



The Vanguards Roll Call

Monthly Publication

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Photos of Vanguard Soldiers in Grafenwoehr
- New Battalion Chaplain introduces himself
- A little history of 18th Infantry Regiment



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Vanguard 6

Hello Vanguard Soldiers and Family members. I want to welcome you to our first battalion newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you informed as to what it is we've done and what it is we'll be doing in the months to come. We'll introduce new members of our team and farewell others. The companies will submit articles highlighting their key events.

We've been very busy since April. We completed our first gunnery density. Through the hard work of the Soldiers each company met or exceeded every battalion and brigade qualification standard. Charlie company then went to Russia and represented the United States by marching in



**2-18th IN BN Commander
LTC Matthew L. Eichburg**

the Russian Day of Victory Parade. They were the first US Soldiers in history to march in Red Square. Just prior to leave the medics took part in Expert Field Medical training with 4 of them earning the coveted badge. The battalion took a much deserved leave in June. Seventy-two hours after leave ended in July, we

started Platoon Situational Training Exercises (STX) in Baumholder. The company leadership did a fantastic job implementing the 8 Step Training Model which resulted in outstanding platoon collective training. We all improved dramatically. During platoon STX, the staff and I participated in the Brigade War Fighter Exercise (WFX) and made great strides in improving our command and control capability. We're in gunnery again now through the third week in September when we'll come back for a week before training in Hohenfels from 01-27 Oct with the battalion home by 29 Oct.

I can't tell you how proud I am of our Soldiers and our Families, without whom nothing would be possible. Thank you and God bless.

Vanguard 7

Hello to the Vanguard Soldier's and families. I can't express how proud I am to be part of this great Infantry Battalion. 2-18 IN has been and will continue to be the 170th IBCT's example of professionalism. Our standards of discipline and conduct are quite high, but achievable. This above all sets the tone for meeting all future challenges.

Since my arrival I have been thoroughly impressed with the attitude, direction and purpose of

our unit. Currently the battalion



**2-18th IN BN CSM
CSM Sean T. Watson**

is preparing for a future deployment. The training will be tough and all will experience a few rough patches till it is complete. What will help the leadership to assist the Soldier and families during this period is open communications. Continue to remain connected to the FRG/FRLs.

Once again I can't express enough how I feel to be back in the infantry and to be a member of the 2-18 IN family. Thanks!

HHC Company Commander

By CPT Matthew Strand

Greetings to all our HHC families from Grafenwoehr, Germany! We've hit the ground at this Fall's gunnery rotation running having already completed two machine gun ranges, mortar live-fire exercises, started our basic rifle qualification, and on a daily basis building our skills with classes planned, executed, and led by your husbands and fathers. As we get deeper into the cycle, training intensifies and you may find you are hearing from them less, but don't be discouraged. Know that the low contact you are experiencing now is caused by them partaking in training which will help keep them safe during our upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. If you were to wonder what it would look and feel like to be in one of our Platoons on a daily basis, below is the standard timeline that our Scout Platoon has been going off of over the last four days.

Occupy firing range: 0500
Set up range: 0500-0900
Fire weapon systems for that range: 0900-1830
Set up range for night fire: 1830-2030
Night Fire: 2030-0400
Rest: 0400-0530
Set up for the next range: 0530-0900
Start the firing day over again: 0900

Of course it is not only the Scouts putting in long days here in Graf. Cooks are up at all hours of the day, mortars are shooting long into the night, mechanics are fixing our vehicles no matter what time of day we break them, and of course the medics are on call every second of the day to make sure we are healthy for this training, returning home, and soon enough Afghanistan.

Before too long Gunnery will come to a close and you will be reunited for a short

reprieve before our return to Hohenfels Training Area to take part in further exercises to better prepare your loved ones for the coming year's challenges. We cannot stress to you enough how much your support is appreciated by those whom you love most and all of the Headquarters Company leadership. We depend on their steadfast resolve and motivation; a trait instilled by you. Thank you again and enjoy all the German fest-season has to offer!



Mortars Plt. Hotel Graf



Mortars Plt. Getting ready to call fires...



ALPHA COMPANY "RAIDERS"

Greeting from Grafenwoehr! The Raiders traveled from Baumholder to Grafenwoehr in order to prepare ourselves for our upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. Every Soldier in the company is playing an important part in the training that we are conducting. The training has been tough and realistic, and is building us into a more cohesive family of In-

fantrymen every day. Our training so far has been diverse and effective. We have conducted M4 training, and we can all shoot targets up to 300 meters away with ease. We have also fired our machine guns, and the machine gunners impressed the leaders in the company with their proficiency. Our training is not only focused on weapons at the ranges. We

have been learning the Dari language, medical skills, driving skills, and maintenance skills; all in preparation for our deployment. We are very thankful to everyone that is supporting us while we are training, especially our families and friends that support us every day. We miss you as much as you miss us.

Raiders company picture after their pro-mask run.



SSG Talavera watches one of many crew serve teams as the Raiders continue to shine at the range..



Bushmaster Commander

By CPT Christopher Mercado



CPT Mercado on patrol during his deployment to Afghanistan

“Without positive role models or any assistance, it was up to Private Manzo whether to sink or swim.”

Napoleon Bonaparte once said, “a Soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of colored ribbon,” referring to the awards, badges and decorations which adorn our formal dress uniforms. In the military, overcoming adversity and exemplary performance are often met with these little bits of ribbon. In most cases, we look to our training to identify our “Heroes of the Battle,” overlooking some of the insurmountable challenges our Soldiers have faced just to join the military. This article is dedicated to those unsung heroes, whose stories of accomplishment are so often rarely told.

Private Truitt of 1st Platoon, B Company is but one of those unsung heroes. Despite an above average GPA and being nearly halfway through college, Private Truitt found himself struggling financially and got caught up in a deep depression. Having lost his job and without his degree, he was unable to find any work – temporary job agencies, manual labor and even fast food all turned him away. Private Truitt turned to the Armed Forces to see what they had to offer.

Unfortunately, Private Truitt weighed 293 pounds and was too overweight to qualify for military service. Dedicating himself to meet qualification standards, Private Truitt began a brutal process of changing his diet and habits. Doing so helped him lose 30 pounds, but it proved not enough. He then implemented a rigorous physical fitness regime which helped him shed an additional 40 pounds,

thereby qualifying him for enlistment. At Fort Benning, the weight continued to disappear as a result of the regimented diet and exercise program.

At his “Turning Blue” ceremony, Private Truitt’s parents walked passed him, unable to recognize him, because he had lost so much weight. At his graduation, Private Truitt weighed in at 181 pounds, having lost over 112 pounds from the day he made the decision to serve.

2nd Platoon’s hero has quite a different story. At four months old, Private Jake Manzo was made a ward of the state. 18 years later, Private Manzo had lived in 16 group homes and 21 foster homes. It wasn’t until he was 18 that Private Manzo was reunited with his biological family.

Without positive role models or any assistance, it was up to Private Manzo whether to sink or swim.

No stranger to adversity, Private Manzo dedicated himself to his education, successfully graduating from high school. Following his high school graduation, Private Manzo attempted to pursue an

education in automotive maintenance, but once again misfortune struck. A lack of funds prevented Private Manzo from completing his education, forcing him to reevaluate his life.

Out of a desire to provide a better life for his fiancée, and with a plan to make a career for himself as an elite Infantryman, Private Manzo made the decision to enlist. Since his arrival in Bushmaster company, Private Manzo has shown all of us his inner strength and resiliency, having been conditioned by constant hardship. Constantly exceeding the standard and motivating those around him, Private Manzo is among our very best.

Private Manzo is looking forward to contributing to the team, and putting his G.I. Bill to use to return to college and earn his degree. Forged in a trial by fire, Private Manzo rose to the challenge and is an example setter for his peers, always positive, and always contributing to the Bushmaster family. Private Manzo is planning on marrying the love of his life, Katie, in December.

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PVT Manzo carries the M240B machine gun during Platoon STX in July, 2010

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Whether marching 18 miles in full gear, conducting complex attacks in urban terrain, or conducting months of training at a blistering pace, the men of Bushmaster company have proved that they have what it takes to complete any mission, in any place, for any length of time. They have proved true the axiom, "it doesn't matter how hard you can hit, it only matters how hard you can get hit, and keep moving forward." While we are proud of all members our Bushmaster family, Privates Truitt and Manzo hold a very special place in all our hearts. For Private Truitt and Private Manzo, no award, ribbon or decoration can ever replace the satisfaction of knowing that life dealt them some tough cards, and they in turn took down the house.



PVT Truitt participates in a 6 mile body armor run early August, 2010



PVT Thomas from 1st Platoon trains with his M4 in preparation for upcoming marksmanship training.

Commando's Commander

By CPT Omololu Makinde



CPT and Mrs. Makinde and one of C Co.'s newest arrivals! Congratulations to all.

In this past month of August we have said good bye to an outstanding leadership team, and multiple beloved members of the company. CPT Mathew Strand and his wife Amanda caringly led this company for the 11 months and will be missed. As we march onward towards deployment the company will be really busy with our pre-deployment training at Grafenwöhr and Hohenfels.

Along with our loses we have gained a lot of strong soldiers as well. The Commando company is proud to welcome it's new 1Sgt, SFC Gonzales, and our new XO, 1LT Estep. In addition to our busy training schedule I would like to congratulate the birth of two Charlie company arrivals, congratulations SSG Hoffman and CPT Makinde. The Commando family is also proud to welcome three wives that have recently joined us from the United States.

We are continuing to build a strong Family Readiness Group to support our deployment. I am looking forward to meeting all of you and I am happy to continue building a strong support base with our families.



Above: C Co. change of command. Below: Commando Company photo.



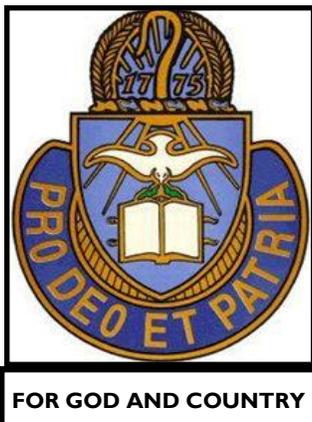
Chaplain's Word



It is my great pleasure to greet the Soldiers and families of 2-18 IN in our first edition of The Vanguard's Roll Call. I will first introduce myself. My name is Chaplain (CPT) Douglas J. Inman, and I call Arkansas my "where I come from" home. I am an avid Arkansas Razorback & SEC fan. I love to hunt, fish, camp, and most of all spend time with my family.

I married my wife Katja 23 years ago, and we have three great boys: Nathaniel/13; Jonas/10; and Caleb/7. We have been on ground in Germany for a little over 2 months now, and yes we have received our house hold goods.

With that said, I want to let you know I am very excited about being your Chaplain. One thing Soldiers and their families might not always know is I am not only a Chaplain to the one in the ACUs, but to his/her family as well. I love to help families



through those occasional rough spots they may find themselves in. So let the record show that I am here for you.

As we spend our time out here in Grafenwoehr going through some really good training, I can't help but wonder if others may feel as I do at times. Sometimes I feel quite unprotected! In fact, while deployed to Iraq there were several times I felt unprotected. One of the reasons I felt that way is because as Chaplain I fall under a non-combatant role. That is exactly right, I do not, and cannot carry a weapon.

Now even though I don't carry a weapon I still go "outside the wire", in other words I go outside the safety of the compound. Without going into great details, I remember there were sometimes I really felt vulnerable out there!

The Chaplain's branch came up with the solution for this dilemma, and that was a Chaplain Assistant (CA). One of the main duties of the CA is being the Chaplain's security force. That's right, he/she is my protection while on patrols and such.

I am really blessed to have a good CA, but that is not always enough when it comes down to needing protection from the things of this world.

Bottom line up front: Sometimes we need assurance we are protected from all the things that can cause us pain and suffering. I would like to share a verse with you that brings me comfort and lets me know I am never unprotected! Psalm 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them." I believe whoever truly fears the Lord, has nothing else to fear.

Your Chaplain,

CH (CPT) Douglas J. Inman

Grafenwoehr Times



The Chaplain Assistant SPC Figueroa was asking, "Did I hit it?"



Happy Grafenwoehr "campers" at the 2-18 IN Vanguard's Diner



Nothing wrong with putting some lead down the range...hooah!

A little Vanguard History

Soldiers from the 18th Infantry Regiment stand guard over Nazi leaders during the Nuremberg Trials following World War II.



World War II

The 18th Infantry Regiment was part of the landing forces that participated in the initial onset of Operation Overlord. The 18th Regimental Combat Team (RCT) was part of the 1st Infantry Division forces that stormed Omaha Beach. The regiment was scheduled to land at 09:30 on Easy Red. The first battalion to land, **2/18**, arrived at

the E-I draw 30 minutes late after a difficult passage through the congestion off shore. Casualties were light, though despite the existence of a narrow channel through the beach obstacles the ramps and mines there accounted for the loss 22 LCVP's,

2 LCI(L)'s and 4 LCT's. Supported by tank and subsequent naval fire the newly arrived troops took the surrender of the last strong point defending the entrance to the E-I draw at 11:30 . Although a usable exit was finally opened, congestion prevented an early exploitation inland. The three battalions of the 115th RCT, scheduled to land from 10:30 on Dog Red and Easy Green came in together and on top

of the 18th RCT landings at Easy Red. The confusion prevented the remaining two battalions of the 18th RCT from landing until 13:00 and delayed the move off the beach of all but **2/18**, which had exited the beach further east before noon, until 14:00. Even then, this movement was hampered by mines and enemy positions still in action further up the draw.

“The confusion prevented the remaining two battalions of the 18th RCT from landing until 13:00 and delayed the move of the beach of all but 2-18”.

Taken from “Omaha Beachhead (6 June-13 June 1944)”

<http://www.history.army.mil/books>

