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Engineer battalion joins the pack

By Sgt. Kim Browne

3rd BCT PAO, 1st Cav. Div.



FORT HOOD, Texas – Not often do entire battalions come and go, and then come back again.

In light of this, the 3rd Brigade Engineer Battalion was activated, uncased its colors and joined the 3rd “Greywolf” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Dec. 12 at the 1st Cav. Div. Museum here.

“These colors have been cased and uncased many times over the course of this nation’s history,” said Col. David Lesperance, 3rd BCT commander.

“It’s nice to see the engineer colors flying over a battalion in the Greywolf Brigade again.”

The 3rd BEB was initially organized as the 3rd Battalion of Engineers, March 25, 1901, at Fort Totten, N.Y.

The battalion was expanded August 1916 and reorganized as the 3rd Engineer Regiment with portions of it in the Philippines, Hawaii and Panama.

In April 1921, the regiment became the engineer component of the Hawaiian Division and the 3rd Engineers did most of the military construction on the Island of Oahu.

The battalion’s insignia was approved Feb. 11, 1921, and it consists of a basic background, a white shield with the Roman numeral III and a splash of red with an indented border of gold.

The crest that sits on the shield consists of a wreath of the same colors with a beaver crouched at the foot of a palm branch.

The beaver is the symbol of New York, the palm branch represents tropical service, the red and white are the engineer colors and the indented border alludes to the work of the engineers in field fortifications.

“The battle streamers proudly attest to the dedication, courage and the sacrifice of the countless 3rd Engineer Battalion Soldiers, who have fought and died for the freedoms we hold dear,” Lesperance said.

“Today is a significant day in the history of the (U.S. Army) Engineer Regiment and the 1st Cavalry Division,” said Lt. Col. Michael Payne, 3rd BEB commander. “I am honored and blessed to stand here today as the commander of this fantastic battalion.”

Photo by Sgt. Kim Browne

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Williams (left), command sergeant major for 3rd Brigade Engineer Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and Lt. Col Michael Payne, the battalion’s commander, uncased the battalion’s colors during the battalion’s activation ceremony Dec. 12, at the 1st Cav. Div. Museum at Fort Hood, Texas. “Today is a significant day in the history of the (U.S. Army) Engineer Regiment and the 1st Cavalry Division,” Payne said. “I am honored and blessed to stand here today as the commander of this fantastic battalion.”



Photo by Sgt. Garrett Hernandez
Spc. Jeffery Azzoto, a multiple launch rocket system operations/fire direction specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Pegasus Fires, throws a makeshift grappling hook to trip any simulated IEDs during the battalion's combat lifesaver games at Fort Hood, Texas, Dec. 10. The competition took place over the course of two days and was designed to test each team's proficiency in CLS and common warrior skills.

41st Fires Troopers compete in combat lifesaver games

By Sgt. Garrett Hernandez

41st Fires Brigade Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas – Soldiers made their way through the brush while on patrol near Belton Lake on a cold December morning at Fort Hood, Texas. Suddenly the team of four heard the sound of incoming indirect fire.

Someone yelled “incoming,” and the Soldiers dropped to the ground. The team from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Pegasus Fires took part in the battalion's combat lifesaver warrior games, Dec. 10.

“We are incorporating warrior tasks and combat lifesaving tasks into a lane where they can practice as a team-sized element and test themselves on these tasks, in order to prepare for combat,” said 1st Lt. Jacob Portalatin, the medical operations officer for 1st Bn., 21st FAR.

For one medic overseeing the games, this was more than just a training event. Spc. Isiah

Stewart saw these lifesaving skills in action during a 2011 deployment to Afghanistan.

While on a convoy from Logar province to Kandahar province, Stewart's patrol came under attack from rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire. Shortly after that, one of the vehicles struck an improvised explosive device.

The convoy took casualties during both engagements, and Stewart and his fellow medics found themselves in a situation where they had to depend on the CLS qualified Soldiers to treat the minor injuries, so they could tend to the more critically injured Soldiers.

“It's important because, if I'm out of the fight or my comrades [other medics] are out of the fight, that these Soldiers know exactly what to do if a medical situation pops off or if any of these guys are needed to perform these skills, we want to make sure they know it,” said Stewart, a native of Compton, Calif.

Stewart's experience in Afghanistan illustrates the need for training events like the CLS

Warrior games.

The competition took place over two days with the first day geared toward military operations in urban terrain operations.

The teams engaged in simulated combat lanes in a virtual shoot house at the Fort Hood Training Support Center.

On the second day, the Soldiers moved out to the field for the culminating event. They had to demonstrate their knowledge of CLS and warrior tasks through a hands-on test. The Soldiers were required to perform such tasks as reacting to indirect fire, calling in an unexploded ordnance report, caring for wounded while under fire, buddy carrying and dragging, and loading litters into the back of a high mobility multi-purpose wheeled vehicle frontline ambulance.

Spc. David Morgan, Spc. Fredrick Stone, Pfc. Shawn Campbell, and Pvt. Jacob Patch from 575th Forward Support Company, 1st Bn., 21st FAR, TF Pegasus Fires, clenched the number one spot at the battalion's CLS warrior games.

Cav on the Spot:

Ironhorse chaplain fulfills calling through Army service

By Pfc. Paige Pendleton

1st BCT Public Affairs, 1st Cav. Div.

FORT HOOD, Texas – Soldiers choose to serve for any number of reasons, whether to support their families, to follow in a relative's footsteps, to make a better life for themselves, or to ensure a better life is possible for other Americans.

One Ironhorse Soldier chose the path of service for a different reason.

Chaplain (Maj.) Marshall Coen, the chaplain for the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, made the decision to pursue a career in the Army, because he felt a higher power needed him to serve not only as a Soldier, but as a chaplain.

“The Lord led me in this direction,” said Coen, a Killeen, Texas, native. “It was a call.”

A self-identified Army brat, Coen grew up in a strong Christian family traveling the world through his father's quartermaster officer career.

Initially, Coen was not interested in pursuing a life involved with the ministry or the military.

“The Lord began to really instill in my heart and in my life that he had a higher calling for me,” Coen said.

After his freshman year of college, Coen decided to work on a degree toward ministry.

Upon finishing his undergraduate degree, he served as the youth minister at the First Baptist Church in Killeen.

During that time, Coen reconnected with a young lady in the congregation he knew from high school and married her in 2000.

Also a native of Killeen, Marshall's wife, Jill, said she felt they had a comfortable life.

Then several military chaplains began visiting their church.

“(The chaplains) just started talking (to us) about the chaplaincy,” Jill said. “We started thinking something new was coming.”

Marshall and Jill felt as though their lives were being pointed in the direction of the Army.

“The Lord slowly began to instill in (us) that he did not call us to be complacent,” Marshall said. “He did not call us to be comfortable, safe and secure in ministry. He called us to take risks, to step out on faith.”

After Marshall decided to join the military, he resigned his position at the church and took steps to become an Army chaplain.

While attending seminary to work on a master's degree in divinity - a requirement necessary to be an Army chaplain - Marshall's father



Photo courtesy of Maj. Marshall Coen
Maj. Marshall Coen (left), a Killeen, Texas, native and chaplain for the 1st “Ironhorse” Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, smiles for a family photo with his wife, Jill (right), and sons, Silas (lower left), Jude, (lower right), and baby Ira (center), Nov. 28, in Killeen, Texas. “The strength of the Soldier is defined by how the home is,” Marshall said. “My success is very much defined by the support I have from family. It goes a long way to have support.”

swore him into the Army as an officer at his commissioning ceremony in April of 2004.

Maj. Rich West, the 1st Cavalry Division Family Life Chaplain, said he believes most chaplains share the same sense of calling that Marshall felt.

“They feel like God has led them and guided

them and put this burden on their heart to join the military to care for Soldiers who are deploying and to provide religious support,” said West, a native of San Diego.

West said Marshall is passionate about caring for Soldiers, and in his supervisory role that

See CHAPLAIN, Page 4



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Live The Legend!

From CHAPLAIN, Page 3

includes caring for chaplains in the battalion's he oversees.

When Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Addison Burgess, the 1st Cavalry Division chaplain, needed a chaplain to serve the Ironhorse Brigade, West said he was looking for two qualities in particular.

"Marshall is one of those unique Army chaplains that has a really good balance of the professional military officer skill set coupled with strong pastoral personality and skill set," West said.

"Chaplain Coen has both of those qualities excellently balanced and in high measure, and that's what Chaplain Burgess was looking for."

Through his charismatic, approachable and energetic personality, it really shows that Marshall cares for his Soldiers, West added.

When people see him, Marshall said he hopes they see his good qualities, but most importantly, he hopes they see the love and light of the Lord.

"There are potentially a lot of people that are hurting in the Army," Marshall said. "Hurt can manifest in different ways, but joy and hope can penetrate the hardship of the military."

At the beginning of his career, Marshall said his goal was to be true to his roots and calling, and

to make sure his family was taken care of.

"My father modeled for me what was important which are faith, family, then career," Marshall said. "I see some of the sacrifices that are required, and I understand what's important."

Along the way, Jill has remained supportive of Marshall's career even when times were tough.

"We're a team," Jill said with a smile. "If I'm not going to be supportive, it's not going to work."

The biggest challenge for Jill is when Marshall can't be home, she said, adding that flexibility and her military upbringing helped get her through those times.

Jill said her most rewarding moment was during Marshall's second deployment to Iraq in 2010.

She was ready for him to be home, but had a change of heart after seeing a photograph.

"I remember seeing a picture of him baptizing a Soldier in Iraq and thinking, 'That's what this is all about,'" she said, tearing up.

"He's away, (and) it's for a greater purpose, so I can handle it. It made it a lot better. It made it worth it ... I think that was my proudest moment to see the fruit of all of his work on a spiritual level."

He recalled the baptism as one rewarding moment of his career, but said his most rewarding mo-



Photo courtesy of Maj. Marshall Coen, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div.

Chaplain (Maj.) Marshall Coen (right), a Killeen, Texas, native and chaplain for the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, baptizes a Soldier during his deployment with the 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Jan. 24, 2010, at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. Coen recalled the baptism as one of many rewarding moments of his career, but the father of three boys said his most rewarding moment was coming home from deployment and seeing his wife and family.

ment was coming home from deployment and seeing his wife and family.

Marshall, the father of three boys, said his greatest accomplishment is his family.

"The strength of the Soldier is defined by how the home is," Marshall said. "My success is very much defined by the support I get from family. It goes a long way to have support."



Photos by Sgt. Angel Turner

2nd BCT Families welcome Troops

Eighty-six Soldiers from various unit within the 2nd Brigade Combat Team redeployed from a five-month deployment to Afghanistan. Other Soldiers of the Black Jack Brigade will continue to support operations in Afghanistan.

At left, 1st Lt. Andrew McConico, the executive officer for Company A, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd "Black Jack" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, embraces his fiancée, Maria Haag, during a welcome home ceremony at Cooper Field, Fort Hood, Texas, Dec. 10.

Above, Sgt. Luis Torres, an unmanned aircraft systems assistant chief assigned to Company A, 2nd Brigade Support Troops Battalion, 2nd "Black Jack" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, heads home with his wife Kimberly and two-month old daughter Kaiya, following a redeployment ceremony at Cooper Field, Fort Hood, Texas, Dec. 10. Torres met his daughter for the first time at the redeployment ceremony.