January 15, 2007

DAGGER'S EDGE

IRAQ EDITION: VOLUME 1 ISSUE 6

"The Greatest Brigade Combat Team Ever Formed"

DAGGER'S EDGE

What Makes it Great

Joyful New Year	CH (Maj.) David Mikkelson	Pg 3
Vanguards Mentor Iraqi Police	Capt. Phil Hensel	Pg 4
Humanitarian Assistance Patrol	Capt. William Schoenfeld	Pg 5
Fire Supporters Adapt to the Conflict in Iraq	1st Lt. Jason Collins	Pg 6
The Hidden Soldiers	1st Lt. Angel Winstanley	Pg 6
Soldiers Participate in Operation Beastmaster	Staff Sgt. Kason Fark	Pg 7
On Call to Serve	Capt. Jeffery Scott	Pg 8
57th Signal Continues On	Staff Sgt. David Martin	Pg 9
Task Force Justice Welcomes a New Year	1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves	Pg 10
The Beginning of a New Year	Lt. Col. Miciotto Johnson	Pg 11
Versatility and excellence in Communications	1st Lt. Michael Martin	Pg 12
Combat Medics	Capt. Leon Smith	Pg 14

Dagger Vision

The Dagger Brigade Combat Team will be trained and ready, fully deployable, disciplined, confident, dedicated and serving selflessly with pride.

We are caring of one another and sensitive to the needs of our Soldiers, family members and DA civilians.

We communicate accurately across the chain of command and work together as a combined arms team of teams.

We are responsible stewards of our Nation's treasure.

We are professionals and ambassadors of our Nation and responsible and respected guests in the Schweinfurt Community, and wherever we find ourselves.

We are flexible, motivated and fully capable of executing any assigned tasks to standard regardless of the challenges.

Picture Credits

(Cover Page) Sgt. James Paska, C Battery, 1-7 FA, and Pvt. Thomas Allen distribute food to residents of western Baghdad. (US Army photo by Sgt. Richard Kolberg, Charlie Battery, 1-7 FA, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)

Joyful New Year

Story By CH (Maj.) David Mikkelson

It doesn't seem that long ago when many of us were saying "Happy New Year" to each other *last year*. With the busyness of the training and deployment, it went by quickly! I am convinced that instead of wishing for a "happy new year," I'd like to wish you a "joyful new year." Let me explain…

We typically start off the new year by wishing each other happiness. Each of us hopes that somehow the new year will be a happy one for us and those we know. But have you ever really sat down and figured out just what it would take to be truly "happy" in the new year? What would need to happen, or not happen, in order for happiness to arrive in 2007?

Bill Hobbs, a Department of Defense Civilian with 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, lights an Advent Candle in Engineer Chapel on Camp Liberty. (US Army photo by Chaplain (Maj.) David Mikkelson)

I would agree that happiness is something many of us work really hard to achieve. In fact, happiness is an official part of the American dream: we can pursue "life, liberty, and happiness." But the problem is that happiness is quite difficult to achieve, and when we do, it is so fleeting. You try and hold onto the moment but it's gone, and then you have to get busy and try to re-create it all over again.

One difficulty in achieving happiness is that it is so hard to define. What exactly is it that we are after? When I hear people say, "I just want to be happy," I often wonder if they would even know when it arrived, or if they know which road to take to get to Happyville. Is happiness the complete absence of problems or struggle in life, with all the planets of modern life – job, spouse, kids, money, health - lined up just right? Does it mean to be lucky or fortunate in the midst of life's problems? Is happiness found in having no responsibilities in life? Is happiness doing exactly what I want to do all day long with no consequences for my choices? Would attaining these really result in happiness?

Let me suggest a better goal for us to pursue in this new year: Joy. Joy and happiness may look similar, but they are quite different. Happiness is an emotion which, like most emotions, is both unpredictable and temporary, and is largely based on our response to outward circumstances in life. When Duke wins a basketball game, I am happy. When my paycheck goes up or my son Benjamin makes nachos, I am happy. But these things come and go, and it is quite unreasonable, perhaps even naive, to think that we would have an entire year of happiness. The outward circumstances in life are simply too unpredictable.

Joy, on the other hand, is not an emotion at all. The Bible says in Galatians 5:22 that joy is a "fruit of the Spirit." In other words, joy is a gift from God. It is something that grows *on* us and *in* us and *out* from us when we are connected with the Spirit of God. It is a by-product of a saving relationship with God and a life of honoring Him, and grows in us regardless of outward circumstances or events. He gives us joy in this life, and the assurance of eternal life with God is a joyful thought as well!

Joy, unlike happiness, is a state of mind, a settled attitude of the heart, a quiet confidence that all is well in my life, that my self-esteem and personal significance are secure regardless of what circumstances come into my life. Joy includes security, contentment, and peace. It is a sure foundation for a life filled with emotional ups and downs, and even the unhappy challenges of deployments.

So I wish each of you a "happy new year," but more importantly I wish you a new year filled with God's joy. Pursue joy and the God who provides it, and it will be a great year indeed.

Vanguards Mentor Iraqi Police

Story by Capt. Phil Hensel

1-18 Infantry Vanguards

Another step has been taken by 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, towards integrating and strengthening the Iraqi Security Forces. Since the Task Force Vanguard's arrival in southwest Baghdad, they have focused heavily on working with the Iraqi National Police in order to prepare them to take full security responsibility in west Rasheed, Baghdad.

In addition to the continued focus on the National Police, The Vanguards have begun to work heavily with the Municipal Police, or Shurta, to train and integrate them into security operations. Vanguard 6, Lt. Col. George Glaze, took the first step in this process on Jan. 8, with a visit to Baya'a police station. The Baya'a police station is the headquarters for the Shurta operating in the eastern portion of Vanguard's operational area. In his visit to the police station Lt. Col. Glaze met with leaders of the Shurta, including Col. Kareem, the Police Chief for the Rasheed district of Baghdad. Relationships built during this trip are essential to the development of the partnership between the Iraqi Police and Coalition Forces. Lt. Col. Glaze also inspected the prisoner holding facility and verified that living conditions were up to standard and that prisoners were being treated humanely.

This visit was only the first part of the effort to train and integrate the Shurta with Coalition Forces. In coming weeks and months Vanguards at all levels will interact and conduct operations with the Shurta to help influence them to provide their own security.

The efforts of all Vanguard Soldiers to train and develop the Iraqi Security Forces from the Iraqi National Police to the local Municipal Police are key ingredients to forming a safe and self-sustaining Iraq.

Spc. Oscar Tovar, a medic with 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, assists Iraqi Policemen with medical readiness. (US Army photo by Capt. Lee Showman, 1st Bn, 18th Inf. Reg.)

S-2 Tips OPSEC

Cell phones are not secure: do not discuss classified or sensitive information unless you are using an SVOIP

Hey Listen up!

Humanitarian Assistance Patrols

Story by Capt. William Schoenfeld

2nd BCT BRT Renegades

Over the past month in the Hateen, Jamia, and Adl neighborhoods in Baghdad, 2nd Platoon has facilitated multiple humanitarian assistance missions to assist poor families during the Iraqi winter. These operations have provided food, generators, and blankets to over one hundred families who have moved or been forced from their homes due to violence in their neighborhoods.

Iraqi Army soldiers hand out blankets to families in need in a Baghdad neighborhood. This was part of a humanitarian assistance mission conducted here December 21. (US Army photo by Capt. William Schoenfeld)

The humanitarian assistance missions began in early December with the headquarters section and second platoon distributing humanitarian assistance to the mosques for refugees in the area. The Iraqi National Police distributed the packages and provided emergency supplies and comfort items for the people of Jamia.

Following this operation, second platoon coordinated with the Iraqi Army to provide humanitarian assistance to families living in extremely austere conditions nearby run down factories. Second platoon again conducted point to point humanitarian assistance in this neighborhood a few weeks later to continue to demonstrate to the local population that the Iraqi Army, Government of Iraq, and US forces care about families effected by the conflict in Iraq.

During a humanitarian assistance mission with the Iraqi National Police in a Baghdad neighborhood, 1st Sgt. David L'elie entertains some Iraqi children outside the Burhan Al Din Mosque. (US Army photo by Capt. William Schoenfeld)

Capt. Dustin Mitchell, of the Brigade Reconnaissance Troop, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, and members of the Iraqi Police talk with the representative from their NAC outside the Burhan Al Din Mosque. (US Army photo by Capt. William Schoenfeld)

Due to their continued success in assisting the local population, all platoons in Troop E, 4th Cavalry now carry humanitarian assistance packages of food and blankets on all of their patrols. If they discover a refugee family who has relocated due to violence in their neighborhood, they are able to have an immediate impact on the quality of life of the family.

Although a relatively small scale effort, second platoon and the Iraqi Army or National Police have been able to reach out to the people in our area of operations, and have touched the lives of dozens of Iraqi families.

Fire Supporters Adapt to the Conflict in Iraq

Story by 1st Lt. Jason Collins

1-5 Cavalry Knights

Fire Support Teams or as they are commonly know in military lingo, FISTers, provide essential support in the form of forward observation for mortars, artillery, missiles, and close air support. FIST sections are attached to infantry and armor units, thus becoming a combat multiplier for greater utilization on the battlefield. The traditional role of the FIST section has evolved in Iraq to include a greater role in lethal and non-lethal targeting. 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry currently operates in a largely urban environment, which is a new paradigm for effects-based operations.

The main area of FIST involvement has been their coordination with Civil Military Operations (CMO). FIST cooperation has provided the link between a more sophisticated company and battalion communication convergence. FIST patrols support CMO activities ranging from essential services assessment (sewage, water, electricity, academics and trash) to non-lethal targeting via information operations.

As the battalion adapts to the asymmetrical battlefield, the role of the FIST has grown to meet this challenge. The ability of Soldiers who can detect insurgent activities in Iraqi neighborhoods through proactive measures provides essential intelligence for battalion operations. This development has created both a unique and widening skill set for the FIST in support of company and ultimately the battalion with lethal and non-lethal effects.

The Hidden Soldiers

Story by 1st Lt. Angel Winstanley

C 101 MI Cobras

Company C, 101st Military Intelligence has one Human Intelligence Collection Team (THT) with each of the battalions within the organic brigade, ranging from Baghdad to Ramadi. The Soldiers are heard about, but are known by only those who need to know. They go out without name or rank, so they can remain unknown to the enemy. The secret identity allows the THT to make their sources feel safer in order to give the team more information about the bad guys who are harming the US Army, Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police and Local Nationals. These are the Soldiers who go out with the units in order to help detain and question sources and captives. The job of the THT can be hard and dangerous. They are on missions with the units conducting Combat Patrols throughout the neighborhoods and cities. They walk the streets with the Soldiers and pull security for the Soldiers next to them. The idea is for these Soldiers to be there when a target or suspect is taken into custody by the Coalition Forces. Once a suspect is taken, the team at the detention center has a certain amount of time to have enough evidence against him or her in order to keep the individual in custody. Getting the bad guys off the streets in order to make the street safer for everyone is the main goal of the THT.

S-6 Words of Wisdom

Reminder: Make sure to clear away any dust from computers and printers.

Soldiers Participate in Operation Beastmaster

Story by Staff Sgt. Kason Fark

2-12 Cavalry Thunder Horse

Staring down at an empty lot, Spc. Craig McBaine wondered how such a tranquil neighborhood could be the scene of so much carnage. Nicknamed "IED Alley East," this 700-meter stretch of barren earth has been the scene of many attacks against coalition and Iraqi security forces.

A Soldier from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, communicates with his squad leader while pulling security during Operation Beastmaster. (Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Michael Buytas)

On this day, the patch of land, bordered on three sides by once-beautiful three-story houses, is occupied by up-armored HMMWVs, Bradley Fighting Vehicles and Abrams Battle Tanks, all in support of Operation Beastmaster.

During Beastmaster, troops from the 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division cleared three large neighborhoods in the western Baghdad suburb of Ghazaliya. The sight of much sectarian violence, Ghazaliya is the battle ground for Sunni insurgents trying to push back the overwhelming Shia population in the northern and eastern areas of Baghdad.

Cpl. Shaun Brewster, a medic attached to the Tactical Command Post, secures the area outside a building in Ghazaliya as Lt. Col. James Nickolas visits people inside during Operation Beastmaster. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Darren Kerr)

The largest road running through southern Ghazaliya, is also the in-road from Fallujah to Baghdad proper.

Having just arrived weeks ago, Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, have set upon the goal of taking over the security of Ghazaliya from the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division.

"It's been pretty crazy already," McBaine said. The Florida native's patrol would later be hit multiple times by small arms fire, a rocket-propelled grenade and a roadside bomb.

Based out of Ft. Bliss, Texas, 2-12 Cavalry is part of the 1st Cavalry Division's newest brigade – the 4th "Long Knife" Brigade Combat Team. While the unit may be new to El Paso, Texas, it is no stranger to combat.

2-12 Cavalry was de-activated shortly after its return from Operation Iraqi Freedom II in March 2005. The unit has also earned streamers in other conflicts such as WWII, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. The unit was the first U.S. unit in Leyte and Japan. The unit re-activated at Fort Bliss 18 months after returning from Iraq.

Participation in operations, such as Beastmaster, with the Iraqi Army is the key to handing Iraq back over to its people. The Iraqi soldiers involved were

(Continued on page 13)

On Call to Serve

Story by Capt. Jeffery Scott

299th FSB Lifeline

One of the many Alpha Company, 299th FSB, missions is to distribute continuous and flexible multi-class supply support to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Justice. FOB Justice support includes, but is not limited to, mail delivery, vehicle escort, both military and civilian, and shuttle service for 2nd BCT Soldiers that need transportation between FOB Justice and FOB Liberty. The American Soldiers which make up Task Force Justice are dependent on the Assassins for delivery of multi-class supplies. The supplies enable Task Force Justice to execute their missions and provide them their basic FOB life support requirements.

FOB Justice is approximately 15 miles from Alpha Company's home base, Camp Liberty, so the supply support requires the Assassins to run Combat Logistics Patrols (CLP) in order to distribute the supplies to FOB Justice. To date, the Assassins have executed over 20 CLPs to FOB Justice, delivering over 45,000 gallons of fuel and over 15 military shipping containers of supplies.

Based on the current mission, Alpha Company has been newly organized as a Distribution Company, instead of its traditional role as a Forward Support Supply Company. The reorganized Alpha Company is fully outfitted with large support trucks, to include Heavy Equipment Transports, Palletized Loading Systems, fuel tankers, semi-tractors and semi-trailers. The large fleet of support trucks provides the capability to transport all classes of supply and virtually any piece of equipment in the Army's inventory. Additionally, a Gun Truck Platoon was formed from Soldiers from within the battalion which provides Alpha Company with the capability to provide security for all of their CLPs without relying on any external assets. The Gun Truck Platoon includes up-armored HMMWVs, M2 .50 caliber machine guns, and M240B machine guns. The new Alpha Company organization allows the company to be completely self-sufficient when executing CLPs to FOB Justice. This self-sufficiency is critical to providing timely and flexible support.

The Assassins are always "On Call to Serve" and they will continue to provide world-class support to FOB Justice.

Assassins stage vehicles prior to a Combat Logistics Patrol to FOB Justice. (US Army photo by Staff Sgt. Hazel Belvin)

Drawing by Thomas Reidy

Assassins stage vehicles prior to a Combat Logistics Patrol to FOB Justice. (US Army photo by Staff Sgt. Hazell Belvin)

57th Signal Continues on

Story by Staff Sgt. David Martin

57th Signal Dagger's Voice

Hello friends and family members of the 57th Signal Company. This past week we celebrated the New Year with a block party hosted by Staff Sgt. Hogan in the motorpool. I do not know how he does it but he had T-Bone steaks, hamburgers, drinks, and chips for all the troops. For entertainment we had music and played a friendly game of Texas Hold'em. A fun time was had by all who attended.

It is beginning to feel like Groundhog Day down here in Iraq but Soldiers are keeping busy in their own ways. Soldiers of 1st Platoon are working out to stay in shape, working on college courses online, doing correspondence courses, and trying to keep in touch with friends and family members. 1st Lt. McLean is also giving out his financial advice to Soldiers for them to help plan for the future. We have a lot of Soldiers that are going and coming back from R&R. The Soldiers that have gone on R&R have come back refreshed and ready to finish the rest of our tour. The other Soldiers are eagerly waiting to get some much deserved time off.

My spotlight Soldier for the week is Pvt. 1st Class Kelly Yokum, from Reno, Nev. Pvt. 1st Class Yokum has just finished a class at Baghdad University for Basic Networking, and also he won the Company Soldier of the Month board. While going to the class he learned skills that will help him during his Army career as well as when he gets out and is a civilian. To compete in the Soldier of the Month board, Yokum first took a physical fitness test. After the test he went into a formal oral board which the Company 1st Sgt. presided over. Also included on the board were other Sgt. 1st Classes from within the company. Questions on this board included everything from physical fitness to Rules of Engagement. He did an extremely good job and will next compete to become the Company Soldier of the Quarter. Good Job and Good Luck!

Sgt. Michael Quick mans the grill at the 57th Signal New Years cook out. (US Army photo by Warrant Officer LaMonte Westbrook)

S-2 Tips
OPSEC

Check your pockets for classified thumb drives and documents before you turn in your laundry to KBR!

Hey Listen up!

Task Force Justice Welcomes the New Year

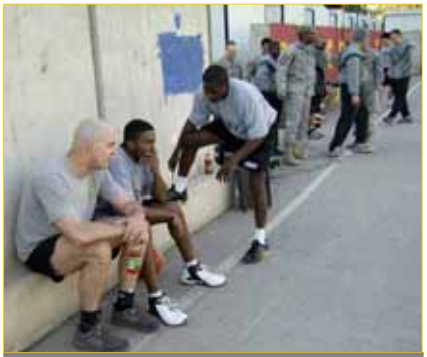
Story By 1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves

Task Force Justice "…Tested in the Crucible of Combat."

New Year's Eve was the final installment in a recent series of holiday celebrations. The best way to bid farewell to 2006 was to see it go up in smoke. Soldiers gathered every piece of scrap wood and brush on our Forward Operating Base to build a massive bonfire. Capt. Jim Egan ignited the diesel-doused mound at precisely midnight following a countdown. The blaze was quite a spectacle as well as a nice source of heat for the crowd, who stood by sipping non-alcoholic drinks and sharing their New Year resolutions.

Soldiers from Task Force Justice, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, enjoy a bonfire during the waking moments of 2007. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves)

Three Soldiers became NCOs during the first minutes of 2007. Congratulations to Sgt. Jose Aracena, Sgt. David Crebo, and Sgt. Jonathan Terrell of Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery.



Capt. Stacy Bare, Civil Affairs Officer, talks strategy at half time with Spc. Anthony Kallie and Sgt. 1st Class Jamel Alston of Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves)

The morale-building event of 2007 was the Justice 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament. Eight teams entered the competition and brought their best game to the slab. With street credit on the line, it came down to a gutter war between teams TNT and the Sandmen. In the end, the Sandmen pulled away by unloading a magazine of outside jump shots. Congratulations to Sandmen Staff Sgt. Tre Brumfield, Staff Sgt. Michael Keber, and Maj. Robert McCormick, of the 3-1-6 Military Transition Team. Maj. McCormick also earned the title of Top Gun on the FOB by winning the 3-pointer competition.

Spc. Anthony Kallie, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, attempts his last shot of the 3-pointer competition which Task Force Justice held to celebrate the coming of 2007. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves)

Capt. Eddie Vargas, Task Force Justice Logisitics Officer, defends Maj. Robert McCormick, Deputy Team Chief, 3-1-6 Military Transition Team and winner of the 3-point competition. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves)

Task Force Justice has appreciated all of the support from friends and family during the past year. The arrival of 2007 means that we are closer to being reunited with you all. We hope that the New Year is one of joy and fortune. Thank you for your continued support.

The Beginning of a New Year

Story By Lt. Col. Miciotto Johnson

1-77 Armor
Steel Tigers

Happy New Year from Ramadi! Soon we hope to be home sharing in the holiday merriment. December has brought many blessings to the STEEL TIGER family for which we are all truly grateful. Thanks to Denise Higgins, Lynn Lauer, my wife and the numerous other spouses, Soldiers, and civilians who made the holiday season for countless dependents enjoyable and more bearable by putting together an incredible Task Force Christmas Party. We loved the Drumbeats and video, your efforts also made our holidays more bearable by knowing that a committed and concerned FRG is in the rear, taking care of our loved ones. TF Sentinel, our gratitude will never be enough for what you do for our family members on a daily basis.

December has also ushered in change. We say "stand by" to the Daniels command team as they prepare to assume responsibility for HHC, and welcome the Higgins command team to the STEEL TIGER family. They are already veterans of deployment operations as Bill served with the Dagger Brigade in OIF II, and they have worked diligently in the Task Force since their arrival in September. I am confident they are dedicated to serving our families to the greatest extent and look forward to working with them. I visited our WARLORDS (Co. A, 1st Bn, 77th Arm. Reg.) to conduct the Change of Command in Baghdad on Dec. 20; they are doing well and are making a difference everyday in their Area of Responsibility. I thank my Vanguard brothers (1st Bn, 18th Inf. Reg.), for taking such great care of our Soldiers. I planned on also visiting the REGULATORS (Co. B, 1st Bn, 77th Arm. Reg), but operational constraints prevented that trip. I will visit them next month. Task Force STEEL TIGERS continue to vigilantly execute Full Spectrum operations in partnership with the Iraqi Security Forces of Ramadi. Every Soldier is committed to coaching, and mentoring our Iraqi hosts in order to ensure that they can eventually assume the lead in all facets of providing a stable and secure environment. We all want the government to grow, the unemployment rate to drop, and the Iraqi children to enjoy the benefits on an education. They are Iraq's future and we are committed to making that future bright.

Spc. Jordan W. Hess

Lt. Col. Miciotto Johnson performing a test on his night vision goggles. (US Army photos by Lt. Col. Miciotto Johnson, commander, 1st Bn. 26th Inf. Reg.)

Finally, December also brought the STEEL TIGERS trails and sorrow. Once again, two of our comrades paid the ultimate sacrifice. On November 17, 2006, Spc. Jordan W. Hess (C/1-77 AR) was fatally wounded by an roadside bomb while conducting a combat patrol in search of suspected insurgents. He subsequently passed on December 5, 2006, at Brooke Army Medical Center, while under care for

(Continued on page 13)

Versatility and Excellence in Communications

Story by 1st Lt. Michael Martin

1-7 FA
First Lightning

In all military endeavors, the ability to command, control and maintain situational awareness is essential to all commanders. Rapid and precise orders issued immediately will lead to success on the battlefield and often can mean the difference between life and death. In the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, the Soldiers of the Battalion Signal Section, or S6, ensure those orders are delivered.

Sgt. 1st Class Travis Jenkins, the S6 Communications Chief, conducts a communications check over an AN/PSC-5 Tactical Satellite Radio. His hometown is Ahoskie, NC. (Photo taken by 1st Lt. Michael Martin HHB, 1st Battalion 7th Field Artillery, 2nd BCT, 1st Infantry Division).

Since deploying in September, 2006, this small contingent of 18 Signal Corps personnel support a task force consisting of over 600 Soldiers engaged in various missions which include patrolling, base security and responsive fires.

This is no easy task due to the multitude of military and commercial communications systems they have to master. These signaleers operate, maintain and repair various types of vehicular and command post radio systems, a Tactical Satellite terminal, secure and non-secure voice and data automations, a Video Teleconferencing Suite and a host of new tactical communications components. Through their technical and tactical expertise and creative innovation, a redundant, stable network infrastructure is maintained. This allows all commanders the opportunity to effectively influence events in their area of operation. This communications team is eager to learn and stay on top of the latest in communications technology and is consistently called on for advice by other units on the Victory Base Complex.

Spc. William Bailey, a Command Post Node Operator from Honolulu, HI, conducts Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) on a Satellite Terminal Trailer Unit. (Photo taken by 1st Lt. Michael Martin HHB, 1st Battalion 7th Field Artillery, 2nd BCT, 1st Infantry Division).

Upon the battalion assuming its current mission, the S6 section immediately went to work upgrading and expanding the unit's capabilities. The battalion Tactical Operations Center's complete layout and cabling was redesigned to increase efficiency. Tactical systems such as Blue Force Tracker, a system which tracks unit movement on the battlefield, were given upgrades to increase the commander's situational awareness. The shop is currently preparing to field the Tacticomp Video System, which will allow the battalion to receive real time video feeds from out in our patrol sectors. All of these things give the commander the means by which to influence the fight.

In addition to their role as the "Voice of Command", these Soldiers are also the "Voice of the Soldier". Upon arrival, S6 personnel assumed control of a barely functioning internet café and have upgraded it into a place useable for all Sol-

(First Lightning...Continued on page 13)

(First Lightning...Continued from page 12)

diers who want to keep in touch with family back home. They set up work stations dedicated for the sole purpose of military and civilian education. They also ensure that the morale phones in the battalion and battery areas are functioning around the clock. Several S6 personnel have taken their personal time to help fix internet and AFN connections in various Soldiers' personal living quarters.

Through their professionalism, expertise and devotion to duty, the Battalion Signal Section of the 1stt Bn, 7th Field Artillery delivers the ability to effectively communicate. They constantly strive to meet the challenges of an ever changing digital battlefield. No matter the mission, a Signal Soldier is present to ensure its success.

Spc. Jamie Lowery, a Local Area Network Manager from Moorefield, WV, troubleshoots an internet connection cable in order to restore connectivity. (Photo taken by 1st Lt. Michael Martin HHB, 1st Battalion 7th Field Artillery, 2nd BCT, 1st Infantry Division).

(Steel Tigers Continued from page 11)

his injuries. His parents were by his side at the time of death.

Pvt. 1st Class Paul Balint Jr. (Co. B, 1st Bn, 26th Inf. Reg.) was assigned to Company B, 1st Bn, 26th Inf. Reg, on February 1, 2006. On December 15, 2006, he was fatally wounded while conducting a combat patrol with his brothers in arms. We will never be able to thank our brothers or their families enough for the service and sacrifice they rendered our nation. However, I hope they find peace and comfort in knowing that we will not rest until our mission is complete.

Pfc. Paul Balint Jr.

Soldiers gather for a photo opportunity. (US Army photo by Lt. Col. Miciotto Johnson, commander, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Reg.)

Both of these great Warriors were outstanding examples of everything our nation stands for. They represented the best America has to offer; we will never forget them or their families, and our thoughts and prayers remain with them. May God continue to watch over each and every one of us while we are apart.

Until next time, BLOOD ON THE AXE!!

(2-12 Cav Continued from page 7)

being observed by coalition forces to gauge their ability to perform urban warfare tasks.

Overall, Operation Beastmaster was a huge success. In the course of three days of house to house searches, the Iraqi Army troops uncovered seven weapons caches, numerous roadside bomb-making materials and captured a high-value target.

Combat Medics

Story by Capt. Leon Smith

1-26 Infantry Blue Spaders

The Scalpel Platoon has made a significant impact providing care for the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, Blue Spaders, Soldiers and other units operating in Baghdad. The twenty members of the platoon have been conducting split operations, establishing two separate Advance Trauma Life Support (ATLS) teams in Baghdad in support of the Task Force Blue Spader mission. The trauma teams led by Capt.David Escobedo (M.D.), from Los Angeles, Calif, and Capt. Joseph J. Whelchel (Physician Assistant), from Austin, Texas, have made a marked impact in their short time in theater.

Sgt. Bradley Messner, from Tusla, Okla., screens an infant during a medical operation in Adhamiyah, Baghdad. (US Army photo by Capt. Leon Smith)

In September 2006, Scalpel Platoon completed six medical relief operations in the underprivileged Adhamiyah and Sha'ab Districts of Baghdad. They established temporary clinics in these neighborhoods, dispensed thousands of dollars of medications, and provided care to over 800 Iraqi civilians in these areas in an effort to provide much needed medical relief for the local national population.

They have provided life saving care to Soldiers of this task force and other units. The surge in attacks against coalition forces operating in Baghdad recently has tested their teams who were positioned perfectly to treat the influx of casualties. Specifically, the ATLS team, consisting of Capt. David Escobedo, Staff Sgt. Brett Mchaney, of Casa Grande, Ariz, Sgt. Bradley Messner, Tusla, Okla, Sgt. Justin Coney, Beaverton, Mich, and Spc. Matthew Roth, San Diego, Calif, who were operating in southeast Baghdad out of FOB Loyalty, were called upon to treat a majority of patients. They treated over 120 U.S Soldiers and 10 Iraqi local nationals, many critically wounded, performed numerous life saving procedures, and repeatedly demonstrated their competency and efficiency.

Spc. Matthew Roth, from San Diego, Calif., examines a 12 year old Iraqi boy for an upper respiratory infection, during a medical operation in Adhamiyah, Baghdad. (US Army photo by Capt. Leon Smith)

In recognition of their tremendous impact, they have not only been praised by the Brigade Surgeons of the 506th Regimental Combat Team and 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, but also presented regimental coins by the 506th Regimental Brigade Commander, Colonel Thomas D. Vail and

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry, Brigade Commander Colonel Jefferson L. Bannister for their outstanding performance.

The latter exemplifies only a small but representative segment of the positive impact that all the "Combat Medics" of the Scalpel platoon are making to safe guard the lives of the members of Task Force 1-26 and all other members of the U.S armed services.

FOB Loyalty's Advance Trauma Life Support Team (from left to right): Staff Sgt. Brett Mchaney, Sgt. Bradley Messner, Doctor (Capt.) David Escobedo, Spc. Matthew Roth and Sgt. Justin Coney. "A League of their own." (US Army photo by Capt. Leon Smith)

STAY DAGGER STAY ARMY

ARMY STRONG

Question Of the Week

"What is your New Year's Resolution?"

299th FSB

Spc Myinda Hopewell

"The New Year's resolution for me is to be a better person everyday."

1-5 CAV

Spc Aaron Morrisette

"To lift more at the gym and save every penny, while I'm over here."

C 101 MI

SSG Randall Peters

"My resolution is to spend more time with family."

1-7 FA

Pfc Christopher Root

"I would like to return home safely."

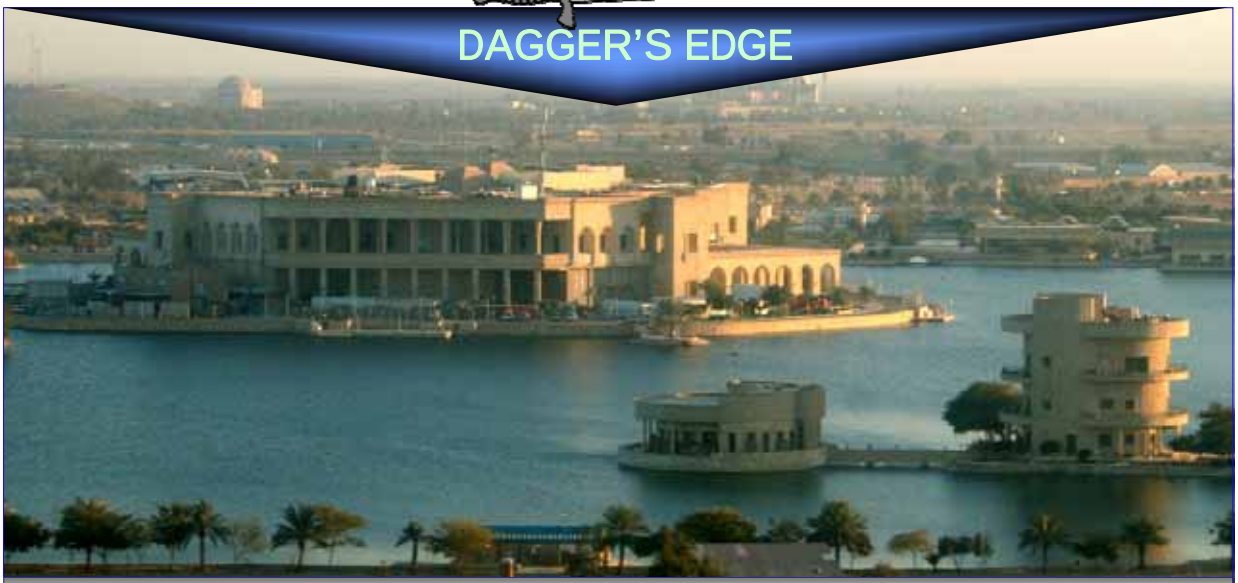
TF Justice

Spc Matthew Stow

"I want to leave Iraq safely, go to Oklahoma, get married and start a normal life."

Volume 1 Issue 6 January 15, 2007

DAGGER'S EDGE



A view from the air of Saddam's Palace near Camp Liberty (US Army photo by Sgt. Lance Wail, Public Affairs, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)

" THE GREATEST BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM EVER FORMED."

2nd BCT Commander
Col. J. B. Burton
2nd BCT Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj.
John Fortune
2nd BCT Public Affairs Officer
Capt. David Levasseur
Dagger's Edge Editor in Chief
1st Lt. Katharine Smith
Dagger's Edge Editor and Photographer
Sgt. 1st Class Keith Laird
Dagger's Edge Design Coordinator and Photographer
Sgt. Lance A. Wail

We are looking for any type of submissions to include: letters, articles, comic strips or artwork, and photographs.

If you would like a copy of this issue please contact your Battalion UPAR

CONTACT US!
HHC, 2BCT, 1ID
ATTN: PAO
Camp Liberty
APO, AE 09344

Katharine.Smith@mnd-b.army.mil

Keith.Laird@mnd-b.army.mil

This Edition can also be found online at www.2bct.1id.army.mil

2-12 Cav: 2nd Lt. Michael Daschel

1-5 Cav: Capt. Cruz Rivera

TF Justice: 1st Lt. Cassidy Eaves

299th FSB: Capt. Aimee Ruscio

9th Eng.: 1st Lt. Christina Kessler

1-7 FA: Capt. Warrick Craig

57th Signal: 1st Lt. Harvey

1-18 IN: Capt. Phil Hensel

1-26 IN: Capt. Jared Purcell

1-77 AR: Capt. Sean Bolling

The Dagger's Edge is an authorized publication for Department of Defense members. Contents of the Dagger's Edge are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office.