. native, Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Brian Kielpinski, completed a year-long tour in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968 with B Company of the 1st “GarryOwen” Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, collecting an NVA flag and an officer’s belt buckle and lighter.

“Once in awhile you would find a weapons case (in the tunnels) and some were abandoned; one time they found a hospital,” Brian Kielpinski said about his adventures. “The hospital had been recently abandoned, so we took a lot of the equipment for our men.”

Now, 44 years later, he is donating his collection to GarryOwen, here at the 1st Cav. Div. museum, Oct. 23, believing “it’s now back to where it belongs.”

During one tunnel rat mission, 19-year-old Brian Kielpinski was flown in under heavy fire and while camped out he stared at an NVA flag for three days.

“Keep a look-out for me, I am getting that flag,” he told his Soldiers, then proceeded to run across a rice paddy field, knock down the pole and gain possession of the flag.

“At the time, I was just glad I didn’t have to look at the flag anymore,” Brian Kielpinski chuckled about his success.

Returning home, he brought the mementos with him, where they went into a drawer and were forgotten about for many years.

“All those years they sat in the drawer, I didn’t think about it, then we had them framed,” Brian Kielpinski continued. “I think as you age you realize things in life don’t necessarily belong to you. Yeah, they are yours as material things, but there are things bigger than us as individuals.”

Brian Kielpinski did not originally plan on personally donating the flag to GarryOwen, but rather donated by his son, Lt. Col. Michael Kielpinski, commander of the 1st “Head Hunter” Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

“(My son) was visiting in June and I sent the flag back to Texas with him,” Brian Kielpinski said about his original plan on handing it to the deserving unit. “He kind of pushed me to do it the right way, so I agreed.”

Michael Kielpinski pushed for his father’s involvement when he was notified of his promotion to lieutenant colonel.

“He asked me if I would mind doing his promotion on the same day as handing over the flag, I said it would be wonderful,” Brian Kielpinski said. “I am very proud of him and seeing him and what he has accomplished puts me at peace.”

Understanding the importance of history to the GarryOwen family, he knew exactly where they belonged. “Just like Custer, all those little sands of history equal the whole history of 1-7 (Cav), and I thought this is part of it and should be with those troopers,” Brian Kielpinski said, explaining his decision for his donation.

The historical significance was clear among all

Continued on page 14
Fifteen Ironhorse noncommissioned officers were inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club here, Sep. 20, at Ironhorse Chapel.

Only select NCOs are inducted into the SAMC which recognizes those individuals who have made significant contributions to the NCO Corps and the Army.

“See you don’t just wake up one day and decide I’m going to be Audie Murphy,” said guest speaker and 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Linton.

“You have to perform at a top level, have unquestionable ethics, values and morals. The kind of ethics, values and morals you only get from good upbringing from mom and dad back home. And then you’re brought into the United States Army and you join America’s First Team where you’re taught how to be an unselfish leader.”

Each NCO was introduced by a Soldier who they had inspired. The Soldiers credited the NCOs for a myriad of qualities that gave insight into why the inductee was chosen for the SAMC.

Spc. Todd Lasham of Company B, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion explained how his NCO, Staff Sgt. Robert Schuelke of Company B, 1BSTB, encouraged him to continue to serve.

“He has truly inspired me to follow in his footsteps and develop into an outstanding leader,” said Lasham. “His willingness to lend a helping hand and dedication to Soldiers is the reason why I am still serving in the United States Army. He is truly a model of what a leader is.”

“I took him and just molded him and talked to him and showed him that not all leaders are the same,” said Schuelke. “There are good leaders out there and you just take what you’ve learned … from your good leaders and your bad leaders, and mold yourself so when you become a leader, you know how to treat the Soldiers that are below you.”

Staff Sgt. Christopher Bane of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division expressed excitement over being inducted into the SAMC.

“Overall, it’s just a positive experience from the beginning when someone told me they wanted me to go, that was just a big boost of morale in general and I look forward to trying to put some of my future Soldiers into this club as well.”

Linton encouraged the NCOs to use their SAMC membership to become better leaders.

“To the newest inductees, I challenge you today not to use this great accomplishment as a promotion tactic or stepping stone in your career,” said Linton. “Take what you have learned and use it to be the best leader in the military.”

1) SSG Joshua Gendron — HHT, 1BCT  
2) SGT Danielle Robinson — A Co., 1 BSTB  
3) SSG Anthony Trimboli — C Co., 1 BSTB  
4) SSG Mitchell Anderson — C Co., 1 BSTB  
5) SSG Nicholas Haredebeck — C Co., 1 BSTB  
6) SSG Robert Schuelke — C Co., 1 BSTB  
7) SSG Cornell Reddick — A Co., 115th BSB  
8) SGT Gustavo De La Victoria — A Co., 115th BSB  
9) SSG Richard Lopez — B Co., 115th BSB  
10) SFC Kevin Horschel — HHT, 1-7 CAV  
11) SGT James Petre — HHC, 2-5 CAV  
12) SGT William Daniel — A Co., 2-5 CAV  
13) SSG Rony Martinez — B Co., 2-5  
14) SSG Christopher Bane— C Co., 2-5 CAV  
15) SSG Ali-Jamal Judge — C Co., 2-5 CAV
1-1 CAV newest SAMA inductees
Ironhorse’s fallen Soldiers

In memory of our comrades.

SPC Webb
1-7 CAV

PFC Sroka
115th BSB

SPC Singletary
115th BSB

Historical Gifts

who attended, especially the recipient of the gifts, GarryOwen commander, Lt. Col. Jay Miseli.

“It’s very significant to me,” Miseli stated. “It’s very personally rewarding as well. To see the inherent pride that exists in this squadron, not only in the troopers, but with our families and veterans.”

Miseli holds a deep history with both participating units, previously serving as the Head Hunters operations and executive officer and currently the GarryOwen commander.

Working side-by-side, the two units shared a major part of each other’s history. Head Hunters organized the recon mission for GarryOwen at Landing Zone X-Ray, the battle later known for the movie, “We were Soldiers.”

The artifacts will be housed in the GarryOwen conference room, named for LZ X-Ray.

“Over all those years I served, I served in a lot of infantry battalions, but I’ll always be a trooper and GarryOwen will always be my first,” Brian Kielpinski concluded. “I have a personal attachment to the 1st of 7th, but not one to the flag. When I first got it, it felt good, but it’s now home.”
Ironhorse Smiling Faces
# Upcoming Events

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### Annual Events

- **1 December**: Copperas Cove Christmas Parade
- **8 December**: Annual Killeen Christmas Parade

### Holiday Events

- **23 December**: Christmas Holiday
- **31 December**: New Years Holiday

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**Please enjoy this winter word search provided by grandforks Herald.com. Be sure to look forward, backward and diagonal!**

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**On the back:**

CONTACT US

Have an interesting story idea? Know an interesting Soldier? Feel free to contact our office via phone, email or social media! We would love to hear them!

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