

# Iron Brigade

March, 2018, Vol. 1 Issue 3

Magazine



**Iron Union - Inferno Creek - Flag Pole**





Above: Photo Illustration that depicts the moment a Kuwaiti M1A2 fires its main gun during the Kuwait Liberations day tied Flagpole exercise. In the foreground is the BMP-3 infantry fighting vehicle.

# Iron Brigade Magazine

March 2018, vol. 1 issue 3.

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COVER: An M1 Abrams tank fires a 120mm round during a live fire exercise at Iron Union 18-6 in the United Arab Emirates, Jan. 23, 2018.

BACKCOVER: Various scenes from the Flagpole, Iron Union and Inferno Creek exercises.



# Greetings from Strike 6 & 7



The Iron Brigade's mission to support both Operation Spartan Shield (OSS) and Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) is almost halfway over. We have accomplished a great deal, but there is still work to be done.

The brigade recently completed some of the most important exercises of our tour, Inferno Creek in Oman and Iron Union in the United Arab Emirates. Additionally, we are retaining the critically important missions in Iraq and Syria in support of OIR. These important exercise and real world missions allowed our Iron Soldiers to focus on the three pillars of our mission here: partnership, interoperability, and readiness.

Partnership is at the heart of our success in the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility. The forging of enduring relationships and our partnered activities are key to building the capacity of our allies and ensuring regional stability. As part of the CENTCOM ready force we stand by to deter any regional threats and to embolden our allies to take greater ownership of their own security. Recent exercises have shown that the Iron Brigade and Task Force Spartan are on the right track.

The key to our recent successes during Inferno Creek and Iron Union was our ability to increase interoperability with our Gulf Cooperation Council allies. At Inferno Creek the UAE armed forces integrated seamlessly with our heavy combined task force. In conjunction with 1-35 AR "Conquerors" and 4-27 FA "Iron Thunder" we achieved real and lasting progress in developing the capacity for Soldier to Soldier interoperability and unit exchange. Operation Inferno Creek was a dismounted training exercise with the dual focus of building company readiness and increasing interoperability with Omani forces. This exercise culminated with a company live fire exercise in which the Iron Brigade Soldiers and Omani forces assaulted an objective with the assistance of a variety of enablers such as unmanned aerial systems, engineers, scouts and mortars.

No matter what our Iron Soldiers were doing, the leadership from the brigade down to the Squad level constantly looked for opportunities to increase their Soldiers' readiness. The theme of increasing our combat power and building readiness has been a constant since we rolled our first vehicle off the boat. The battalions and companies have done a commendable job finding opportunities to make room for training that allows them to increase their readiness for the next objective. A great example of this was the Army Day combined arms live fire exercise. The brigade and 1-35 AR designed a training event which allowed the CENTCOM and Kuwaiti senior leadership to see our capabilities, and did it in a manner where the executing company received serious repetitions and intensive maneuver



training.

We can't mention readiness without also addressing our forces in support of OIR's critical anti-ISIS operations. Elements from the Iron Brigade provide both security and direct support to anti-ISIS operations primarily in Syria and Iraq. Much of our Iraq based

Security Force (SECFOR) and fire support elements are returning to Kuwait after several months of long and diligent service. In Syria, 1-1 CAV continues to support OIR by providing forces for SECFOR, Quick Reaction Force, and other security operations. All of our forces supporting OIR remain at a high state of readiness and their morale is high.

No matter the mission, the Soldiers of the Iron Brigade are ready and able to work side by side with our GCC partners and coalition partners as we meet any and all challenges of both OSS and OIR. As we come to the half way point our minds continue to be focused on our mission while we anticipate returning home in the coming months.

**STRIKE HARD!**



# Forging partnership through experience at Iron Union 18-6



An M1 Abrams tank from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas fires a 120mm round during a live fire exercise at Iron Union 18-6 in the United Arab Emirates, Jan. 23, 2018.

Photo and story by Sgt. Thomas Crough, U.S. Army Central

Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas, participated in a field training exercise alongside United Arab Emirates Armed Forces during Iron Union 18-6, near Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Jan. 21-24, 2018.

“Our mission here is to build interoperability and keep everything in the fight, focusing on readiness of equipment and personnel,” said Capt. Matthew Gaskin, commander, “Hellion” Forward Support Company (H-FSC), 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment. “We got with the nation of support, UAE, we looked for our counterparts whether it be...maintenance, supply, or combat arms fellowships. We linked up with them, we started sharing ideas, they showed us how they do sustainment, how they do maintenance

and then we pitch ours, how we do it. And we gain common understanding from each other.”

Iron Union is a recurring exercise focusing on combined arms, security, and staff operations. It is designed to strengthen military-to-military relations between the U.S. and the UAE land forces.

Emirati and U.S. troops need to

figure out how to communicate despite the language barrier and do the exercise together, explained Maj. Gen. Victor J. Braden, commanding general, 35th Infantry Division, during a visit with Soldiers of the 2nd BCT, 1st AD, at an austere training site. The training site encourages Soldiers to overcome this hurdle as forces live and work together.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas, refuel an M109 Paladin from the 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, during Iron Union 18-6 in the United Arab Emirates, Jan. 23, 2018.





“It helps to get together and learn about their culture and show them ours,” said Spc. Winston Madera-Ortiz, a motor transport operator, with H-FSC. “We can share our knowledge and at the same time we can take theirs so we can keep moving forward.”

The training is an opportunity for both countries to build tactical proficiency in critical mission areas, gain an understanding of each other’s forces, and support long-term regional stability.

“We really focused on building that bond between our counterparts throughout our entire time here...individuals conversing either at the table, in a vehicle, or on the battlefield...” said

Maj. Gen. Victor J. Braden, commanding general, 35th Infantry Division, visits Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, during Iron Union 18-6 in the United Arab Emirates, Jan. 23, 2018.



Gaskin, a native of Arkansas. “They do a lot of things that we do...the major that I was paired with, he has three boys just like I do so it was really good conversations and that just built that bond between the two forces.”

Above: Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas, prepare their equipment for a convoy during Iron Union 18-6 in the United Arab Emirates, Jan. 23, 2018. Kuwait.



Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas, stop their vehicles to allow a herd of camels to pass during Iron Union 18-6 in the United Arab Emirates, Jan. 23, 2018.



# Inferno Creek shows off partnership

Specialist Nathan Goodlet and Cpl. Jacob Kehler, snipers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, search for a simulated enemy high-value target, Jan. 29, 2018, during Inferno Creek 2018 near Thumrait, Oman.

Story and Photos by Sgt. David Nye, U.S. Army Central

Surrounded by the clear blue skies and bright orange sand of Oman, Omani and U.S. forces conducted a simulated assault against dozens of enemy fighters, Jan. 31, 2018, in the culminating event of Inferno Creek 18, a three-week training exercise conducted by the U.S. and Omani armies near Thumrait, Oman.

The joint exercise allowed multiple elements of the militaries to practice working together with the countries each contributing scouts, mortars, infantry, engineers, and other elements that worked hand-in-hand to complete their task: an assault on

a simulated enemy compound followed by a hasty defense against an armored enemy counterattack.

The success of the training mission relied on seeds planted three weeks before when the leaders met to work through the military decision-making process, or MDMP, according to Lt. Col. Jonathan M. Genge, the U.S. task force commander for the exercise.

"It's been great since day one, the Omanis coming in right on time, every day, for MDMP, energetic, ready to tackle the task of the day," he said. "They've come in with their experiences, we've learned from that as well. They took the lead in a lot of

## Task Force



## Spartan



things with MDMP as well as [course of action] development, the wargaming.”

For the grunts on the ground, working with the Omanis presented new challenges but allowed for great experiences. “I feel pretty excited about it, because I’m working with someone from an entirely different country,” said Pfc. Tyiamarte J. Linley Jr., a mortarman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. “New language, new culture, new everything, and it’s just fascinating, just learning more about a different country, a different person, completely.”

The first elements hitting the objective were the scouts. Omani vehicles dropped off U.S. forces near their planned observation posts and most of the Americans dismounted to go on foot the last few hundred meters to observe the battlefield. A few of the Americans went with the Omani vehicles which acted as mobile weapon platforms during the fight.

“At first, before the maneuver force gets to the objective, we will be observing the objective area, identifying key personnel, key weapon systems, any obstacles that could hinder their movement up to the objective,” said Cpl. Jacob Kehler, the sniper team noncommissioned officer for the exercise. “Once they get up to 100 meters or

so, right before their assault on the objective, we’ll transition up north to where we’re expecting an enemy armored reconnaissance unit.”

As the maneuver force, made up primarily of Omani and U.S. infantry and engineers, made its way up, the scouts and infantry automatic weapons teams laid down a base of fire. With multiple teams from two armies fighting at once, coordination was a challenge.

“It really tests our preparedness and our rehearsals,” said Kehler, “to be able to coordinate between different units, us being scouts and the infantry and the added personnel of the Omanis. So the coordination between all units really has to



A mortar crew from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, fires illumination rounds into the night, Jan 28, 2018, during Inferno Creek 2018 near Thumrait, Oman.





Specialist Gavin Alderman, cavalry scout with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, throws a Raven unmanned aerial vehicle into the sky, Jan 29, 2018, during Inferno Creek 2018 near Thumrait, Oman.

be on point, it really tests how well you can conduct everything going on, how proficient you are at communication between the units.”

An engineer team with personnel from each force breached the wire protecting the target compound with Bangalore torpedoes, explosive tubes made for clearing obstacles, before the U.S. and Omani infantry squads poured through the gap created by the detonation. Finally, an Omani rocket-propelled grenade team destroyed a simulated T-72 tank that was attempting to take back the compound.

While the exercise was complex, junior leaders emphasized to their Soldiers the importance of learning to work with other forces.

“We were up in Iraq for a couple weeks back in November,” said Kehler. “And, when we were up there, there were British forces, Danish forces, and then French forces. So Americans aren’t the

“They’ve come in with their experiences, we’ve learned from that as well.”

only people in these combat zones right now. So being able to communicate even between those is very key to not having any fratricide, being able to work smoothly, and contributing to the combined effort is very important.”

Lt. Col. Genge, the task force commander, agreed and praised the value of the exercise for reinforcing and building partnerships. He also expressed a hope that, while 2018 was the largest iteration of the annual exercise yet, it would grow even larger.

“Inferno Creek 2018 is an opportunity for the US and our partner, the Omanis, to bridge a gap and build a relationship here in the Middle East and to develop ourselves at the company and tactical level and now make our way from the lower levels, the individual, all the way up to the battalion and, looking to the future, maybe make our way up to the brigade level and higher with not only just the maneuver but maybe a command post exercise,” said Genge.



# Demon Co. returns from Syria



Story by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Michael Wells  
1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment

Demon Company, 1-1 CAV's tank company is transitioning from their role in Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) to Operation Spartan Shield (OSS). With that transition comes one of their most significant and fundamental training requirements – Tank Gunnery.

According to MAJ John Dolan, the Squadron S3, Gunnery is a critical element of training because it is a cornerstone in developing the fundamental skill set for operating and employing armored vehicles in a decisive action environment. The gunnery density tests are designed to help new crews learn and qualify on their platform, and but also to instill confidence and trust in their equipment and ability to employ their tanks in combat.

Gunnery is a major event for any unit, but conducting gunnery while deployed presents unique opportunities compared to that of home station. Squadrons and Battalions are able to block off

larger amounts of times for their crews to complete gunnery. Conducting gunnery while deployed allows the crews a more focused opportunity to train on and gain confidence in their tanks.

Demon Company has shown its adaptability and drive to accomplish any assigned mission, as was evident in their recent experiences supporting the defeat of ISIS mission. While operating as security forces (SECFOR) in Syria, the platoons conducted continuous operations for over four months. Their mission included protecting fellow service members by manning guard towers, operating the entry control points, and establishing quick reaction forces to respond to a variety of situations to support the mission.

In Syria, Demon had the opportunity to operate on specialized vehicles they ordinarily would not have ever used. Demon used special mine-resistant vehicles were fitted with some familiar weapons, the M2 .50 caliber machine gun and a variant of the M240 machine gun, two types of weapons used on their tanks. Employing these





The move back to Camp Buehring also brings a change of pace for the Soldiers. CSM Kenneth Drury, the Squadron CSM explains, "Demon Company has shown outstanding performance over the past few months as part of the SECFOR requirements for OIR. Now it is time for them to shift gears and aggressively get after the priorities associated with OSS, and I have full confidence that the Leaders and Troopers of Demon will continue to excel!" The mission of Operation Spartan Shield is to deter aggression and to support the United States' partners throughout the region. Executing gunnery is vital in

weapons on a daily basis allowed them the opportunity to train on the vary weapons they will use in gunnery. On maintenance days, Demon's tank crews would squeeze-in training on vehicle identification and other classroom based skills, all areas they will be tested on as part of their gunnery density.

maintaining readiness to support our partners and accomplish the missions our country has asked our Soldiers to undertake.

Gunnery not only instills confidence in the crews that are trained, but it is a quantifiable way that the US can show its partners and enemies that

Another accomplishment that Demon has achieved is the movement of personnel and equipment to and from Camp Buehring. Weather has had a large impact on their movement by delaying flights and movement of equipment, but Demon has compensated by implementing a plan resulting in the completion of inventories and other essential recovery tasks to allow sufficient time for gunnery preparation.

we are trained and capable of accomplishing our mission, anywhere, and anytime.



Demon Company has continually adapted to unique mission requirements throughout our deployment. They have always answered the call and achieved the best results. They will without a doubt continue to set the standards at gunnery and make our Squadron proud. Blackhawks!

1-1 CAV Soldiers Company Soldiers enjoy a fire in the cool winter weather in Syria.



# *1-184 Delta Company Tests Combat Readiness*



Story and photos by  
2nd Lt. Matthew French,  
1st Battalion, 184th Infantry

Deploying forward as a cohesive unit requires many variables to be successful. The Delta Company “Demons”, of the 1-184 Infantry “Nightstalkers”, recently put their cohesiveness to the test in a grueling squad competition to test the combat readiness of the collective group. The competition pitted two sections against each other in a collection of physically and mentally demanding events over a three day period that covered over 20 miles on

foot. The prize? Four days off from their normal daily work and bragging rights.

SSG Richard Main, Platoon Sergeant for Demon Company, remarked, “This competition was designed to not only be physically demanding, but also one that forces Soldiers to dig deep mentally and to work closely as a team to accomplish winning results. This, like so many other tools, is also used to help assess the combat readiness of the Soldiers and leaders, and to help identify weakness and strengths within

the unit.”

Day one started bright and early with an APFT type event that included push-ups, sit-ups and a 2 mile run. Following the APFT, was the Pile of Pain. This event consisted of the four primary weapons Demon Company has in its arsenal: the M240B, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, M4 Carbine and M9 pistol, disassembled in one box. The section had to reassemble all four weapon systems in the dark and perform a successful functions check.

The section then completed an M1151 HMMWV push. The section had to push the up armored vehicle 100 meters to a turn-around point, complete a 3 point turn, and push the vehicle back to the finish line totaling 200 meters. Day one ended with the completion of the classic 12 Minute match. During this event, each soldier had 20 rounds 25 meters behind them and a five circle target 25 meters to the front. The Soldiers had to run from the firing line to retrieve one of the 20 rounds, run back to the weapon and fire that one round. The Soldiers had 12 minutes to fire all 20 rounds. If all rounds did not get fired, or there was any missed impacts on the paper target, the shooter received zero points.

Day two consisted of three events. The first, a three-mile team run with one stipulation: the section had to start and end together. Following this, the section completed a 2 mile litter carry weighing approximately 160 pounds. The team was not





authorized to set the litter down, and all members had to rotate to move the litter the required two miles. Day two ended with an M4 engagement consisting of five fighting positions and five magazine reloads. This was an individual event, and each shooter's score was added together for a total team score. Each miss equaled a three second penalty to the raw score.

Day Three started with a 12 mile ruck with complete fighting load and weapon, together as a team. This event was timed and the time stopped when the last soldier of the section moved past the finish line. Following the ruck, the sections competed in the shotgun load/unload event. Each Soldier had to combat load a 12 gauge shotgun and load the magazine

tube. Once complete, the weapon had to be properly unloaded. This was an individual event with an averaged team score.

At the end of the competition, Alpha Section had bested Bravo Section winning 5 out of the 9 events.

At the culmination of the event, SSG Main added, "Team work in the Infantry is one of the most

important single aspect of what makes us the most lethal fighting ground force in the world. The United States Army Infantry is the strongest because of our ability to combine accurate fire and maneuver to close with and destroy the enemy in close quarters combat. This cannot be accomplished without effective violence of action and team work."





# Tales of the King of Battle

Story by: 1st Lt. Jacob Ostergard,  
4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery



Each Soldier has their story to tell; here are some of the stories of the King Battle from the 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery.

2nd Platoon, Alpha “Assassins” Battery, began their mission at Al Asad, Iraq. 1LT Roman Mulvihill, Roman Fire Direction Officer reflected. “We had only a few days to prepare and move to our fire point after we received our equipment. It was nice while we were at Al Asad. The food was good and it had good variation between the three DFACs.”

A few weeks later, Alpha would move up to PAA Fuhaymi. 1LT Mulvihill explains that, “the Firing point mainly comprised of three American units. It had us, the Marines, and the HIMARS from 5-3 FA 17th Fires Brigade out of Fort Lewis. Additionally, some Norwegians were seen around the firing point and French CAESAR howitzer Platoons arrived to support counter fire operations just a couple weeks after Alpha Battery 4-27. It was a great chance to cross train with other units, there was always something

going on.”

The Marines would build a TOC that could tap in to the generator’s supply and use some of the power as well. “Those Marines and HIMARS guys were lifesavers. Their mechanics were all over those generators, troubleshooting and resolving the issues that would come up so everyone could support the mission.”

2nd Platoon Bravo “Bone Crushers” Battery, 4th Battalion 27th Field Artillery started their time in Fuhaymi, Iraq. CPT Silas Bowerman explains







that, “within the first 72 hours during our RIP process, the Platoon was on the ground conducting fire missions. We fired 70 rounds in the first week.”

2nd Platoon was in support of Task Force Lion and the Iraqi Army. Once they were completed, their mission in Fuhaymi shifted to support Al Asad and within the first three hours of emplacing in Al Asad they received their first fire mission.

CPT Bowerman would like to thank SSG Alan Coon for his ability to get TPE guns up and running in a very short time. “He was able to get two guns fire capable that have not been serviced in a year and half within 24 hours. That is a real accomplishment.”

1st Platoon, Charlie “Chaos” Battery, 4th Battalion, 27th Field

Artillery. Mission was counter fire for Camp Manion in ATAB, from October 23rd to FEB 4th to support the Ramadi Fallujah corridor.

1LT James Delong, explained the mission as, “The purpose was to provide counter fire for any indirect fire to the Ramadi Fallujah corridor, to protect US and Iraq forces, allow for freedom of movement in the area of operation, work with team 50 from the Marine Corp, while working with Task Force Spartan.”

1st Platoon worked with the Iraqi Army. 1LT Delong reflected, “working with the Iraqis was great. We had three key leaders engagements with different Iraqi Colonels, especially Iraqi Field Artillery. We learned from them how they worked. From how they are laying their guns and

also how they accounted for the five requirements for accurate predictive fires.”

Chaos would have some Soldiers go up to Habbaniyah to provide a security for the Iraqi forces to help with base improvement. “We created a fires plans for the State Department’s visit to Ramadi and created fires plans for Janus counter IED to help cover their movements for route clearing operations. The support that 1LT Delong’s platoons gave was highly noticed.

“They would ask if the tanks were still there. They did not know that we are not tanks but we knew that they were talking about us. It gave our partners a sense of security in the area,” Delong said.



# Pioneers Building the Trail to Soldier Success

Story and photos by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Courtney Corcoran  
47th Brigade Support Battalion

As the 47th Brigade Support Battalion approaches the half-way point to the deployment in Kuwait, the Battalion puts its full support to the Brigade on pause for a day to conduct the Battalion's first Pioneer Warrior Challenge.

The Pioneer Challenge is an esprit de corps event to build comradery while validating a team of Soldiers on level one tasks from each company. The challenge consisted of four lanes: Air Assault course, Adapt and Assess Threats, Electronic Simulation Training (EST), and Tactics.

Each lane was spread across Camp Buehring that would take each of the participants on a five mile ruck from point to point. The Battalion's four Companies each fielded a team that consisted of eight Soldiers and one Team Leader, and one Battalion team of nine Lieutenants.

Each team started at the Obstacle Course that would require participants to overcome nine physical obstacles. The purpose of this lane is to test individual Soldiers on their physical resiliency and encourage them to push themselves through uncomfortable tasks to help their team.

"The Pioneer Challenge was a good test of our physicality, as well as our ability as Soldier to refine our basic skills" said Specialist Jared Foust,



Wheeled Mechanic, Company B, 47th Brigade Support Battalion.

"A few unforeseen obstacles arose and we were able to overcome as a team. Upon completion of the Air Assault course, I felt we could excel at the Challenge," said Foust.

During the obstacle course, many Team Leaders and Team-mates pushed and encouraged one another, building their Teams team-work early in the Challenge.

After a two and a half mile ruck to lane two, Soldiers were put to the test with how to encounter



suspicious personnel that required searching, seizing, and securing the area. The Pioneers were given two scenarios before encountering an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) lane



were they had to identify, report, and react to IED threats on their route.

“Always ready,” said Sergeant Joshua Hakes, Charlie Company Team Leader, when asked how the team prepared for these events leading up to the Pioneer Challenge.

Another trek of two miles brought the Teams to the third lane at the EST Center. Each team member had a M4 weapon and were scored on their ability to fire on moving targets. Following the firing iteration, the squad would take a land navigation test and Basic Soldier Knowledge written exam. The team members were given two tests, map, and protractor with 20 minutes to complete the exams.

Upon completion of lane three, the Teams headed to most physical and mental draining lane. “The most challenging and rewarding part of the Pioneer Challenge for me was the fourth lane” said 1st Lieutenant Andrea

Hockenbery, Company B, 47th Brigade Support Battalion.

“Too often, young officers get hemmed up in our daily requirements that we tend to miss out on exercising our basic soldiering skills and tasks. This experience was very humbling,” said Hockenberry

The teams had to break into four buddy teams and high crawl 150 meters to the first bunker. Simulation rounds and smoke grenades made the environment stressful and made for communication between the Team Leader and four buddy teams more difficult. From the first to the second bunker the

teams had to low crawl 150 meters with increasing frequency in the simulation rounds to cause stress to the Squad Members. At the third bunker, a chemical

attack began and required the teams to don their Chemical, Biological, and Radioactive (CBRN) masks and throw grenades at the enemy targets that were 25 meters from them. The Squad had to retrieve, assess, and evacuate ambulatory casualties 300 meters.

The Battalion plans to have a second Pioneer Challenge in the future, but for now wants to focus on continuing to train Soldiers and supporting the Brigade during Operation Spartan Shield.

“The Pioneer Warrior Challenge set the standard and was the first step in a long march for us as a Battalion” said Second Lieutenant Nelson Guzman, Officer In charge of the Pioneer Challenge. “We will continue to train hard and lead from the front as Pioneers do. Blaze the trail!”





# MICLIC in Kuwait - The Modern Battering Ram

Story by: Private First Class Victoria R. Herrera, 40th Brigade Engineer Battalion

Few Soldiers get to witness a Mine Clearing Line Charge (MICLIC). The combat engineers that crew Assault Breaching Vehicles (ABV) of Second Platoon, Bravo Company were part of an operation that certified the MICLIC for use.

The MICLIC allows these soldiers to clear minefields for mission essential vehicles and personnel to maneuver through minefields and other obstacles.

Lane Clearing consists of three components: Reducing, proofing, and marking a lane through an obstacle. The MICLIC is the reduction asset as it tears through linear obstacles and minefields. The ABV can carry up to two MICLICs. The Full Width Mine Plow (FWMP) attachment is the proofing asset that ultimately clears a lane through the detonated area large enough for tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and other mission essential vehicles to pass through. The ABV uses the Lane Marking System (LMS) to mark the lane with Hand Emplaceable Minefield Marking Sets (HEMMS) poles, allowing friendly forces to pass through the obstacle safely. The ABV is an important asset for combat operations.

1st Lieutenant Derek Wilson was the officer in charge of MICLIC Range Operations. As instructors, Sergeant Calderwood (Alpha Co.) and Sergeant Perez (Bravo Co.) assembled a two

day class, they emplaced heavy emphasis on Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS), driver and commander stations, MICLIC TUB, the MOD MK II rocket launch, operation fuse, and misfire procedures. The instructor's intent was to provide the soldiers with all the knowledge they needed in order to accomplish future missions and operations.

Sergeant Perez weighs in, "It's a great accomplishment knowing that my soldiers are qualified and have a better understanding of the ABV vehicle, and the responsibility that comes with it. By doing that, it enables this company to continually provide ABV operations for future missions." It is essential for leaders to ensure their soldiers

are adequately trained prior to executing range operations. A MICLIC range consists of two tables: 1) An Active-Inert (training MICLIC charges with an Active-Simulated rocket) and 2) An Active-Simulated (live-MICLIC charges) with an Active-Simulated rocket. Previously, they conducted both Active-Inert rehearsal and Active-Simulated MICLIC Operations in a Combined-Arms Breach exercise successfully during their pre-deployment training exercise, the National Training Center (NTC) in Fort Irwin, California prior to deployment. For this operation, the "WarDogs" conducted the Live-Inert in Udari, Range Complex, Kuwait successfully in order to maintain qualifications and mission readiness.





# Bandits Build Interoperability



Story by 1st Lt. Jeff Steele,  
1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment

Maintaining and building interoperability with our regional partners is a major task that requires joint synchronization of all war-fighting functions. To exercise and improve these functions, it is vital that the US military conducts regular military partnership exercises with allied nations. Operations Iron Union and Operation Inferno Creek were two examples of this type of exercise.

Iron Union was a two-week exercise in the United Arab Emirates incorporating assets and units from across the brigade. 1-37 AR companies deployed under the mission command of 1-35 AR to execute this mission and ensure combat readiness and interoperability with the Emiratis. Axemen Company, under the command of CPT Alex Z. Pytlar,

and Hellion Support Company, under the command of CPT Matthew D. Gaskin, departed 13 JAN 2018 to conduct the mission. Operation Iron Union involved the execution of multiple Squad Tactical Exercise lanes, a Field Training Exercise, and culminated in a Combined Arms Live





Fire Exercise. Operation Iron Union focused on maintaining readiness and developing interoperability with Emirati forces. The exercise involved planning and execution on the tactical, operational, and strategic levels, further preparing the Bandit Battalion for future operations.

Operation Inferno Creek was a joint partnership executed with Omani forces in southern Oman near the Yemeni border. Although comparable in exercise design, the event focused on team to company level light infantry operations, and culminated in a full battalion fires coordination exercise. Cobra King Company, under the command of CPT Stein P. Thorbeck, was the decisive operation for the three-week long exercise which succeeded in accomplishing the dual focus of developing

company Mission Essential Tasks (METL) and increasing interoperability with Omani forces. The exercise consisted of live fire exercises beginning at the buddy team level and culminated in a company live fire exercise supported by nearly every battalion in the brigade. 1-6IN scouts provided an early screen while 1-35AR mortars suppressed the objective in order to enable Cobra King, 40th EN sappers and Omani infantry forces to breach and conduct their final assault.

The culmination of these two exercises exhibited just how

prepared and able the Bandit Battalion is in accomplishing missions in conjunction with other regional forces. In the upcoming month 1-37 AR will again be tested in their ability to integrate and train with host-nation forces as Banshee Company, under the command of CPT Mitchell J. Jordan heads to Saudi Arabia to participate in Operation Friendship. The Bandits look forward to yet another opportunity to represent the Strike Brigade and 1st Armor Division on the world stage.





# Conquerors train with the Kuwaiti Land Forces Institute

SSG Adriana M. Diaz-Brown,  
2nd Armored Brigade Combat  
Team

After more than 100 Kuwaiti Land Forces Institute (KLFI) Soldiers successfully completed training with the 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, a graduation ceremony was held at the Kuwaiti Land Forces Institute Feb. 22.

As part of the training, the 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment or 'Conqueror Battalion' executed a multi-day joint training exercise to train KLFI Soldiers on the fundamentals of small unit tactics, combat life saver techniques and troop leading procedures.

In addition, the training included Engagement Skills Trainer (EST) rifle marksmanship, squad attack, cordon and search, military operations in urbanized terrain, and medical evacuation.

"The Kuwaiti Land Forces' dedication to training its leaders is very impressive and we enjoyed the opportunity to start a new chapter in our partnership with this exercise," said Capt. James Gibbs, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment commander.

The first of its kind as a joint





partnership with the KFLI students; the exercise also included training and rotating KFLI instructors for the live-fire element of the Kuwaiti Flagpole Exercise.

The goal is to enhance interoperability among U.S. forces and their partners, improving team effectiveness in communication and working together. The training exercise is planned to continue with U.S. Forces each year.

“From movement to completion of the exercise, communication was the key to mission success and the transparency between forces only elevated our partnership as well as strengthened it,” said 1st Sgt. Taylor Donohoe, Charlie Co., 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment 1st Sgt.

The 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team also known as the ‘Iron Brigade’ is here in support of U.S. Army Central Command, and acts as a ready force to respond to any security threat in the region. The brigade conducts multiple theater security training exercises with regional partners.

“The entire brigade is extremely busy,” said the commander of the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, Col. Charles Lombardo. “We are learning a lot. The brigade has used its initiative and partnered with every country we have visited, and we have been aggressive in connecting to our partner nations.”





# The Iron Brigade welcomes 1-244th Aviation



Story by: SPC Devin A. Fleming

The 1-244th Aviation Regiment was constituted on 1 October 1987 as an UH-1H Huey Air Assault Battalion, and in 1995, the 1-244th Battalion received 16 UH-60 Blackhawks and 15 OH-58C Kiowa helicopters and reorganized as a Command Aviation Battalion in support of III Corps. In the span of 30 years the unit has participated in Operation Up-Hold Democracy in Haiti, Operation New Horizons in Central America on 4 occasions, Operation Tiger Strike to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin California, Operation Iraq Freedom II, during the entirety of the operation the unit conducted over 2500 combat missions and accumulated over 16,000 combat flight hours.

Shortly thereafter upon the return home the unit was called

upon by our own citizens and the state of Louisiana to assist in life-saving operations following the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Against surmounting odds coupled with post deployment 1-244th persevered even though Hurricane Katrina destroyed the unit's facilities at Lakefront Airport in New Orleans and 35% of personnel's homes.

The battalion subsequently relocated to Hammond Northshore Regional Airport in Hammond, Louisiana. The unit's new facilities are state-of-the-art and represent our solidarity between the unit and the citizens of the State of Louisiana.

In 2007, the 1-244th was called upon once again to serve in the war on terror. The unit again deployed to Balad, Iraq and performed air movement and

air assault missions in support of 12th Combat Aviation Brigade and 34th Combat Aviation Brigade, and on April 2010, 1-244th assisted in the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill conducting over 1600 flight hours, transported over 4300 passengers, and delivered over 5 million pounds of sand in sling-load operations.

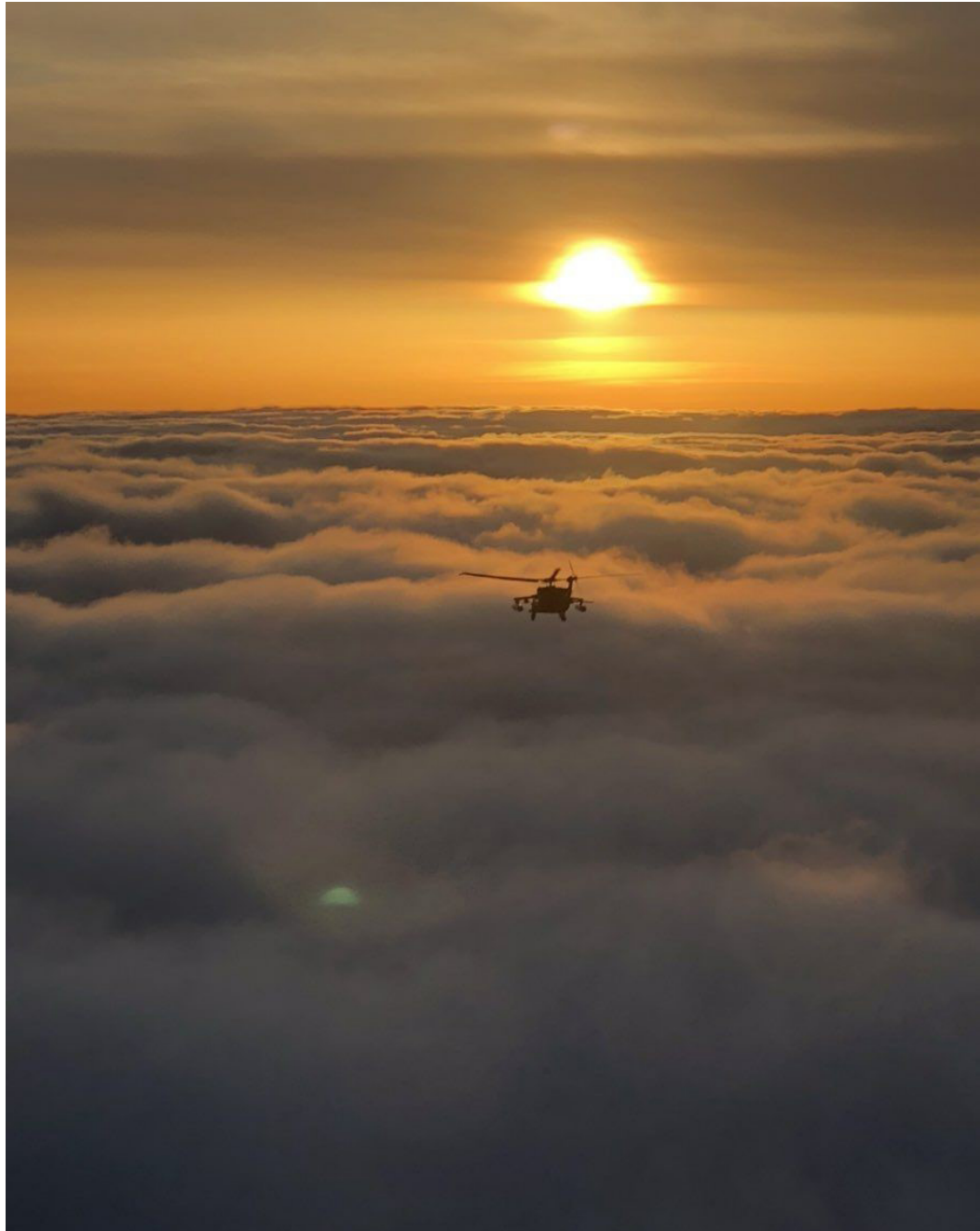
The unit sent a detachment to Haiti to participate in Southern Command's Operation New Horizons. The detachment provided aviation support to engineer's mission, which was much needed relief and humanitarian aid following the devastating earthquake in 2010. In August 2012, Hurricane Isaac's large storm surge and heavy rains caused massive flooding to south Louisiana. The 1-244th flew 82 missions, carrying over 249 people and 1.3 million tons



of cargo and totaling over 278 flight hours for a period of 15 consecutive days flown. On March 2016, another devastating flood struck Louisiana. The Battalion provided Air Movement, Search and Rescue, Damage Assessment and Sling Load Support for the States relief efforts. On October 2017, the Battalion was activated in support of Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Spartan Shield under the 449th CAB. The Battalion departed for its overseas mission in December 2017. TF VOODOO is currently comprised of units from Louisiana, Oklahoma, Rhode Island and Delaware.

The Battalion is headquartered at Camp Buehring, Kuwait with personnel operating in 5 countries and 10 locations. The Battalions primary mission is to provide aviation support to the 35th Infantry Division, TF Spartan, to deter Iranian aggression in the Arabian Gulf region, and build military interoperability with ally Middle Eastern nations.

The most recent involvement was providing aviation air movement support February 9th , 2018 on Army Day in Kuwait, a multinational training exercise between Kuwait, U.S. Armed Forces, CENTCOM, NAVCENT, and ARCENT assets.







# 1-6 IN Says Good Bye to Iraq

Story by: CPL. Tara Brown, 1-6 IN

1st Battalion 6th Infantry Regiment “Regulars” deployed to Kuwait during the fall of 2017, and moved forward to Iraq in support of Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). Bravo Company Bushmasters, Alpha Company Gunfighters, and support personnel from HHC and India Company moved forward to Iraq within a week of having boots on the ground in Kuwait.

Regulars spent their days, while attached to a Marine unit, and with military personnel from multiple countries. The Bushmasters worked hard alongside Soldiers from Britain, Denmark, and Scotland. They got to know their counterparts, learned plenty and more than anything they laughed together.

Corporal Gregory Martinez, an Infantryman with Bravo Co, said “it was a good experience to see exactly how they (British, Scottish, and Danish) run their day to day process compared to how we do it, such as tower guard or patrols”.

Not only did they get to know and learn from their foreign counterparts, they also worked daily with the Marine Corps. The Marines and the Regulars supported each other throughout the mission both operationally and with comradery. If one team was in need, the other was ready to help.

Security was a huge focus, both on and off of post. Every day was different. The Regulars served in numerous roles, performing tasks such

Above: PFC Elijah Solis, B Co. 1-6 IN stands tribute to the U.S. flag with some of his Marine counterparts.



as security checks to prevent individuals from bringing narcotics onto post, shooting down drones flying in their airspace, discovering IED's and training Iraqi Soldiers on survival and battle drill procedures.

A Bushmaster convoy provides a prime example of the unexpected hazards that the Regulars faced. The convoy came across an IED in route to a town that was a couple of hours away from their base. The company called Explosive Ordnance Disposal, which detonated the road side bomb. On their return back from town, during a short halt, the Bushmasters were approached by an Iraqi civilian who warned them that there was an IED next to them that they could not see.

This experience brought Soldiers from different companies together who had not previously worked with one another and created a strong bond across the formation. They created bonds and friendships that are rare and hard to find in this world.

In this day in age, with social media so prevalent, you often don't find young individuals sitting and talking to each other, but in Iraq this was a favorite past-time. Many didn't have much more than each other, especially with the different time zones with their family and friends back home. SPC Kevin Galvan, with India Company, says "My time in Iraq with the In-



fantrymen was a good experience. As scared as I was, being a mechanic getting sent to Iraq, not knowing what it is like, and with a company I did not know, I learned a lot and I learned a lot from the Infantry. I got to know them and knew I could always count on them. OIR was an experience I will never forget, from the long walks in Faheyne to the long drives to Al Qaim. Iraq will always be a memory I will never forget".

The deployment to Iraq for the Regulars has brought many challenges and fulfilling experiences but it is not one that any of them will soon forget.





# Chaplain's Message

Strike Soldiers and family members,

Over the last several months our country has been devastated with mass shootings in Las Vegas and Florida where countless numbers of people were killed and many more injured. Yet, the Lord tells us, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) How is it even possible to find such peace with so much violence and turmoil all around us? The dictionary defines peace as "a state of tranquility or quiet, freedom from disquieting thoughts or emotions, and harmony in personal relations."

Many people think of peace as the absence of war. But we can feel peace even in times of war, and we can lack peace even when no war is raging. The mere absence of conflict is not enough to bring peace to our hearts.

There once was a King who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried. The King looked at all the pictures, but there were only two he really liked and he had to choose between them. One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror for the peaceful towering mountains which surrounded it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace. The other picture had mountains too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky from which rain fell, in which lightening played. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all.

But when the King looked, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest ... perfect peace. Which picture do you think won the prize? The King chose the second picture. Do you know why? "Because," explained the King, "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means

to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace.

Just as that mother bird was at peace in the midst of the tumultuous waterfall, we too can find peace in the midst of life's downpour in our own lives. To do so, I recommend that we go to the true source of peace, even the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). We can accomplish this through daily, sincere prayers and scripture study and then following its teachings in our lives (Philippians 4:6-9). While we are not immune from heartache and suffering, take solace in these words from the Lord right before his own suffering and agony for each of us: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." (John 14:27) May God bless you as you pursue this peace which is promised to all who will seek after Him.

— Chaplain Troy Blan







*STRIKE HARD!*