

YANK

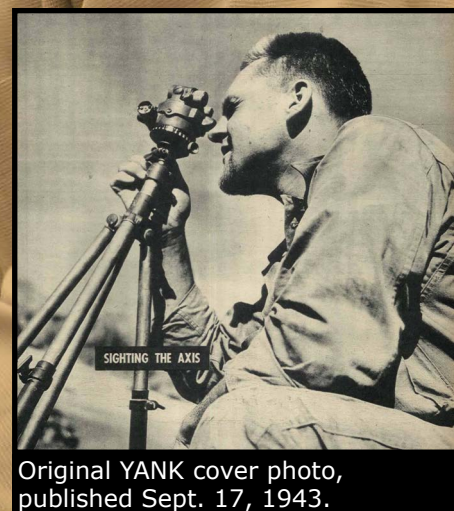
THE ARMY  NEWSPAPER



*By the Soldiers
for the Soldiers
in the service*

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Original YANK cover photo,
published Sept. 17, 1943.

A New Year-- A New Era for READY FIRST



B. Btry, 2-3 FA sighting a more modern axis.

Cover photo:

1st Lt. Nathaniel Stine, a native of Dewitt, Michigan, and the platoon leader for Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Division Artillery, recreates the original YANK cover photo from Sept. 17, 1943.

Photo by:

Staff Sgt. Kristen Duus, 1/1 AD PAO

No Soldiers were harmed in the recreation of this photo.

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TO THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES

***Colonel Coffman discusses company
STX, LFX and Iron Focus.***

The READY FIRST Combat Team Headquarters Fort Bliss, Texas

February 10, 2015

READY FIRST Soldiers, we have just under three months to go until we embark on our training mission exercise at the National Training Center. At NTC, the READY FIRST brigade will work closely with our Atropian partners to defeat and deter acts of aggression from Donovanian enemy forces in order to maintain Atropia's pre-conflict territorial integrity. But before we can do this, we have several training events we must accomplish and master.

In preparation for NTC, we must first conduct our company situational training exercise (STX) lanes. This will allow us to certify for battalion and brigade STX during Iron Focus. These exercises will fully integrate multi-echeloned training, exercise battalion- and brigade-level mission command systems and incorporate all brigade internal enablers and apply them in tactical problems. Our companies will be trained on deliberate attack, hasty defense, movement to contact and enabler integration. The culminating event is a company live-fire exercise (LFX) designed to train the companies on how to integrate fires and movement to equal maneuver. This will also allow us to certify the brigade to conduct battalion-level LFX at our NTC rotation.

Upon completing company STX and LFX we move straight into Iron Focus, an incredible training event that is a week-long. During Iron Focus, we will conduct multi-echeloned training by incorporating organic, Division and national-level resources to combine movement and fires to create maneuver. Company-sized units will train and demonstrate proficiency in react-to-contact drills, air assaults and village stability operations. READY FIRST Soldiers will train in realistic simulations they may experience during a deployment, to include role-players acting as village residents and officials. These scenarios will enable us to evaluate our readiness.

These events will make the READY FIRST brigade trained at the brigade- and battalion-level to execute future decisive action operations and is fully prepared and capable to execute its Regionally Aligned Forces mission and other worldwide contingency operations.

READY FIRST- Iron Soldiers!



Richard R. Coffman
33rd Colonel of the READY FIRST

One Century of Spartan History

The 36th Infantry Regiment was constituted as a unit of the Regular Army July 1, 1916, and was organized July 27, 1917 in Brownsville, Texas. The regiment did not deploy in support of the World War, but instead saw service on the Mexican border. The 36th was ordered to report to Camp Devens, Massachusetts, and assigned to the 26th Infantry Brigade of the 12th Division in 1918.

However, the Armistice of Nov. 11, 1918 brought about the demobilization of the 36th and the regiment was inactivated in 1921. In March 1923, the 36th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the 9th Division and remained in an inactive status until being relieved from the 9th Division in 1940.

Sept. 15, 1943, the regiment arrived in England, where they continued to prepare for the invasion of Europe. The 36th fought throughout Europe for the next 11 months and fought in 221 consecutive days of combat, earning two Presidential Unit Citations. May 12, 1956, the 36th Infantry Regiment arrived as the first major element of the division. Feb. 3, 1962, 1st Armored Rifle Battalion, 36th Infantry was reactivated in Germany and assigned to the 3rd Armored Division's 3rd Brigade.

Their primary mission during this period was, in the event of war, to defend the Fulda Gap against Warsaw Pact forces alongside other NATO elements. In 2000, 1-36 IN deployed with the "READY FIRST" Brigade to Kosovo in support of Operation Allied Force

and Operation Joint Guardian. In April 2003, 1-36th IN was called to duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They conducted more than 20 battalion cordon and searches, hundreds of tactical check-points, more than 140 raids and participated in seven brigade missions. They deployed again to Iraq in January 2006, and received orders to move south to the city of Ramadi, in Al Anbar Province.

The 1-36 IN was relieved in September 2008, from assignment to the 1st Armored Division and assigned to the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division at Fort Bliss, Texas and was soon after reactivated as a Combined Arms Battalion in October 2008. For the next 12 months, the Spartans of 1-36th IN would conduct New Equipment Training on tanks and fighting vehicles.

Dec. 3, 2009, the battalion deployed to the Ninevah Province and attached to the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division to Mosul. In July 2010, they turned over control of its battlespace to 1-64 Armor, having been the last battalion in Multi-nation Division-North to complete its mission. Dec. 30 2012, 1-36 IN assumed responsibility of the most volatile district in Kandahar province and partnered with the afghan national security forces to improve security and the quality of life for the people of Maiwand.

The battalion again deployed in December 2012 to the Maiwand District, under 1/1 AD, returning in September 2013.



Above left: A Soldier with 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, pulls security in the back of a Stryker in the Maiwand District of Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, July 2, 2012. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Kristen Duus, 1/1 AD PAO)

Above right: A Soldier from 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment conducts a foot patrol through Hit, Iraq, a city 70 miles northwest of Ramadi in Iraq's Al Anbar Province, June 13, 2006. At that time, the "Spartans" were based out of Friedberg, Germany. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Goodwin)

Rifle Soldiers dominate Iron Sniper competition

Staff Sgt. Kristen Duus, 1/1 AD

Every year, Soldiers compete for the chance to be the Army's Best Sniper at Fort Benning, Georgia. Soldiers assigned to Fort Bliss competed to represent the 1st Armored Division as its top sniper this year.

According to the Army, the primary mission of a sniper in combat is to support combat operations by delivering precise long-range fire on selected targets.

Over the course of five days in January, Soldiers from 1st Armored Division competed in the Iron Sniper competition. While nine teams began the competition, only five completed it, with four teams falling due to injuries, proving it's no easy feat.

Pfc. Adam Garcia, a native of Los Angeles, California, and Sgt. Michael Pomerening, a native of Farmington, Minnesota, both infantry Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division placed top in the competition.

Garcia, who has been in the Army for only a year and a half, is scheduled to go to sniper school at Fort Benning, Georgia, in March, with his partner, Pomerening.

"It's always better to have better knowledge," said Garcia. "But I guess I got good training from my leaders."

Though the team worked in nearly perfect sync, they only paired up a week before the competition, shooting hundreds of rounds at the range in the snow in early January.

"I think we did well," said Pomerening. "We talked it through each other and it worked out."

Staff Sgt. Galamiel Ortiz, one of the cadre and evaluators from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored

Division, and a native of Vernon, Texas, was pleasantly surprised by the competitors' abilities.

"I was very impressed with the caliber of shooters and snipers we had," said Ortiz. "The motivation they had was good and they continued to push forward, and I was very happy with that."

One of the more difficult tasks for the competitors



proved to be the long-range marksmanship, due to the high winds in the desert.

Most people were having problems with the 700-meter target, explained Pomerening. While they fumbled around at the start, they ended up picking themselves back up and hitting the target several times, despite the harsh conditions.

The shooters were put to the test not only physically, but mentally, as well.



Top: Pfc. Adam Garcia, a native of Los Angeles, sites a target over the shoulder of his teammate, Sgt. Michael Pomerening, a native of Farmington, Minnesota, during the Iron Sniper competition at Fort Bliss, Jan. 29. Garcia and Pomerening, both Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, 1/1 AD, won the competition.

Above: Command Sgt. Maj. Lance Lehr, 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss command sergeant major, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Richard Behrenhausen, and Maj. Gen. Stephen Twitty, 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss commanding general, stand with Sgt. Michael Pomerening and Pfc. Adam Garcia during the award ceremony of the Iron Sniper competition at Fort Bliss, Texas, Jan. 30. Pomerening and Garcia, both Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, 1/1 AD, won the competition.

Right: Sgt. Michael Pomerening, a native of Farmington, Minnesota, and a Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, 1/1 AD, spots a target for his teammate, Pfc. Adam Garcia, a native of Los Angeles, while they shoot into a village during the Iron Sniper competition at Fort Bliss, Texas, Jan. 28. Pomerening and Garcia won the competition.

(Photos by Sgt. Sarah Goss, 1/1 AD PAO)

Attack Company Buffalos conduct range operations

Capt. Thomas Goodman, 4-17 IN

It was a busy month for "Attack" Company, 4th Battalion 17th Infantry Regiment, "Buffalos," 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. Coming off of block leave the company immediately hit the ground running. From chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear (CBRN) leadership professional development sessions to small arms ranges, the company has been training non-stop.

Over the course of the month every platoon in the company supported both company ranges as well as battalion ranges. 2nd Platoon, Attack Company, 4-17 IN, did a fantastic job running Table III on Range J for the battalion. Table III is the gateway to gunnery, allowing the company and battalion to excel on Tables V and VI.

Attack Company Soldiers conducted hand grenade training on Ranges 2, 3 and 4, Jan. 21. Soldiers conducted confidence and accuracy throws with dummy grenades prior to throwing live. This allowed range safeties to verify that Soldiers had the accuracy and arm strength required to correctly employ a live grenade.

Each Soldier threw two live M67 fragmentation grenades at four Ivan targets down range. All Soldiers were proficient enough to send large amount of shrapnel into the target, but a few

demonstrated expert use of the grenades, blowing the targets completely in half! Soldiers were able to see the results of their throws after their iteration was complete. This kind of target feedback is crucial as it allows Soldiers to see the results of their efforts in real time.

As part of small-arms ranges, Soldiers shot with their protective masks (Pro-Mask) on to simulate a CBRN environment. This was a new experience to many of the new Soldiers who battled not only exercising the fundamentals of marksmanship but also the added stress of the protective masks. With instruction from their team and squad leaders, all Soldiers successfully qualified both with and without their masks.

This training provided invaluable as Attack Company moves into squad, platoon and company live fires. Our culminating event will be a company tactical exercise and live fire at the end of March as part of the brigade's Ready Focus exercise.

The Soldiers and leaders of Attack Company are excited for the training and missions ahead of them. For many, this will be their second iteration of gunnery and live fires. They are eager to improve upon their already stellar performance from last iteration and show they are the most lethal Soldiers in the READY FIRST brigade! FEAR NO ONE!



Above: Soldiers with Attack Company, 4th Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, fire their M4 rifles while wearing promasks, at Fort Bliss, Texas, Jan. 21. Soldiers wear their masks to enhance their proficiency.
Right: A grenade thrown by an Attack Company, 4th Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Soldier, detonates near the Ivan targets on Range 4 at Fort Bliss, Texas, Jan. 21.
(Photos by 4-17 IN)



Blackhawks swim to take on water survival

1st Lt. Michael Harbison, 6-1 CAV

More than 40 Soldiers of Bravo Troop, 6th Squadron 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, utilized the Aquatics Training Center located on East Fort Bliss on the morning of Dec. 10. The unit's mission was to conduct Combat Water Survival Training in order to broaden each Soldier's aquatic skill set and familiarize them in water.

After the safety brief and orientation of the training area was given by the officer-in-charge, 1st. Lt. Michael Harbison, Bravo Troop then identified the strong and weak swimmers. Once identified, the strong swimmers were split into the four training stations designated for this training and the weak swimmers were given additional training.

The four stations included the 25-meter weapon swim-- where the Soldier had to successfully swim 25 meters while keeping the muzzle of a training rifle above the surface, the 25-meter combined swim-- a combination of underwater and above surface stroking, the equipment drop-- where Soldiers quickly removed encumbering equipment from their person, and the 10-meter step off-- where Soldiers stepped off a diving board from a height of 10 meters and swims to the side of the pool, maintaining his or her rifle.

The staff of the Aquatics Training Center provided numerous life guards and lanes to support training. The noncommissioned officer instructors, led by Sgt. 1st Class Carl Wilson, over-watched and corrected Soldiers at every station, ensuring each station was completed correctly, or the Soldier was retrained and repeated the station.

Each Soldier waiting for stations to open up had to go through numerous poolside exercises in order to induce physical stress before attempting to complete the next station. Charles Armendariz, who heads the ATC, was extremely friendly, helpful and eager to watch Soldiers utilize the great resources they provide. These resources included lifeguards, "rubber duckies" or training rifles and floatation devices.

"Our mission is to support the troops with all of their water training as safely as possible," said Armendariz.

"We offer a range of services including free swim lessons for Soldiers of all levels, shallow water egress and supporting Combat Water Survival Training."

Weak and non-swimmers left the training more confident in their abilities to move around in the water and while casual swimmers found great challenge in going through the stations with sterile Army Combat Uniforms and boots on.



Top: Staff Sgt. Hiram Elizondo gives instructions on how to complete water survival lanes to Bravo Troop, 6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Soldiers while they conduct exercises between lanes, at the Aquatics Training Center on Fort Bliss, Texas, Dec. 10.

Above left: Pvt. Lewis Postles, a Soldier with 6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, completes the 25-meter weapon swim lane during Combat Water Survival Training at the Aquatics Training Center at Fort Bliss, Texas, Dec. 10.

Above right: A Soldier with Bravo Troop, 6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, warms up in the water prior to conducting Combat Water Survival Training at the Aquatics Training Center at Fort Bliss, Texas, Dec. 10.

(Photos by 1st Lt. Michael Harbison, 6-1 CAV)

Cold Steel Gunners make it rain

1st Lt. Samuel Litz, 2-3 FA

What is the sound of artillery? BOOM BOOM! These are the sounds that could be heard during Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Division Artillery's certification in November, 2014.

The training was a section-level task that certified members of Charlie Battery, 2-3 FA, to safely and accurately fire live rounds.

"It was truly exciting," says Pfc. Dustin Sanders, a cannoneer, and a native of Flippin, Arkansas. "It was an excellent opportunity to learn more about my profession through practical application."

The process was overseen by the battalion's master gunner, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Medrano, a native of Amarillo, Texas. Table VI is the first live fire certification table for field artillery units, laying the groundwork for further training. Each section fired 23 rounds to standard, resulting in every howitzer section receiving certification. The live fire training was the first time the battery fired live in more than two years.



Leading up to this training, the "Cold Steel" battery trained extensively in preparation, under the leadership of Capt. Joshua Fink, the battery commander, and a native of Decatur, Alabama. All soldiers in the battery conducted written testing to verify their knowledge of artillery concepts. Furthermore, the artillerymen underwent the Artillery Skills Proficiency Test, certifying their skills as a howitzer crew member and their ability to apply their knowledge. The sections practiced crew drills repeatedly to produce the muscle memory required for an efficient firing process.

Maintenance was also a large part of the preparations. Each howitzer went through services to ready and verify that the gun would be able to fire safely and properly. The tube and mechanical components were disassembled, cleaned and inspected to ensure the gun was fully mission capable prior to firing.

Behind the gunline, the Fire Direction Center (FDC) handled the technical operations for calculating firing data. The platoon FDCs used the Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System to process fire missions and translate calls for fire into accurate data that the howitzer sections use to execute firing. The FDC also disseminated the safety information specific to the position, ammunition type and the current weather, ensuring every mission was fired safe. The Soldiers' hard work paid off, as every section and FDC certified.

"Although my experience is limited, the training I participated in motivates me to put rounds on target during our field exercises this coming year," said Sanders. Charlie Battery will continue to train intensely as they prepare for Iron Focus and supporting READY FIRST at their National Training Center rotation in the spring.

Above: A round exits the tube of a M777 Howitzer at Firing Box 2 at Dona Ana Range Complex, Nov. 19

Top Left: A Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, section performs crew drills in preparation for live-fire, Nov. 8, at Dona Ana Range Complex.

Left: An ammo team chief prepares rounds prior to a live-fire exercise, Nov. 19 at Dona Ana Range complex.
(Photos by 1st Lt. Samuel Litz, 2-3 FA)

READY FIRST Soldiers find enemy through UAS

Capt. Kenneth King, 16 EN

The Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) platoon of the 16th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, provides a new definition of "ground-pounders." They toe the line professionally between the grunts at their side and the pilots that fly above them; not quite in one world and not wholly part of the other. But have no doubt about it, the UAS Soldier is a hard-working, in-the-field-roughing-it, mission oriented GI working for his or her brothers and sisters in the READY FIRST brigade.

The UAS platoon has been working hard to prove themselves and to live up to their responsibilities watching over READY FIRST Soldiers and finding enemy muldoons on the battlefield so the brigade can deal death and destruction on them as required for mission success.

In pursuit of these goals, the platoon has spent an enormous amount of time in the field attempting to bring everyone up to standard with their training. Between October and December, the UAS platoon spent seven of 12 weeks in the field for the duration of the duty week, away from their families and working to become better at their profession.

"Being away from my wife is tough at times," said Pfc. Richard Smith, a UAS Operator from Rochester, New York. "But flying is pretty awesome and I am very satisfied with the many weeks we spent in the field."

The UAS platoon has spent time integrating with

units such as 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, Division Artillery, and 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, 1/1 AD, during their various exercises while balancing the type of training which is required to progress UAS Soldiers through their training requirements so they can independently operate aircraft without instructor supervision.

"I enjoyed the training," said Pfc. Michael Wallum a UAS Operator, and native of Tucson, Arizona.

Wallum added that he felt more comfortable with the demands of flying then he did only a few short months ago.

The platoon has worked doggedly to check off the 122 subjects that must be taught and tested, the 28 complex tasks which must be performed and collectively the more than 200 hours of flight which must be logged before the platoon can be fully mission capable.

"Progression is going well," said Spc. Kyle Simmons a UAS Operator and native of Gouverneur, New York, and the platoon's school-trained standardization/instructor operator. "We have overcome obstacles concerning weather conditions and occasional malfunctioning equipment but the Soldiers I train and work with are willing and ready to learn."

The UAS platoon continues to work to provide the kind of reconnaissance which the Soldiers of READY FIRST deserve. Finding the enemy and passing that information to their infantry and field artillery brethren so they are able to fix and finish the enemy on the brigade's next battlefield.



Pfc. Emily Denzer, (standing) a UAS operator from Bemidji, Minnesota, and Pfc. Marobie Lockhart, a UAS operator from Florence, New Jersey, both Soldiers with 16th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, reinstall the Remove Before Flight Items (RBFIs), onto the aircraft post-flight. The RBFIs protect parts of the aircraft while it is on the ground.
(Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Alfonso White, 16th EN BN)

Providers-- There and back, a history

The 501st has been exposed to many wars as both an attached and organic unit to the 1st Armored Division. From its conception until recent times, the Providers have been forging ahead with their combat arms brethren in the brigade named after a powerful warship - Old Ironsides.

Initially, though, the 501st was simply a Supply Battalion, formed Jan. 1, 1942. They were activated January 3rd of the same year, in order to support the 1st Armored Division during their campaign in World War II. Near the end of the war, in September 1944, the supply battalion was deactivated as the war waned.

The 501st was again reactivated in 1951 - this time as a Quartermaster Battalion, at Ft. Hood, Texas, but deactivated once more at Ft. Polk, Louisiana in 1957. Five years later, the 501st popped up once more as the 501st Supply and Transportation Battalion, but then deactivated in 1984 in Germany. This followed once again with an activation and redesignation in 1987 to the 501st Support Battalion.

Finally, in 2001 under the force structure redistribution, the unit became the 501st Brigade Support Battalion, as commands usually held separately for support were placed under their respective divisions, brigades and battalions - thus made organic to their units.

The 501st has participated in many wars with the 1st Armored Division, including World War II, the Korean War, the Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Operation Enduring Freedom. 501st BSB has made a multitude of impacts within military history by always providing world class combat support. The most recent of these impacts was made in Afghanistan where

fighting units were provided the best combat support which lead to a successful tenure in southern Afghanistan. 501st BSB supported 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division from November 2012, until September 2013 with zero deficiencies.

Afghanistan consisted of a nine-month tour in which the BSB was nestled in a Forward Operations Base (FOB). In this FOB, the BSB worked hand in hand with the 115th Military Police Battalion, out of Salisbury, Maryland, to provide support - maintenance, supply, medical and security to the areas surrounding Kandahar Air Field. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Alpha Company and the Military Police provided the security required both to protect surrounding areas and to move convoys across the battlefield in order to supply and maintain other units, but especially the other battalions of the 1st Armored Division.

Not only was the BSB responsible for support, but also for the immense task of retrograding the equipment used for the past 13 years in Afghanistan. This consisted of constantly rolling convoys bringing items and inventory back to FOB Walton, which could then be processed at Kandahar Airfield (KAF). From there, this equipment made its way back into the supply system, saving billions - and considered one of the biggest retrograde missions in history.

These undertakings, while both immense and impressive, are nothing short of a Battalion within 1st Armored Division. Providers - always supporting, always ready, standards and discipline. The 501st BSB motto says it all. "Providers."



Above left: U.S. Army Sgt. Larry Davie, top, a dental hygienist for Charlie Company, 501st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, cleans the teeth of Staff Sgt. Mike Carrigan, a brigade mortuary affairs specialist at Forward Operating Base Walton in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, March 9, 2013. Davie helps run the only dental clinic in the brigade. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Kristen Duus, 1/1 AD PAO)

Above right: 501st BSB participates in reactivation parade for 1st Armored Division, Feb. 3, 1962. (Photo credit unknown)

READY FIRST represents Best Rangers for competition



1st Lt. Justin Edson, a ranger with 4th Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, participates in the second phase of the 1st Armored Division best ranger competition at Fort Bliss, Feb. 10. Edson will be one of four Soldiers from 1st AD to represent the division at the Army-wide Best Ranger competition at Fort Benning in April.
(Photos by Staff Sgt. Kristen Duus, 1/1 AD PAO)

Want a voice in the YANK?
Send all questions, comments
or suggestions to our
public affairs office. We
want to hear from YOU!
Private message us through
the Brigade Facebook page or
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