

The 75th BCTD Color Guard march during the Rededication Ceremony held August 10, 2008 at Ellington Field in Houston, Texas.  
Photo by Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman



# The Bulgebuster

75th Battle Command Training Division Winter 2008/2009

## Transition with a Bang!

The 75th Welcomes its 17th Commanding General,  
Maj. Gen. Eldon P. Regua p. 22



### Meet the New CSM!

Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Belanger shares his experiences and insights. p. 5





Photo by Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman

Brig. Gen. David Puster, 4th Brigade, 75th BCTD commander, salutes during the Change of Command Ceremony August, 2008 at Ellington Field in Houston, Texas.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman

Maj. Gen. Steve Best (center) has his photo taken with members of the Division during the Commander's Conference held August, 2008 at the Hilton in Clear Lake, Texas.

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**Col. Michael Metcalf**  
Division Chaplain

This is my first "Bulgebuster" article as your Division Chaplain. And I have to say that being selected as the 75th Division Chaplain is both an honor and a blessing-the highlight of my career. I look forward to serving with you.

We are entering what is joyfully known as the Holiday Season. Most of us celebrate Thanksgiving. Depending on our faith and/or cultural backgrounds, many of us celebrate Christmas, others celebrate Chanukah, and others Kwansa. We are entering times of joy-times when we focus on Family, friends, faith and community.

Unfortunately, not everyone has as much to celebrate-some may be facing civilian job loss, hard financial times, separation from family, or personal loss. "Leave no fallen comrade behind." We need to know what is going on with our Soldiers and their Families. We need to know what is going on with the Soldier to our left and to our right. And we need to assist them in their time of need. Maybe a section or office needs to come together to put together a food basket or other gift for Soldier or Family. Maybe it is as simple as a kind word, expressions of support and a listening ear.

I will never forget the Thanksgiving that I received a "Dear John" e-mail (yes, e-mail) while mobilized at Fort Lewis. Even more, I will never forget, and will always cherish, how the Soldiers whom I supervised, as well as those to my right and left, supported me-sometimes picking me up and carrying me-not leaving me behind.

The holidays are a time of joy-great joy-when we celebrate pivotal events in our faith, cherish our Families, remember our heritage. Let's not forget our military Family and community-leave no one behind.

God's Blessings!

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## The Bulgebuster

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## The Bulgebuster

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Cover: Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Carroll

Maj. Gen. Eldon Regua, commander of the 75th BCTD fires a 75mm Pack Howitzer after the Change of Command Ceremony August 10, 2008 at Ellington Field.



Commander's Corner  
**Major General Steven P. Best**  
**Commander, 75th BCTD**  
*Outgoing*



**Major General Eldon P. Regua**  
**Commander, 75th BCTD**  
*Incoming*

I have shared many words with each of you over these past four years, two months, and 26 days, since I was given the honor and privilege of accepting the colors of this great Division from my predecessor, MG Perry Dalby. The time has passed incredibly quickly, but much has been accomplished by the Division. We've set up literally hundreds of units, and thousands of their Soldiers, for success during deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, the Horn of Africa, Pakistan, Kosovo, and Guantanamo, as well as support to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita recovery operations...just to name a few.

Many of you have been separated for significant amounts of time from your families, friends, and civilian careers. I continue to be amazed at your dedication, and I'm grateful to your families and employers for the sacrifice they have made as well. I hope that you all know that those sacrifices have made a difference - a significant difference - in insuring that all those who have deployed have been as ready as possible to perform the critical duties assigned them, and when completed, to return home safely to their families and civilian careers. I will always have a special place in my heart for those families whose loved ones did not return home as they left, and am always mindful of the sacrifice those heroes made for all of us...and future generations.

There are many other enduring images that will remain with me long after I pass our distinguished colors to Maj. Gen. Eldon Regua, my successor in command. They are too numerous to mention here, but are, and will remain, etched in the history of this Division and in the minds and hearts of the great Soldiers who have worn its patch. It has been an honor and privilege to have served with you...I extend to all of you my "Best" wishes for continued success in setting our great Soldiers and their units up for success. They deserve it! **Make Ready!**

Thank you to all Soldiers, civilians and families of the 75th Battle Command Training Division (BCTD) for your warm welcome of my family and me.

Over the next few years, my wife, Cirella and I look forward to meeting and working with you. We want to thank Maj. Gen. Steve and Judi Best for turning over a great Division to us.

I am committed, with your help, to build a full-strength Division with Soldiers imbued with the Warrior spirit, while being agile, better trained and responsive to our client units. Additionally, we'll continue to build and cultivate an encouraging and positive atmosphere for all.

Our nation is engaged in a persistent conflict against violent extremists that seek to destroy anything western, to include the freedoms and the liberties we enjoy in this nation. The 75th as a trainer enabler for our Army Guard and Reserve brethren, has professionally conducted our assigned mission with good success.

We must not lose sight of why we exist and that we train those entrusted to us at or above the Army standard as they deploy to fight the global war on terrorism. These units we train continue to safeguard the American way of life.

We will face many challenges over the next few years; I will challenge all of you to live the Army Values, the Warrior Ethos, over-achieve and to be innovative in all you do. We have to adapt and think of ways to do things better, cheaper and faster.

Resources will continue to be scarce after 2011 and failure is not an option.

**Army Strong!**

Continued from page 17

latest technology the Army has to conduct operations and exercises. When comparing the use of technology on the battlefield in Desert Storm and today, Cyran believes "the technology has really come full circle with the military since I actually started in 1988. You can provide a unit miles and miles away from you input on what is happening within a battle and they can provide it back to you."

On how communications with Warfighters have been affected by the use of technology on the battlefield, Cyran remarked, "you can sit so far away and say one thing and make people move around the battlefield. That's just incredible to me because back in '88 we just didn't do that kind of stuff."

The experience of using technology during the MRE leads Cyran to "absolutely believe that we are able to provide a realistic look of what the 34th CAB is seeing and feeling when they get into country. We're re-creating those types of things. They're reacting to it in a safe environment so if they make a mistake, good, make the mistake now. Don't make it whenever there's a life at stake."

Sgt. Alfredo Guajardo, a Light Wheel Mechanic with Task Force 34, also a Desert Storm veteran knows that "even though we are battalion maintenance, we're everybody's (the 34th CAB) maintenance." He adds that working in an aviation regiment's maintenance section brings additional challenges. "You could be working on a generator one minute all the way up to a big old fueler. It's a wide variety of maintenance, and with that maintenance comes a lot of hands. You're not just learning your job but a lot of other jobs."

Along with performing regular maintenance, Guajardo recognizes that there are specialized tasks that he and his fellow maintenance Soldiers must be proficient in in order to support an aviation regiment. "You have to learn how to bring those choppers down. You have to know the hand signals. Safety is a big issue," Guajardo declared.

Also within Task Force 34 are the pilots who will be flying all of the missions in Iraq. Chief Warrant Officer Will Rollefson is a CH-47 Chinook pilot and was assigned to Task Force 34 due to a shortage of

Chinook Instructor pilots. He recently completed a one year tour with the 36th CAB in Iraq and will deploy again with the 34th CAB on this mission.

During the MRE, Rollefson said his duty was to "get our guys trained up on the mission we're going to be doing over there. We've been doing a lot of air assaults. We're only allowed to currently fly at night in Iraq because the Chinook is obviously a large target and it's one of the more high value targets for the enemy so it keeps us safe by flying at night."

When conducting any future CABs, Rollefson recommended to "get more involvement from the guys who are just getting back from Iraq. It's been a lot of mentoring of these guys. They are very perceptive. It's a real good company I am with."

*"you can sit so far away and say one thing and make people move around the battlefield. That's just incredible to me because back in '88 we just didn't do that kind of stuff."*



served at least six years and agrees to another four-year contract can receive the money even sooner.

The transferred benefit will cover the cost of tuition only.

Benefits may be divided as long as they don't exceed 36 months of college classes. For example, a retired Soldier can use half of the benefits to pay for a two-year degree program, then transfer the remaining half to a spouse or child.

College-age children of long-serving servicemembers could get a free college education starting fall 2009, provided they attend a state-backed school.

Transferability is limited to those currently serving in the military and will likely be used as a retention tool.

\* In earlier copies of the Post 9/11 GI Bill, it was stipulated that members would be able to stop making enrollment payments for the MGIB. This stipulation was removed from the law. This means that those servicemembers who are currently paying the \$100 a month enrollment fee will be required to continue making payments until the \$1,200 enrollment fee is paid in full.

#### Affects on Existing GI Bill Benefits

If you are already enrolled in the Montgomery GI Bill and also meet the criteria for the Post 9/11 GI Bill, you have the option to transfer your remaining MGIB benefits to the new program.

For many veterans this will be a good option. However, due to the tuition limits set by this new GI Bill, many veterans who are pursuing a post-graduate degree may find the MGIB better suits their needs. This is also true for those students pursuing an online degree, as this new benefit will not pay the housing stipend to students enrolled in distance learning programs.

Further Eligibility Details:

You qualify for 100% of the benefit if you have a total of at least 36 months on active duty in the Armed Forces. This includes service on active duty for entry level and skill training.

You qualify for 100% of the benefit if you have a total of at least 30 continuous days on active duty in the Armed Forces; and after completion of service were discharged or released from active duty in the Armed Forces for a service-connected disability.

You qualify for 90% of the benefit if you have a total of at least 30 months, but less than 36 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces.

(including service on active duty in entry level and skill training).

You qualify for 80% of the benefit if you have a total of at least 24 months, but less than 30 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces.

(including service on active duty in entry level and skill training).

You qualify for 70% of the benefit if you have a total of at least 18 months, but less than 24 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces.

(excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training).

You qualify for 60% of the benefit if you have a total of at least 12 months, but less than 18 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces.

(excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training)

You qualify for 50% of the benefit if you have a total of at least 6 months, but less than 12 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces.

(excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training)

For more information go to <http://education.military.com>

## 75th's New CSM Brings Tested Experiences to NCO's

Story and photo by Sgt. Mayra Kennedy

As an NCO, we need to step up and take a look at our role. We need to focus on becoming more relevant and, in this Division, the way to become relevant is to be a Battle Staff NCO. We have a responsibility as we move up, to do exactly that," said Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Belanger, recently nominated as the command sergeant major for the 75th Battle Command Training Division.

But it wasn't until 1986 that Belanger made the switch to the enlisted side. In 1971, Belanger was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant in the Marine Corps when he started flight school.

Belanger's experience with the 2nd Marine Division ranged from platoon leader, to weapons platoon commander, company executive officer and company commander.

"I flew in the Marine Corps until the ceasefire in Vietnam. Later on, I was reassigned to the infantry field. I wanted to be a Marine, so I stayed in until 1983," said Belanger, whose hometown is Tucson, Arizona.

After a short break in service, Belanger transitioned in 1986 from the Marine Corps into the Nevada National Guard. At the same time, his civilian job as a special investigator for the federal government moved him and his family to California. Given that development, the Guard was the way to go.

Being a special investigator took him away from home frequently, so Belanger needed to create a better balance between his family and his career.

His wife of 35 years, Roxanne, and his four daughters - Leane, Andria, Amber and Ashleigh - are his top priority, so at the time a career change into the Reserves seemed best for Belanger and his family. That's when he became an enlisted Soldier.

As a sergeant, Belanger had the opportunity to continue his military career and could spend more quality time at home. He made the transition in 1995, joining the 91st Division and becoming an observer-controller and lanes team NCOIC.

In 2001, Belanger was promoted to command sergeant major and was later assigned to the 319th Signal Battalion. He led this unit into Iraq in 2003 and operated



the tactical control facilities from Baghdad to Kuwait, operating extensively in southern Iraq and racking-up a total of 15,000 miles on his Humvee.

What Belanger remembers most about his tour to Iraq was the great number of young Soldiers he got to work with who volunteered for the tour, never complained and always placed the mission first.

"It was such an awesome experience to lead that group of Soldiers. I really enjoyed my time there," he said.

"Young Soldiers, such as E-4s and E-5s, are some of the most highly-trained Soldiers in the world today," said Belanger, but properly training these Soldiers in leadership is something that often tends to fail.

"Our job is even more important in the 75th Division; preparing battalion and brigade staffs to take care of all their young Soldiers and fully prepare them to face the challenges so they can fight, win and survive on the battlefield," he said.

"We need to create a better and more robust cadre of Battle Staff NCOs that are willing to go downrange and be part of the mission."

Belanger's advice to those interested in the military as a profession is simply to live the Army values. He said Soldiers today can't just think they are part-time warriors. They need to become dedicated, full-time Soldiers, but with an even balance between their profession and their families.

As the new year approaches, we should keep in mind Belanger's philosophy in life, one that reminds us of the importance of the small things. "Every day is a holiday, every meal is a banquet, every other day is a pay day, and the worst day I have is wonderful."

***"We need to create a better and more robust cadre of Battle Staff NCOs who are willing to go downrange and be part of the mission."***

# Fending off the Trauma of War

by Sgt. Mayra Kennedy



Dealing with a traumatic experience can be difficult for anyone, but two courageous Soldiers of the 75th Battle Command Training Division have managed to transition from a stressful combat zone back to their normal lives.

More and more deployed Soldiers are reporting at some degree a condition called post traumatic stress disorder and Spc. Lucas J. Wright and Capt. Doug C. Hoffman, with the 75th BCTD, were two of them. Wright, a 24-year-old infantryman, experienced the aftermath of the war only months after his 14 month tour in Iraq ended. His team's mission at hand included direct contact with insurgents in a hostile environment while conducting searches and clearing main supply routes for U.S. troops.

To Wright, the term PTSD was used just as part of the procedure of check and balances after deployment required by the Army; however, the term gained its popularity after 2003 when the U.S. invaded Iraq during the initial search for weapons of mass destruction and later against the war on terrorism.

Not even a year after the Iraq invasion, Wright was called to duty for the first time in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Wright arrived at Camp Victory in January, 2004 and was later moved to Camp Bonsai, in downtown Baghdad, with the 15th Cavalry Division, Bravo Company, where he got front row seats to the war. As an infantryman, Wright was trained to engage targets, conduct combat operations, be a member of a firing team during movement to contact, attack, defend and perform tactical operations. He was no stranger to the duties and job at hand while at war.

"In Fallujah, we were on gate guard assignment and we took mortar fire. One Soldier took shrapnel to his ankle and we also saw enemy casualties while at another resting place. We watched a couple of our guys get shot in the leg. One took shrapnel to the arm and another had a rico-shade bullet go thru his chin," he said describing an instant flashback of his tour in Iraq.

For Wright, whose hometown is Montgomery, Texas, the experience was unforgettable but he said he would do it again without a doubt in his mind; however, the consequences of his exposure did not surface until his boots hit U.S. soil.

Wright said that it wasn't he who noticed any significant changes, but his family and friends. His wife,

The amount of tuition and stipends paid under the Post 9/11 GI Bill will vary depending on your state of residence, number of units taken, and amount of post Sept. 11, 2001 active-duty service. Here is a quick reference showing the percentage of total combined benefit eligibility based on the following periods of post 9/11 service:

- \* 100% - 36 or more total months
- \* 100% - 30 or more consecutive days with Disability related Discharge.
- \* 90% - 30 total months
- \* 80% - 24 total months
- \* 70% - 18 total months
- \* 60% - 12 total months
- \* 50% - six total months
- \* 40% - 90 or more consecutive days

## Tuition Rates

Under the new GI Bill you will be provided tuition up to the highest established charges for full-time undergraduate students charged by the public institution of higher education in the State in which you are enrolled.

One of the added features of this tuition payment plan is that the tuition will be paid directly to the school, relieving you of the responsibility. This is similar to the process used for military tuition assistance.

Based on 2008 in-state tuition rates, the anticipated annual tuition payment rate for 2009 will be just over \$6,000. The low being Wyoming at \$3,500 a year and Michigan which is the highest payment in-state tuition rate at \$13,000.

## Monthly Housing Stipend

If you are enrolled in a traditional college program as a full time or three-quarter time student, you will be paid a monthly housing stipend equal to the monthly amount of the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an E-5 with dependents. The average housing stipend will be approximately \$1,100 a month. However, if you attend distance learning programs such as correspondence courses and online you will not qualify for this stipend.

## Book and Supply Stipend

You will receive a lump sum payment the first month of each quarter, semester, or term. The payment will help cover the cost of books, supplies, equipment, and other educational fees for that academic term. The payment amount will be equal to either a quarter or half of the annual \$1,000 cap for that academic year, depending on how the academic year is divided - quarter or semester terms.

## Benefits Expiration Date

Unlike the Montgomery GI Bill, the new GI Bill will allow you to use this benefit for up to 15 years after your last discharge or separation from active duty.

## Licensing and Certification Payments

This new GI Bill will provide up to \$2,000 to cover the cost of one licensing or certification test. This benefit is not charged against your 36 month entitlement.

## Tutorial Assistance

Like the Montgomery GI Bill, the new GI Bill will provide up to a maximum of \$1,200 for tutorial assistance. The program will pay up to \$100 per month, for a maximum of 12 months. This benefit is not charged against your 36 month entitlement.

## Benefit Transferability

According to a recent Stars and Stripes article, servicemembers who have served at least 10 years on active duty will be able to transfer their benefit to a spouse or dependent child. Spouses of servicemember who have



# New GI Bill Overview

Military.com

<http://education.military.com>

**The new GI Bill (Chapter 33) or so-called "Post 9/11 GI Bill," boasts the most comprehensive education benefits package since the original GI Bill was signed into law in 1944. This new benefit does not go into effect until August 1, 2009.**

Many post 9/11 veterans and servicemembers will soon see a new package of education benefits. This new Post 9/11 GI Bill, or so-called GI Bill for the 21st Century, boasts the most comprehensive education benefits package since the original GI Bill was signed into law in 1944.

The new bill goes well beyond helping to pay for tuition; many veterans who served after Sept. 11, 2001, will get full tuition and fees, a new monthly housing stipend, and a \$1,000 a year stipend for books and supplies. The new bill also gives Reserve and Guard members who have been activated for more than 90 days since 9/11 access to the same GI Bill benefits.

The following fact sheet provides a quick reference to answer the following questions you may have about Senator Webb's Post 9/11 GI Bill.

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## Benefits Start Date

This new GI Bill is set to go into affect on August 1, 2009. However, as with any new legislation, it could take some time for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to begin paying benefits. Benefits will not be paid for any training or education programs completed before July 31, 2009.

## Eligibility for the New GI Bill

If you have served a total of at least 90 consecutive days on active duty in the Armed Forces since Sept. 11, 2001, you're eligible. However, the amount of benefits you receive under this program are determined by the actual amount of accumulated post 9/11 service you have.

To be eligible for the full benefit, you must have three years of active duty service after 9/11 or have been discharged due to a service-connected disability.

If you are an officer who graduated from a service academy or received ROTC scholarships, you also qualify for the new GI Bill benefits. However, your ROTC/Service Academy associated obligated active-duty service time does not count toward the three years necessary to qualify for the full benefits.

**Note:** You didn't have to opt-in for the Montgomery GI Bill to be eligible for this program.

## New GI Bill Payment Rates

The Post 9/11 GI Bill will provide up to 100% of your tuition. In addition, the program provides a monthly housing stipend a stipend of up to \$1,000 a year for books and supplies. If you attend less than full-time will receive a portion of the payment based on the number of units of study.

Tammy, said she noticed how he had become a light sleeper and that he would lose his temper easily and that he even showed road rage while driving.

"My wife would barely roll over in bed and I would wake up and ask her if everything was okay," he said.

Simple resting time at home became almost impossible for Wright. If he suddenly awoke in the night, he would think that it was because something was wrong. That was when his friends and family decided to approach him about the issue.

Wright explained that after completing the Army mandatory PTSD evaluation, he realized that he had checked yes to most of the questions asked. He knew that something wasn't quite normal, so he decided to do something about it.

Although there are several ways to treat PTSD, Wright found that talking to his comrades, chaplain, family and friends and others who have had similar experiences helped him deal with the transition period after deployment.

On the other hand, the approach taken by Hoffman, a human resources officer, was different.

Since July, 2007, the Army's PTSD awareness campaign has brought to light an issue that many deployed Soldiers are dealing with, and supporting them and making all sources available to Soldiers is what got Hoffman's attention.

"When I got out of the Army completely, that's when it dawned on me that I had some issues with security at my new house. This happened in March of 2006, almost two years after the deployment," said Hoffman

It wasn't until after a visit to the V.A. Hospital that Hoffman was told that he was experiencing noticeable symptoms of PTSD.

Hoffman explained that if a Soldier feels in need of help, he or she should seek professional assistance when it comes to PTSD because like any other injury, no matter the degree, it needs attention just like a broken arm that needs to be fixed.

While in Iraq, Hoffman's mission was to secure

large portion of a Baghdad's neighborhood and its sector. These included securing electricity sources, doing surveys with locals to improve the quality of life and assisting the local police force with training and patrolling the streets.

As a young lieutenant in Iraq, Hoffman was assigned to be an infantry platoon leader in charge of 36 Soldiers whose main responsibility was to conduct security patrols, which at times involved dealings with IEDs, engaging the enemy, and taking offense and setting up ambushes and such.

"We had a couple of people hurt in the platoon. We had one Soldier killed. He was 19 years old," he said.

Hoffman and his platoon had to help clean up and secure an area after they witnessed a suicide bombing and detonations in their sector which led to Iraqi casualties. Once Hoffman returned home from deployment, his duties changed completely.

"When I got back, the first thing I noticed was anger issues and a short temper. I didn't use to be that way," he said. "All of my friends were experiencing the same issues to some degree."

Hoffman went to the VA Hospital seeking some guidance and there he found out that his problems were treatable, but that it was up to him to decide if he wanted help.

"You can probably walk away and be fine the rest of your life, but if you want to be preventative about it, get it checked. I really let my guard down and was okay because I treated this like any other affliction that may have happened during my time in the Army and over in Iraq," he said.

"It's all about finding the person that can help you. It's not like a broken bone that any doctor can put a cast on," he said. "I'm aware that it did happen to me, but right now I feel like I'm back to normal and it's better to be safe than sorry."

Editor's Note: For more information about PTSD, visit <http://www.ncptsd.va.gov>. We commend Cpt. Hoffman and Spc. Wright for their willingness to share their experiences.

**"The first thing I noticed was anger and a short temper."**



# All in the Family

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Michael J. Lacuesta

Sgt. Merrill Simon is a force to be reckoned with. Standing at an impressive 6 feet, 11 inches, he is looked up at more than people look up at birds in the sky. This resident of Moundhouse, Nevada, a small community east of Carson City, is looked up to with respect and dignity.

Simon was born on October 18, 1955 in Long Beach, California. Simon met his wife Roberta at Bethany Nazarene College in Bethany, Oklahoma in 1977. Roberta and Merrill Simon were married on June 30, 1978 and are proud parents of 16 children, with one more on the way. Early in their marriage, Roberta and Merrill Simon learned they would not be able to have their own children, along with events early in Roberta's life, they decided to look at Special-needs adoptions. Each one of these children has severe emotional and/or physical special needs, ranging from fetal alcohol syndrome to more severe medical needs such as blindness, deafness, tracheotomy,



Sgt. Simon and wife, Roberta, pictured with their adopted children. Photo courtesy of the Simons.

Cerebral palsy, wheelchair dependent and many require 24 hour care. These special parents do everything they can to provide a loving and nurturing home for these children and are committed to the lifetime care many of these children will require in the future. Due to their medical conditions, two of these children have passed away, each having left this world long after their doctors had predicted they would pass. While the family dearly misses these two little ones, they feel their mission has always been to provide the best possible home, with as much love and care as can be provided.

Simon has a total of over 33 years, to include 25 years of commissioned service in the United States Army Reserve and Army National Guard. His present assignment is working with the S6 at Headquarters & Headquarters Company (HHC), 5th Brigade, 75th Division. His civilian occupation is an I.T Technician with the Nevada Department of Transportation, Carson City, Nevada.

Simon is a man who has dedicated his life to help others. The 5th Brigade is proud to call him one of their own. He is living up to the motto "Army Strong."



Sgt. Simon poses in front of the 5th BDE building at Camp Parks.

"From there, the light finally came on."

Before the first election was held, a group of approximately 300 Iraqis had five Americans cornered, including Eckroat.

## Explaining voting

"I'm trying to explain how they're going to do the voting, who they can vote for. And they said, 'No, no.' Every one of them, 'No-no-no. It won't happen. You write on a piece of paper. You hand it to the man at the box.

You say, "Look at it." If it says yes, it goes in the box. If it says no, they will take you behind the door and kill you."

The audience chuckled. Eckroat said he was about to pull his hair out after three hours of talking with the Iraqis, but finally it sank in that they would be able to vote for someone other than Saddam, including their own tribesmen.

"And so, from there, it went off. It started. And people were walking 25 miles, or riding a donkey, or piling on a truck or an old car to get to the voting places. And they'd come back, and they'd put their finger up, or a thumb, and you were just so proud of them. And it's like, I wish more people in America would witness this and see this and how precious it is," he said.

Early on, he met with resistance from the Iraqi Army's officer corps, which held itself aloof from non-commissioned officers and wouldn't accept training from American NCOs.

The solution was for Eckroat to sit down with them and say, "I'm nobody. I believe in my God, as you believe in your God. But this is what I do. I have so many hectares of land, I have so many cattle, I have so many horses, I have so many tractors and all, and my family let me go to come over here to work with you to help you have a better nation."

That opened the door for him to train Iraqi officers so they could in turn train their NCOs better.

## Other speakers

Guests at the Army Reserve Ambassador Day also heard Staff Sgt. Maria Ortiz, the 75th Division's NCO of the Year, talk about how the Army Reserve is paying for 100 percent of her college education.

After an introduction by Col. Doug Sanford, commander of the 2nd Battle Command Training Group, they also heard Col. Jimmy Wells and Col. Greg Ford talk about the

five-year model for Army Reserve training, as opposed to the three-year model for the Army. As part of Army Force Generation, Reservists will have three years to reset and train. Year four is the "ready year," and in year five Reservists would be available for deployment.

The model is intended to guarantee Reservists a certain amount of time with their families and give a certain amount of predictability to Soldiers, their families and their employers.

## Establishing the government

"I think the most important thing I have learned from this, and the greatest value to me, has been to see how our citizen-Soldiers are helping to establish government in Iraq," said state Rep. Ann Coody. "In other words, the Iraqis are getting to see for themselves citizens from the United States come over and give of their time and show them how to establish a government and help them to see that deep inside, they as citizen-Soldiers are very much

like the Iraqis, trying to establish a democratic government, which is our goal, after all.

And I think it's very helpful for me to see that, and I wish that everybody could experience what we've experienced today and see what our citizen-Soldiers are trying to do in Iraq, in helping them to establish a democratic government."

Coody praised Ortiz's

presentation as "a great incentive for our young people, to encourage them to serve in the military, at the same time helping themselves."

This was state Rep. Joe Dorman's second opportunity to attend an Army Reserve Ambassador Day. Dorman said his House district includes all of Fort Sill but the firing range, and it actually makes up almost a quarter of the population in the district he serves.

"So it's very important to me to know what's going on out here. And because of pretty much the predominance of the federal government's involvement in Fort Sill, I don't have that many opportunities to interact with the personnel out here, and so every chance I have to come out here, I welcome it. It makes me a better representative, knowing what my people want," said Dorman, D-Rush Springs.

**"If it says yes, it goes in the box. If it says no, they will take you behind the door and kill you."**



# Soldier Puts Human Face on War

by Mitch Meador, Staff Writer for The Lawton Constitution

Master Sgt. Charlie Eckroat put a human face on the war in Iraq for guests attending an Army Reserve Ambassador Day event in 2007.

Raised on a farm northeast of Oklahoma City between Jones and Spencer, Eckroat graduated from Star-Spencer High School and joined the military in April 1975. He went to basic training at Fort Leonard Wood and did his advanced individual training at Fort Sill to become an artilleryman.

His first assignment was with the 2nd Battalion, 83rd Field Artillery in Babhausen, Germany, an 8-Inch Gun unit.

He came back to the U.S. in 1978 and went straight into the Army Reserve's 95th Division. He was in the only unit of the 95th Division to be called up for Operation Desert Storm in 1991. He served as an observer/controller, rifle trainer and grenade trainer.

After the first Gulf War, he joined the 75th Division, and today he has served a total of 32 years in the

active and reserve components. The last five were at Fort Sill with the Army Reserve's 2nd Battle Command Training Group (formerly the 2nd Simulation Exercise Group), 1st Brigade, 75th Division, which provides training support to units mobilizing here for the War on Terrorism.

When he's not in uniform, Eckroat might be farming with his father and his brother or helping his wife, Debra, take care of their horses and dogs.

He was one of the first from the 2nd SEG to volunteer to take a team to Iraq.

"It was a heck of an adventure working with the Iraqis. We merged with the Iraqis, worked with them, learned a lot of stuff. We would also learn that we talk a lot with our hands. And their handgames are the same as we do our handgames over here in America, with the tribes and all. ...

"I think when I left, I left a large part of my heart over there. We did great things, we did good things. Nothing less than that. We were there to help them build a nation, and we were making history," Eckroat said.

Asked for his perspective on the Iraqi Army, Eckroat said, "The Iraqis sat down with us, and they said, the first time we were over there, 'The only reason why you're here is to teach us to win a few more wars.' And I said, 'We are here to help you learn and to make a better country and to

support and take care of your country.'

"And they liked that idea, but it was hard. It was hard to take the three main tribes, Sunni, Shiite and Kurds, and put them together. ... You'

ve got to stay two steps ahead of them.

They're very simple people, simple-minded. So you think that way, and you put them in a situation, and you put them all in their military clothes, and I said, 'Do the bad guys know (which tribe) you are?' And they said, 'No. They only know you're Iraqi Army.' Right? Right. 'OK, so you have to learn to work together as a team, to make it happen as a team. You can't fight amongst each other.'

**"we were making history"**

### Explaining teamwork

"And the other example I showed them, I pulled what teams I had with us, from the Marines and all that, and I had African-American, Mexican-American, Puerto Rican and white American. I said, 'We're Americans.

We work together. We have our differences. We come from different backgrounds, but we all work together to make things happen and do a great job.

We believe in America, we love America, as you will believe in Iraq and make Iraq your home and work together. You can't fight amongst each other. It just doesn't happen. Unless you split the country up, it won't work. So you learn to work.'



Ted Marley (left), Army Reserve Ambassador from Lawton and William Layton, southwest area chairman of the Oklahoma Committee for ESGR, listen to Col. Greg Ford give a presentation on the 75th Division's mission and history as part of an Army Reserve Ambassador Day event at Fort Sill.

Michael D. Pope

# Presenting "My Boss is a Patriot" Award!

by Warrant Officer Dylan Raymond



Johnny Polson

Warrant Officer Dylan Raymond (right) explains the "My Boss is a Patriot" award to employees of C. A. Walker Construction from left to right 1st Class Petty Officer Steve Garcia, Paul Marshall, President and CEO Chris Walker.

On May 2, 2008, C. A. Walker Construction President, Chris Walker accepted the "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate on behalf of C. A. Walker Construction.

The certificate was presented by Warrant Officer Dylan Raymond of the 75th (BCTD), HHC, US Army Reserves command in Houston, Texas, along with Paul Marshall, a retired Naval Reserve Officer. Raymond is a volunteer Ombudsman and Military Liaison for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR).

Raymond, also an Iraqi veteran, said, "the two critical things that are important to a servicemember are their families and that their jobs are secured"

The National Committee for ESGR recognizes employers for employment policies and practices that are supportive of their employees' participation in the National Guard and Reserve.

All employer recognition and awards originate from nominations by individual Reserve component members. The "My Boss is A Patriot" award is given to dedicated employers whose support and

good will are important to retaining highly skilled and qualified members of the Guard and Reserve.

Steve Garcia, 1st Class Petty Officer of NMCB-28 Navy Reserve, a Construction Superintendent, nominated the company for the award. He noted that Chris Walker and the entire staff of C. A. Walker construction supports him during his normal annual commitment as well as his most recent deployment to Iraq.

The company gave Steve some additional time off to spend with his family prior to deployment. The leadership continued to support him while he was in Iraq by sending him mail, email and care packages.

C.A. Walker Construction is a full service general contractor with a single vision and a passion for building. Their reputation has been built by maintaining a high level of professional service to both independent and chain affiliated companies nationwide.

The company attributes its success to highly trained and motivated employees as well as tenured superintendents like Steve Garcia.



# Training Warfighters

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Danial Lisarelli



A casualty is loaded onto a 2/149th Medevac Helicopter during the 34th CAB MRE at Fort Sill, Okla.

The 1st Battle Command Training Brigade (BCT), 75th BCTD joined forces with the 120th Infantry Brigade and the 479th Field Artillery Brigade in July, 2008 at Fort Sill, Okla. to prepare Task Force 34 Warfighters from the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB), a component of the 34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota Army National Guard, during a Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE) for deployment to Iraq.

One of the purposes of the MRE was to enable Task Force 34 Warfighters to plan and execute air assault missions, especially at night. This required a

round-the-clock exercise with operations designed to test and assess a variety of typical flight operation tasks that Task Force 34 may encounter while deployed.

Numerous 1/75 BCT Brigade Warfighters played important roles during the MRE, including role players, communications and logistics support, and Observer Controller/Trainers (OC/T). With them was Maj. Cathy Cyran, an OC/T in the 3rd BTCG and a Desert Storm veteran, who portrayed the role of a Medical Evacuation Coordinator.

During the MRE, Cyran got the chance to use the

Continued on page 33

# Farewell and all the Best

by Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman



Members of the Division said their goodbyes to Maj. Gen. Steve Best August 9, 2008 during a Farewell Dinner held at the Hilton in Clear Lake, Texas. (Above left) Sgt. Maj. Wilbur Sampson gives Maj. Gen. Steve Best a Cardinals jersey with the name BEST on the backside. (Above right) Maj. Gen. Steve Best and his wife, Judy, share a laugh at the dinner. (Below left - from left) Judy Best and Maj. Gen. Steve Best say their goodbyes to members of the division at the Farewell Dinner. (Below right) Lt. Fernando Sustaita and Maj. Gen. Steve Best at the Farewell Dinner.





# Change of Command



Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman



Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman

(Above from left) Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, Maj. Gen. Steve Best and Maj. Gen. Eldon Regua watch the crowd during the Change of Command ceremony held August 10, 2008 at Ellington Field in Clear Lake, Texas. (Left) Maj. Gen. Eldon Regua speaks to the Soldiers of the Division. (Below) Maj. Gen. Steve Best stands at attention during the ceremony.



Sgt. Les Taranto

## 5th BDE, 75th DIV Memorial Day Salute Battery

Story by Sgt. Tony Bui

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chanthasith Thanadabouth



The 5th Brigade, 75th Division Salute Battery blasts their cannons during the 140th Annual Memorial Day Celebration in San Francisco.

The 140th Annual Memorial Day Celebration of the Presidio of San Francisco was held on Monday, May 26, 2008. On this Memorial Day, special tribute was paid to the Americans killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Special guests included: San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, U.S. Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Senator and Assistant President pro Tempore Leland Yee and many other important state, city and military officials.

Memorial Day festivities included a parade through the Presidio, an honorable tribute to the fallen Soldiers and a special 21 Howitzer Cannon Salute by the 75th BCTD. The 91st Division USAR Band orchestrated the music for this special Celebration.

The 5th Brigade, 75th BCTD Salute Battery OIC, Maj. Craig Macina and NCOIC, Master Sgt Lyndon Delago, took charge of the event with the help of 17 Soldiers (whose ranks were Master Sergeant to Specialist). They excited the crowd with their timed precision as their cannon blasts echoed through the Presidio.

The 21-gun salute is held for the President of the United States as well as visiting foreign Heads of State. The 21-gun salute is also practiced on Memorial Day to honor the fallen Soldiers of America. Each round in a gun salute is fired one at a time. The number of cannon used in a battery depends upon the intervals between each round fired.



# PDSS to Iraq Essential

Story and photo by Lt. Col. Danny Magpantay



From left to right, 5th Brigade, 75th Division Soldiers Maj. Robert Trojanowski, Col. Bill Aquino, and Lt. Col. Andy Juknelis at Camp Bucca, Iraq.

Col. Bill Aquino, Senior Observer/Controller for 3BCTG, 3rd BCTG 5th Brigade, 75th BCTD conducted a Pre-Deployment Site Survey (PDSS) to prepare for the 11th Military Police Brigade Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) this coming July 2008.

Aquino visited Victory Base Complex and Camp Bucca. Meeting with the 11th MP BDE commander and selected staff of the 300th MP Brigade, he collected detailed data for the upcoming MRX which will cover MP North and South areas of operations. Aquino received training guidance from the outgoing Task Force-134

Commander Maj. Gen. Douglas Stone and the incoming Commander Rear Admiral Wright.

Rear Admiral Wright's philosophy in relation to detainees is...

"The period of detention is a significant engagement between an Iraqi citizen and the coalition. Dignity, respect and rule of law must be played out in action; not just words. Information Operations must be integrated across all detention operations. The guard force must be vigilant to ensure that the detention facility does not become an extremist 'university'".

All TF-134 units provided outstanding assistance in sharing practical experiences, recommending

training topics, providing staff products and raw data to drive a realistic MRX. Extensive historical information was gathered to support the development of trend analysis in a Contemporary Operational Environment (COE) and the conduct of a RIP/TOA to start the MRX.

Aquino acknowledged that the 300th MP BDE staff principals were very pleased with the training they had received from the 5/75 BCTD at Fort Bliss, Texas prior to deploying to Iraq. The 300th MP BDE staff said the 5/75 training was the most realistic, relevant and matched most of the events taking place in Iraq during their deployment.

## Anything else you'd like to share?

Yes, I like to share a quote. Prior to America losing this great patriot in 2001, Retired Master Sergeant Benavidez wrote in his book, Medal of Honor: One Man's Journey from Poverty and Prejudice" these memorable words: "I believe that there is no greater calling for a man or woman to serve in the military of a free nation. I believe that it is a calling that transcends all others because imbedded deep within the soul of every free man or woman in the knowledge that every freedom we have was earned for us by our ancestors, who paid some price for that freedom. Each and every generation must relearn those lessons, and they are best learned by doing. The strength of every nation depends on this transfer of knowledge. Only through the transfer of knowledge from generation to generation will free men survive."



With background view of Saddam Hussien's AL Faw Palace, Regua poses with 104th Division's (Leader Training) Command Sgt. Maj. Ken Howard in Baghdad, Iraq.

Inside the Al Faw Palace, Victory Base, Baghdad in December 2006, Regua sits on Saddam Hussein's palatial chair. The chair was presented to Hussein by former Palestinian Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat.



Visiting Kabul Army Airfield in October 2007 with aviators of the Afghanistan Army Air Corps as they train on their Soviet-era Mi-24 HIND A Gunship.



Meeting with retired Army Gen. Erik K. Shenseki in October 2008 at the Pan-Pacific American Leaders Meeting in Washington D.C.



g. **PERSONAL COURAGE.** Good leaders must have the courage to do right no matter what others think. Leaders must be able to admit their mistakes and say, "I was wrong." You must have the courage to accept the responsibility for failure without blaming superiors or subordinates.

#### **How important is training to you?**

"Training is everything and everything is training." Ensure all assigned tasks are completed to or above the Army standard. After action reviews continue to be an invaluable training tool, even in an office environment.

#### **How should Soldiers interact interpersonally?**

I expect maximum support in upholding the dignity and respect for others. I will not tolerate any type of harassment. I want leaders to be people-oriented who make the welfare of their subordinates a top priority, maintain physical mental and Soldier readiness, and understand that performance counseling is a must. Take care of Families. We enlist Soldiers, but re-enlist Families.

#### **What importance do you place on Soldier recognition?**

Give recognition for a job well done by your Soldiers and civilians. I encourage pats on the back, letters, certificates, and awards. Let our commendations outnumber our criticisms.

#### **What type of leader environment do you want to encourage?**

I want leaders that are self-motivated, plan, and always do the right things. I believe honest mistakes are okay, shortcomings should be addressed privately, strong character is important and should be exhibited by your words and deeds. Leaders serve their Soldiers and Families, their customers and maintain a positive command climate where coaching and mentorship is extended to junior leaders.

#### **What are your views about professional growth?**

There are great opportunities for personal and professional growth for all members of this Division. If we plan efficiently and execute smartly, we will accomplish great things together. We owe this to our Soldiers, our Civilian work force, our Army and to this great country.

#### **Have you served in theater?**

I have been to Iraq twice (December 2006/May 2008) and Afghanistan twice (October 2007/September 2008). Should Lieutenant General Stultz give me the word, I have my A-bag packed and ready to go.

#### **How do you score on the APFT?**

Great question, 300! I have max'ed the APFT three times this past year. I also finished the Army 10-miler this past October in Washington, DC. Given the demanding schedules we all have, I encourage all of you to keep in shape, not only physically, but spiritually as well as mentally.

#### **What do you do outside of commanding the Division?**

I left my civilian job as a Supply Chain Manager 18 months ago. I have worked for high-tech companies in various Purchasing/Material Management positions in the Silicon Valley for the past 25 years. I am a Certified Purchasing Manager. However, my Army duties as a general officer have demanded more time so I got permission from my wife Cirella to have one job, which I thoroughly enjoy. I also serve on two general officer committees; the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee (ARFPC) which is a Title 10 committee reporting directly to the Secretary of the Army. We meet quarterly for three days culminating with an out-brief to the Secretary on areas he can assist with respect to the readiness/mobilization preparedness of the Reserve Components. Secondly, I serve on the DCG, USARC, Maj. Gen. Alan Bell's Transformation General Officer Steering Committee and meet every other month to assist with, well, Army Reserve transformation. Occasionally, I serve on promotion and selection boards at the different US Army Human Resource Command (HRC) locations.

Winter 2008/2009

## Be a Part of an Outstanding Team

Photo and story by Sgt. Maj. Wilbur H. Sampson, 75th BCTD, G4



(From left) Staff Sgt. Daniel Moreno, Sgt. 1st Class Jude Albert, His Eminence Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Staff Sgt. Henry Escobedo, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Tevebaugh and Sgt. 1st Class Toliver Hill pose for a photo at Dr. Michael DeBakey's funeral in July, 2008.

When you enter the office of the 75th BCTD, G4, you will see numerous photos of events that were performed by your Color/Honor Guard.

This group of distinguished Soldiers goes unnoticed for the most part, but their dedication and attention to duty will carry them far.

They have continually impressed bystanders with precision movements, attention to detail and spotless uniforms. The surrounding community constantly calls upon them to strut their stuff at all kinds of events and galas. Just this year they have been invited to cover such events as: Houston Hobby USO, Royal Scots Dragon Ceremony, West Point Society, Beaumont Fallen Police Officer Ceremony, Texas Federation of Women, Splashtown Military Appreciation Day, The Republican Convention and most recently they provided a three day support effort for the late Dr. Michael E. DeBakey, where they were shown on national television, newspapers and the internet.

They have been photographed with such notables as former President George Bush, The Texas State Governor, His Eminence Cardinal Daniel DiNardo and Maj. Gen. Mari K. Eder (DCAR, AR) to name a few.

It's no coincidence that these Soldiers are sought after to perform at these different venues. They do their job with

precision and pride knowing that they represent the 75th BCTD.

Already, we have been asked to perform at events as far out as December. I would like to take this time to publicly thank those Soldiers who have consistently given of their time (even after duty hours), who have never said no (when asked), and made me proud: Sgt. 1st Class Jude Albert, G4  
Sgt. 1st Class Toliver Hill, EO  
Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Tevebaugh, G6  
Staff Sgt. Daniel Moreno, CMD GP  
Staff Sgt. Henry Escobedo, G4

These five Soldiers were always there for each and every event they were asked to perform and demonstrated a sincere interest in the learning and growth of each member of the team.

They have been admired by many over the past two years and the 75th BCTD should be as proud as I to have these Soldiers in its organization.

To the 75th BCTD Color/Honor Guard, let me say, HOOAH!!

If you are interested in becoming a part of the 75th BCTD Color/Honor Guard please contact: Sgt. 1st Class Jude Albert or Sgt. Maj. Wilbur Sampson, 75th BCTD, G4.



# Devotion to Duty Hits Deep in the Heart

by Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman

*The nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten. - Calvin Coolidge*



Sgt. Maj. Wilbur Sampson

**Soldiers receive the coffin of Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Hartley, 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment at the David Wayne Hooks Memorial Airport in Spring, Texas in April, 2008, while performing Casualty Assistance duty.**

The 75th Division has been performing Military Funeral Honors (MFH), Casualty Assistance (CA) and Casualty Notification (CN) for the past two years to all military servicemembers and retirees in Houston and the surrounding area.

In 2007, the division provided service to 21 funerals and by April, 2008, they had provided an additional 25.

According to Col. Robert DeLeon, Casualty

Assistance Officer, the toughest part of the mission is the effect that it leaves on you.

"Pfc. Adam Garcia, age 21 - Iraq - he was a gunner in a convoy. A round of fire hit him in the face... He was the nephew of an officer from the former 2nd Brigade, 3/381st, Maj. Ruby Stewart.

Before he joined the Army, he wanted to be an airborne ranger. He would come out and run with us every morning. That was very touching because the

## What is your vision for the Division?

Simply, "A full-strength division of motivated Soldiers and Civilians imbued with the Warrior Spirit and Army Values who train Soldiers and staffs to execute their wartime mission."

## Would you share with us your leadership philosophy?

America is at war and should expect to remain fully engaged throughout the world for the next several decades in a persistent conflict against an enemy dedicated to U.S. defeat as a nation and eradication as a society. As leaders and Soldiers, being entrusted with the lives of Soldiers is both an honor and awesome responsibility that demands outstanding and competent leadership. To that end, I want you to know exactly what you can expect from me to achieve outstanding leadership and what my expectations are of each Soldier and Civilian in this command:

### 1. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME. I believe that I should:

- \* lead from the front
- \* exemplify the Army Values and Warrior Ethos
- \* demand high standards, from military bearing to training
- \* be fair, ethical and aggressive
- \* visit and participate in training
- \* take care of families and participate in community activities

### 2. WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU. I expect you to:

- \* exemplify the Army Values and Warrior Ethos
- \* be proficient, competent, and get along in a professional manner
- \* be honest, courteous, fair and innovative
- \* meet or exceed all assigned objectives
- \* communicate with your full-time and part-time staff members regularly

### 3. ARMY VALUES. Let me elaborate on the Army values as I see them.

a. **LOYALTY.** This implies loyalty both up and down the chain of command. Stand up for those you lead and defend them against criticism. Enthusiastically implement your superior's decisions without criticism or excuses.

b. **DUTY.** All are to be totally dedicated to accomplishing all assigned as well as implied missions. Train Soldiers for their wartime mission. Never walk away from a deficiency.

c. **RESPECT.** Treat everyone with respect. Don't talk down to or demean others. Respect for others promotes dignity, consideration and fairness.

d. **SELFLESS-SERVICE.** Share hardships and discomfort with your Soldiers. By being selfless, you will gain the respect of superiors and subordinates alike.

e. **HONOR.** Leaders should live by and enforce the codes of truth, honesty, morality, and ethics.

f. **INTEGRITY.** Professional integrity is the basis for both trust and efficiencies. Leaders must cherish integrity and guard it, because if you do not, you will lose the confidence of others.



## Maj. Gen. Regua, Welcome to the 75th BCTD



### Tell us about your family.

I am married to Cirella Regua and live in San Jose, California where I was born and raised as the fourth of seven children. I have four adult children; Daniel, Jason, Sarah, and Ronnie and five grandchildren ranging from eight years old to over a year old.

### What is your educational background?

I was commissioned Air Defense through the ROTC program at Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, where I received a Bachelor of Science in Commerce Degree in Accounting. I also earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Chapman University as well as a Master of Strategic Studies degree from the US Army War College.

### Did you serve on active duty?

I served on active duty as an assault fire platoon leader, tactical control officer, and executive officer for Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Air Defense Artillery (Hawk) in Giessen, Germany from 1977 to 1980. While in Giessen, I was a qualified Allied Air Forces, Central Europe (AAFCE) Battery Control Evaluator and evaluated the readiness of Dutch, German and other US Army Hawk units. We called these exercises TAC Evals, short for tactical evaluations. I didn't go thru any formal evaluator training but we did good work. I also served as an Operations Research System Analyst in the US ROLAND Project Management Office at the US Army Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

### What other positions have you held in the Army Reserve?

Prior to being selected as the Commanding General of the 75th BCTD, I served as the Commanding General for the 104th Division (Institutional Training) located at Vancouver Barracks, Washington for just under a year. Additionally, I served as both the Assistant Division Commander (Operations) and the Chief of Staff of the 104th Division. Prior to joining the 104th Division (IT) in July 2003, I was the Assistant Chief of Staff, G3 (Operations and Training), 91st Division (Training Support) headquartered at Camp Parks, Dublin, California, where I was mobilized the first half of 2003 in support in Operation Noble Eagle. I have held positions of increased responsibility in the Army Reserve to include; Company Commander, Battalion Operations Officer, Battalion Executive Officer, Division Training and Operations Officer, Team Chief of a Field Artillery Observer/Controller Training section, Battalion Commander in 91st Division (Exercise), Garrison Support Unit (GSU) Commander in the 63rd Regional Readiness Command, and Assistant Chief of Staff, G1, 91st Division (TS).



Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman

Keyris Tamez (right), her family members and Soldiers from G4 pose with a photo of Eddie Tamez.

Soldier was getting ready to join the Army," said DeLeon.

The effect the Soldiers have on the family members of the deceased also leaves an impression.

"It is very traumatic for the families because they have lost a loved one. Families cannot think very clearly, so we need to provide them with guidance and assistance. When you are performing these duties, you become a part of their family and it gives you a sense of honor because if it happens to you, you would be looking for the same," he said.

Apr. 27, 2007, Spc. Eddie D. Tamez, 21, of Galveston, Texas, was killed in Fallujah, Iraq supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was assigned to the 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga. He died of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations. Maj. Joseph Ramos was designated the CAO for the Soldier's family.

"I did not anticipate the emotional roller coaster that I would be put-on immediately upon meeting the spouse and family. The range of emotions remains difficult to explain even now. I learned very quickly

that I had to establish specific objectives at each visit in order to provide effective assistance.

In the end, the bond that formed between the family and I was one of openness and trust. I learned that the family relies on the CAO to be "up-front" about information regardless of how difficult it might be to deliver the information. After just a couple of days, I learned that if I knew of a specific event coming-up involving the spouse and family, I would begin to prepare them mentally for the event.

This proved to be very effective in that it allowed the spouse and family to gradually accept the fact that some difficult information was about to be delivered or a difficult event was about to take place.

My specific experience with CAO duty taught me that providing the spouse with as much information about the process in advance was very helpful. This methodology allowed the spouse to participate in the decision making process and feel that she was an integral part of the whole process," said Ramos.

Keyris Tamez, 20, Eddie's surviving wife, wrote the following letter in appreciation for the support to her family.



To: Col. Robert DeLeon

I want to thank you for putting two great men next to me during this very difficult time.

I want to thank you for putting such a well rounded, supportive, understanding and professional major by my side.

Maj. Ramos is far more than a major to me. His professionalism helped me make my husband's goodbye the most memorable and respectable event and I thank you for putting Chief Hartman on this case with Maj. Ramos.

Chief Hartman was so supportive and truly professionally outstanding.

Both their expertise helped me so much give my husband, Eddie, the honor and recognition he deserved. Thank you a million times for making that possible.

Mr. DeLeon thank you so much for everything. My gratitude is endless. I don't know where I would be right now if it wasn't for all the support Maj. Ramos has given me.

You truly blessed me with these two great men. I want to say both these men worked so hard for me and my husband.

I truly don't know where to begin to thank you. Maj. Ramos has gone far beyond his duty to help us all out any way possible. He took care of us all and took care of business so professionally, its admirable. He not

only excelled in his expertise, but he wore that uniform with honor and truly set a high standard for the Army.

Everyone was truly amazed at his dedication and contribution toward making this event perfect for Eddie. Thank you so much for putting him next to us. I know Eddie was proud.

Mr. DeLeon, Maj. Ramos' efforts and dedication truly brings me to tears as I am writing this letter because I know my Eddie is so proud and thankful for you and Maj. Ramos and Chief Hartman.

You all have worked so hard, thank you so much. Eddie always looked up to people like you all and I know he would have been proud to have known you

all, so thank you once again. Eddie always admired strong leaders. Maj. Ramos has taught me to take it one day at a time, his support and advice has been crucial to me making it everyday.

Eddie meant the world to me and this tragedy has been the most devastating event in my life, it has scarred me for life.

Maj. Ramos has helped me so much with his advice and he has helped me take care of business when I am not strong. Thank you so much for bringing me such a strong, supportive major during the most difficult time of my life.

Thank you for all your hard work and understanding toward this whole situation. I could not go on any more days without thanking you for putting Maj. Ramos by my side, I don't know where I'd be.

May God bless your home and family everyday and may only happiness and well-being come your way. I hope to one day have the pleasure to meet you and thank you for putting Maj. Ramos by my side.

On behalf of the Tamez-Dunn family, I would also like to extend my gratitude. Thank you a million times once again.

Sincerely,  
Keyris M. Tamez

It is the support and dedication of outstanding Soldiers who perform tasks of this

nature that give meaning to duty.

"Performing duty as a Casualty Assistance Officer is an honor. From my perspective, the Casualty Assistance Officer is responsible for being the symbol of all that the deceased Soldier stood for. To this end, the CAO must be ready to work tirelessly for the surviving spouse and family. The CAO must be able to show the spouse and family that the country truly appreciates the service his/her spouse performed for our country," said Ramos.

"It's hard to express with words. Sense of Honor. Heroes are the reason we are a free country and we will never forget that," said DeLeon.

**Thank you so much for bringing me such a strong, supportive major during the most difficult time of my life!**

and Army regulations from Fort Sam and developed his own training module and exam sheets tailored specifically for the 75th Division's role.

The training lasts two days and consists of actual hands on training equipped with coffin, flag and bugle. So far, 26 Soldiers have completed MFH training.

It is a simple ceremony consisting of a two to three man team. They do not perform a 21 gun salute but they do perform honors for cremations.

Albert has been on the team since the beginning and has never missed an opportunity to train more Soldiers on this task.

"I do it because it is an honor to train Soldiers and ensure that they know and understand the importance of what we do and why we do it... to pay our last respects to fallen Soldiers for their service and our nation," he said.

Albert not only devotes his time to MFH duties, but also assists the division as a casualty assistance officer and casualty notification officer and performs command Color Guard duties and acts as NCOIC of the Joint Services Color Guard at just about every ceremony requested of him.

He trains with his team of color guards constantly because events come up all the time.

"I want them to do it right. I want to prepare Soldiers for what needs to happen so we can pay our last respects and honor the Soldiers memory," he said.

Those who work with Albert see the difference he makes to the unit and have many great things to say about him.

"He's STRACK, focused, professional. He goes far and beyond his duties and responsibilities. He divulges 100%-200% to see things are done professionally. It would be difficult to find a replacement that can meet all these criteria," said Col. Robert

DeLeon, Casualty Assistance Officer for the division.

An Army leader is anyone who by virtue of an assumed role or assigned responsibility inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals. Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the chain of command to pursue actions, focus thinking and shape decisions for the better good of the organization. FM 6-22, 1-2

Albert spends hours of his extra time preparing. His extra duties require that he be constantly ready to tackle whatever request is asked of him, be it MFH, CAO or Color Guard. He must make sure that his uniforms are always clean, professional and ready to slip on. And he must make sure the team is ready to go at all times as well.

Because he has so many responsibilities, he carries a government cell phone so that he can be ready in a moment's notice. He also maintains a pool of skillfully trained professionals that he personally trained to assist him.

"I have a lot of pride and take it very seriously. I never want to take for granted what we have

here and I always want to remember those that have sacrificed their lives to protect us. It is the least we can do," said Albert.

Albert works as the divisions Supply Sergeant. He has been married for seven years and has two children. He has been in the Army 13 years.

Why is he such a dedicated Soldier?

"Sense of Honor, Beauty and Country," said DeLeon.

"Sense of Pride. The thing I love the most is the end product. Showing up in a professional military manner and seeing the appreciation like a smile. I love the sense of pride, the satisfaction of having accomplished the mission.



Graduates of the January 2009 military funeral honors class pose for a class photo with their instructors. Staff Sgt. Matthew Goss (left), NCOIC Sgt. 1st Class Jude Albert, Staff Sgt. Monique Young, Master Sgt. Ramon Valadez, Staff Sgt. Zarkpa Asloan, Cpt. Jill Keim, First Sgt. Troy Gentry, Sgt. Juan Casiano and OIC Lt. Colonel David Rainey.



# Motivated by Pride and Honor

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman



**Sgt. 1st Class Jude Albert (left) shows Master Sgt. Keith Fetters, 1st Brigade (BCST) and other Soldiers in the division how to properly fold a flag during Military Funeral Honors training at the Sergeant Major Macario Garcia Reserve Center in Houston, Texas.**

"He's a Super Soldier," stated HHC 1st Sgt. Tess Spagna.

In 2007, the division provided service to 21 funerals and by April, 2008, they had provided an additional 25.

One Soldier, Sgt. 1st Class Jude Albert, received the task of training the entire division on how to conduct Military Funeral Honors (MFH).

Prior to joining the 75th Division, Albert completed MFH training with the 90th RRC's MFHs training

team. He was a member of the 377th Theater Support Command Color Guard and served as the NCOIC for the Joint Services Color Guard for the 377th TSC.

Lt. Col. Jon Elliot serves as the OIC of MFH and Lt. Colonel David Rainey serves as the OIC of the training.

"When he (Elliot) found out I was here he entrusted me to tailor my skills to train members in the 75th Division," stated Albert.

To improve on his skills, Albert gathered videos

# 75th Soldiers Move to Ellington Field



**The 75th Battle Command Training Division Headquarters and 1st Brigade moved to the Armed Forces Reserve Center located at 14555 Scholl Street, Houston, Texas in November 2008. The 173,000 sq. ft., \$35 million dollar facility occupies over 43 acres and serves as a Joint Reserve Center located at Ellington Field. Marine Corps and Naval Reserve units will also occupy offices within the facility.**



**USAR occupants include the 4005th United States Army Hospital, 1st Battalion, 289th Regiment, 416th Engineer Battalion and the 10th Battalion, 95th Division, Institutional Training. Phase II scheduled for 2011, will include the construction of a 43,000 sq. ft. Battle Projection Center.**



# Hearts and Minds

## *Nurturing a Nation*

by Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman



Villagers gather to get their cattle vaccinated in Te-Tugu, Uganda in January, 2008.

Editor's Note: Staff Sgt. Suzy Hoffman, a public affairs NCO with the 75th BCTD deployed to Africa in January 2008 to cover various civil affairs teams throughout Uganda and Djibouti for the United States Army Reserve Command. This story is one example of the impact Civil Affairs missions have in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

**H**ot, sweaty and hardworking. Those are just three adjectives that do not even begin to tell the story about a team of Soldiers who work long, hard hours in the African sun to accomplish their mission - fighting the Global War on Terrorism.

The 350th Civil Affairs Command (CAC) - Functional Specialty Team (FST) from Pensacola, Fla., has toured 10 countries over the past 12 months assessing the needs of African communities and implementing a Veterinary Civic Action Program (VETCAP) and/or a Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) under the auspices of the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA).

"We've been assigned missions in over 40 sites just in Northern Uganda," said Lt. Col. Jeffery Swan, a CA officer with the 350th CAC and a U.S. Army Reserve Soldier.

The teams travel to African villages, assess what needs the community has and then nominate them to receive veterinary and medical assistance under the VETCAP or humanitarian assistance under the MEDCAP. They write-up proposals and detailed plans for the projects, then provide supplies and medication and assist the communities in the execution of the plans.

"We travel to remote areas and perform veterinary and public health missions. The people depend on their livestock for their livelihood, which has a significant impact on human health. It is important for the Global War on Terrorism because it alleviates the underlying problems that could cause conflict and allow terrorists to move into the area," said Lt. Col. John Hustleby, team chief for the 350th CAC FST.

Under the VETCAP, the team assists the local veterinarians and students with combating diseases such as trypanosomiasis, zoonotic, rabies, influenza, Newcastle disease and tick-borne diseases by providing vaccinations, vitamins, deworming and medical treatment for their livestock and pets.

The FST divides into two groups and visits two sites a day for a one month period administering treatment in the sweltering heat and stench. They tackle these conditions with only the rations and veterinary supplies that fit into their vehicles. Because the teams willingly subject themselves to some diseases for which there are no vaccines, they must be admired for the smiles on their faces and for the way they play with the local children. They not only do this mission because it is their job, they do it because they want to.

"They (indigenous population) need help making a comeback in these war-torn areas from past rebel activity. This is a great humanitarian action because a lot of the diseases these animals have can be passed onto humans, like rabies and the Human Sleeping Sickness," stated Swan.

The Human Sleeping Sickness, or trypanosomiasis, is a parasitic disease in people and animals caused by protozoa (genus *Trypanosoma*) and transmitted by the tsetse fly. The disease is endemic in certain regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, affecting roughly 36 countries and 60 million people. It is estimated that 50,000 to 70,000 people are infected at any one time.

"It's tiresome at times, but the end effect is always good. We are showing them the other side of things. They are not used to having help. It's a good feeling. We rescue cattle, assist the vets and get dirty. Everything has its flaws, but it's a good mission. We are helping people, we are making a difference. It gives you a warm and fuzzy feeling," said Sgt. 1st Class Jerome Marco Jackson, specialty civil affairs sergeant for the 350th CAC, USAR.

This past year the team has administered VETCAP aid to over 16,500 animals in Northern Uganda alone.

"The people appreciate what we're doing and just need some resources. I feel blessed to have such a great team. They're a great group who work very hard," stated Hustleby.

The 350th has over 1,100 personnel under its command, mostly Army Reserve Soldiers whose civilian expertise is needed to support military efforts abroad. The 350th is part of the U.S. Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (USACAPOC) at Fort Bragg, NC. Civil Affairs Soldiers are the Army's experts on working with civilian authorities and setting up civilian governments in the wake of wars and natural disasters. The command was created to support the U.S. Southern Command.