

Duty First!

February 2010 | www.riley.army.mil

Unofficial 1st Infantry Division Magazine of Soldiers & Families

Army love



– Valentine's Day: The Army Way

– Rear D, MSE stand up as division deploys

The Big Red One Creed

TEAMWORK is the foundation of the Big Red One. I shall never fail my team, for I maintain the standard. My conduct and self-discipline set the example for others to follow.

HONOR is what I stand for – an American Soldier on duty for my country. My loyalty is intense. I display care for my fellow Soldiers and my chain-of-command through courage, respect, integrity and compassion.

I have learned to **ENDURE** to thrive in adversity. The harsh reality of combat gives me the enthusiasm for realistic training. I am physically and mentally strong to meet the demanding situations my unit encounters.

We are one in the Big Red One. Our **BROTHERHOOD** gives us strength to fight on to any objective and accomplish the mission as our veterans have done before us. I live the legacy of my division.

READINESS is my priority. To be ready for any mission, anytime, anywhere. My business is first-class training and living high standards of care and equipment, weaponry and tactical and technical competence.

My **ORGANIZATION** is my strength. The BRD is bigger than any one individual. It gives me purpose, self-confidence, competitive spirit, intestinal fortitude and the desire to fight with all my heart.



Duty **1** First!

No Mission too Difficult. No Sacrifice too Great.

February 2010

www.riley.army.mil

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COVER: Kimberly Wines greets her husband, 1st Lt. Joshua Wines, Dec. 15, 2007, during a 97th Military Police Bn. redeployment ceremony at Fort Riley.

Photo by Anna Staatz, Duty First magazine

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Unveiling Campaign Plan

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks

Greetings from Iraq! A new year and a new chapter in the history of the Big Red One has begun and we're looking forward to the next 12 months as we partner with the Iraqi security forces here in southern Iraq.

While my main focus this year will be on our operations here in theater, I will still remain very much involved with operations back home, as Brig. Gen. Petersen, Command Sgt. Maj. Wallace and the garrison and mission support element staffs work together to accomplish the goals laid out in the Fort Riley 2015 Campaign Plan.

The campaign plan was unveiled to community leaders shortly before we deployed. It is our plan to make Fort Riley the premier division-level installation in the world.

Our challenge is two-fold, to restore balance after eight years of combat and to set conditions for the future. In order to set the installation's conditions for the future by securing additional resources and attracting the best Soldiers and civilian work force, we must ensure that Fort Riley is no longer the Army's best kept secret.

In partnership with the Army's most supportive community, the Central Flint Hills Region, the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley are committed to building the resilience of our Soldiers, Families and civilians, while simultaneously developing trained, combat ready forces to combatant commanders.

We will pursue this vision through four primary goal areas: ARFORGEN, resilience, sustainability and community. Each of these goal areas will have a series of actions and objective outcomes that move us forward.



We have seen much growth on Fort Riley since the return of the Big Red One in 2006, and we anticipate more growth over the next couple years. By the end of 2011, we will have about 15,000 Soldiers physically at Fort Riley — the highest level we've seen in the past several years.

To accommodate much of that initial growth, construction happened at a rapid pace and we saw many improvements, from new child development centers to a \$180 million renovation of Marshall Army Airfield. Now we are taking those improvements to the next level. The Fort Riley 2015 Campaign Plan builds on the resourcing we've received over the past three years of growth at Fort Riley. This plan is built on top of an already expanded Fort Riley and focuses our efforts through the end of 2015.

The significance of the Fort Riley 2015 Campaign Plan is that it doesn't just focus on the installation. We have goals to work with our community partners to make improvements throughout the Central Flint Hills Region, because those improvements not only benefit Fort Riley, but they benefit our partner communities as well. We're not aware of any other installation that has expanded its campaign plan to include their surrounding communities. So this marks yet another "First for the First."

We're very excited about the future and what it holds for our post and the surrounding communities. We want Fort Riley and the Central Flint Hills Region to be a place that is no longer the best kept secret, but a desired location for Soldiers and Families to live and make their home.

Duty First!

Soldiers' strength in Family

Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne

Often, when most people talk about the Army, the first thing they talk about is our Soldiers. Our Soldiers accomplish amazing feats every day because of the support they have behind them and because the ones who influenced and shaped their lives during their path to the Army.

The Family of each Soldier plays an important role in his or her success in the military. Parents shape the life of a child and give them the all-important moral standards that guide them for the rest of their life. A parent can be one of the most influential factors in whether a young person chooses to join the ranks of those who wear a uniform.

For other Soldiers, the support comes not just from their parents, but from their wives and children, who deal with moving across the country, changing schools and jobs and adapt to a new life at home during deployments.

It's often said the strength of America is its Army and the strength of its Army is its Soldiers. The strength of our Soldiers is the Families who choose the Army way of life. Many of the Families in the Big Red One have mastered the keys to success: flexibility, taking care of yourself physically and emotionally and an iron-clad will to stay together while serving our country.

Families who stay flexible know that the constant of the Army is change. They make the most of the times they have together and find



ways to improvise when they are apart, taking advantage of Web cams, internet phones and Facebook. They conquer time differences and holiday absences and at the end of the line, pick up right where they left off.

Successful couples and Families also know that having a healthy relationship means staying healthy yourself. Staying in shape physically helps both Family members and Soldiers deal with the stress of separation, anxiety and depression. And when physical fitness isn't enough, staying healthy means admitting you need help and taking advantage of the resources available to you.

While each Family is different, many of them realize that they are strongest when they are together. While this often means moving every few years and helping children adjust to new neighborhoods and schools, our Families do so because staying together is the most beneficial scenario.

In this issue of Duty First!, we have profiled Families and couples with deep ties to the Big Red One. Our deployed Soldiers and their Families also exchange Valentine's Day greetings in the following pages. Support from Families — in whatever relationship that might be, whether parent-child; siblings; or couples — are what allow our Soldiers to effectively do their jobs. The sacrifices our Families make are many, but in supporting those who wear the Big Red One patch, they support the defense of our freedom and way of life.



PHOTO BY JORDAN CHAPMAN, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Soldiers of the Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion salute during the National Anthem during the 1st Infantry Division headquarters' deployment ceremony Dec. 4, 2009, in King Field House. About 900 Soldiers deployed to southern Iraq in January 2010 for 12 months.

meet the Team

By **Jordan Chapman**
Duty First! Magazine

From the enlisted private to the commissioned major general, one by one Soldiers making up the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters Battalion are arriving in southern Iraq to serve their nation.

Rear command keeps Fort operations running smoothly

While each Soldier completes their mission to change Iraqi security for the better, it will be the mission of Brig. Gen. David Petersen, deputy commanding general-rear, Command Sgt. Maj. (rear) "Buddy" Wallace and Oliver Hunter, director of Mission Support Element, to keep Fort Riley operating like nothing has changed.

"I believe [Fort Riley] is being left in great hands with [Brig.] Gen. Petersen, the Garrison command



**Brig. Gen.
David Petersen**

and this mission support element," said Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general for the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley.

After being drafted into the military in 1972, Petersen has since served for 38 years without a break in service.

"I do love the Army ... I like the structure, I like what we stand for and I appreciate the fact that there is less than one percent of our population that gets to wear the uniform," Petersen said, adding that a personal pride goes hand in hand with the passion he has for his work.

Petersen comes to Fort Riley from Fort Leavenworth, where he acted as the assistant division commander for support to the 35th Infantry Division, while also acting as Deputy Adjutant General for the state of Nebraska.

"This job at the 1st Infantry Division is a dream job for me," Petersen said. He added that this assignment will allow him to put into action everything he has learned in his last 30 years of experiences and education.

Though Petersen is certain there will be challenges along the road, he is confident that he and his staff will continue the traditions of the "Big Red One" with ease and will continue to maintain if not heighten Fort Riley's status within its own gates as well as past them amongst the post's surrounding city neighbors.

Wallace shares similar sentiments with Petersen and has full confidence that their day-to-day team work will insure success throughout the next 12 months.

"We're sewn together at the hip," Wallace said. "(Petersen) is a pretty smart guy. We will be just fine." Wallace is a 30-year Army veteran, with a background in aviation. He said that making the switch to the division's rear command sergeant major hasn't been difficult.

"For every enlisted (Soldier) in the Army our primary objective is to support the infantry. That's what we all do ... it's all about leadership. It doesn't matter what your MOS is, it gets down to the essentials of leadership. That every Soldier is a Soldier first," Wallace said, reiterating that there will be no scheduled changes while headquarters is deployed, but he does hope to improve the anticipation of problems and to keep on taking care of Soldiers physically as well as mentally.

"We need to focus on not just getting the Army

"For every enlisted (Soldier) in the Army our primary objective is to support the infantry. That's what we all do ... it's all about leadership. It doesn't matter what your MOS is, it gets down to the essentials of leadership."



— Division Command Sgt. Maj. (rear) "Buddy" Wallace

better now, but to make it healthier tomorrow," he said. "The young guys and girls that we have serving today, they make it all worthwhile."



Oliver Hunter

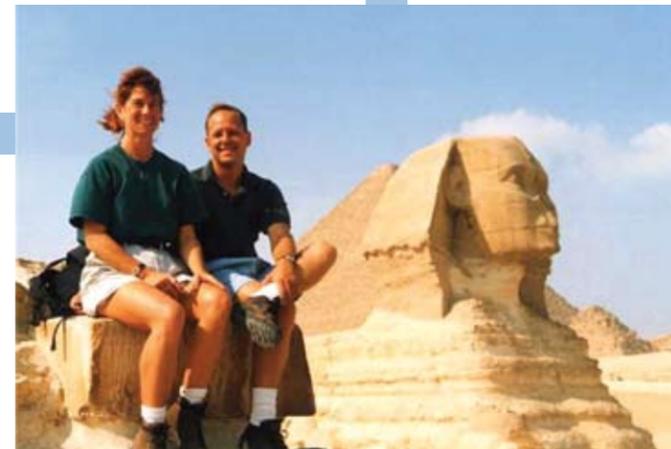
Oliver Hunter, who became Fort Riley's first director of Mission Support Element in 2008, will help take care of those Soldiers by enabling and executing administrative control for Forces Command units in Brooks' areas of responsibility.

Though Hunter will not command rear detachments or provisional units, he will provide guidance, direction, stability and continuity to help assist, coordinate and synchronize non-deploying units, rear detachments and provisional units in accordance with Brooks' policies, priorities and direction.

Hunter had more than 30 years of active service in the military before retiring in July of 2004, is a master aviator and his awards include three Legions of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, three Army Meritorious Service Medals, and two Army Commendation Medals. He has accumulated 2700 flight hours in attack and assault aircraft.

Upon retirement, he served the U.S. Army for one year with the Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan, Kabul. There, he was a mentor to the Afghan National Army Deputy G3 for Operations, Readiness and Mobilization. His major projects included creation of Afghanistan's National Military Command Center and the Army's Readiness Reporting System.

COURTESY PHOTO
Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jim Hood, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, and Lt. Col. Leslie Alford, Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, pose for a photo in Baghdad in 2004 while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



COURTESY PHOTO

Hood and Alford sit in front of the Great Sphinx of Giza in 1997.

to go to because you have a car and we don't."

Leslie acknowledged the memory only by saying rather slowly and contemplative with a sigh and a smile, "Three warrant officers."

"She took us to Hooters. Those three warrant officers, for the next year as we knew her as a captain; we followed her where ever she wanted to go. We did anything that she asked of us, because anyone who will take you to Hooters is beyond cool," Hood said with a laugh.

Together, the couple explained that as they traveled to Egypt, their relationship continued to evolve, though there wasn't much to do on a base that occupied one square mile of land in the middle of a desert. Luckily, they had access to vehicles.

"Leslie would read the Bible and find a spot and we would drive to that spot in Israel or Egypt. We went to Mount Sinai, Tel Aviv ... it was the coolest year I have ever spent," Hood said, though Alford corrected that they were there for 18-months. "We extended, we liked it so much," Hood elaborated.

Following those 18 months, they requested from their branch managers that they be stationed together at their next assignment, though they were not yet ready to marry. They were sent to Fort Sill, Okla., a place that each feels was an amazing experience because of the leadership, activities and the family atmosphere that surrounded them.

After another year and a half of courtship at Fort Sill, they were married. Their next adventure awaited in Germany with the 1st Infantry Division, which soon led them back to the desert to assist in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, where their marriage was tested, as any might be when having to live together in a small tent in Baghdad for 15-months.

"We had no shower, we had a poncho liner with a Rubbermaid tub on top of a shelf with a little hose that came out," Hood described, with Alford adding that



COURTESY PHOTO

Hood and Alford pose for a photo in Baghdad in 2004 while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

the other side of the shower was enclosed by a Santa Claus flag that somebody had found.

"We just watched out for each other," Hood continued, eventually getting used to rockets shelling the Earth near them and on occasion leaving holes in the fabric from shrapnel passing through in the night.

"One time she had to roll me out of my bunk and be on top of me while the rockets were coming in ... the first time you're laying there getting rocketed together, it's a true bonding experience," Hood said. They both laughed, knowing how strange it must sound to others when they talk about combat or incidents so casually.

"It's not so much that we are used to it, it's just that you had to do that," Hood explained. "You can sit there and fret over it but it wouldn't do you any good. You're not going to stop going on convoys every other day, me going on combat flights ... it was just life. I'd look at her and say, 'you're a Soldier. Deal with it,' and she would look at me and say, 'you're a Soldier. Deal with it.'"

It is that same Soldier mentality that helps their marriage stay strong when dealing with certain aspects of the Army, such as having to fight to be stationed together every time a new assignment arises, having to stay home while the other deploys or simply understanding when one or the other has to take a trip for a few weeks to get a job done.

"We know people that have been married for years and years that have spent almost no time in the same place. We know people who have been apart far more often than when they were together, but we have been the exception to that," Alford noted, thankful for that, though it takes a lot of work to get the results they strive for.

Both husband and wife plan to retire in the next year, Hood in July and Alford following her current deployment. Though they will miss their work in the Army, they won't get a chance to miss the region. They plan to retire at Fort Riley in a home full of memories, love and years of adventures to come. ▀

walking

Hand in Hand

"With an M-16 pointing out the window, and your wife in the front also with an M-16, going through hostile territory ... that was interesting."

Twenty-four year Army veterans celebrate more than 10 years of marriage on worldwide scale

By **Jordan Chapman**
Duty First! Magazine

Interesting, unique, supportive, adventuresome, loving, caring; each is a word that could describe a marriage that was dreamed of in Egypt, made real in Oklahoma and blossomed as the Army took Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jim Hood, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, and Lt. Col. Leslie Alford, Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, around the world hand in hand.

Ten years ago this past December, the two 24-year Army veterans took their wedding vows in Fort Sill, Okla. The couple met three years before that at Fort Bragg, N.C., while preparing to deploy to assist a Multi-National group monitor peace between Egypt and Israel.

"She was a captain and I was a W-3 with two other W-3s and we needed a ride to get something to eat," Hood said. "We said, 'Ma'am, if you fly we will buy. Any restaurant you want

Love & Near Far

Celebrating Valentine's Day Apart

Story by *Shelley Roten* | *Duty First! Magazine*

TWO YEARS AGO, JESSICA VAUGHN WAS WITHOUT HER SWEETHEART ON VALENTINE'S DAY WHILE HER HUSBAND, SGT. NATHAN VAUGHN, WAS DEPLOYED WITH 2ND BATTALION, 32ND FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT, 4TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM. THIS VALENTINE'S DAY, THEY WILL ALSO SPEND APART.

A few thousand miles won't get in Jessica's way of making Valentine's Day special for Nate, herself and their three kids, Justice, 11, Breanna, 6 and Nathan, 2.

This year, Jessica said she plans to do something similar to what she and the kids did for Nate for Valentine's Day during the last deployment.

"The last deployment, for Valentine's Day the kids and I got together and we put on strips of paper our favorite memories of him. Then we folded them up

and filled up a cocoa can because our family likes to drink cocoa," Jessica said.

She also hopes that his unit will do another video teleconference like they did for the spouses during the last deployment.

"It was in real time — so there was no lagging — that was pretty neat. The kids enjoyed seeing him on the great big screen," Jessica said.

As for herself, she plans to go to a nice Valentine's Day dinner with one of the other wives from the unit.

"That helps pass the particular day," she said.

Another deployment tradition for Nate and Jessica is an old-fashioned game of tic-tac-toe that they keep up back and forth throughout their time apart.

She looks forward to the pictures he draws or the notes he writes alongside his "X" or "O" box.

"It's kind of fun to just touch something that he's touched," she said.

Jessica and the kids also send Nate packages with thoughtful gifts that will be sure to please him and bring a smile to his face.

For Christmas they sent him several items — but the one he wanted most was a pillow with their family picture on it.

Jessica already has another package she is working on — once the box is filled up she will send it on to Nate. It contains a special family photo album that she made online and some Food Network DVDs that Nate is sure to enjoy.

"He doesn't spend much time watching TV — he's



great at coming home from the military and plugging right in to being a family," Jessica said. "So he doesn't watch much TV, but when he does get a chance to kick up his boots and sit in front of the TV he usually turns on Food Network."

They didn't start dating until after high school, but Nate and Jessica have known each other since the sixth grade, when they both attended the same school in Phoenix, Ariz.

They got married in 2002, not long after Nate joined the National Guard. By 2004 he was on his first deployment. During his 18-month deployment to Kuwait, Nate decided to switch to active duty. It was a decision he and Jessica both made in order to provide their family the stability and security of being in the Army, but she also recalls being influenced by their visit to ground zero while he was in guard training.

"When I went to New Jersey to visit him, we went and saw ground zero in person, and I think that had a lot of impact on him," Jessica explained.

This is the third deployment the Vaughn Family has been through, and the second that Nate has been active duty and deployed with the 1st Infantry Division.

As a seasoned military spouse of a deployed Soldier, Jessica is familiar with the responsibility that comes with being the head of the household and providing the steadiness the kids need during their father's deployment.

Jessica has been involved in the family readiness group during both active duty deployments. She is the treasurer of her FRG, the point of contact for a section of her husband's battery and is also on the family care team — the team involved on the FRG side of notifying and assisting families in the event of an emergency.

She is an advocate of spouses of deployed Soldiers staying at or near the Army post during the deployment for many reasons.

"When you stay, you will find depths of you that you never knew existed," Jessica said. "I think it's extremely empowering when the women stay behind."

Jessica offers advice for each stage of a deployment. Before the deployment she stresses the importance of educating yourself on what is normal. Her church and faith play a huge role in her support system and she reminds herself that no matter where her husband is, he is in God's hands.

"During R&R or the pre-deployment phase, I love to tell the ones that are on their first deployment that it will go by easier if you just live like a teenager — one day at a time, next month doesn't matter. That advice seemed pretty helpful," she said.

Finally, after your Soldier returns home Jessica en-



COURTESY PHOTO

ABOVE: Sgt. Nate Vaughn, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, poses with daughter, Breanna, 6, during family pictures taken before his deployment with 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in August 2009. OPPOSITE: Nate and Jessica pose for their Valentine's Day dinner date night out. This Valentine's Day, the couple will spend another holiday apart while Nate is deployed with 4th IBCT.

courages spouses to really evaluate their Soldier and allow them time to adjust to back home.

"When your Soldier is struggling, recognize that your best friend is still in there and there are many resources to take advantage of through the Army to help with the transition," Jessica said.

She also emphasizes the importance of knowing that things can change.

Nate and Jessica have said before that they would like to make a bumper sticker that reads "Army (be flexible)."

"We thought that would get a chuckle," she said. ▀



COURTESY PHOTO

The Vaughn family walks along the river walk in Junction City during a pre-deployment family photo session in August 2009. They enjoy outdoor activities as a family, especially hiking because each of their three children can go at their own pace.

A little more than 20 years ago, Lucille Martin was a young school teacher working in Junction City. Like many teachers in Unified School District 475, she often spent Friday nights at the officer's club, now Riley's Conference Center, for happy hour. It was here that a Lt. Love introduced her to then-lieutenant Dana Pittard, who was attending a unit hail and farewell function in another part of the building.

Love at Fort Riley

Army life provides couple lessons to learn & to share

Story By Anna Staats / Duty First! Magazine



COURTESY PHOTO

Maj. Gen. Dana Pittard and Lucille Pittard on their wedding day back in 1985.

"He was just a really nice guy," Lucille said. "He was very articulate and well-spoken young man."

Lucille left the conversation and went back to the happy hour room where she told the girlfriend she was with that night that she had met the man she was going to marry. Her friend laughed, but Lucille wasn't kidding. A short time later, she called Lt. Love's office, and asked for Lt. Pittard. The man who answered the phone said, "no ma'am, you're looking for Lt. Pittard." She and Dana ended up going to lunch that week and the rest, as they say, is history.

The couple dated for the next several months until Dana left for his next duty station. They stayed in touch, visiting every few months and eventually became engaged and then married in 1985. Dana flew back to Germany, where he was stationed and Lucille remained in Junction City to complete the school year as a teacher.

"He's committed, but I'm committed too," she said. "When I start something, I want to finish it."

Twenty years later, they had the chance to return to Fort Riley in a surprising turn for both of them. After serving as brigade commander of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Dana had yet to receive a follow-on assignment.

"I said, 'Dana, do you think we could go to Fort Riley,'" Lucille said. "And he said, 'no, we can't because there's no job for me there, unless I was the assistant division commander and I'm too junior to do that.' I told him a girl can dream, and he said 'keep dreaming.'"

But other plans were in the works. Dana was indeed named ADC of the 24th Infantry Division (Mech) and assigned to Fort Riley.

"I remember calling and asking where we would be living. And she said, 'yes, you'll be living in designated quarters at 100 Schofield Circle,'" Lucille said.

That news was the icing on the cake of returning to Fort Riley. As she was preparing to move, before she even knew where they would be moving, she found a Junction City home tour book from 1995 and the house



COURTESY PHOTO

Maj. Gen. Dana Pittard is shown with his wife, Lucille, and sons Jordan (left) and Taylor.

at 100 Schofield Circle was one the tour that year. She hung on to the book, fascinated by the house.

"You have no idea how it felt when I found out we were moving to this house," she said.

The Pittard's years at Fort Riley were filled with memories, but some stand out for Lucille above the rest.

"When I was asked to speak to the USD 475 faculty at the Geary County Schools Celebration of Teaching week, that was a high point," Lucille said. "To address my peers was an honor and definitely a highlight in my life, not just my time here."

Her other top memories include Dana's promotion to brigadier general on post and celebrating her 50th birthday with old and new friends.

This is the first time she's been stationed at Fort Riley as an Army wife, but Lucille is quick to say she has fond memories of growing up in the Westwood neighborhood of Junction City. Her father served in the enlisted ranks of the Big Red One and retired at Fort Riley, where he also served in civil service and retired from it at the post.

"I had a good life growing up here," she said. "I didn't have everything, but you know, I didn't have a

care in the world. I had good friends who, for the most part stayed put. I was happy to come back here and bring my children here, because I had many fond memories of growing up here."

She has had many opportunities to spend time with old friends she grew up with and even her mother's friends. She and her sister had the opportunity to host several of their mother's friends for a small gathering.

"What was so amazing was these ladies were World War II veterans' wives, Vietnam and Korean War veterans' wives and to sit there and listen to them tell stories. ... I didn't know those things growing up. Life as a military spouse is not easy, but talk about our forefathers, if you will, and I wouldn't get that if I lived anywhere else. I wouldn't know those kinds of ladies."

The Pittards, who have two sons, Taylor and Jordan, moved from Fort Riley to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., which he commanded. Currently, he is the deputy chief of staff, G-3/5/7, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, at Fort Monroe, Va.

Editor's Note: This story originally appeared in the July 27, 2007, issue of the Fort Riley Post.

Careless Keystrokes Can Kill

Don't let your e-mails or blogs make someone a target



Operation Security (OPSEC)

Sending out wishes of

LOVE

Soldiers, loved ones exchange sentiments for Valentine's Day

**To: Major Michael Wayne Cobb,
Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion
From: Carrie Cobb**

*I love you all through February,
Not just on Valentine's Day;
I cherish you when flowers of spring
Appear in the midst of May.
I adore you in the summer,
When the air is filled with heat;
Without you in my life each day,
I just am not complete.
I treasure you in the fall,
When leaves are turning gold;
I loved you when you were younger;
I'll love you when you're old.
I prize you in the winter,
When colder days are here;
I love you, love you all the time,
Every minute of the year.
So I'll give to you this Valentine,
But I want to let you know,
It's not just today, but always,
That I will love you so.*

I miss you ♥

**To: Maj. Michael Cobb
From: Olivia Cobb**

*Dad you are my favorite man,
And I sure want you to know,
I'll always respect and love you, Daddy
No matter how big I grow
I'm lucky to have you as my Dad!
I miss you and love you ♥*

**To: Christine, Joshua and Sarah-Grace
From: Maj. Michael Goodwin, DHHB**

*Happy Valentine's Day from Baghdad,
Iraq. I want to wish my wife, Christine, a
special 6,850-mile-long Valentine wish. I
want so much to be home with you
celebrating these special days but
unfortunately cannot. It is a testament to
our love that I am able to be so far away
from you with the certainty that you are
home waiting for me to return. Thank you
for your love, devotion, support and
commitment that lifts me up even half a
world away. You are always in my
thoughts and in my heart. I do not tell you
often enough how much I love you and
cannot express to you strongly enough
how much I miss you. Happy Valentine's
Day also to Joshua and Sarah-Grace. I
love and miss you all. ♥*

To: Gail Webb
From: Sgt. Gary Webb, 2nd Bn., 32nd Field Artillery Regt.

A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. She is clothed with strength and dignity. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." (Proverbs 31, NIV, excerpts)
To my lovely SBCS: Thank you for being a wonderful wife. Truly God has blessed me! Have a happy Valentine's Day.
I love you! ♥

To: Gabriel, Selene and Alex
From: Chief Warrant Officer 2 Martha Gonzalez, 4th IBCT

To my Son Gabriel, my sister Selene and nephew Alex at Fort Riley — I love and miss you very much. I appreciate all your support for me to be at peace on this deployment. Thanks to God and all my family — Gonzalez, Anaya, Ramirez, Maciel for the love and support. ♥

To: Sandra Steward
From: Lt. Col. Chip Stewart, DHHB

Dearest Sandra,
Happy Valentine's Day from your loving husband, who misses you more than you'll ever know. I couldn't have asked for a more wonderful woman to be my valentine!
Love, Chip ♥

To: Nicole Lamont and Narissa, Nevina and Novelty
From: Sgt. 1st Class Neil Lamont, 1st Squadron, 4 Cavalry Regt.

Happy Valentine's Day to my beautiful wife of 14 years, Nicole, and my three little girls, Narissa, Nevina, and Novelty, who stole my heart from the minute that I laid eyes upon them! I'm sorry that I have missed a whole year of birthdays, Christmas, and other holidays, but do know that you have my heart on this Valentine's Day from halfway across the world and I send you all the love that I have! ♥

To: Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Kindavong, DHHB
From: Candace Kindavong

I love you forever, nothing will ever change that. No matter how far away you are, know I'm always with you. Please stay safe and come home soon. Happy Valentine's Day! ♥

To: Spc. Eduardo Colon, DHHB
From: Jacqueline Colon

Happy Valentine's Day, my love. I miss you so much, thank you for everything you are doing for us. There are not enough words on this earth to tell you on how much I love you and am in love with you. I thank God and the angels up above for putting you in our lives. Thank you for being my husband and for being our children's dad. Papi, I will be home waiting for you. Te amo con todo mi Corazon!!! You're my dun...143 ♥

To: Whitney Lukenbill
From: 1st Lt. Chester Lukenbill, 1st Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt.

Whitney,
Today while I'm so far away from you, I like to think about all of the good times we have spent together and the ones that are still to come. I remember the first time I saw you standing next to the pool when you were a summer day-camp counselor and I was a lifeguard. I also remember the countless miles we rode together on my bike, watching you play softball with such passion and all the nights we stayed up until 5 in the morning talking about who knows what. Even though we can't be together today, I know that we still have many, many more great memories to make and I look forward to making them with you. You are not only the love of my life, but also my best friend. I love you and I will see you soon.
Chester ♥

To: Spc. Lamont Marquis Green, 701st BSB
From: Shanetha Stallings-Greene

Happy Valentines and third anniversary to the love of my life. I miss you so much and can't wait for you to come home. Miss you so much baby, and I'm proud to say I'm your wife...
xxxxxxxxxxxx ♥

To: Pvt. David Hendrix, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav. Regt.
From: Elizabeth and Kailey Hendrix

You mean the world to me, and I could never see my life without you. You have given me a beautiful baby girl who adores you just as much as I do. We have had our hard times and good times, but no matter what we go through I will always love you. I know we are apart right now, but we will be together again soon. I love you with all my heart. Kees, kees, my love.
Yours truly, always and forever,
Your wife and daughter ♥

To: 1st Lt. Michael Johnson
From: Mandy Johnson

Happy Valentine's Day! The day I met you, I had no idea how my life would change and I am so blessed that you happened to walk by that tree at exactly the right time. I bet you had no idea that day that you were getting ready to endure a lifetime of bad cooking! I want you to know that even though we are not always near each other, I love you more and more every day. The times we are together are special and I am grateful for every second. When we are not with each other, knowing how much you love me makes the time pass faster. You are an amazing person and husband, and I am so proud of everything you do. I look forward to many more happy years together. I love you more, most and forever. Kisses! ♥

To: Staff Sgt. Shawn Handwerk, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Crystal Wilding

My Caro, you are everything to me. You make all my troubles fade away and always have the right words to say at the right time. You are my world, handsome! Happy Valentine's Day, baby. I can't wait till you get home so we can celebrate it together. Big smooch!
Your Schatzi, Crystal ♥

To: Spc. Richard Rowley, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Priscilla Rowley

My dearest Husband,
Happy Valentine's Day to you! Just remember my heart and soul will always be yours, whether we are together at home or apart through the miles. These words I write seem so small compared to the love I feel for you. Being beside you for nearly 10 years has been the best years of my life. Although we have had some rough spots, the good always overrules the bad. You and I have got the most beautiful children, who, no matter where you are in the world, are proud of you and proud of what you do. They love you and can't wait for you to be home to tell you all about the things from the last months gone by. We all love you sweetheart. Come home to us safe and sound and always remember we will be here waiting for you! Yours always and forever!
Your Family — Priscilla, Donovan, Ethan, Faith and Grace ♥

To: Sgt. Josh Doyle, 4th IBCT
From: Chasity Doyle

Happy Valentine's Day, baby!!! I love you more than words can say. You mean the world to me. I am super proud of you and your accomplishments in the Army, as well as in your relationship with our Savior, Jesus Christ. I am praying for your quick and safe return home.

*Love Always,
Sweetie ♥*

To: Pfc. Talon Reed, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Miranda Reed

Even though we are apart by miles, no amount of distance can truly separate us. Our hearts are always together — I carry yours in mine, as you do mine. For one day, together again we will be. I cherish all of the memories we have made sharing our lives together. I couldn't be more grateful to have an amazing, loving, passionate, and loyal husband like you. Looking forward to all the future memories we have yet to make. I love you and miss you with all that I am. Happy

*Valentine's Day, husband!
Your Valentine Forever and Faithfully,
Your Wife ♥*

To: Sgt. Thomas Schulte, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Micah

*Happy Valentine's Day, daddy Tom! I miss you!
Love, Micah, xo ♥*

To: Staff Sgt. Van Booth, 1st Bn., 28th Inf. Regt.
From: Melissa, Caden, Liberty and Bristol Booth

*To our loving husband, father, and hero, SSG Van Booth: I know that I can count the number of times we have spent Valentine's Day together on one hand due to the mission. But the love we have as a Family surpasses the miles deployment puts between us. As our children grow, they will always know that they will be able to find comfort and love in their father's voice. So, on this day, think of the love we share and the happiness we have knowing you're safe. Until you come home, with all our love,
Your wife and children ♥*

To: Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Louis,
2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Rebecca Louis

*Happy Valentine's Day to my sweet husband! I love you the MOSTEST! And I am waiting on the day you get to come home to me! Always kissing you goodnight, and always holding your hand!
Your loving and faithful wifey ♥*

To: Sgt. Marco Gonzalez, 701st Brigade Support Bn.
From: Nichole Gonzalez

Happy Valentine's Day and 10 year anniversary, Honey Bear! We love and miss you. Love, your wife ♥

To: Capt. Rebecca Walsh, HHC, 4th IBCT
From: Pat and Mickey Wells

Happy Valentine's Day to a wonderful daughter-in-law! We are so very proud of you and hope to see you soon! ♥

To: Capt. Al Walsh, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt.
From: Pat and Mickey Wells

Happy Valentine's Day to a wonderful Son. We are so very proud of you! Hope to see you soon! ♥

To: Sgt. Kellin Banks, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Nina Koreen

Kellin, I know we may not be physically spending this Valentine's Day together, but you will still be in my heart today and every day. We may be thousands of miles apart from each other, but we will celebrate in our hearts and minds together. I LOVE YOU SO MUCH, and I can't wait to see you soon. Will you be my Valentine? ♥

To: Sgt. Thomas Schulte, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Bekah Schulte

*I may not get to see you as often as I like. I may not get to hold you in my arms all through the night. But deep in my heart I truly know, you're the one that I love, and I can't let you go. I love you babers, and this deployment only makes me love you more. I miss you so much, come home soon! Never forget that you're my best friend, my soulmate and my hero. I love you, Tom — always have and always will!
xoxoxoxoxox ♥*

To: Sgt. Mark Schellhase, 4-1 BSTB
From: Debbie Schellhase

*Well another Valentine without but I know in my heart and soul after 15 years that you're the best thing that ever happened to me. I miss you and can't wait to see you again.
"A n F" ♥*

To: Command Sgt. Maj. Michael McCoy, HHC, 4IBCT
From: Chris McCoy

To my one and only — my friend, my love, my hero. I wish you a Happy Valentine's Day, baby. ♥

To: Pfc. Damion Petee, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Kristen Pettee

Babe, I love you so much and miss you every day! My heart has, is, and will always be with you. You are a great husband and a great dad! Can't wait to have you home! Happy Valentines Day. I love you! ♥

To: Pfc. Damion Petee, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Hayden, David, Crystal and Addyson Petee

Daddy we love you so much and talk about you all the time! You are our hero and we are counting down until we can all do fun stuff with you again! You are the best Daddy ever! Happy Valentines Day and WE LOVE YOU! ♥

To: Staff Sgt. David Moreno, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt.
From: Valerie Moreno

I want to wish you a Happy Valentine's Day. I love you with all my heart and soul. You complete me. Love Always and Forever. ♥

To: Sgt. 1st Class Shantae Gordon, 4-1 BSTB
From: Anoinette Davis

Shantae, my baby and the first daughter that I gave birth to, along with your twin brother. It gives me great pride to know that you are so brave to be out there protecting our country. During the same time you became my daughter, you became a granddaughter, sister and later an aunt and sister-in-law. We all miss and love you, and we are wishing you a safe and quick return.

*We love you so much!!!
Happy Valentine's Day from all of your Family with all of our love!!!
Antoinette (Mom) Viola, Redd, Ashley, Spencer, Parrish, Christian, Gabrielle, Garrett and TaNadia ♥*

To: Staff Sgt. John H Steele, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Krista Steele

*My love, my husband, my best friend, my HERO! Thank you for a decade of wonderful memories. I can't wait for the next 10 years!
Love Always, Me ♥*

To: Spc. Jeffrey Slavens
From: Linda Slavens

*Hey pookie, I wanted to tell you that angel and I are missing you this V-day...it's our second v-day apart. I wish you were here with us, but I know you're doing what you gotta do. We are so proud of you and can't wait till you come home to us.
Wwe love you so much and are thinking of you always.
Your wife and son... be safe! te amo. ♥*

To: Staff Sgt. Derek Becknal, 701st BSB
From: Rhanah Becknal

You have been my best friend from the very beginning. Your love, dedication and strength still amaze me. While we are apart I miss you every moment of every day, yet, I smile. I know that soon you will return and life will begin anew. We will persevere and grow from this deployment, just as we did from the last. May God watch over you, and return you to your ever loving family. Happy Valentine's Day baby, I love you. ♥

To: 1st Sgt. David Fallin, DHHB
From: Eileen Fallin

To my incorrigible Hubbalicious — As I write this note, you are here at home with us, but when you read the words, you will be a world away. You can be sure we miss you dearly, and just know that no matter how many miles or how many days, I will always be your Valentine. Love, your BB and girls -- who have decided against painting your new workshop lavender while you are gone! ♥

To: Anna Staatz
From: Sgt. 1st Class Jake Newman, HHC, 4th IBCT

Happy Valentine's Day, Baby. I love you! It's funny how those three little words can take up so little space on paper, but fill up all the space in my heart! While Valentine's Day is only one time a year, I hope I am able to show you each and every day that God gives us together how precious a gift you really are. You have brought me so much joy and happiness and I can't wait to get back to you soon. Happy Valentine's Day, I love you...ALWAYS! ♥

To: Sgt. Timothy Straight, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt.
From: Jessica Straight

Hey, baby! I love you with all my heart and I cannot wait for you to return home! Although this Valentine's day, we are physically apart, I know our hearts are not. Life without you is not the same and I cannot wait to share it with you again. I love and miss you more than you can imagine! See you soon! ♥

To: Sgt. 1st Class Jason Hellstrom, DHHB
From: Katherine Hellstrom

I love and miss you very much! I can't wait to see you again. Our baby girl loves and misses you too! Happy Valentine's Day and Happy Birthday! LUSS!!! ♥

To: 2nd Lt. Bryan Smith, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Samantha Smith

Happy Valentine's Day! Matthew wants you to know that you are a great Dad, and that he is proud that you are fighting for freedom! ♥

To: Capt. Ben Doornink, 701st BSB
From: Dana and Leah Doornink

Happy Valentine's Day to a wonderful husband, father and friend. Leah and I miss you so much and look forward to having you home again soon! We love you! ♥

To: 1st Lt. Trevor Dursky, 4-1 BSTB
From: Megan Dursky

*Trevor,
I want you to know how much I love and miss you. Not a day goes by when I don't wish you were here. These months apart have been very difficult, but all worth enduring knowing that I get to share the rest of my life with you. I look forward to all life has to offer us, knowing that we have so many memories yet to make. I am so proud of you, Trevor. Not only for what you do, but the man that you are. You are my best friend and my husband. I can't wait to see you! Happy Valentine's Day.
All my love — Megan ♥*

To: Pfc. Charles Christel, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt.
From: Angela Christel

Hey, Babe, me and the boys miss you very much. Hope you have a good Valentine's Day! We can't wait till you come home! You are my hero! I love you! ♥

To: Chief Warrant Officer 2 Corey Zagelow, 701st BSB
From: Jessica McCarty

*Corey,
You are the last thing on my mind at night and the first thing on my mind when I awake. Although this time apart may be trying, I am certain it is worth every heartache, knowing we have the rest of our lives to live together. I am so thankful to have you in my life and I look forward to our future when you return. I miss you immensely, but love you even more.
FYI — my ring size is 6.
Happy Valentine's Day! ♥*

To: Sgt. Bryce Tucker
From: Amber, Nicholas and Sasha Tucker

*Happy Valentine's Day to my wonderful husband. We love you and miss you.
Come home soon and safe. ♥*

To: Staff Sgt. David Maldonadovarela,
1st Bn., 28th Inf. Regt.
From: Michele Maldonado

*We love and miss you over here today and everyday! Happy Valentine's Day. Don't worry if you don't send flowers, we love them anyway (and I will go get some for you). Please don't save anyone from "rouge camels" without me. I love you!
Michele, Tyler and Allison ♥*

To: Sgt. 1st Class Jake Newman, HHC, 4th IBCT
From: Anna Staatz

Thank you for being the man I never believed existed. For every dark secret and every ugly night I told you about, you gave a thousand beams of sunlight. By the grace of God, you have helped turn ashes into beauty and mourning into joy. We have an amazing future ahead because you have stood by the very first promise you ever made to me — to always be there to catch me every time I jumped into the unknown, and to stand with me no matter the obstacle. I love you so much! ♥

To: Paula, Sydnee, Caleb and Jack
From: Sgt. 1st Class Eric Krueger, 2nd Battalion, 32nd FA Regt.

To Paula, my wife of 18 years, and my three children, Sydnee, Caleb and Jack: Happy Valentine's Day. It is very hard to be away from you. Know that I think about you all every minute of every day. I will be home soon. I love and miss you! ♥

To: Tricia Verschage
From: Master Sgt. John Verschage, HHC, 4th IBCT

I would like to say Happy Valentine's Day 2010. I love and miss you very much. Thank you for being my beautiful wife and best friend for the past 20 years. You are my life, and I love you very much. Thank you for being there for me and supportive during my military career. I can honestly say behind every good NCO there is a very strong spouse — you are that spouse — thank you. Like most Valentine's days, we are apart, but in my heart, I know there will be a time when we will spend every Valentine's Day together as we grow older together. I love and miss you. ♥

To: Susan Marie Parks
From: Sgt. Justin Parks, DHHB

*Ich denke dein, wenn mir der Sonne schimmer
Vom Meere strahlt;
Ich denke dein, wenn sich des Mondes Flimmer
In Quellen malt.*

*Ich sehe dich, wenn auf dem fernen Wege
Der Staub sich hebt,
In tiefer Nacht, wenn auf dem schmalen Stege
Der Wanderer bebt.*

*Ich höre dich, wenn dort mit dumpfem Rauschen
Die Welle steigt.
Im stillen Haine geh' ich oft zu lauschen, Wenn alles
schweigt.*

*Ich bin bei dir, du seist auch noch so ferne,
Du bist mir nah!
Die Sonne sinkt, bald leuchten mir die Sterne
O wärst du da!*

-J.W. von Goethe ♥

To: Tammy, Brandon and Stacy Pitt
From: Maj. Rodger Pitt, DHHB

*This message goes out to my lovely wife, Tammy Pitt; my brave Padawan, Brandon Pitt; and my little princess, Stacy Pitt in San Diego, Calif.
I am writing this Valentine's note on the eve of my departure to Iraq while sitting at the airfield on this mid-December evening. Therefore, I am hoping and praying that my lovely family continues to understand how much love I hold in my heart for them. As I am sitting here listening to Christmas music, thinking of the love I have for the three of you, wishing I was playing Wii with you until my arm hurt, dreaming of the time we spent on the cruise, and praying for many more of those very enjoyable days upon my return, I am reminded of a saying in Corinthians: "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." Tammy, Brandon, and Stacy, please know that this is the type of love that I have for you. Happy Valentine's Day! ♥*



LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE BIG **RED ONE**?

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