



THE CAVALRY CHARGE

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 9

~America's First Team~

October 4, 2013

Walking in remembrance

By Capt. John Farmer
41st Fires Brigade Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas – Twelve years ago, the United States was attacked by terrorists. The World Trade Center in New York City was destroyed, thousands lost their lives, and millions more were forever impacted by this travesty.

Twelve years later, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment, 41st Fires Brigade and students at Manor Middle School, most of whom were barely able to walk at the time of the attack, took time to honor those who were lost on September 11, 2001.

Students, faculty, Soldiers, local law enforcement and volunteers from the local Armed Services YMCA participated in Manor Middle School's second annual Freedom Walk in Killeen, Texas, Sept. 10.

"In Texas, the week of September 11th is Celebrate Freedom Week. We celebrate not just our first responders, our Soldiers and our veterans, but we also take some time to remember September 11th," said Danielle Tucker, the Curriculum and Instruction Specialist at Manor Middle School.



Photo by Capt. John Farmer

Volunteers from the Armed Services YMCA, students and faculty from Manor Middle School and Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment, 41st Fires Brigade, participate in Manor Middle School's annual Freedom Walk in Killeen, Texas, Sept. 10.

"We have formed a tradition of having a pep rally to celebrate our first responders, our Soldiers and especially our adopt-a-school unit," said Tucker, "then we go on a walk, and we let our community know that we're celebrating our Soldiers."

At this year's pep rally, Lt. Col. Kenneth McDaniel, commander of the 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment gave the key note speech.

He spoke to the amassed crowd of more than 650 middle schoolers about what it means to be free and about taking advan-

tage of the opportunities available here in the U.S.

"I challenge that the best way to honor those who sacrificed to protect your freedoms is to take full advantage of the opportunities this country provides you," said McDaniel. "What you do with your freedom is only limited by your imagination."

Jennifer Washington is the principal at Manor Middle School, and she is committed to ensuring her students understand exactly what it means

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Dragon Soldiers persevere, earn spurs

By Pfc. Paige Pendleton
1st BCT Public Affairs, 1st Cav. Div.

FORT HOOD, Texas – Traditionally, certain honors are awarded to Soldiers in the Army who prove their ability to conquer challenges, and the way cavalry units grant their exclusive privilege to wear spurs is through the Spur Ride.

Dating back to knighthood, cavalry Soldiers are inducted into the Order of the Spur by meeting individual Spur Ride requirements and completing a series of tasks.

Thirty-nine Soldiers assigned to the 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division braved triple digit temperatures, physical exertion, 18 non-stop hours and a downpour of rain to earn their spurs during the Dragon Spur Ride Sept. 4 and 5 at Fort Hood, Texas.

Syracuse, N.Y., native, 2nd Lt. Markus Spicer, a Dragon fire direction officer, said the Spur Ride is a right of passage, a way to build unit cohesion and teach new cavalry Soldiers about tradition.

Miami native, 1st Lt. Carlos Cuervo, Dragon Spur Ride coordinator, said the event is a way for Soldiers to prove themselves and show they are worthy of wearing the spurs.

A Spur Ride usually entails some type of physical activity and knowledge of being a cavalry Soldier, Cuervo added.

Dragon spur candidates were required to meet the Army's height and weight standards, have a minimum Army Physical Fitness Test score of 250 points, qualify sharpshooter on their individual weapon by shooting at least 30 out of 40 targets and have no pending disciplinary actions before participating in this event.

After a safety brief, Soldiers took a trip to the 1st Cavalry Division Museum to brush up on cavalry history and prepare for questions at a knowledge board held at the end of the Spur Ride.

"It's been (interesting) learning all the history and being a part of something more than (myself)," said Spicer.

The challenge began with a run in true Texas heat including stops at two exercise stations that required candidates to sprint up and down a steep hill and lift large military vehicle tires in teams.

The main obstacle was a land navigation course in pouring rain with five stations for teams to demonstrate proficiency in basic Soldier skills.

"I like that it kind of pushed you outside your own element and made you think under stress and when you're tired," Spicer said.



Photo by Pfc. Paige Pendleton

Saltillo, Miss., native, Cpt. Daniel Brooks (right), commander of Battery B, 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division places newly earned spurs on the boots of Orland Hills, Ill., native, 2nd Lt. Patrick Hastings (left), a Dragon fire direction officer, at the Dragon Spur Ceremony Sept. 5 at Fort Hood, Texas.

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Photo by Capt. Angel Jackson

Pvt. Angel Jaramillo (left), Phoenix native and armor crewman assigned to Company C, 2nd “Lancer” Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and Pfc. Steven Bivins, San Diego native and infantryman assigned to Company A of the Lancer Battalion, carry simulated remains of a casualty to a body bag during Company Level Evacuation and Recovery Team Training, Aug. 29, at Fort Hood, Texas. Jaramillo and Bivins participated in a practical exercise to certify as CLEAR Team members.

Never leave a fallen comrade

By Capt. Angel Jackson
1st BCT Public Affairs,
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FORT HOOD, Texas – Every Soldier knows it. The words are woven into the very creed Soldiers serve by – the Warrior Ethos.

“Never leave a fallen comrade” is a promise that no matter how long it takes and regardless of the situation, every Soldier will come home.

Soldiers of the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division learned what it takes to keep that promise during Company Level Evacuation and Recovery Team training Aug. 23 to Sept. 6 here.

The Ironhorse Brigade’s 115th “Muleskinner” Brigade Support Battalion trained and certified CLEAR Teams for each company across the brigade.

Wearing blue latex gloves and slowly walking in single-arm intervals, trainees crossed a fabricated battlefield searching for remains. What they found were cardboard cutouts dressed as Soldiers, fake identification cards and medical training dummies, but the training was far more realistic.

CLEAR Team instructor Staff Sgt. Reginald Alexander, a computer/detection systems repairer and Magnolia, Ark., native assigned to the Muleskinner

battalion, watched closely as students identified, categorized and collected items, demonstrating their ability to perform as a team.

As one Soldier attempted to recover cardboard remains, Alexander could be heard in the background saying, “Keep in mind that is someone’s loved one. Treat him with respect.”

Listening to Alexander’s advice, the Soldier grabbed a partner, and the two-man team secured the cardboard remains and carefully placed them into a body bag.

After all remains and personal property were gathered and properly documented, the trainees carried all items off the

makeshift battlefield. As they moved back to the classroom, one Soldier said, “That’s one additional duty I hope I never have to do.”

Throughout the course, Alexander stressed the importance of paying attention to detail when locating, documenting and securing personnel and their equipment to ensure safe delivery to the Mortuary Affairs Collection Point.

“Some gave little, and some gave all,” Alexander explained. “For the ones that gave all, it’s important to try to get the remains back to the families as soon as possible, and a lot of the members in the class recog

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Cav on the Spot:

Seventh-generation Soldier reflects on military rich bloodline

By Sgt. Christopher A. Calvert
1st ACB PAO, 1st Cav. Div.

FORT HOOD, Texas – For many service-members, joining the military is a choice to serve their country and better their own lives. For one 1st Air Cavalry Brigade Soldier, it's a choice that runs deep in his bloodline for more than 200 years.

Sgt. Robert George III, a signal support systems specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st ACB, 1st Cavalry Division, is no stranger to the military. It's been a part of his family's heritage since his fifth great-grandfather fought in the Continental Army.

In fact, the Tucson, Ariz., native has had members of his family fight in most major armed conflicts since the 18th century, including the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I and Operation Desert Storm.

Cpl. John Albright, George's fifth great-grandfather, fought during the Revolutionary War in Valley Forge and the Siege of Yorktown.

Albright was taken prisoner twice, once by the British for 11 months after the fall of Fort Montgomery, and once by Native Americans during the fall of Fort Stanwix, where he was forced to carry heavy loads to Canada before receiving his freedom in a trade. After Albright received his freedom, he immediately returned to service to continue fighting for the Continental Army, George said.

"There's no way for me to feel more proud," George said. "The sense of pride I have in knowing the patriotism I developed is not just based on a single act of terrorism, but it's ingrained in the fabric of my family history."

Despite growing up with military roots, George was originally unable to enlist in the armed forces due to a medical disqualification; however, at 16, he felt a calling from a higher power, which would lead him down a different path after high school.

"When I was 16, I became very religious and felt a desire to go into ministry," George said. "I did a year of junior college and then a year of seminary. Afterward, I became an interim youth pastor in Tucson, which was very enjoyable as it gave me the opportunity to help people."



Courtesy Photo

Sgt. Robert George III, a Tucson, Ariz. native and signal support systems specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, poses alongside his mother, Tech. Sgt. Jane George, a retired supply sergeant who served 20 years in the Air Force.

George would reach a turning point in his life shortly after becoming an interim youth pastor when he traveled with his ministry team to ground zero after 9/11 to provide emotional support to victims and family members affected by the tragic attacks on that fateful day.

It was then that George's sense of patriotism took over, and after conflicts in multiple countries began, he decided to try his luck again at entering the military.

"My former roommate from seminary contacted me after getting discharged from the military and I ended up moving in with him in California," George said. "I began thinking it was maybe possible for me to join due to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, so I gave it another shot."

George visited his recruiter in 2004 in hopes of fulfilling his desire to serve in the Air Force.

He qualified to join, but after all the paperwork was complete, he was informed he would not be shipping out to initial entry training for 12 months.

It was this delay, coupled with a lack of funds, that made him hastily decide to pursue another branch of service.

"When I was told it would be a 12-month wait, I immediately grabbed my paperwork and went straight to the Army recruiter next door," George said.

"The Army was able to offer me not only a job that I could utilize skills in after exiting the military, but also a duty station of choice while shipping out within six weeks. With all of that being said, my mom still pokes fun at me for not joining the Air Force."

After graduating advanced individual training, George went on to be stationed in California, Korea and Washington before ending up at Fort Hood in January 2011 with the Air Cav.

He was deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom for a year with the 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st ACB, in June 2011.

"I'm extremely proud of the nine years of service I've had so far, and especially of my time in Afghanistan," George said. "It feels great to build upon my family's lineage of serving this great nation."

Marie George, George's wife and a Salisbury, Mo., native, echoed her husband's patriotism.

"I'm very proud of his service," Marie said. "He chose to serve his country during a time of war. That alone takes a lot of physical and emotional strength, and it also shows a lot of character. To build upon that, he's using his educational benefits and balancing being a new father to our six-month-old. He isn't just serving to honor his family's history; he's doing it for himself, too."

1st Sgt. Fernanda Redwine, HHC first sergeant and Henderson, Texas, native, said George has helped the company excel since becoming a member of the "Warlords" in January.

"Although he has only been with us nine months, his contributions to the S6 [signal and communication capabilities] and the brigade have been nothing short of excellent," Redwine said. "He plays a key role in the brigade S6, being only one of two communication security custodians for the entire brigade. This NCO is always motivated when I see him, never late for duty, very enthusiastic, and most importantly, he is family-oriented first."

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Live The Legend!

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to be free.

"I believe that Lt. Col. McDaniel gave a wonderful speech today," said Washington. "He reminded our students that they can do anything in this world they aspire to do, and he's absolutely right.

But he also reminded us that service to the country is something that provides all of us with the same opportunities."

For Washington, the Freedom Walk is not only a symbolic

gesture of remembrance for those who lost their lives on September 11th, but as a poignant learning lesson for her students; freedom is not free.

"Freedom comes with a heavy price tag, and this is just a small token of our appreciation to our first responders, our military Soldiers and everyone else who defends our freedoms on a daily basis," she said.

"I think it's important that our students know that the things

they take for granted...come with a price tag."

The actual walk itself was fairly short, about a mile and a half in length. But the impact of the walk was felt far beyond W.S. Young street in downtown Killeen.

The school's cheer team could be heard for blocks as they chanted, "U-S-A! U-S-A!"

Soldiers, faculty, students and community members walked side-by-side down the road as passing traffic honked their

horns and waved their support.

Antionette Wiggins is the Armed Services YMCA Child Care Director in Killeen, Texas, and she has been participating in the Freedom Walk since it's inception.

"I love to see the Soldiers, especially with the kids, because they've got a lot of people, parents and friends that are in the military. I love to see this cohesion...I wouldn't change it for anything in the world," she said.

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If candidates correctly navigated the route, they walked a minimum of 16.2 miles.

Soldiers were tested on their ability to evaluate and treat simulated casualties; call in a medical evacuation; react to enemy contact; communicate via radio; disassemble and reassemble an M249 squad automatic weapon, a M240B machine gun and an M4 rifle; and react to a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threat.

The basic Soldier skills tested during the Spur Ride are perishable and should not be forgotten, Spicer said.

"If you don't use it over time, then you

lose it," Spicer added.

During the last leg of the Spur Ride, Tampa, Fla., native, Lt. Col. Richard Ng, Dragon Commander, and Fresno, Calif., native, Sgt. Maj. Steven Rosales, the Dragon command sergeant major held a knowledge board to quiz candidates on the significance of elements in their unit's crest, the colors of the 1st Cavalry Division patch and the importance of the Spur Ride.

When Rosales asked a team why cavalry units host Spur Rides, Orland Hills, Ill., native, 2nd Lt. Patrick Hastings, a Dragon fire direction officer and Spur Ride team member listed esprit de corps, camaraderie, teamwork, tradition and challenge.

Ironhorse Brigade. "I definitely wouldn't have [written] serial numbers for the money. I would have probably loaded it up like it was cargo."

"I probably would have been totally overwhelmed by how much paperwork goes into the process and how detailed you have to be when recording what's on a casualty," said Denver native Pfc. Jacobs Delargy, an infantryman also assigned to Lancer's Co.

Claiming they missed a reason, Rosales asked the question again. After discussing, the team responded: lineage.

"There you go, history," Rosales smiled. "Why is it important to know your history?"

"To know where we came from, sergeant major," responded Alpine, Calif., native, Sgt. Jeff Dieterle, a Dragon cannon crewmember.

All finishing candidates were released after the knowledge board. "Personally I believe it's an accomplishment, but (there are) many more accomplishments to be had so (I) can't stop at that," Spicer concluded.

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nize that."

Without training, Soldiers slated to perform CLEAR Team duties could make many mistakes.

"I probably wouldn't have recorded any personal effects down properly," said San Diego native Pfc. Steven Bivins, an infantryman assigned to Company A, 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment of the

A.

CLEAR Team training is not just essential but a requirement for unit commanders. Each recovery team is required to have one noncommissioned officer and four Soldiers.

With training complete, the Soldiers of the Ironhorse Brigade are better prepared to recover their own personnel and ensure they never leave a fallen comrade.



Photo by Sgt. Kim Browne

CG recognizes volunteers, retirees

Maj. Gen. Anthony Ierardi, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, recognizes and poses for a photo with 4th "Long Knife" Brigade Combat Team volunteer of the month Kiara Brewster, a family member from 5th "Black Dragons" Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment during a Distinguished Service and Welcome Ceremony at Cooper Field here on her birthday, Sept. 12. During the ceremony Ierardi recognized First Team's retirees and volunteers; said farewell to 1st Cav. Div. command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. James P. Norman III; and commemorated the Cav's 92nd birthday with a cake-cutting.