



THE IRONHORSEMAN

1st Brigade Combat Team 1st Cavalry Division

Gamblers support Dragon gunnery



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1st Brigade Combat Team
1st Cavalry Division
Fort Hood, Texas



Brigade Commander
Col. Steve Gilland

Brigade Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. Mervyn Ripley

Editor/Public Affairs Officer
Capt. Angel Jackson

Public Affairs NCOIC
Staff Sgt. John Couffer

Public Affairs Journalists
Sgt. Bailey Kramer
Pfc. Paige Pendleton

Broadcast Journalists
Sgt. Larry Carter
Spc. Fred Brown

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Never leave a fallen comrade

Story and Photos by Cpt. Angel Jackson

1BCT, 1CD PAO

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 recognize 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 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



1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers carry simulated remains of a recovered casualty during Company Level Evacuation and Recovery Team Training, Aug. 29, at Fort Hood, Texas. The Ironhorse Brigade’s 115th “Muleskinner” Brigade Support Battalion trained and certified CLEAR Teams for each company across the brigade.



Pfc. Jacobs Delargy, a Denver native and infantryman assigned to Company A, 2nd “Lancer” Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, reads off identifying information from the dog tag of a simulated casualty during Company Level Evacuation and Recovery Team training, Aug. 29, at Fort Hood, Texas.

Lancer’s Co. 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.

A recovery mission could be a simple operation or require coordination of additional resources like an engineer team or explosive ordinance disposal team.

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.



Ironhorse: Ready, aim, fire safety



Photo by Spc. Fred Brown

Staff Sgt. Jeremy O'Shea, Pueblo, Colo., native assigned to Company C, 2nd "Stallion" Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, fires his rifle at silhouette targets during the Ironhorse Privately Owned Firearms Safety Range at the Hicksville Gun Range Aug. 29 in Gatesville, Texas.



Photo by Spc. Fred Brown

Pfc. Tyler Bush, Woodbridge, Va., native assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, fires his AK-47 Assault Rifle at a silhouette target during a rifle competition during the Ironhorse Privately Owned Firearms Safety Range at the Hicksville Gun Range Aug. 29 in Gatesville, Texas.

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer IBCT, 1CD PAO

GATESVILLE, Texas – In order to afford privately owned firearm owners the same safety opportunities as motorcycle riders, the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division hosted POF Safety Training at the Hicksville Gun Range here Aug. 29.

"From time to time everyone needs safety reinforcement," said Staff Sgt. Alfred Dickens, the Ironhorse Master Gunner. "I have seen competitive shooters make mistakes. Professionals, who do this for a living, make mistakes too. No one is above it."

After spreading the word about the upcoming training for POF owners, about 70 Ironhorse Soldiers and spouses attended the Privately Owned Firearms Safety Range at the Hicksville Gun Range.

"I enjoy shooting and have been since I was a kid," said Staff Sgt. Rockney Rhodes, an infantryman hailing from Morganville, N.J., and assigned

to Company A, 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment of the Ironhorse Brigade. "It is just fun to come out here and shoot to relieve some stress, shoot some rounds down range and just have fun."

Adding to the safety instruction, the brigade also invited local experts.

Instructors from the Concealed Handgun License course for the state of Texas were invited to speak to the participants about POF storage, what Texas considers safely stored, how to properly transport weapons, and the weapon registration process.

Before participants were allowed to fire their weapons, they were required, at a minimum, to wear eye protection and ear protection. If shooters were used to gloves, they were encouraged to wear those as well.

Participants used their personal weapons to better build familiarity with them.

"I brought my 1892 Lever-action Rifle, .45 Long Colt and my Single Action Army .45 Long Colt," said Pfc. Roman

Valdez, a Los Ojos, N.M., native assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the Lancer Battalion. "They are the classics."

Getting Soldiers familiarized with their weapons is important to their safety, said David Sullivan, the Ironhorse Safety Officer from Nolanville, Texas.

"We sometimes don't have a lot of time on our off time to get out here, sharpen our skills, and to keep proper weapons handling in the forefront of their minds," Sullivan added.

Sullivan said the most common safety mistake firearm owners make is complacency.

"You can never assume a weapon is clear," Sullivan added. "You have to clear it yourself. We have had a few incidences where we have had Soldiers injured, because they failed to clear their weapon correctly ... if they get complacent, they start to take shortcuts and then get injured."

Dickens said this training was specifically aimed toward younger Soldiers who have never handled firearms outside

the Army but then purchase one they aren't familiar with.

"This will hopefully introduce them to people who ... can teach them, coach them, and mentor them," Dickens added. "But the takeaway is, first and foremost, safety."

Although many of the participants are seasoned firearm owners, Rhodes said there is always something to learn or reinforce about weapons safety.

"When you go out to a range like this where there (are) a bunch of people, and it's very relaxed out here, you still have to remember all the weapons safety," Rhodes said. "You see a lot of personnel walking around like their weapon is not loaded or anything, and you just don't know."

Dickens said the brigade hopes to incorporate this training semiannually in conjunction with the Excellence in Marksmanship competitions.

"Don't become complacent and don't take for granted that the weapon is clear," Sullivan said. "Make sure that weapon is clear before you handle it."



For the Soldiers, by the Soldiers

Story and Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton
1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – The Army has no shortage of Soldier programs, but one stands out by focusing on warriors who make up more than one-third of the force: single Soldiers.

This summer, Soldiers can look forward to a variety of activities through the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program.

The lineup includes a 24-hour post-wide softball tournament, pool parties, a cruise to Yucatan and Cozumel, Mexico, a water park trip and regular volunteer visits to make lunch for patients of the Central Texas Veterans Health Care System in Temple, Texas.

Developed in 1989 here at Fort Hood, Texas, the BOSS program's three pillars are to improve Soldiers' quality of life, offer leisure and recreational activities as well as coordinate volunteer and community service opportunities.

Gilpin County, Colo. native, Spc. Molly Brown, the BOSS representative for 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, thinks BOSS is a great way to network and make friends.

The pool parties have had amazing turn outs with at least 60 people attending the July event and around 200 at the most recent party, Brown said. People, including off-duty lifeguards, participated in the belly flop contest.

Although Soldiers can be apprehensive about attending events for the first time because they don't know anyone, Brown explained, it really is a better opportunity for single Soldiers to get out and meet other people.

"My recruiter actually met his wife through BOSS and they're having a baby soon," Brown added.

Brown feels the more Soldiers are able to experience the Fort Hood surrounding community, the more fun they can have.

"If you just feel like going out on a limb and going by yourself, go for it," Brown said. "Jump in the deep end."

Branson, Mo. native, Spc. Brian Seitz, a BOSS representative for the 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment of the Ironhorse Brigade, has noticed many Soldiers don't get out much because they think there are no activities for them.

Brown explained officers have Club Hood and noncommissioned officers can go to the Backbone NCO Lounge, while Patton's Pub, which was previously open to all ranks, is now the BOSS Headquarters.

BOSS aids Fort Hood's more than 20,000 single Soldiers by getting them involved in the community and through events planned directly from their suggestions explained Fort Hood's BOSS President, Honolulu native, Sgt. Sonya Legaspi, a human intelligence collector assigned to the United States Army Garrison Reception Detachment at Fort Hood.

While BOSS is geared toward single Soldiers, participation is open to married Soldiers when slots for events are available, Legaspi continued.

Legaspi believes recreation and community service activities help maintain Soldiers' morale. BOSS recently hosted a fishing tournament, ice skating, camping trips and took Soldiers to volunteer at the American Red Cross and local animal shelters.

The program helps Soldiers adjust to Army life by keeping

them occupied and active, Brown said. BOSS wants to make sure single Soldiers are safe and entertained.

Along with leisure and volunteering, unit BOSS representatives advocate for single Soldiers' quality of life issues involving barracks, dining facilities and any other problems they may have, Brown explained.

"What we do is take feedback from the Soldiers themselves and pass it up the chain," Brown continued. "It works just like a normal chain of command."

From barracks room issues to weekend closures of the nearest dining facility causing Soldiers without vehicles to catch a shuttle across post to get to chow, Brown said BOSS representatives get involved to help fix problems.

"If it takes longer than needed to get (something) fixed, then we step in," Brown added.

Seitz believes BOSS gives Soldiers a voice in telling their chain of command what they would like to see.

It is a Soldier run program: for the Soldiers, by the Soldiers, Brown said.

Seitz feels BOSS is a close knit organization with a family atmosphere.

In addition to the three main pillars of BOSS, Seitz explained the community service done through the program can be tracked, potentially put toward earning a Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

Brown believes volunteering shows a Soldier's command they are actively involved outside of work and giving back to the community.

"Fort Hood is similar to any other place," Brown concluded.

"You get what you put into it."

Anyone interested in volunteering, participating in activities or becoming a unit representative can contact the BOSS Headquarters at (254) 287-6116.



Spc. Ross Martin (left), Grand Haven, Mich. native, and Pfc. Travis Shelton, Ukiah, Calif. native, both unmanned aircraft systems repairers assigned to Company A, 1st "Centurion" Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, pet a rescue dog at Texas Humane Heroes during a Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers volunteer trip, Aug. 8, in Killeen, Texas.



Hammer Troop hosts Organizational Day

Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton
IBCT, 1CD PAO



Soldiers assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters "Hammer" Troop, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division compete in a tug-of-war competition during the Hammer Organizational Day Aug. 29, at Belton Lake and Outdoor Recreation Area in Belton, Texas. Soldiers and families also played basketball, volleyball, horseshoes and flag football.

Walnut, Calif. native, Pfc. Joseph Ybanez, a unit supply specialist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters "Hammer" Troop, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, makes a snow cone during the Hammer Organizational Day Aug. 29, at Belton Lake and Outdoor Recreation Area in Belton, Texas. The menu included hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans and potato salad.



Sparta, N.C. native, Spc. Evan Isner, a fire support specialist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters "Hammer" Troop, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, prepares to toss a horseshoe during the Hammer Organizational Day Aug. 29, at Belton Lake and Outdoor Recreation Area in Belton, Texas. Soldiers and their families also participated in a flag football tournament and tug-of-war.



Stallions: Serving those whose war never ends



Augusta, Ga., native, Sgt. Mateo Moses, a Bradley mechanic assigned to Company C of the 2nd "Stallion" Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, blends a coleslaw mixture to serve at the barbecue for Wounded Warriors and their families at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio Sept. 6. The barbecue included hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans and potato salad.



Austin, Texas, native, Pfc. Benjamin Barboosa (left), a tanker, and San Antonio native, Sgt. Bradley Fooshee, a tank mechanic, both assigned to Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment attached to the 2nd "Stallion" Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, slice tomatoes and onions to serve at the barbecue for the Wounded Warriors and their families at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio Sept. 6.



Manning, S.C., native, Capt. Matthew Canty (left), the human resources officer for the 2nd "Stallion" Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, serves Lawrence, Mass., native, Sgt. Ricardo Perez (right) pasta salad during a barbecue for Wounded Warriors and their families at BAMC Sept. 6.

Story and Photos by Sgt. Bailey Kramer
1BCT, 1CD PAO

SAN ANTONIO – "Thank you for coming."

To some people, these four words may not mean much, but when said by Wounded Warriors at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, they can mean the world.

About 70 Soldiers from the 2nd "Stallion" Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, spent their Friday preparing and serving a barbecue to Wounded Warriors at the Brooke Army Medical Center, here, Sept. 6.

Recognizing the number of Soldiers at BAMC who have sacrificed a great deal for their country, Lt. Col. Kelvin Brown, Stallion Commander, wanted to do something in return, deciding on a Friday afternoon barbecue.

While standing in line many Wounded Warriors thanked Brown and his Soldiers for taking time out of their busy schedules to come and visit them.

"It's about you, not about us," Brown replied.

The Stallions served hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken, baked beans, coleslaw, potato and pasta salad, corn and cookies.

"It feels great to know someone cares about us," said Lawrence, Mass., native, Sgt. Ricardo Perez, a Soldier currently assigned to the Warrior Transition Unit at BAMC. Perez said not many units take the time to remember them, and Wounded Warriors sometimes feel forgotten.

"It is an honor to serve these men and women," said Manning, S.C., native, Capt. Matthew Canty, the human resources officer for the Stallion Battalion. "Especially being a Soldier myself."

It isn't how much money that's put into an event that makes it meaningful but the willingness to do it, Perez added.

"(Stallions) call me as often as they can just to see how I am doing," Perez added. "I don't think they really know how much that means to me."

The barbecue concluded with Stallions dancing with Wounded Warriors and family members to the Cupid Shuffle, Electric Slide and other well-known line dances.

Brown said they plan on returning in April for another barbecue.



Dragon Soldiers persevere, earn spurs

Story and Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton
IBCT, 1CD PAO

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.

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.

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 crew-member.

All finishing candidates were released after the knowledge board and later received their spurs during a ceremony.

“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.



Miami native, 2nd Lt. Sean Debaron, a Dragon reads a history board at the 1st Cavalry Division Museum to prepare for knowledge questions during the Dragon Spur Ride Sept. 4 at Fort Hood, Texas.



Monroe, La., native, 2nd Lt. Dexter Harris (left), a maintenance platoon leader, and Eastland, Texas, native, Sgt. Thomas Corkran, a wheeled vehicle mechanic, both Dragon Soldiers, assist a simulated casualty during the Dragon Spur Ride Sept. 5 at Fort Hood, Texas.



Crazyhorse Soldiers: best friends since high school



Photo by Sgt. Bailey Kramer
Manahawkin, N.J., natives, Pfc. Tyler Sladen (left), a driver, and Everett Giberson, a loader, both assigned to Company C "Crazyhorse" of the 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, enjoy some limited down-time before firing their tanks back up for gunnery. The Soldiers are best friends from Southern Regional High School in Manahawkin, N.J. currently serving on the same tank crew.

Courtesy Photo by Sgt. Eric Taylor
Manahawkin, N.J., natives, Pfc. Tyler Sladen (left), a driver, and Everett Giberson, a loader, both assigned to Company C "Crazyhorse" of the 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, stand in front of their tank with Sabot Rounds during tank gunnery, Sept. 23, at Fort Hood, Texas. Sladen and Giberson graduated together from Southern Regional High School in Manahawkin, N.J.



By Sgt. Bailey Kramer
1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – As the popular Disney song says, "It's a small world after all" – even smaller for two high school friends now serving on the same Ironhorse tank crew.

While attending Southern Regional High School in Manahawkin, N.J., Pfc. Tyler Sladen and Everett Giberson, lived only minutes apart, and became best friends.

"He lived only nine minutes from my house, so I drove him to school every day," said Giberson.

The 21-year-old tankers are now not only assigned to Company "Crazyhorse" C of the 2nd "Lancer" Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, but also serve on the same tank crew.

Throughout high school, the friends discussed the option of joining the military, but never decided to enlist together. Graduating in 2011, the two Soldiers didn't leave for basic combat training until 2012.

Sladen, a driver, enlisted first, and left for BCT in March 2012. He chose to be

a tanker because the job sounded more appealing to him than an unmanned aerial vehicle operator.

While going through the enlistment process, Giberson, a loader, asked Sladen which job he should choose, and Sladen recommended he enlist as a tanker. Six months later in September, Giberson left for basic training to do just that.

Joining an organization of over 500,000 active duty personnel, the two never thought they would end up being assigned together.

"(Giberson) sent me a letter from basic training telling me he got 1st Cav.," said Sladen. "We were pretty stoked."

Not only were they excited about their upcoming reunion, but Giberson said their families were glad they would be together again.

After graduating basic training in December 2012, Giberson went home and reunited with Sladen over Christmas, and the two flew into Fort Hood together.

After in-processing, Giberson received orders to the Lancer Battalion.

Sladen said he was attached to 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd "Greywolf" Brigade Combat Team of the 1st

Cavalry Division when he received word he would be serving side-by-side with his friend.

"I wasn't expecting to hear he would be coming (to Crazyhorse)," said Sladen. "I was pretty excited."

Even more remarkably, the two now find themselves serving on the same tank crew while Crazyhorse conducts gunnery operations.

"We didn't request it or expect to be on the same crew," said Gibson.

Completing 10 out of 10 engagements, they received a distinguished score of 942 out of 1,000 on Table VI – preliminary main gun training – getting a few points docked for taking too much time on single targets.

But their friendship doesn't end at work.

"It isn't uncommon to see us neck-deep in water fishing or hunting," said Sladen. Neither Giberson nor Sladen have deployed, but are looking forward to their battalion's mission as part of the Ironhorse Brigade's regional alignment with the U.S. European Command.

Giberson and Sladen plan on re-enlisting to keep their friendship intact. Their goal: Hawaii.



Ironhorse leader serves with pride and honor

By Pfc. Paige Pendleton
IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – With more than 20 years of military service, one 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Soldier personifies the 2013 National Hispanic Heritage Month theme: “Hispanics: Serving and Leading Our Nation with Pride and Honor” through personal values and a commitment to serve.

Born and raised an American citizen in San German, Puerto Rico, 1st Sgt. Maria Levitre, the senior noncommissioned officer of Headquarters and Headquarters “Hammer” Troop of the Ironhorse Brigade epitomizes this theme.

This annual observance, running from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, celebrates the contributions of Hispanic Americans whose roots sprouted in Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America and South America.

“Being an NCO is an honor,” Levitre said. “It’s just an honor, because Soldiers are always going to look up to you. It gives you more motivation when someone comes to you and says I want to be like you.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Mervyn Ripley, the senior noncommissioned officer of the Ironhorse Brigade noticed a need for strong female NCO mentors after speaking with young female Soldiers. Ripley, a New York City native, wanted a leader with a strong personality, who could rise to the challenge of leading the brigade’s headquarters troop, and someone female Soldiers could aspire to become.

Levitre’s professionalism, calm demeanor and exacting standards are what stood out about her, Ripley said, adding she assesses every situation looking for the best avenue to take on a problem.

Ripley said he likes Levitre’s style of leadership because it reminds him of his own, and she always leads from the front.

“To me, if you want to be a good leader, you have to earn the Soldiers’ trust and (be) able to tell them this is right, this is wrong, this is how you fix it,” Levitre said.

The first time Levitre entered the continental U.S. was to attend Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C. in 1989. She enlisted because she always wanted to make a career of leading Soldiers as an Army NCO.

Although Levitre grew into the leader she set out to be, her path was not without struggle.

“I think the biggest challenge was just being a female in the Army,” Levitre said. “You have to push harder to get to the top.”

Initially, Levitre entered the Army during a time when there were far fewer female Soldiers than today.

“I was the only female in my motor pool, so that was kind of weird,” Levitre remembered. “Everybody looks at you different. I was always just doing the same thing the male Soldiers did.”

Females have changed the Army, Levitre said, and she sees chances for them to excel as new doors open.

“I think one of the greatest things about our Army is that we are not biased by gender nor race,” said Ripley.

Ripley added, as the Army continues to flatten by allowing women into combat arms roles, they are presented with new opportunities to lead.

“I always strive to do the best, not to do the minimum,” Levitre explained. “I always try to be the best. That’s what motivates me and keeps me going.”

Her motivation comes from another source as well.

When Levitre’s previous battalion commander asked what motivates her to get up every morning, she said, “My Soldiers.” When he asked why, she told him, “Because I know that I care for them and they care for me.”

The mother of two believes family and Soldiers’ welfare must come first. Levitre sees family as the true backbone of the Army, because they support and care for Soldiers as well.

“Soldiers cannot give you 100% if the Army does not take care of their families,” Levitre said. “I know I couldn’t... If the Army takes care of my family, I come to work and give 100% or more.”

In order to become the leader she is now, Levitre credits her upbringing and good leadership throughout her career.

“Growing up, my parents were very strict,” Levitre explained. “They always told me (to) treat others the way you want to be treated. Just always do the right thing, be honest, be loyal, be truthful to others and be respectful.”

She believes it is important to understand, respect and learn from the races, cultures and values that make up the Army.

“When you look around, everyone is different,” Levitre explained. “I think the Armed Forces is probably the only place in the world where you have so much diversity. I think it’s incredible, and I think that’s why so many people wanted to come to the U.S. of A.”

Levitre tells her kids to be proud of who they are as Americans, and grateful for the opportunities she didn’t have growing up in Puerto Rico, adding she is proud to have influenced so many Soldiers in what she calls “a big pot of diversity.”

“I think diversity brings strength,” said Ripley. “Some people think it weakens, I think everybody has something to give to the whole.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Couffer
San German, Puerto Rico, native, 1st Sgt. Maria Levitre, the senior noncommissioned officer of Headquarters and Headquarters “Hammer” Troop, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division inspects the NCO saber during her Change of Responsibility ceremony Jul. 12, at Fort Hood, Texas. “I always strive to do the best, not to do the minimum,” Levitre explained. “I always try to be the best. That’s what motivates me and keeps me going.”



Stallions fall into tank gunnery

Story and Photos By Pfc. Paige Pendleton

1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Gunnery is in full swing this fall as the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division gears up for another brigade inclusive training exercise in November, and a rotation to the National Training Center in February.

A 36-day gunnery training exercise kicked off in mid-September, and Soldiers assigned to 2nd “Stallion” Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment of the Ironhorse Brigade conducted Tables III and IV with M1A2 Abrams tanks, Sept. 23 here.

These tables cover stationary and moving target engagements which will lead to crew qualification tables later in the exercise.

Normally, crew qualification is conducted every six months while platoon qualification is annual, explained Milwaukee native, Staff Sgt. William Roark, master gunner for Company C of the Stallion Battalion.

This exercise will qualify Stallions for the second time this year, and certify companies on both tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles through company collective gunnery and maneuver training.

Since this summer’s gunnery, Roark explained that some crews have changed, with Stallion Soldiers moving into different roles, shifting from either loader or driver to gunner.

A loader during his first gunnery, El Paso, Texas, native, Pfc. Corey Troxell, an M1 armor crewman assigned to Company C of the Stallion Battalion was assigned to a new crew - this time as a gunner - and thinks his crew and others have adapted well to the new rosters.

“They’re performing their jobs correctly, we’re hitting everything that we need to and everything is going smoothly,” he said.



Soldiers assigned to the 2nd “Stallion” Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division prepare to fire M1A2 Abrams tanks during the Stallions fall gunnery, Sept. 23, at Fort Hood, Texas.

Cohesion is what allows crews to work well together and perform successfully during gunnery.

“Everything about being a tanker is teamwork,” said Troxell. Tank crews must be synced at all times, Roark explained. The whole crew can fail if a driver is out of sync, a gunner misses a target, or a loader cannot arm the gun in time.

“You work as a crew all the time,” he added. “As a tank crew, you’re a family.”

So far, Roark is impressed with tank crew performances and is confident they will continue to perform well throughout the duration of the exercise.



2nd “Stallion” Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers conduct a firing iteration of gunnery training with an M1A2 Abrams tank during the Stallions fall gunnery, Sept. 23, at Fort Hood, Texas.



Battle of Ia Drang, Garryowen veteran speaks at seminar

By Staff Sgt. John Couffer
1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – In the words of Sir Winston Churchill, “Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.”

In an effort to draw from experience, noncommissioned officers and officers of 1st Squadron, 7th “Garryowen” Cavalry Regiment, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, seized the opportunity to listen to one Vietnam veteran’s take on small leadership in combat at Howze Theater here Sept. 6.

Col. (ret.) Ramon Nadal, a Williamsburg, Va., native and former commander of Garryowen’s, then Company A, during the Battle of Ia Drang in Vietnam, Nov. 14 to 18, 1965, gave a seminar on Small Unit Leadership in Combat here Sept. 6.

Wayne, N.J., native, Maj. Matthew Cuiello, the executive officer for Garryowen, met Nadal at the 47th reunion of the Battle of Ia Drang in Branson, Mo., in May of this year, when Nadal said he would like to talk to 1st Cavalry Soldiers about leadership.

“When you get an opportunity to host a legend in the squadron, you jump on that opportunity,” Cuiello said.

Having Soldiers listen to not only a veteran, but a former company commander whose decisions played a pivotal role in saving lives during the Battle of Ia Drang, is invaluable, Cuiello said.

Even though the fight was different than Iraq and Afghanistan, Cuiello said parallels can be drawn and lessons learned from Nadal’s experiences in the Battle of Ia Drang.

“It helps you develop as an officer or an NCO, as a junior leader, to get that experience ... and actually translate that to your training and down to your Soldiers,” Cuiello said.

With only five months on the job and no combat experience, 2nd Lt. Eric Hurley, a scout platoon leader and Omaha, Neb., native, assigned to 4th Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, said his company commander encouraged him to attend the event.

Hurley wanted to know what he was doing right and understand things to improve on to gain the trust of his Soldiers.

“(The seminar) covered perfectly how to gain trust with your Soldiers and how to gain the leadership structure you need to build with your Soldiers to be an effective leader,” Hurley said. “I’ve learned from a guy (who has) done it. I haven’t just learned from a guy who studied it at a school. I haven’t just learned it from a guy who read a book. I learned from a guy who was there, who did it, and successfully did it.”

Hurley said what he learned will help him develop as a leader and better understand the importance of being able to complete those very tasks he expects his Soldiers to perform.

“It’s a perfect example of what I want to be and how I should be in order to successfully lead my troops,” said Hurley.

It has been 42 years since Nadal’s last visit to Fort Hood. He is now the program director of the Wounded Warrior Mentors at Fort Eustis, Va. Nadal said it is always good to talk to 1st Cavalry Soldiers.

“I love it,” Nadal said. “I feel a great deal of bond with these Soldiers.”

Nadal may be from a different era, but he looks at today’s Soldiers as carrying the torch for the future.

“I hope as a result, this will cause (leaders) to think about their function and their responsibility as a leader particularly if they have to take troops into combat,” Nadal said.



Assassins train on new UAV



Spc. Jose Perez (right), Kissimmee, Fla. native, and Pvt. Kristina Bright (left), Maryville, Tenn. native, both Assassin unmanned aerial vehicle operators conduct pre-flight checks on an RQ-7B Shadow UAV Aug. 22, at Fort Hood, Texas.

Story and Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton 1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – In an adaptable, ever-changing Army, equipment upgrades are to be expected. With those upgrades comes the need to keep Soldiers trained on the latest and greatest pieces of equipment.

Soldiers of Company A “Assassins,” 1st “Centurion” Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division learned the ups and downs of a new unmanned aerial vehicle here from Aug. 21 to 28.

After three days of classroom instruction, unmanned aircraft systems repairers and UAV operators headed to the field to conduct training on an upgraded model of the RQ-7B Shadow UAV, featuring a fuel-injected engine and longer wings than previous models.

These aircraft are used instead of Soldiers in certain circumstances for a few reasons.

UAVs take the place of Soldiers during lengthy surveillance missions and in areas hazardous to manned aircraft and ground troops, explained

Staff Sgt. Morgan Caffarello, a Las Vegas native and UAS repairer for the Assassins.

“The benefit of having (an) unmanned aircraft (is) it takes the danger away from the pilot,” explained Spc. Alexander Gonzalez, Rosemount, Minn. native, and an Assassin UAV operator.

It is not ideal for a UAV to go



Spc. Matthew Williamson (left), Plainwell, Mich. native, and Pfc. Ector Munoz (right), Houston, Texas native, both Assassin unmanned aircraft systems repairers learn maintenance steps on a new extended-wing RQ-7B Shadow UAV Aug. 22, at Fort Hood, Texas.

conducting surveillance.

Upgrades for UAVs are continuous, requiring operators and maintainers to train and fly regularly, preserving their proficiency on the systems, Caffarello explained.

The extended wings give the aircraft longer endurance, allowing the Shadow to fly up to nine hours, explained Sgt.

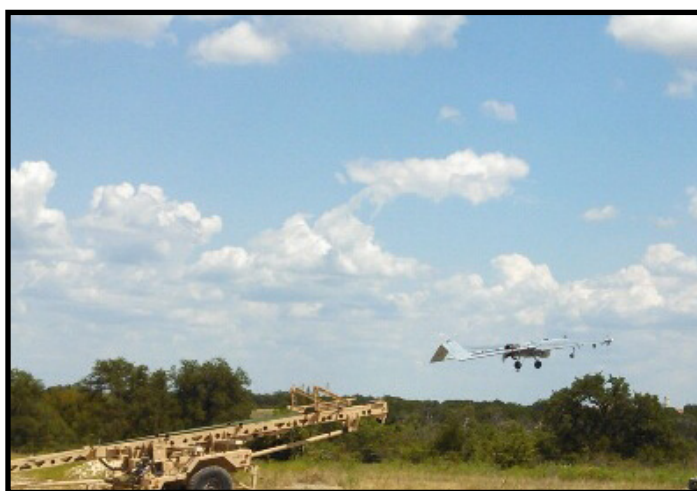
jected engine, eliminates issues like ice in the engine at high altitudes, posing problems when using a carburetor, Callahan continued.

Assassin UAV operators and maintainers spend two weeks of every month in the field allowing them to develop muscle memory of the skills they use, Callahan added. Continued training allows Soldiers to operate faster becoming more proficient each time they fly.

“Everything is easy, and everything is difficult,” Gonzalez said about learning the new system. “It just depends on how much focus and how much time you actually put into it.”

Caffarello said his favorite part of the training is how the new system puts Soldiers on an equal playing field. Because the system is new, Soldiers from private to staff sergeant share an identical knowledge base, Caffarello added.

“I don’t know anything more about the system than (my private first class),” Caffarello concluded. “I like that it takes a lot of the rank out of it and (focuses) more on just (doing) our job.”



*Photo Courtesy of Spc. Byron Sanford
An extended wing RQ-7B Shadow unmanned aerial vehicle takes off from a launcher during UAV training for Assassin Soldiers Aug. 22, at Fort Hood, Texas.*

down, but a piece of equipment can be replaced while a person cannot, Gonzalez added.

Gonzalez said UAVs track enemy forces, provide security, and identify targets while

1st Class Timothy Callahan, Ventura, Calif., native and a UAS repairer for the Assassins. The previous model could only spend up to six hours in the air. Another feature, the fuel-in-



Domestic violence: serious business

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer
IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Domestic violence is one of the most chronically underreported crimes according to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Of those who do report their attack, less than one-fifth of victims seek medical attention.

In October 1981, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence organized a “Day of Unity.” Eight years later, Congress passed a bill designating October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

“I think it is important to keep people aware of what is out there to help people in these situations,” said Fullerton, Calif., native, Capt. James McDonald, the behavioral health officer for the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

Domestic violence is defined as physical, emotional or sexual abuse used to control a significant other, married or not.

McDonald believes the main reason people do not report their attacks is because they are afraid of their attacker.

“Fear of reprisal,” McDonald explained. “They are afraid of what will happen to them or their children.”

The Ironhorse Chaplain, Capt. Marshall Coen, agrees, but believes there are two other reasons victims do not come forward.

“They are afraid things will only get worse, they don’t have anyone to trust, or in the long run it will only hurt their family even more,” Coen added.

McDonald said the best way to prevent domestic abuse is awareness and to always have your eyes and ears open.

“It’s possible anybody might



The Power and Control Wheel explains the cycle an abuser uses to keep control of their victim. Since 1989, October has been designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

run into it,” McDonald said. “Just by talking to a friend and finding out there is something going on at home. You just have to pay attention.”

Victims of abuse may experience manipulation, yelling, shame, public humiliation and control of finances.

“The signs of a problem vary by the resiliency of a person,” said Coen.

Fort Hood, Texas offers a program for victims known as the Family Advocacy Program, while Killeen, Texas has many safe havens for individuals to escape to.

“I believe people fear if they tell on their (significant other)

they won’t be able to care for their children or themselves,” McDonald added.

McDonald said he knows it can sometimes take awhile for people to realize something is wrong.

“People sometimes don’t understand (it’s) not what is suppose to happen,” McDonald added. “They just think it’s part of a normal relationship.”

Although it is important to be aware of possible warning signs and to try and help your friends and family in their time of need, a person may not believe there is a problem.

“Sometimes hearing enough people say, ‘this is not right,

help is out there,’ is all it takes to finally realize there is something wrong,” McDonald added.

Coen says although domestic violence is an ongoing problem he believes it is because couples don’t know how to communicate.

“There is help,” McDonald said encouraging victims to reach out.

If you feel you are a victim of domestic violence or know someone who needs help contact the Family Advocacy Program on Fort Hood at (254)-286-6773 or call The Hotline at 1 (800)-799-SAFE (7233).



Gamblers work to keep Dragons gunnery rolling

Story and Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton
1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Soldiers can't eat. Tanks won't move. And weapons won't fire without logistics support.

Forward Support Company G "Gamblers" of the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, provided that support needed to execute Table XV Gunnery, here, Sept. 30 to Oct. 8.

Gambler FSC must have a no-fail logistics plan in order to keep the Dragon Battalion moving.

This plan includes a range of support operations to include establishing a logistics resupply point, setting up field feeding sites, maintaining every piece of equipment across the battalion, and distributing ammunition.

"We support the batteries (or) companies," said 1st Sgt. Leon Johnson, the Gamblers senior noncommissioned officer. "Whatever things we can't do, the (115th "Muleskinner" Brigade Support Battalion) will help us."

"The bottom line is, if the enemy is out there and (the battalion) has to shoot artillery...to protect our Soldiers, we have to be able to do that," said Johnson, who is a native of Gerard, Ohio. "Our sustaining the batteries...helps makes that mission happen."

Split operations enable Gamblers to provide forward and rear support to Dragon Batteries conducting gunnery qualification, said Capt. Quentin Benjamin, the Gamblers' commander.

The company operates from two locations, a Field Trains Command Post near garrison and a Combat Trains Command Post located close to maneuver elements. The FTCP is the hub for supplies to restock the CTCP, operating as a nearby support location for batteries.

The Gamblers ensure Soldiers have what they need by making daily rounds to Dragon Batteries.

"It's a never-ending chain of resupply to the CTCP or to the battery," added Benjamin, a native of Orangeburg, S.C. Maintainers, cooks and distribution specialists work mainly out of the CTCP.

Some maintainers are attached to each battery for on-the-spot needs during missions, and maintainers come equipped with a portable tool shop for on-site repairs called a forward repair system.

The maintainers also serve as recovery assets and tow vehicles that break down in transit.

"Our primary mission out here is (to) make sure these guns (keep) shooting," said Oxnard, Calif., native, Staff Sgt. Robert Vela, a Gambler artillery mechanic.

Along with the maintainers, cooks operate out of the CTCP to ensure Dragon Soldiers get two hot meals delivered every day.

Each meal is prepared at a precise time so that no meal is cold by the time it reaches a Soldier.

The distribution and transportation platoons are responsible for a wide range of tasks supporting Dragon needs. They provide ammunition, fuel and water, receive expended rounds and more.

"When something needs (to be) refueled (or) resupplied, we go get it," said 1st Lt. Deric Stokes, the Gamblers executive offi-



Poteet, Texas, native, Sgt. Ernest Soliz, a Gambler motor transport operator unloads 155mm rounds during a rearm, refuel, resupply survey point mission supporting Dragon gunnery, Oct. 7, at Fort Hood, Texas.



Soldiers assigned to Battery A "Hot Steel" of the 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, conduct Table XV Gunnery qualification, Oct. 7, at Fort Hood, Texas.

cer. "That's basically our job, to keep this battalion moving."

Tacoma, Wash., native, Sgt. Christopher Young, a Gambler petroleum supply specialist said fuel is a hot commodity, because everything the battalion needs moves by fuel.

"If you don't have what you need to push the battalion forward to support the mission, then you really are just stuck," Young added.

The battalion can have working vehicles, but if they do not eat, they won't fulfill their mission, Young explained.

"We give them their food. We give them their ammo to shoot. We fix their vehicles," said Stokes, a South Bend, Ind., native.

Benjamin said learning from experience and correcting mistakes made during training exercises can prevent problems from arising in combat.

"We have to get supplies to the warfighters, the ones on the front lines," Benjamin said. "If we don't get (supplies) out there to them, they fail their mission. If they fail their mission, it causes us to lose lives on the battlefield."



Team cohesion makes mortars fly

Story and Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton

1BCI, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – “Hang it! Fire! Boom!”

That is the sound of teamwork and preparation prior to the moment a mortar is safely and successfully fired.

Indirect fire infantrymen and fire support specialists assigned to the 1st Squadron, 7th “Garryowen” Cavalry Regiment, 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division executed live-fire mortar training here Sept. 11 to 13.

After classroom instruction, written exams and testing on their equipment, the exercise certified fire support teams and qualified mortar crews on M121 120mm mortar systems.

Bloomington, Ill., native, Cpl. William Shelton, a Garryowen indirect fire infantryman, said after seven live fire experiences, he still gets nervous hanging mortar rounds because of the danger involved.

“It makes you respect your weapons system a lot more,” Shelton added.

Mortar crews must maintain cohesion, because it takes four to five Soldiers to run the M1064/A3 Mortar Carrier track vehicle, Shelton said. Every crew member on the vehicle is a safety.

Shelton said crew members conduct checks from the time the round leaves its packaging until it is hung in the firing tube.

“You can’t run these by yourself,” Shelton stated. “It’s not like an M4 (rifle) where you can just go out and shoot.”

Guthrie, Okla., native, Staff Sgt. Ryan Anderson, also a Garryowen indirect fire infantryman believes teamwork is key in this exercise.

“Not one individual can do every task,” Anderson added. “If the team does not work as a team, then the crew will fail.”

There is too much to do, Anderson explained. One Soldier runs gun mission data, another drives and

pivots the vehicle, a third selects the correct round and preps it, while another Soldier assists in getting the mortar tube up and running, hanging the rounds safely.

Burlington, Mass., native, Cpt. Ryan Schuler, a Garryowen fire support officer, said FST and mortar crews work collectively as an indirect fire system where the FST is the eyes of the system.

Because mortar and FST qualifications occur approximately every six months, the teams conduct a lot of co-training, said Schuler. The FST finds the target, and the mortar team running the mortar tube is the muscle of the system.

Mortar crews receive grid information from an FST located between the target and the mortar crew, then fire over the FST at the target.

Schuler said it is important for FST and mortar teams to maintain their skills to support worldwide contingency operations.

Garryowen is preparing for its upcoming rotation to the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Calif., by certifying platoons and conducting gunnery and troop certification.

Schuler said because the FST typically uses a computer simulator to train, fire supporters don’t often call in live rounds, which is important since a computer screen isn’t the same as a live scenario.

“There is nothing you can do to replicate actually sitting out here observing,” said Schuler.

Although the exercise is slow paced, the Soldiers’ motivation and morale is high, Anderson said, adding his favorite part of the training is the camaraderie it builds.

These exercises are the first opportunity for new fire support officers and enlisted Soldiers coming from advanced individual training to get out and conduct the training, Schuler said.

“A good degree of their job will be on-the-job-training downrange, but they’re getting the essentials now to set them up for success later,” Anderson concluded.



Highland, Calif., native, Spc. Stephen Keeling (left), Lakeville, Minn., native, Spc. Taylor West (center), and Crothersville, Ind., native, Spc. Tyler Bowman, all Garryowen indirect fire infantrymen, place a 120mm mortar round during a mortar live-fire training exercise Sept. 11, at Fort Hood, Texas.



Highland, Calif., native, Spc. Stephen Keeling, a Garryowen indirect fire infantryman drops a 120mm mortar round into a firing tube during a joint mortar live-fire and fire support team training exercise Sept. 11, at Fort Hood, Texas.



Lakeville, Minn., native, Spc. Taylor West (left), and Crothersville, Ind., native, Spc. Tyler Bowman, both Garryowen indirect fire infantrymen, clean a mortar tube during a live-fire training exercise Sept. 11, at Fort Hood, Texas.



Ironhorse Soldiers help shape Army's future



A researcher (left) and noncommissioned officer (center) assigned to the United States Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine, look on as Ironhorse Soldiers construct parts of a Bailey Bridge during the Army's Physical Demands Study Sept. 12, at Fort Hood, Texas.



An Ironhorse Soldier carries ammunition cans during the Army's Physical Demands Study Sept. 13, at Fort Hood, Texas.



An Ironhorse Soldier carries sand bags during the Physical Demands Study Review Sept. 12, at Fort Hood, Texas.

Story and Photos By Staff Sgt. John Couffer
1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – The Army is assessing seven combat-arms jobs to determine physical performance requirements and to set standards, and help to select the best qualified Soldiers regardless of gender.

Thirty-four male and female Soldiers assigned to the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division volunteered to conduct common warrior and engineer-specific tasks during the physical performance stage of the Army's Physical Demands Study, here, Sept. 9 to 13.

US Army Training and Doctrine Command, in conjunction with the US Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine from Natick, Massachusetts, are conducting the study to assess the physical demands of engineer Soldiers.

USARIEM researchers and scientists used specialized medical equipment to analyze and record the physiological demands required to perform the tasks over a five-day period.

Prior to performing a task, Soldiers were equipped with a heart monitor and instrumentation to record breathing, heart rate, oxygen use and metabolism.

The measurements will be used to develop future evaluations for Soldier tasks.

"The next step ... is to come up with simulations," said Dr. Edward Zambraski, USARIEM project leader. "How can I simulate when someone has to take a 100lb (artillery) shell and put it on a rack? We'll try to develop a simpler test, a simulation, where we can mimic the physical demands associated with the tasks that Soldier has to do."

TRADOC's Branch Proponent Schools identified the physically demanding tasks required of each MOS during an earlier phase of the study.

Fort Hood was chosen to assess engineer-specific tasks such as preparing obstacle with the H6 40lb cratering charge, operating a modular-pack mine system and the carrying of an Anti-Personnel Obstacle Breaching System.

In Aug., USARIEM conducted focus groups with Ironhorse Soldiers in the



Army's Physical Demands Study

seven combat arms MOSs to validate and provide descriptions of various tasks.

As a result of engineer Soldiers' feedback, some tasks may be added and others removed, said Zambraski.

When conducting and measuring the tasks, MOS-trained Soldiers were used as a baseline, and compared to non-MOS Soldiers trained to conduct the same tasks.

"You want people that have been trained to perform those tasks and the best people to choose are the people who are assigned to those MOSs," said Marilyn Sharp, a USARIEM

research physiologist and the principle investigator for the project.

If a Soldier is not experienced in doing the task, they aren't going to do it as efficiently or effectively as one who is MOS-trained, Sharp added.

In preparation for the study, Soldiers trained for weeks prior to the assessment.

"(All Soldiers) became familiar with the common tasks, (which) wasn't all that hard for them to pick up," said Chester, Ill. native, Staff Sgt. Joshua Rubach, a combat engineer assigned to Compa-

ny C, 1st "Centurion" Brigade Special Troops Battalion of the Ironhorse Brigade, who was responsible for the training of the Soldiers who volunteered. "It was just getting used to the weight limits of the (Bradley Fighting Vehicle) barrel and the feeder (assembly)."

Rubach said non-engineer Soldiers spent more time training on tasks such as moving to an obstacle while carrying an APOBS, but executed the tasks well.

Rubach added that although some tasks may have been more difficult than

others, the Soldiers seemed in good spirits.

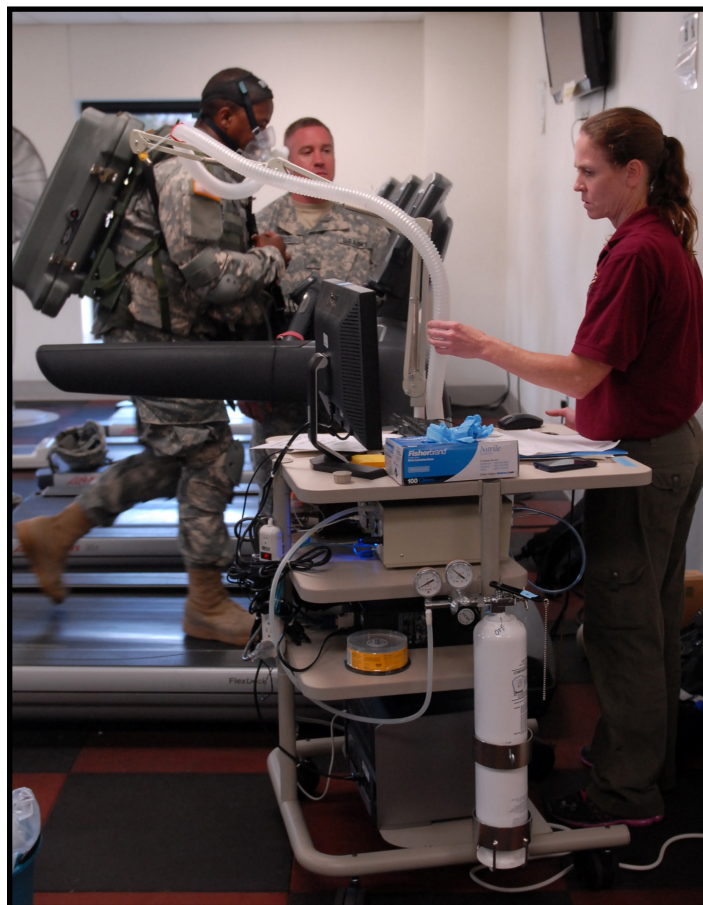
"I think (the Soldiers) are a little ecstatic on being a part of something bigger for the Army," said Rubach.

Sharp explained that the assessment can potentially help the Army get the right people in the right job, reduce Soldier injuries and develop MOS-specific physical training.

"It's an opportunity to make (the) MOS stronger and safer," Sharp said. "It's an incredible opportunity and the Army will benefit tremendously from it."



Sgt. Dennis Scofield, a medical laboratory specialist (right) assigned to the United States Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine takes the weight of a Soldier assigned to the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division with his gear during the Army's Physical Demands Study Sept. 9, at Fort Hood, Texas. Height, bodyweight, and the combined weight of the equipment being carried are important factors when collecting medical data of Soldiers participating in the study.



A United States Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine researcher, Dr. Jan Redmond, (right) reads the data of a Soldier assigned to the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division as he simulates a foot march while carrying an Anti-personnel Obstacle Breaching System on a treadmill during the Army's performance stage of the Physical Demands Study, Sept. 11, at Fort Hood, Texas. The APOBS station was one of five engineer-specific tasks Soldier performed.

Ironhorse comes together for Fall Festival

Story and Photos Pfc. Paige Pendleton

IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Soldiers and families of the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division here celebrated Halloween in style during the Ironhorse Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat Oct. 26, here.

Each battalion spruced up vehicles with Halloween-inspired decorations for the Trunk or Treat and provided volunteers who ran a variety of carnival games for all age groups.

With Halloween-themed music playing, kids in costumes searched far and wide for 1st Cav. Div. patches marking clues for the scavenger hunt.

The attraction garnering the most attention was the Ironhorse scare house.

“There’s been a line outside the door all day,” said Dover, Del., native, Sgt. 1st Class Kristopher Willey, Ironhorse Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat assistant coordinator, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop “Hammer.” “That has been the biggest hit.”

Spc. Meschelle Munro, Company C “Castaways,” 115th “Muleskinners” Brigade Support Battalion of the Ironhorse Brigade said she enjoyed meeting families while handing out candy from a vehicle decorated like a pirate ship.

The parents and kids had a good time, said Munro, a native of Killeen, Texas.

“They were dressed up. We were dressed up, and I think as a unit ... (it’s) good for us to come together,” said Munro.



A 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division child plays the “eyeball toss” carnival game at the Ironhorse Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat, Oct. 26, at Fort Hood, Texas. Between games, Ironhorse Soldiers and kids visited a haunted house and ate plenty of candy donated by Soldiers from each battalion.



A 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, child plays a balloon pop carnival game at the Ironhorse Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat, Oct. 26, at Fort Hood, Texas. The array of games included lawn darts, bean bag toss, ladder-ball, a scavenger hunt and more.

Army helps Soldiers have courage to seek help

Story and Photos by Pfc. Paige Pendleton
IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – The Army's definition of personal courage is facing fear, danger or adversity, whether it is physical or moral.

Soldiers are taught to mirror every Army value, but having courage can be difficult in situations where they don't necessarily feel strong.

"The Courage to Seek Help" is the Army's 2013 theme for National Depression Education and Awareness Month. Throughout October, this observation aims to raise awareness about the causes, treatments and realities of depression affecting one in 10 U.S. adults, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

One way the Army helps Soldiers affected by depression or other behavioral health problems is by providing Embedded Behavioral Health Clinics to units.

These clinics operate close to units making assistance for behavioral health more accessible.

Capt. Timothy Martin, commander of the Headquarters and Headquarters Troop "Hammer," 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, said he believes having the EBH Clinic right around the corner is beneficial to the brigade.

"We're right here ... in their home work environment," said Kelli Bonyeau, a clinical social worker and the Ironhorse Brigade EBH Clinic officer in charge.

The clinic's mission is to remove stigma associated with behavioral health problems, create relationships between providers and unit leadership, increase mission readiness, and identify trending issues within units.

Bonyeau said awareness and education can help Soldiers get assistance before problems worsen and impact their ability to perform their duties. Soldiers don't know how to fix a problem if they don't know a problem exists, she added.

"It's important to notice (problems) now, so you can address (them) early, and you can help people as they need to be helped, rather than wait until things blow up out of proportion," said Martin, a Midland, Mich., native.

Often Soldiers don't seek help because of the stigma associated with depression, "Some people look at expressing emotions, sadness, crying or feeling down as (a sign of) weakness," said Bonyeau, a Miami native. "I think it's a myth that just because you put on a uniform or just because you deploy (that) doesn't mean you don't experience any kind of struggles or don't have feelings or emotions."

Martin said he believes it is more hurtful to Soldiers if they don't seek help.

"Mental health is no different than physical health," Martin added. "Problems don't get better on their own, they just get worse."

When Soldiers come to behavioral health, the goal is not only to help them, but also to get them back to being mission ready and deployable, Bonyeau said, adding that seeking behavioral health assistance can make Soldiers stronger and more resilient.

Many factors of a military lifestyle can impact a Soldier's mental well-being.

Deployments, separation from family and a support network, stress, unpredictable schedules, change of lifestyle, and isolation can wear Soldiers down and affect different areas of their lives, said Martin.

If a Soldier is depressed at home, the high level of stress during a deployment will only add to the problem, Martin said.

Many symptoms of behavioral health problems involve emotions: persistently feeling sad, anxious, empty, guilty, worthless or hopeless.

Depression can manifest itself in other ways including changes in sleeping habits or weight, self-isolation, fatigue, decreased energy, or loss of interest in activities and hobbies.

The key changes — sleep, appetite and isolation — happen over a period of time, Bonyeau said.

"People always say you have to know your Soldiers," Martin said. "Every Soldier is different."

Martin said if he notices a change in a Soldier's behavior pattern that is his clue to ask if something might be wrong.

"We need to care for people as a whole person, and their health and their well being is critical," Martin said.

Depression is treatable, and anonymous screenings are available at EBH Clinics, Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, and Veteran's Affairs hospitals and clinics.

For more information about behavioral health assistance, contact Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center's Outpatient Behavioral Health Services at (254) 553-2288 or (254) 553-228, or visit www.realwarriors.net.



Ironhorse Soldier uses Army skills to train young football stars

By Sgt. Bailey Kramer
IBCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – “Hut ... Hut ... Hike!”

To some people, hearing these words means another NFL Sunday night football game, but these words mean so much more to one Ironhorse Soldier.

Sgt. 1st Class Ethan Braud, a transportation coordinator assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop “Hammer” of the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division here, is the head coach of the Fort Hood Warriors.

The Warriors are not a Fort Hood team but were founded by a Soldier who was stationed at the installation. Braud said although the majority of the 22 players are military family members, the only connection between the team and Fort Hood is the name.

Since 2011, Braud has coached the Warriors, a Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. football team, for two seasons. His 10-year-old son is a Warrior and the chance to influence young children.

“Being a football coach at that age, nine times out of 10, I will

be somewhat of a foundation for the choices they make in the future,” Braud said about coaching athletes ages 9 to 11.

Staff Sgt. Eric Warner, a Reserve drill sergeant for the 2nd Battalion, 354th Regiment of the 95th Training Division in Waco, Texas, also thinks Braud is a valuable influence on the kids.

“He is a great coach,” said Warner, a Dover, Ohio, native. “The kids respond to him as a father figure and are real receptive of him.”

Warner believes Braud’s relationship with the kids has been a main contributor to their 6-2 win-loss record, a successful season thus far.

“They have our heart, and we have their heart,” Warner added. Although coaching football or joining the Army wasn’t in his plan, he’s happy with his decision.

Joining the Army right out of high school wasn’t Braud’s original plan, but due to family circumstances he had to make a choice.

“My plan was to go to college straight out of high school,” said Braud, a native of New Orleans. “My wife ended up getting pregnant with our first kid, so I had

to make a choice ... that was a big decision maker for joining the Army.”

Skills he has acquired during his military career have transferred over to his coaching style.

“The biggest one is being a motivator,” Braud said, adding that many of the players are shy, and it can take awhile for them to come out of their shell. “Me, putting them in a position to where I let them know they can be comfortable being who they are ... expressing themselves verbally or through their actions and not being afraid to do so is probably the biggest leadership skill I use on the field.”

Warner agreed that Braud’s Army leadership style is transferred into his coaching style, and it is noticeable.

“All the coaches learn from that,” Warner added. In addition to his military experience, Braud has incorporated self-taught lessons as a coach into his Army career.

“(Coaching) makes me a better leader,” Braud said. “Being around kids at a young age and noticing how each kid has a different personality helps me as a Soldier, because it makes me realize adults are the same way.

Each Soldier won’t be the same.”

Braud compares techniques used to keep players motivated on the field to those used to motivate his Soldiers.

“Things I would have to do to get a Soldier to perform at their top level won’t be the same thing I would have to do for another to perform at their top level,” Braud said. “And I kind of compare that to my kids.”

Braud isn’t only coaching to teach them about football but hopes to leave a deeper impression on his players.

“Whatever you want to be in life and whatever you want to do in life, don’t let anything hinder your ability to accomplish that,” Braud said.

When Braud retires, he doesn’t plan on leaving the coaching scene.

“I had a joke while I was recruiting, that when I get out (of the Army) all I want to do is put stickers on people when they come in Wal-Mart,” Braud laughed, adding that after coaching, his primary focus will either be coaching a football organization or starting a business focusing on helping young children advance in their athletic abilities.



Photos courtesy of the Fort Hood Warriors

(left) New Orleans native, Sgt. 1st Class Ethan Braud, a transportation coordinator assigned to Hammer” troop of the Ironhorse Brigade, breaks down a play for his team, the Fort Hood Warriors, a Pop Warner Football Team, at Fort Hood, Texas, Aug. 12. Braud believes coaching has helped him as an Army leader.

(right) Braud encourages his team the Fort Hood Warriors, a Pop Warner Football Team, during a game. Braud’s advice to the children: “Whatever you want to be in life and whatever you want to do in life, don’t let anything hinder your ability to accomplish that.”



Former Lancer trooper receives Soldier's Medal

Story and Photos by Sgt. Bailey Kramer
1BCT, 1CD PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – Soldiers' acts of heroism don't only occur during combat-related events, and in 1922 the War Department determined that acts of bravery should be recognized during times of peace.

This led to Congress establishing an award, the Soldier's Medal, to recognize heroic servicemembers who go above and beyond to help others during peacetime. One former Soldier of the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, was recognized, Sept. 11 for going above the call of duty during an apartment fire.

Jeremey Pelletier, a former fire support sergeant, previously assigned to the 2nd "Lancer" Battalion of the Ironhorse Brigade, received the award after saving the lives of 26 individuals.

"We are amidst a bonafide hero," said Maj. Gen. Anthony Ierardi, the commanding general of the 1st Cav. Div., during his remarks at Pelletier's ceremony.

Shortly after arriving home in the early morning hours of Sept. 14, 2012, Pelletier heard the sound of breaking glass outside his apartment. Upon investigation, he saw smoke pouring from his neighboring unit.

After helping his neighbor's daughter exit the apartment safely, Pelletier began



Maj. Gen. Anthony Ierardi (left), commander of the 1st Cavalry Division, presents Kalamazoo, Mich., native, former Sgt. Jeremey Pelletier with the Soldier's Medal at the Spirit of Fort Hood Chapel on Fort Hood, Texas, Sept. 11. Pelletier earned the Soldier's Medal for his heroic actions Sept. 14, 2012, when his apartment complex caught fire. He went door-to-door ensuring residents were evacuating the building. "We are amidst a bonafide hero," Ierardi said in his remarks about Pelletier.

warning residents of neighboring apartments to quickly evacuate the premises.

"It was instinctual," Pelletier said about his actions. "I had actually just started eating dinner. I didn't notice it until afterwards, but I still had a chicken bone in my mouth when it was all said and done." Residents said Pelletier notified police and the fire department, then started

kicking in doors, encouraging tenants to immediately exit the building.

Pelletier, a native of Kalamazoo, Mich., has deployed three times with the Ironhorse Brigade in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and credits his actions during the fire to his military training. "It wasn't something I had to think about doing," Pelletier said. "I only reacted."

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 from you!

Office Phone: (254) 285-5927
Email: Ironhorsebct@gmail.com

Facebook: Ironhorse BCT
<https://www.facebook.com/1stBCT1stCD>

Twitter: [@1cd1bct](https://twitter.com/1cd1bct)
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Your BDE EOA

1BCT Equal Opportunity Advisor



SFC Crow, Robert D.
(254) 288-9553
BLDG 37013

robert.d.crow4.mil@mail.mil

Monthly Observance

National American Indian Heritage Month Observance

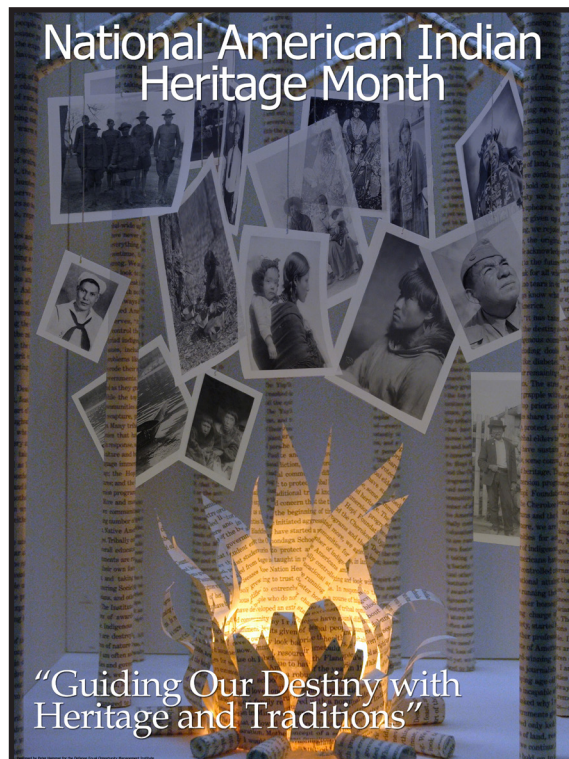
Guest Speaker:
Dr. Daniel Gelo
Professor of Anthropology

14 November 2013
1330 – 1430
Club Hood, Building 5764

SQDN/BN EOLs

HHT, 1BCT
SSG Clay / 287-6121
1-7 CAV
SSG Buchanan / 618-7162
2-5 CAV
SSG Mouring / 288-1417
2-8 CAV
SFC Boyer / 288-6000
2-12 CAV
SFC Landon / 287-0467
1-82 FA
SSG Grabowski / 288-7851
115th BSB
SFC McLeod / 287-0812 91
91 BEB
SSG Shane-Travota / 288- 2130

National American Indian Heritage Month



“The artwork for this year’s poster revolves around “Heritage and Traditions,” taken from the theme. Both of these are shared in native tribes in an oral tradition, in some cases around a fire. The images all come from the Library of Congress spanning many years and diverse tribes; the illustration is a thread of legacy that runs throughout the ages from one generation to the next,” said Mr. Hemmer.

What is National American Indian Heritage Month?

In accordance with Public Law 101-343, National American Indian Heritage Month honors the many contributions and accomplishments of American Indians and Alaska Natives. During November, we remember the legacy of the first Americans and celebrate their vibrant culture and heritage. Since the Revolutionary War, Native Americans and Alaska Natives have played a vital role in our country’s freedom and security. They proudly serve in all departments of the United States Government today.

In 1976, the United States’ bicentennial year, Congress passed a resolution authorizing President Ford to proclaim a week in October as “Native American Awareness Week.” On October 8, 1976, he issued his presidential proclamation doing so. Since then, Congress and the President have observed a day, a week or a month in honor of the American Indian and Alaska Native people. And while the proclamations do not set a national theme for the observance, they do allow each federal department and agency to develop their own ways of celebrating and honoring the nation’s American Indian heritage.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs developed the theme for this year’s National American Indian Heritage Month observance products: “Guiding our Destiny with Heritage and Traditions.”

SOURCE: www.deomi.org (DEOMI RELEASES 2013 NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH OBSERVANCE POSTER)