



# THE WARRIOR

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The Mountain Warrior Report







## COMMANDER SPEAKS

Mountain Warrior Soldiers and Families,

I want to start out this month by saying how proud I am of the work all of our Soldiers are doing. The effort you put forth during Mountain Strike was absolutely amazing and while we have some learning to do I could not be happier with the progress. The next several weeks are going to busy as the brigade prepares for our trip to the National Training Center at Ft. Irwin, Calif. There will be some long days ahead and time away from the Family as we tackle our upcoming mission to Afghanistan.

As we move into the next phase of our training, there are a couple of things I need you to keep in mind: risk mitigation and professionalism. Risk is mitigated by two things, leadership and training. Both of these tenets begin at the team and squad-leader level; I am relying on our young NCOs to lead the way. Professionalism begins and ends with our Army values. They are the cornerstone of all we do. At a time like this we cannot afford amateurs so if you see someone or something wrong, something not to standard, fix it. Our character and



competence go hand in hand, we must be 360 degree soldiers.

Secondly, time has come to celebrate another hallmark of our nation. For over 227 years, the American work ethic has built us into the world's greatest society. Over the next four days we will take a well deserved break to celebrate Labor Day. As summer draws to an end, remember our Soldiers are our country's most valuable asset. Enjoy your fam-

ily, friends and barbeques. Get out into the 'Best Hometown in the Army' and have some fun, but do it responsibly. As the nation's finest Soldiers and leaders I ask that you embrace this time with professionalism, discipline and live our Army values. In closing, stay safe, have fun and get some rest. Thank you for your service.

"Led By Love of Country, Steadfast and Loyal!"

Col. Brian L Pearl,  
Commander, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division

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On the Cover:

Pfc. Alexander Loli, Troop C, 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div. mans an observation post during Mountain Strike on Fort Carson, Aug. 23, 2013.

(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Nelson Robles 4th IBCT PAO)

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## SAFETY MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

**No one should take a vacation away from Safety!**

Many people view Labor Day as the end of summer and their last chance to travel, hit the beach and fire up the grill.

While many people will spend the Labor Day weekend traveling and spending time with family and friends, no one should take a vacation from safety.

It's still important that people work to remain vigilant on the road, at the beach and at cookouts.

People should follow these safety tips:

**Tips for Safe Travel**

- Carry an emergency supply kit in your trunk
- Let someone know your destination, your route, and when you expect to arrive.
- Buckle up and observe speed limits.
- Don't drink and drive.
- Don't drive while fatigued.

**Tips for Safe Swimming**

- Check weather and water conditions beforehand and throughout the day.
- Always swim with a buddy in a designated

swimming area supervised by a lifeguard.

- Provide constant supervision to children in or near the water and always stay within arm's reach of young children an inexperienced swimmers while they are in the water.
- Young children and inexperienced swimmers should wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets.

**Tips for Safe Grilling**

- Keep the grill away from the house, tree branches, or anything that could catch fire.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals have already been ignited.

The American Red Cross First Aid App for smart phones and tablets provides users with expert advice on what to do in case of emergency. This free app is available on the Apple iTunes or Google Play stores and at [redcross.org/mobile-apps](http://redcross.org/mobile-apps).

For more information on emergency preparedness, go to [redcross.org](http://redcross.org). Additional water safety tips are located at [redcross.org/watersafety](http://redcross.org/watersafety).







# MOUNTAIN WARRIORS REMEMBER FALLEN SOLDIERS



Photo and Story by Sgt. Jessica A. Parker  
4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORT CARSON, Colo. -- Family, friends and coworkers gathered to honor the one-year anniversary of the passing of four of their own at The Mountain Post Global War on Terrorism Fallen Soldiers' Memorial on Fort Carson Aug. 8, 2013.

Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Griffin, along with Maj. Thomas Kennedy, Maj. Walter Gray and USAID civilian Ragaei Abdelfattah, were killed in action, while several others were wounded, on a patrol in the Kunar province of Afghanistan.

One of the wounded, Capt. Florent Groberg, commander, Personal Security Detachment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, who spent the last year in rehabilitation following the attack, wrote about Griffin's honor and sacrifice. Griffin's widow, Pamela, read Groberg's words before the release of the red

balloons to honor her husband, and blue balloons to honor the other three men that were lost that day.

"I respected the man immensely and learned as much as I could from him" Groberg said, "He died that day a hero, but not only a war hero, but a hero husband, father, son, leader and friend."

Griffin was the senior enlisted advisor to the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. A native of Riverton, Wyo., Griffin was known for his devotion to the Army and his Family.

Kennedy, a native of West Point, N.Y., was also assigned to the 4IBCT, 4ID, as the brigade fire support officer. He had only recently arrived in Afghanistan when he was killed.

Gray was an air liaison officer and flight commander for the Fort Carson-based 13th Air Support Operations Squadron. Gray's hometown was Conyers, Ga.



**Spc. Eric D. Hobson**  
**1980-2013**



Lt. Col. Michael Egan, commander of 704th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Cpt. Aaron Reedy, commander of Company B, 704th BSB, 4IBCT, 4ID, Spc. Tray Hill and Spc. Omar Jones bow their heads while the chaplain issues the invocation at the memorial ceremony for Spc. Eric Hobson at the Soldiers Chapel.



Spc. Eric D. Hobson is honored for his outstanding service to the Army at his memorial ceremony at the Soldiers Chapel on Fort Carson, August 12, 2013. Hobson was killed when a drunk driver struck him while he was riding his motorcycle.



1st Sgt. Demond Mabry, first sergeant for Company B, 704th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conducts final roll call for Spc. Eric D. Hobson at the Soldier's Chapel on Fort Carson, August 12, 2013.





# MOUNTAIN STRIKE

SOLDIERS TRAIN IN REAL WORLD SCENARIOS FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS

FORT CARSON, Colo. – As the dust settles throughout the training areas of Fort Carson, the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Mountain Warriors completed their annual training event called Mountain Strike, Aug. 27.

This two week-iteration is an important one as the Mountain Warriors embark on a new mission as the focus in Afghanistan shifts to one of Security Force Assistance operations.

"The Mountain Strike exercise is about getting us prepared for our upcoming Security Force Assistance Team deployment to Operation Enduring Freedom," said Maj. Mark Ivezaj, brigade executive officer for 4th IBCT. "We are also staging this in a manner that allows us to train for the National Training Center which is our culminating exercise before we actually deploy."

With roughly 2,700 Soldiers participating, organizing this training event was no easy task.

"This type of exercise requires a lot of planning," Ivezaj explained. "We've been planning for this exercise with our lead into NTC for over a year, we've conducted every type of training at the platoon, squad and team level heading into Mountain Strike."

The training was broken into several lanes, each with it's own focus. The first lane was the most closely related to the SFAT operations.

"This training will help Soldiers identify what they need to look for in Afghan forces to help train them," said Capt. Benjamin Hooker, officer in charge of lane one during Mountain Strike. "This will better prepare them to take the lead in the future to secure their own nation."



Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div. interact with Afghan local national role-players as they make their way through a replica Afghan market place.

Soldiers first patrol through a replica Afghan bazaar interacting with local nationals. They then link up with the Afghan National Army and advise them through different levels of operation. Soldiers are faced with many obstacles including IEDs, local national complaints and even a possible suicide bomber.

Another lane focused on establishing Observation Posts in the mountains. Soldiers were air assaulted by CH-47 helicopter and had to ruck-march to their OP site. Although many challenges were presented, the training allowed them to focus (on what).

"Were trying to create a pretty realistic tactical environment where it's not overwhelming, it's not a crazy situation where there are 50 insurgents up here to attack them, and their hitting IEDs left and right," said Capt. Alex Zeller, officer in charge of the air assault lane during Mountain Strike. "It's a chance to get up here and go through their standard operating procedures and operate as a platoon in preparation for their rotation at the National Training Center."

Through the route clearance patrol lane, Soldiers are trained to spot obstructions that normally go unnoticed. These obstructions may be improvised explosive devices that can be cleared using their available assets. Although

the hours are long and the work is meticulous, the early detection of these weapons prevents damage to equipment and saves lives.

"We can't fail at any of our tasks but [Route Clearance] is the one thing we absolutely have to get right," said 4th IBCT Commander, Col. Brian L. Pearl.

Although the mission focus is shifting, the 4th IBCT must maintain their fighting competencies. Mountain Strike ran movement and live-fire lanes to ensure this. One lane in particular focused on newly gained assets and their use in the battlefield.

"The biggest thing we are looking for the Soldiers to get out of the training today is the use of and abilities of the assets outside the organic infantry company," explained Capt. Erik Anderson, officer in charge of the walk and shoot lane. "Today we used 81mm mortars, 120mm mortars, the 105mm howitzer and we used an Apache helicopter to facilitate our movement across an open area."

With the conclusion of Mountain Strike, the 4th IBCT has further developed their proficiencies both lethal and non-lethal alike. They are prepared to conduct Security Force Assistance operations and complete our mission during Operation Enduring Freedom.



After a simulated suicide bomber detonates, Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment must not only provide aid to their own injured, but the Afghan role-players as well.



Soldiers made their way to a replica Afghan National Army headquarters building where they assisted the Afghan Soldiers through varying training scenarios.

(Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Nelson Robles, 4th IBCT PAO).





# FROM BAGHDAD TO MOUNTAIN WARRIOR

FORT CARSON, Colo. – Every Soldier has a story, a reason for joining. Some may have joined because of past generations of veterans in their families, others to provide for their families.

Pfc. Ishaqyan Sahag, Company C, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, was born and raised in Baghdad, Iraq. “Shaq,” as he likes to be called, lived what he thought was a normal life. When the war in Iraq began in 2003, his life was turned upside down.

“I was in middle school in 2003, when the war started; that’s when everything went down hill. War was everywhere,” Shaq recalled. “I finished middle school there, but I couldn’t do much else really; people were blowing themselves up. I even had family members kidnapped.”

His sister took a step that would change his family’s life.

“The Green Zone, that’s where the troops were at, it’s a fortified place, my sister started working there as an interpreter,” Shaq explained. “She then became a contractor, same thing for my brother and my mother, helping the troops.”

“If you stay there for quite some time you, can get (to America) easily. You get your green card since you are doing something dangerous (in support of U.S. Operations). Back then, if (the insurgents) knew you were working with the U.S. Government, then something bad could happen, so they had to change their names (for protection).”

His family then applied for their green cards to escape the escalating violence.

“It was my sister that got (to America) first, and she told us we should go, just to get out of (Iraq). We started the process and got approval. I went to Virginia and finished my senior year of high school there. I wanted to go to college, but I didn’t have the money.

“I joined the Army as an (infantryman), he said. “(I) should have been an interpreter instead, though, since I know three languages.”

The transition to American life came easy to him.

“I used to watch a lot of (American) movies in Iraq, so I didn’t have culture shock, really. I didn’t even get home sick, I just wanted to get out of there,” Shaq reminisced.

The transition into Army life was a whole other story.

“It was hard for him to adjust; he wasn’t used to the small things,” said Pfc. James Terry, a fellow Soldier in Company C, who went through basic combat training with Shaq. “A lot of people looked down on him because of where he is from.”

Shaq’s experiences in his homeland make him an asset during training exercises, such as Mountain Strike.

“Shaq has been playing the village elder most recently, going up to brigade and talking to the Americans about how their trucks are destroying his property.” Explained Sgt. Aaron Ostermiller, team leader, Company C. “I can see that after having lived in Iraq for a while that he understands; this is how it actually happens.

“It’s good, because it creates realism whenever they are having a meeting in there,” Terry said. “He’s angry, yelling in Arabic, and they are trying to figure out through an interpreter what’s being said. That’s how stuff gets misconstrued; it really adds to the realism of the exercise.” Shaq doesn’t see himself as a career Soldier, but instead wishes to utilize his educational benefits to obtain a degree.

“I’m still thinking about what I’m going to be majoring in,” Shaq said. “I’m trying to go back to Virginia, to James Madison University. I’m going to use my G.I. Bill and begin studies there.”

“He’s a pretty cool dude; different people always (immigrate) to America from different places to improve their lives, and it looks like that’s what he is doing,” Ostermiller said.

Although everyone’s story begins differently, we all serve our country with pride. Soldiers can meet people from many walks of life in the Army; but if they don’t ask, they may never know who the men and women that stand beside them in combat truly are.



(Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Nelson Robles, 4th IBCT PAO).

# LEATHAL WARRIORS ADVISE AND ASSIST



The 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th IBCT “Lethal Warriors” prepare for future Security Force Assistance operations.



Cpl. Trevor, McMahon of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div. explains the functions of his M203 grenade launcher to Afghan role-players during Mountain Strike on Fort Carson, Aug. 18, 2013. The purpose of this training was to practice relations with Afghan nationals and the Afghan National Army in preparation for an upcoming deployment.



(Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Nelson Robles, 4th IBCT PAO)





# DESTROYERS BEGIN NEW CHAPTER IN STORIED HISTORY

FORT CARSON, Colo. – The 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Mountain Warriors welcomed Lt. Col. Leo Wyszynski during the 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment assumption of command ceremony held at Waller Gymnasium, Aug. 7, 2013.

As squadron commander for 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, Wyszynski will lead the Destroyers through intense training leading up to and through their eventual deployment.

Although new to the Mountain Warriors, Wyszynski has served with the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team since 2010 as the Brigade Chief of Operations in Afghanistan as well as Brigade S3 Office In Charge. A native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Wyszynski is married to the former Ivy Bohensky of Dushore, Pennsylvania and has two children, Levi and Eve.

“This squadron in front of you has seen some of the toughest fighting, in some of the hardest terrain in Afghanistan. They have a storied history and close bond among their soldiers,” said Col. Brian Pearl, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team commander. “They wear their Stetson’s proudly, and they never fail any mission assigned. Lead them well and take care of them.”

“I am honored and humbled to be taking command of your great squadron full of American heroes past and present that has, and continues to distinguish itself on America’s battlefields,” Wyszynski said.



(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jessica Parker 4th IBCT PAO)



Spc. Gilbert Taylor, Troop C, 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div. defends a observational post during Mountain Strike on Fort Carson, Aug. 23 2013. These Cavalry Scouts man their OP in 24-hour shifts and are rotated via Chinook Helicopter daily.  
(Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Nelson Robles 4th IBCT PAO)

# STEEL WARRIORS

## FIELD NEW ARTILLERY

(Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Nelson Robles, 4th IBCT PAO)

FORT CARSON, Colo. – After two weeks of training, Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div. were able to demonstrate their proficiency on their new M777 155mm howitzer Aug. 14, Fort Carson.

With this new piece of artillery, the ground commanders of the 4IBCT have additional options, as they can not only perform the same mission as their current M119 105mm Howitzers but can also fire larger 155mm rounds, further (over 30 kilometers) and more accurately with its technological advancements.

“The style of M119s that we have according to our type of unit does not facilitate precision guided munitions, the M777 155mm howitzer is capable of shooting these munitions including the M982 Excalibur which is GPS guided,” said Capt. Joshua McCaskill, commander of Battery A. “It’s a pretty responsive and accurate weapon.”

The excalibur rounds are fired with GPS-provided coordinates utilizing the digital fire control system. This level of precision guidance allows units to hit targets that are behind mountains and obstacles that would have previously been impossible to hit with traditional artillery rounds.

The major benefit comes with the reduced risk of collateral damage when firing into urban or highly populated areas. This precision reduces the quantity of damage to neighboring structures by reducing the need for multiple strikes to hit an intended target.

“At about 20 miles, you could put this GPS guided round into a 10 foot by 10 foot square house,” 1st Lt. Charles Ridge said.

In addition to precision, the howitzer weighs in at less than half the weight of its predecessor, approximately 9,800 lbs. versus almost 20 thousand for the old model. The decrease weight enables the M777 to be moved at higher altitudes by helicopter adding even more maneuverability to already versatile weapon system.

“You’re putting the same size round down range with a gun that’s about two-thirds the weight,” said Ridge. “It’s all made out of titanium alloy and you can pick it up with a Chinook helicopter and move it which is big in Afghanistan with retrograde operations constantly moving firing batteries around.”

The light-weight design combined with a new hydraulic system also allows the M777 to be adjusted by a small firing team.

“These M777’s even have hydraulics which makes it easy to pump the gun up and spin it around, all you need is two soldiers on the front to push it around,” explained Staff Sgt. Hector Figueroa, gunnery sergeant of 1st platoon, Battery A. “This helps speed up emplacement and displacement times.”

The New Equipment Training Team out of Fort Sill, Oklahoma was on hand to validate the efficiency of Battery A on the M777 system.

“Most of our section chiefs (which are the equivalent to a squad leader in artillery) were on this last deployment and fired the M777 in theater so we have a lot of experience coming from our last deployment to help train up new soldiers,” said McCaskill. “It’s good that a lot of our leadership and a lot of our experience has remained intact.”





## BLACKSMITHS TEST SKILLS IN FIELD



704th Brigade Support Battalion has supported the Mountain Warriors on many fronts. Their dining facility has served thousands of meals in the field while their medical team has provided level 2 treatment to dozens of patients all during the brigade's training exercise.



Spc. Patrick Hamilton, Spc. Francesca Torres and Spc. Erin Marrero from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 704th Brigade Support Battalion serve dinner to Mountain Warriors during Mountain Strike on Fort Carson, Aug. 25, 2013. This field dining facility has provided over 21,000 meals to 4th IBCT Soldiers in the field.



## 4STB CLEARS THE ROAD FOR CARSON

FORT CARSON, Colo. -- If you were to ask most commanders about the largest danger facing the combat Soldier today, nearly all would say it would be roadside bombs. One Fort Carson unit took to the field this week to refine their ability to detect and destroy today's greatest threat.

Company A, 4th Special Troop Battalion "Gryphons", 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, are designated as the brigade's route clearance patrol element. The company is comprised of two platoons, with over a dozen vehicles specifically designed to clear routes for logistical and maneuver convoys. In addition to the vehicles, the Gryphons also use a dismounted team as well as robotics to assist in their search.

On a typical day, route clearance elements leave their secure bases and travel some of the most dangerous areas in the world. In order to effectively clear an area, the units travel at a snail's pace, sometimes as slow as three miles per hour.

"It's not fun to go that slow, but it's what the mission requires," said Spc. Ben Candelora, combat engineer, Company A. "The longest mission I've ever

been on lasted 28 hours."

While missions typically only last a few hours, Soldiers know that when they leave their bases, they have to be prepared for anything the enemy may throw at them.

The Soldiers are trained to spot obstructions that normally go unnoticed. That training was displayed when a driver spotted a small obstruction in the gravel at over 200 feet. This find led to the detection of large, notional improvised explosive device that would, if detonated, have caused massive damage to vehicles and possibly cost the lives of Soldiers traveling along that route.

"It takes a lot of discipline to stay focused out here, but that's our job," said Staff Sgt. Michael Smithers, squad leader, Company A.

Although the days are long and may seem tedious to some, the Soldiers realize the importance of their mission.

"It's a lot of long days, but I know that every IED I find probably means one less guy losing his leg," said Smithers. "Knowing that makes all the time we spend out on the road worth it."





# CYSS YOUTH GOLF CLINIC

at Cheyenne Shadow Golf Course

This program is for beginners or youth who want to work on their skills.

The 3 week season will have practices 2 days a week per age group. Ages 8-11 and 12-14.

Starts September 10  
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12.4 mile  
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swim  
bike  
run

Team  
Triathlon Sprint

750 meter  
12.4 mile  
6.4 mile



Registrations must be received NLT 12:00 noon on 4 Sep, 2013 @ Garcia PFC, bldg 1856 \* 526.3944 (Registration begins 29 July 2013)

Registration fee :

Individual Triathlon - \$20.00 (non-refundable)

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For the safety of the race participants: Helmets are required for the bike race. Race numbers must be visible at all times.



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