



TCM-ABCT/BFSB
Fort Benning, Georgia

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BFSB Monthly

Director's Message

By COL Gary R. Nicoson
Director, TCM-ABCT and BFSB

BFSB Community,

Greetings again to the Battlefield Surveillance Brigade Community of Practice! This August BFSB Monthly continues to inform you about relevant current BFSB activities. Our main effort this month centered on the 504 BFSB Post Deployment Lessons Learned Week which ran 21 – 23 August and culminated with the 504 BFSB change of command. 504 BFSB, fresh off of their post deployment block leave presented an invaluable look at BFSB operations, their METT-TC factors, and a Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leader, Personnel and Facilities (DOTMLPF) assessment of the BFSB. Keeping in mind many are working with tight travel budgets, 504 BFSB hosted a SIPR based BFSB WfF on line symposium. You can review this ninety minute presentation using a SIPR computer and SIPR Defense Connect Online. A link to the recording can be found on the BFSB Warfighter Forum homepage on AKO-S at <https://www.us.army.smil.mil/suite/page/21502>. My team is “analyzing and fusing” the data from this great lessons learned week and will report out to you in September.

You will also find in this BFSB Monthly articles on COL James D. Edwards’ retirement from the U.S. Army, the 519th Military Intelligence Battalion’s NTC rotation, 71st BFSB Soldiers in The Horn of Africa, a 297th BFSB deployment to Mongolia in support of Khaan Quest 12, and the 560th BFSB in Kosovo, validating my conclusion that there are not many places in the world BFSB Troopers turn up that surprise me.

I’d like to farewell and wish God Speed to two members of our BFSB community and welcome a new member. COL Jim Edwards, whose command tenure included deploying and commanding the first BFSB employed in Afghanistan, retired on 31 July. COL Gary Johnston, just left command of 504 BFSB and is now the Deputy Chief of Staff, G2, XVIII Airborne Corps. I’d also like to welcome to our community the new Commander, 504 BFSB, COL Chuck Hensley.

In closing, I’d like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the sacrifices, innovations and successes made by members of Combined Task Force Viper and 504 BFSB. Welcome home! I also ask that you please keep in mind those BFSB Troopers from 71 BFSB, 201 BFSB, and 560 BFSB who are now deployed and accomplishing key missions for their supported commands.

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Disclaimer

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Note: Please contact me if you'd like to submit an article in the newsletter!

142nd BFSB Shoulder Sleeve Insignia



Description: On a light blue circular embroidered item, a yellow star polygon of eight points, the sides arched inwardly, surmounted by a white star polygon, the same shape, displaying a red diagonal cross, surmounted by two silver gray diagonally placed swords, points down; all within a 1/8 inch (.32 cm) light blue border. The overall diameter is 3 inches (7.62 cm).

Symbolism: The eight pointed star polygon, symbolic of Helios the Greek God of the Sun, who could see and hear everything, denotes alertness. The red diagonal cross of the white star polygon signifies the Alabama State flag, the home state of the Brigade. The crossed swords suggest the aggressive and protective requirements and the elements of physical danger inherent in the mission. The following colors represent the branches that form the Brigade: oriental blue refers to the Military Intelligence functions and yellow and red indicates the Cavalry capabilities to accomplish its reconnaissance mission.

Background: The shoulder sleeve insignia was approved on 3 March 2011. (TIOH Dwg. No. A-1-1045)

This information can also be found on The Institute of Heraldry website, [here!](#)

First battlefield surveillance brigade commander retires

COL James D. Edwards, the commander of the Army's first battlefield surveillance brigade, the 525th, retired on July 26th during a ceremony at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

COL Edwards' biographical information:

Colonel James D. Edwards enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves in 1981 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in Military Intelligence (MI) from the University of Virginia in 1987.

His professional education includes the MI officer basic and advanced courses, the Post Graduate Intelligence Program, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff Officers Course (CGSC), the U.S. Air Force Command and Staff College (distinguished graduate), and the National War College (distinguished graduate). He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Commerce and Masters degrees in Business Administration, Strategic Intelligence, Military Operational Art, and National Security Studies.

Colonel Edwards' assignments include duty as Assistant S-2, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry in Germany; Ground Surveillance Radar Platoon Leader, B Company, 501st MI Battalion in Germany and deployed to Southwest Asia for Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM; Chief, J-2 Current Operations, Joint Task Force - Panama; Commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army South at Fort Clayton, Panama; S-2, 128th Aviation Brigade, Panama; Chief, Joint Intelligence, 1st Battlefield Coordination Detachment, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Analysis and Control Element (ACE) Chief, 82nd Airborne Division; S-3, 504th MI Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas; Chief of G2 Plans and Exercises, G-2 Operations and the Corps ACE at III Corps, Fort Hood, Texas; Commander, 202nd MI Battalion, Fort Gordon, Georgia and deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of Southwest Asia in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) and ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF); Deputy G-3 (Forward), U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, deployed to Iraq for OIF;

and G2 of U.S. Army Forces Command. He assumed command of the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade (BFSB) at Fort Bragg, NC in August of 2009 and completed its transformation into the Army's first BFSB. 525 BfSB deployed to Afghanistan in support of OEF in July 2010 and formed the basis of Combined Task Force Lightning.



COL James D. Edwards

On 23 September 2011, COL Edwards relinquished command of the 525th BfSB to COL Xavier T. Brunson. COL Edwards' next duty assignment was at Fort Bragg, NC, as the Deputy Chief of Staff, G3 XVIII Airborne Corps. COL Edwards' awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal (with oak leaf cluster), Purple Heart, Combat Action Badge and the Senior Parachutist Badge. He has been honored to lead units awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Valorous Unit Award in combat.

Colonel Edwards was born at Fort Hood, Texas. He is married to Mrs. Silke Schwarz Edwards, a former MI officer and previous Adjutant of the 525 MI Brigade, the forerunner of the 525 BfSB. They have two sons, James and Duncan.

504th BFSB Lessons Learned Conference

The 504th BFSB Lessons Learned Conference took place from 21-23 August in Fort Hood, Texas. A detailed report on the event will be published in the September edition of the BFSB Monthly Newsletter, and will be posted on the BFSB Warfighter Forum AKO Homepage once it becomes available.

On 23 Aug, a BFSB Warfighter Forum Symposium was broadcast over Defense Connect Online—Secret (DCO-S). A link to the recording can be found on the BFSB Warfighter Forum homepage on AKO-S. Please go to page 5 of this newsletter to view the links to the BFSB Warfighter Forum on AKO and AKO-S.



CJTF-1 Leaders Brigadier General Funk, Brigadier General Gedney, and Command Sergeant Major Sasser present SPC Daniels, of Bravo Company 109th Military Intelligence Battalion, with a Purple Heart and Combat Action Badge. While on a mission outside the wire in Afghanistan, SPC Daniels was shot in the helmet, which stopped the bullet and saved his life. He is currently in treatment and monitoring, which is going well. He is expected to make a full recovery and return to duty soon. Many of our Soldiers, like SPC Daniels, serve on missions with maneuver units outside their bases and this event highlights the life-saving importance of our superior equipment and training (photo from 109th MI BN Facebook page).

2012 Maneuver Conference

The 2012 Maneuver Conference takes place at the Columbus Convention and Trade Center in Columbus, Georgia from 17-20 September.

This year's conference focuses on the moral, physical, and cognitive components of Soldier, leader, and organizational development and performance. This is essential to prepare and employ the Army across the range of military operations. At the Maneuver Center of Excellence, we are emphasizing these innovations in our training and educational programs of instruction. These innovations are improving training and education in the areas of counter-improvised explosive device detection, cultural understanding, advanced situational awareness, Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness, immersive learning, and understanding complex environments. These recent initiatives are enhancing leaders' ability to think critically and improving Soldier combat effectiveness.

For those who are unable to travel to Columbus to participate in the event, several of the sessions will be broadcast over Defense Connect Online. "Guest" log-ins will not be accepted by the room administrator, and each online participant will need to log-in using a DCO account. Users will only be allowed to chat, since video and microphone capabilities will be disabled by the room administrator.

Registration, along with additional information on the event, can be found by going to the Maneuver Conference page on the Fort Benning website, or by clicking on this link: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mcoe/maneuverconference/>.

If you're a member of one of the battlefield surveillance brigades and plan on attending any of the events of the 2012 Maneuver Conference, please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist you on your trip to Columbus, Georgia.

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CPT Tori Schmidt, physician assistant, 297th BFSB, Alaska Army National Guard, treats a patient at the medical clinic as part of the Medical Humanitarian Civic Action Outreach Project during Khaan Quest 12 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (photo by SGT Edward Egerton, 134th Public Affairs Detachment).

Multinational partners conduct staff training

Story by SGT Edward Egerton,
134th Public Affairs Detachment

FIVE HILLS TRAINING AREA, Mongolia – A conglomeration of U.S., Mongolian, and various international forces took part in a staff exercise (STAFFEX) during Khaan Quest 12 to enhance their ability to operate in a multinational environment.

Khaan Quest is a regularly scheduled, multinational exercise sponsored by U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) and hosted annually by the Mongolian Armed Forces. Khaan Quest 12 is the latest in a continuing series of exercises designed to promote regional peace and security. This exercise marks the tenth iteration of this regionally significant training event. Among those on hand for this year’s exercise was Secretary of the Army John McHugh.

In a world of different cultures, customs, and languages, learning to transcend these differences and work together for a common cause is imperative to the success of any multinational endeavor.

“This exercise gives us an opportunity to train in an environment that exposes us to different ways of conducting peacekeeping operations,” said Maj. Mark Binggeli, executive officer, 1st Battalion, 297th Cavalry (Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron), Alaska Army National Guard. “It benefits us in getting a whole new perspective.”

“The importance of Khaan Quest,” said McHugh, “is we’ve found over the last ten years in Iraq and Afghanistan that coalition building and partnership is the best way to build capacity and capability.”

In the staff exercise, the various participants are tested and trained by putting them in a fictional

“It brings our Soldiers together with Soldiers of other nations. This is how you make friends.” - Hon. John McHugh, Secretary of the Army



Click on the image to read an article highlighting Soldiers in the 67th BFSB, Nebraska Army National Guard (on page 15).

scenario where they have to plan missions, react to situations that arise, and interact with external entities like the media and the Red Cross. Elements of the exercise are tasked with role-playing as these external people and organizations.

“The purpose here is to exercise the staff and allow them to work with government and non-government organizations,” said 1st Sgt. Stephan Young, operations non-commissioned officer, 1st Battalion 297th Cavalry (Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron) Alaska Army National Guard.

As the situations unfold in the fictional nation created for the exercise, the staff must navigate through various problems to meet the needs of the nation’s population, explained Binggeli.

The complexity of the individual pieces moving simultaneously as the fictionalized scenario evolves challenges the staff exercise participants to consider potential situations that may otherwise be overlooked. This kind of training gives the staff the ability to anticipate and prepare for conceivable variables in future peacekeeping missions.

Another benefit to multinational training is that it helps build stronger relationships between nations. In this year’s exercise, more than 10 nations have come to train together in the vast countryside of Mongolia, strengthening the bonds between one another.

“It brings our soldiers together with soldiers of other nations,” said McHugh. “This is how you make friends.”

UPDATE: Click [here](#) for an update on the 297th BFSBs deployment to Mongolia.



Above: Djiboutian Armed Forces and U.S. Army soldiers from Task Force Raptor, 3rd Squadron, 124th Cavalry Regiment, 71st BFSB, Texas Army National Guard, participate in a night vision goggle best practices exchange June 23-26, 2012. The Texas National Guardsmen participate in various military-to-military training sessions in support of Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa, whose mission is to strengthen partner nation military capacity in East Africa (U.S. Air Force photo by TSGT Daniel St. Pierre).

Texas National Guardsmen, East Africa militaries shed light on NVGs

*Story by SSG Malcolm McClendon,
Task Force Raptor (3-124 Cav)*

EAST AFRICA – U.S. Army National Guardsmen deployed to the Horn of Africa exchanged best practices in three different night vision goggle, or NVG, familiarization seminars hosted this summer by two East African nation militaries.

SFC Andrew Filbeck and SPC Rumaldo Hinojosa, Task Force Raptor, 3rd Squadron, 124th Cavalry Regiment, 71st BFSB, Texas Army National Guard, were invited by the Kenya Armed Services to participate in an NVG exchange May 28 to June 1 and later invited by the Djibouti Armed Forces to two additional NVG seminars held June 11-12 and June 23-26.

The seminars included the exchange of best practices on the maintenance and usage of the night vision system.

“We started with the basics of the goggles: how they work, the functions available, how to adjust the settings for best results, and how to wear them properly,” said Filbeck, a platoon sergeant in Charlie Troop. “We also discussed the limitations of the NVGs and how to work around them.”

At the end of each seminar the soldiers participated in a practical exercise to apply what they had learned.

“Each exchange ended with all of us putting on the NVGs and conducting a series of events,” Filbeck said. “It gave us a chance to see how well we retained the information shared.”

Filbeck said he knows firsthand the value NVGs bring to men and women in combat environments...(Read more: <http://www.dvidshub.net/news/93580/texas-national-guardsmen-east-africa-militaries-shed-light-nvgs#.UDwZvqCVAy0#ixzz24nbR4VC5>).

BFSB Warfighter Forum (WFF) Links

- [BFSB Wff Homepage](#) (Includes links to BFSB unit homepages)
- [BFSB Collaboration Site](#) (CAC required to register)
- [BFSB Warfighter Forum on Facebook.](#)
- SIPR info: The BFSB Warfighter Forum on AKO-S can be found by going to <https://www.us.army.smil.mil/suite/page/21502>.

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TF Thunder prepares for OEF deployment at the National Training Center

Other WfF Newsletters

Story by 1LT Lindsay Roman,
519th Military Intelligence Battalion

FORT IRWIN, California – The 519th Military Intelligence Battalion, Task Force (TF) “Thunder”, participated in National Training Center (NTC) rotation 12-09 in support of 1st Brigade, 1st Armor Division (1/1 AD), Fort Bliss, Texas, from July 27 through Aug. 25.

The installation’s vast landscape, scorching heat, and real Afghan role players will help to improve the awareness and knowledge these soldiers will use when the battalion deploys to Afghanistan in early 2013.

During the grueling seven days of Reception, Staging, Onward-movement & Integration, the unit prepared to head into what they call “The Box,” a highly realistic training environment.

The technical and intelligence collection teams went through Situational Training Exercises (STX) while the battalion’s headquarters supported 1 AD, serving as the rotational division Headquarters, and 1/1 AD as the battle space integrator.

These STX lanes provided prime opportunity to train signals, human, and counter-intelligence tasks with ever increasing difficulty and complexity as the unit partnered with U.S. and Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) security elements.

This operational environment created by the expert trainers at NTC provided the right stimulus for the soldiers that operate on the battalion’s multi-functional, low level voice intercept, human intelligence, and counter-intelligence teams; in addition to exercising the battalion headquarters, subsequent intelligence collection during force-on-force provided maneuver battalions valuable practice with assets that will support them down range.

“Our relationship with 1/1 AD commanders are critical so we put our teams with the same battalions in training that they’ll support in Afghanistan,” said Lt. Col. Kevin A. McAninch, Commander of the 519th. “We began our partnership with 1/1 AD in January 2012 and sent a team to support 3-41 Infantry during their Iron Focus exercise. This set the foundation to build the team for combat in support of Col. Adgie, commander of 1st Brigade.”

In all, the NTC training environment – a world-class facility and capability – will hone TF Thunder from the individual to the collective level. “NTC was tough, realistic, and worth every effort we put into it. It is our Army’s premier training venue and we’re fortunate to test ourselves here in preparation for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF),” said McAninch. “Every day we learn something about the employment of our task force while also building leaders ready for the rigors of combat. NTC was top-notch.”



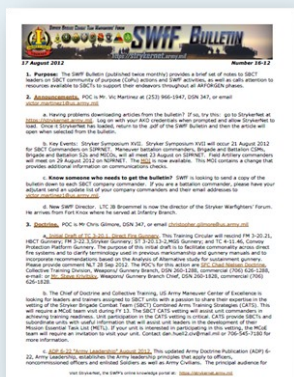
Soldiers of the 519th Military Intelligence Battalion worked hand and hand with the ANSF while they conducted movement drill during situational training exercises at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., Aug. 8 2012.

The deployment to NTC was also historic.

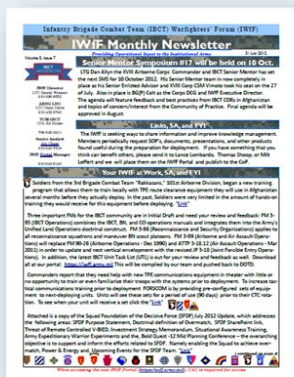
“I’m told we’re the first MI Battalion in over 5 years to come through a NTC rotation” added McAninch. “I find that surprising and only hope we find a way to add other Multi-functional Brigade (MfB) Battalions in future rotations.”

“What I want to do is take the lessons learned here and not make the same mistakes down range,” said CPT Rolando Gutierrez, Commander of Charlie Company, 519th Military Intelligence Battalion. Ultimately, the resources of the National Training Center coupled with being a part of the 1/1 AD team have prepared TF Thunder and they are more ready than when they arrived.

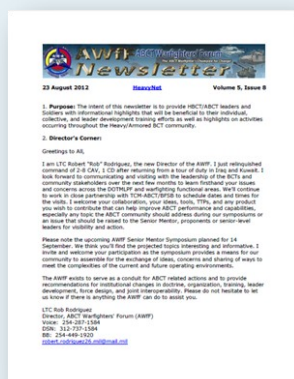
Editor’s note: 525th BFSB Soldiers from the 319th MI BN and 1-38 CAV were also conducting training during this time at Camp Bullis, Texas.



SWfF Newsletter (17 Aug 12)



IWfF Newsletter (31 Jul 12)



AWfF Newsletter (23 Aug 12)



MNBG E conducts soldier & NCO of the rotation boards

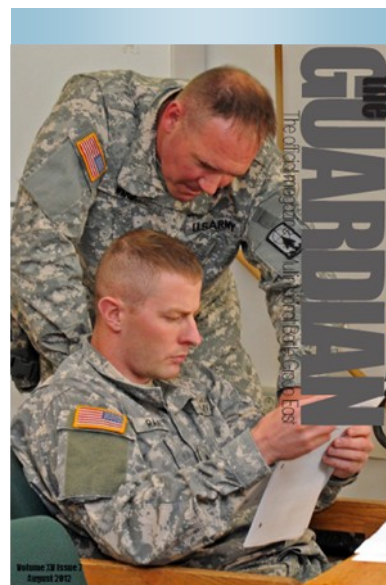
Story by SFC James Wagner,
172nd Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo-Multinational Battle Group East (MNBG E) put forward the best of its junior enlisted and non-commissioned officer (NCO) force with soldier and NCO of the Rotation boards conducted Aug. 18-21 at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

NCO honors went to SSG Matthew Eubank of the U.S. Contingent (U.S. COY), while SPC Joshua Ludecke of the Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT) took soldier of the rotation honors.

Runners-up in the soldier (E-4 and below) category were SPCs Jason Cormier and Kyle Black of the U.S. COY; runners-up in the NCO (E-5 & E-6) category were SSG Timothy Bailey from Task Force Aviation and SSG Jeffrey Peets of the LMT.

According to Command Sgt. Maj. Bradley J. Shields, MNBG- E Command Sergeant Major, it was a very competitive board and he congratulated the efforts of all who participated, as well as their sponsors who helped ready them...Read [MORE](#).



Click above to download The Guardian for more articles on the 3-108th Cav.

"Our soldiers and NCOs continue to demonstrate that they are some of the most professional, disciplined and hard working Soldiers within the battle group." - LTC Lynch, Cdr, 3-108th Cav



560th BFSB Soldiers SSG Matthew Eubank, left, and SPC Kyle Black, both with the Multinational Battle Group East's (MNBG E) U.S. Contingent (U.S. COY), consult a road map in the pre-dawn hours before a ruck march, Aug. 21, 2012. Eubank was named the MNBG E NCO of the Rotation while Black was selected 2nd runner-up in the soldier category. Both are deployed to Kosovo with the Georgia Army National Guard's 3rd Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment. U.S. Army soldiers MNBG E participated in the soldier and NCO of the rotation board at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Aug. 18-21, 2012. The competitors, selected from winners of their respective unit's quarterly boards, vied for top honors in a number of events designed to test their knowledge and competence in common Army skills, including: physical fitness, counseling, weapons proficiency, land navigation, first aid and call for fire.



Upcoming Events

- 14 Sep: AWfF Symposium. To download a copy of the MOI, click [here](#).
- 2012 Maneuver Conference, 17-20 Sep at the Iron Works Convention Center in Columbus, Georgia (see page 3 for more details)
- 10 Oct: IWfF Symposium

CATR representatives at the Maneuver Conference

The Close Access Target Reconnaissance (CATR) program will have a display booth at the 2012 Maneuver Conference scheduled for September 18-19, 2012 at the Iron Works Convention Center in Columbus, GA. The Convention Center is at 801 Front Street between 8th and 9th streets in downtown Columbus. There will be a group of CATR Field Service Representative (FSRs) present to answer questions or demonstrate CATR equipment at the event. Please stop by and see us at the location.

If you have any questions about the CATR program, please contact one of the POCs on page 5 of this newsletter.





More photos...



Page 8 photos (from top to bottom): Soldiers from C Troop (ABN)(LRS), 3-124 Cav, 71st BFSB, listen to a class given during a French Desert Survival Course while deployed to The Horn of Africa; Mongolian state honor guard members perform a pass and review during the Khaan Quest 2012 closing ceremony held at the Mongolian Armed Forces Peace Support Operations Training Center near Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Aug. 23, 2012 (photo by SGT Michelle Brown, 134th Public Affairs Detachment, Alaska Army National Guard); HHC, 502nd Military Intelligence Battalion, 201st BFSB Soldiers who were part of a convoy between Spin Boldak and KAF in Afghanistan.

Page 9 photos (top-left): 519th Military Intelligence Battalion, 525th BFSB, was the first military intelligence battalion in over 5 years to take part in a rotation at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, California. Click on the picture to watch a video of the unit's training; (bottom-left) Soldiers of B Troop, 1-38 CAV and HHT, 1-38 CAV conducted training at Camp Bullis focusing on tasks such as zeroing, M4/M9 qualification, shotgun familiarization, CQM, and Team Live fire; (top-right) PFC Payne-Head, of C Company, 109th Military Intelligence Battalion, 201st BFSB received her Combat Action Badge, which she earned in response to enemy actions while deployed to Afghanistan; (bottom-right) Members of 3rd Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, 560th BFSB, Georgia Army National Guard, conduct crowd and riot control (CRC) training with members of the Moroccan army at Camp Nothing Hill, Kosovo (U.S. Army photos by SPC Leland White).