

Remembering our  
**FALLEN HEROES**



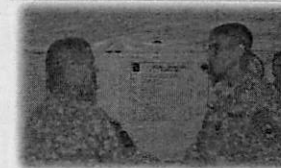
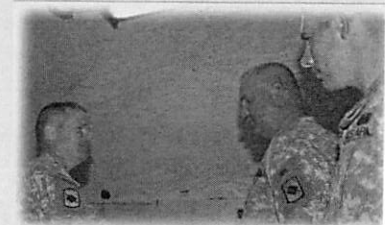
39<sup>TH</sup> BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM  
**ARKANSAS BOWIE**  
EDITION

Arkansas  
**Warriors**  
**BACK 2 IRAQ**

less than three years removed from the desert,  
Bowie Brigade becomes first Guard BCT to  
return for second tour of duty for OIF



# SOLDIER EXCELLENCE



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ness.

"We can't go in with the attitude that, 'I've been there, done that, got the t-shirt' and become negligent in carrying out our mission. We've got to stay focused on the enemy within—complacency, stupidity," he said. "We have a large contingent of Soldiers with combat experience which has already proven valuable during our training; however, it's important to look at the potential negative aspects of experience. Never take anything for granted, especially when it comes to Iraq."

Early into the home station mobilization, it

an unconventional enemy requires an unconventional approach to training along with an ability to adapt and make on the spot changes.

Oftentimes, the training being conducted here resembles a basic training site. Soldiers are required to achieve the highest standards in all training. Anything less than the highest standard is considered a 'no-go' to these trainers. And, 'do it again' is something that can be heard many, many times throughout the course of the day. The reality of this training is that it saves lives.

Preparing for a second deployment to Iraq, Arkansas' 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) has experience on its side; however, it's this experience that has the Bowie Brigade's top enlisted troop concerned.

But how does experience equate to concern in the mind of this nearly 30-year veteran? It would seem to be an apparent contradiction; almost as contradicting as saying Iraq and peace in the same sentence.

Having returned from Iraq in the spring of 2005, this deployment is seemingly *deja vu* for approximately 1,600 Soldiers. These are Soldiers that spent twelve months 'boots on the ground' in Iraq. These are Soldiers that understand the enemy even as unconventional as that enemy might be. These are Soldiers that defeated the enemy many times, many ways. These are Soldiers that have been in combat.

Nonetheless, Command Sgt. Maj. Steven Veazey is so concerned with this mission that he is warning his Soldiers to stay focused on a new enemy—the enemy within.

As Veazey explains it, the 'enemy within' is as unconventional as the enemy military forces face in Iraq. One strike by this enemy can prove to be deadly; however, each Soldier can directly affect the effectiveness of this enemy. The goal: enemy ineffective-

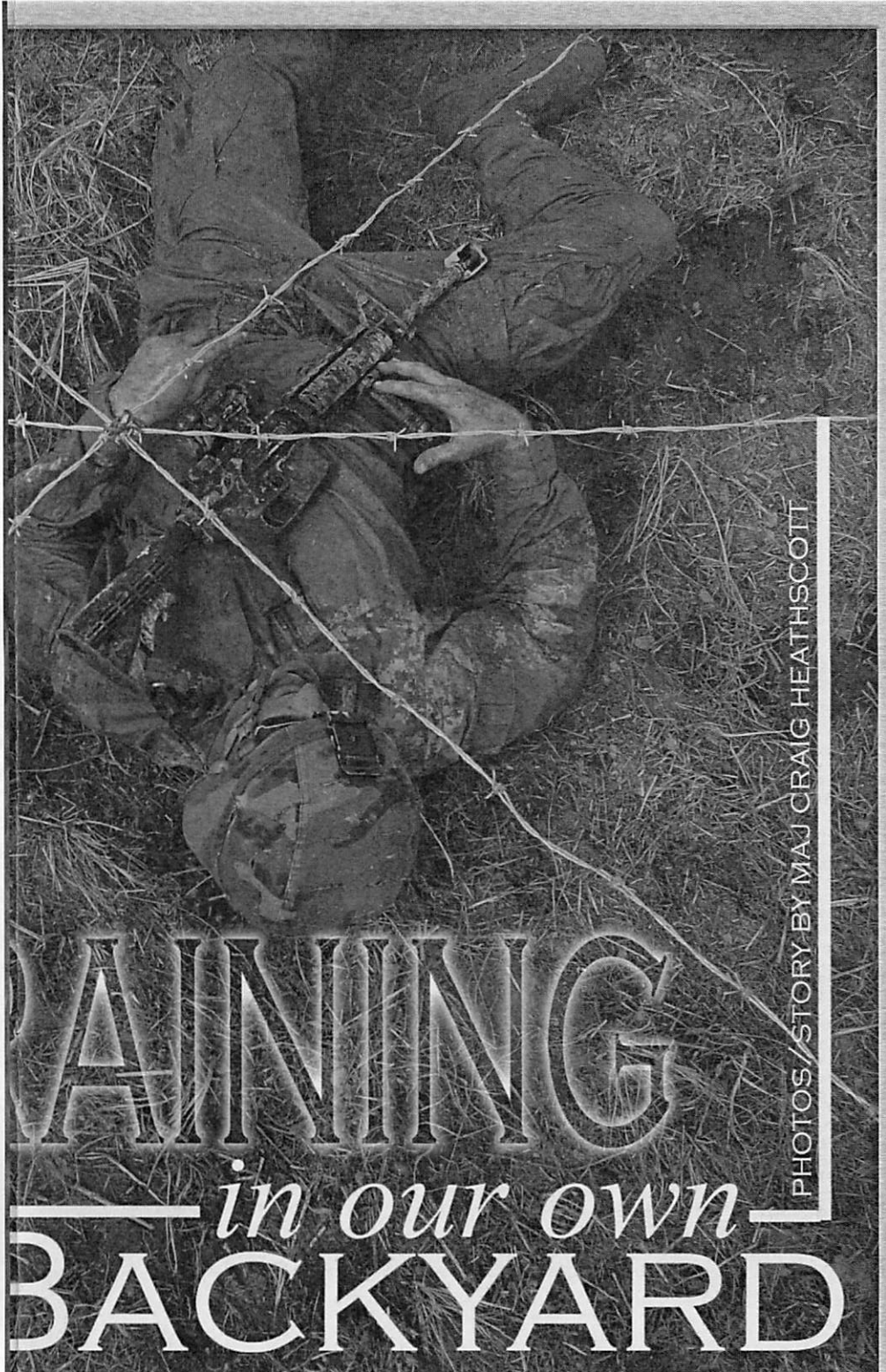
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would appear the 39<sup>th</sup>'s non-commissioned officer core has the enemy contained as motivation is at an extremely high level, according to Veazey. As long as motivation remains high, he is confident that the trainers will "deliver the goods" and provide excellent training. The benefits of having combat veterans as instructors are many, but one of the greatest is their ability to look beyond textbook training. Fighting

When the initial verbal alert order came in April, the Arkansas leadership immediately began planning on how they might benefit from its' experienced troops. The resulting plan called for the combat veterans to serve as trainers—a plan that Command Sgt. Maj. Veazey wholeheartedly supports.

Every Soldier within the Brigade is required to complete the Warrior Training



# TRAINING —in our own— BACKYARD

PHOTOS / STORY BY MAJ CRAIG HEATHSCOTT

Creating a 'Family friendly' environment was the motivation behind Arkansas' fight for a home station mobilization. The 'friendly' side of this mobilization, however, doesn't start until the duty day—which oftentimes outlasts the sun—is over. And, while the duty day is spent with their second Family there's nothing friendly about the intensive battle-focused training the Soldiers are experiencing.

Preparing for their return to Iraq early in 2008, the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the Arkansas Army National Guard won its bid for a home station deployment late in the summer. The commander of the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT)—Col. Kendall Penn—was determined to give his troops more Family time and was

determined he had the experience—thanks to his 1,600 Iraqi combat veterans—to conduct the training in his own backyard. In the previous deployment, the Brigade spent nearly six months away from home in Fort Hood, Texas training before ever arriving in Iraq.

"It's as if the Soldiers arrive at work in the morning, clock-in and then walk out on the battlefield and fight the war," said Penn, 39<sup>th</sup> IBCT commander. "This is real-world battlefield training that is designed to keep these troops alive. We ask them for 110 percent during the duty day and in return we allow them to clock out and return to their Family. Our hope is that Families get to spend more time with their particular Soldier, and it provides a motivation for the Soldier that extends to the training environment."

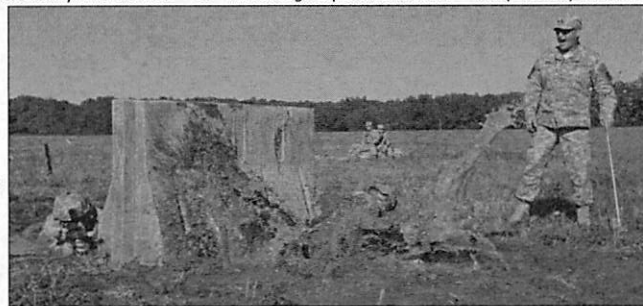
The 39<sup>th</sup> is a history-rich brigade with its most recent entry into history being the first Brigade Combat Team to be mobilized for a second time to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. And now, the home station mobilization is a historical move and one that is catching the attention of other BCT's as Arkansas is setting the standard for future mobilizations.

The Brigade has received visits from other states to include Oklahoma, Texas and Utah to see first hand how the home station mobilization plan was working. The National Guard Bureau as

well as 1<sup>st</sup> Army have been highly complimentary of the standard Arkansas is setting.

"... talk about experience of our staff—we've got OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) warriors, combat vets," said Command Sgt. Maj. Megoloff, who oversees the Training Evaluators (TE's). "These aren't classroom geeks. These guys have been there, done that, and they've done it with bullets flying over their heads."

The battlefield where this current war is fought—or better yet, 'taught'—can be found in three basic locations—Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, Camp Joseph T. Robinson, and the various 39<sup>th</sup> armories around the state. And the teaching has been left to a group of Arkansas Guardsmen from the 39<sup>th</sup> with enough experience to allow



them to talk the talk and walk the walk.

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Megoloff was instrumental in the creation of a special Arkansas battalion of training evaluators from the 233<sup>rd</sup> Regional Training Institute. The battalion consists of approximately 60 Soldiers made up of six teams of which each is assigned to one of the battalions within the 39<sup>th</sup> IBCT.

Quick to compliment the strength of the training evaluators he was able to assemble, Megoloff didn't rely solely on combat experience when developing his team of experts. According to Megoloff, he wanted to ensure these Soldiers, these trainers could relay their knowledge as effectively as they could perform their duties on the battlefield.

As a result, those selected as training evaluators were required to complete the Total Army instructor Training

Course (TAITC) to learn how to be an instructor. During this training, each Soldier became experienced with one of the 40 Warrior Training Tasks (WTT)

that every Soldier within the Brigade will have to master before leaving for Iraq. Additionally, the training evaluators were required to complete the Combat Lifesaver Course.

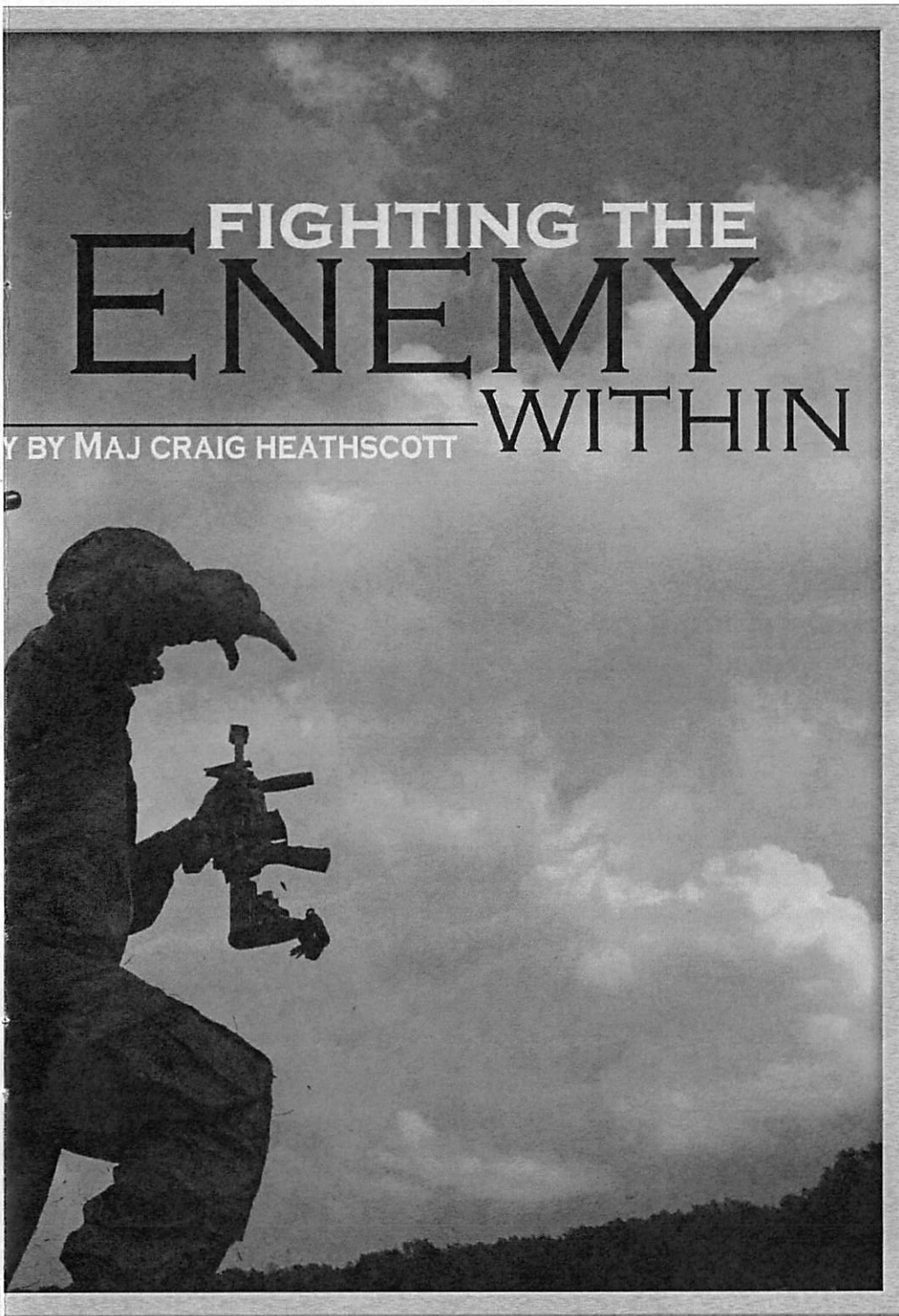
Megoloff would be hard pressed to identify a weak link in his staff as he was personally involved in filling every position. And as a sergeant major, he has Warrior mentality and knows training Soldiers is a key to success and wanted his team to be the best. With the likes of Staff Sgt. Kenneth Johnson—Non-

commissioned Officer of the Year for the Arkansas Guard—on his team, it's hard to argue with Penn's argument that he had the experienced staff to conduct a home station deployment.

Conducting the Individual Movement Techniques (IMT) lane training at Fort Chaffee in early October, Johnson was quick to get in the mud with the troops as they traversed the course; oftentimes on their back or in the low-crawl position. An observer of the training could quickly identify the characteristics that ultimately helped him attain the title of NCO of the Year. And, his motivation was contagious as troops where quick to dive into the mud-soaked lane that had been hit by as much as eight inches of rain the evening before.

"Safety is of utmost importance on this lane, so remember that at all times. But remember this also—you will get wet, you will get muddy! So, pay attention to what you're doing and have fun!" he said with a smile.

As the first troops hit the first obstacle and became immersed in mud, they received what seemed to be Johnson's ultimate award, "Out by-God standing!" But as quickly as an award was handed out, he would hand out a repre-



# FIGHTING THE ENEMY WITHIN

BY MAJ CRAIG HEATHSCOTT



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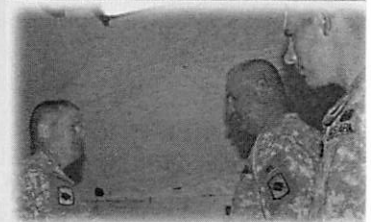
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# SOLDIER EXCELLENCE







mand and let the troops know they had made a mistake. But, when you practice wrong you do your job wrong and in Iraq there is no room for error. So he was quick to require a, "re-do"

Hiding behind a barrier, the troop slowly lifts his head up to see if he can advance his team. With the command, "A-team moving!" the two-man team was up and running.

"One thousand and one, one thousand and two. . . . one thousand and five; get down!" shouted Johnson as he ran towards the troops.

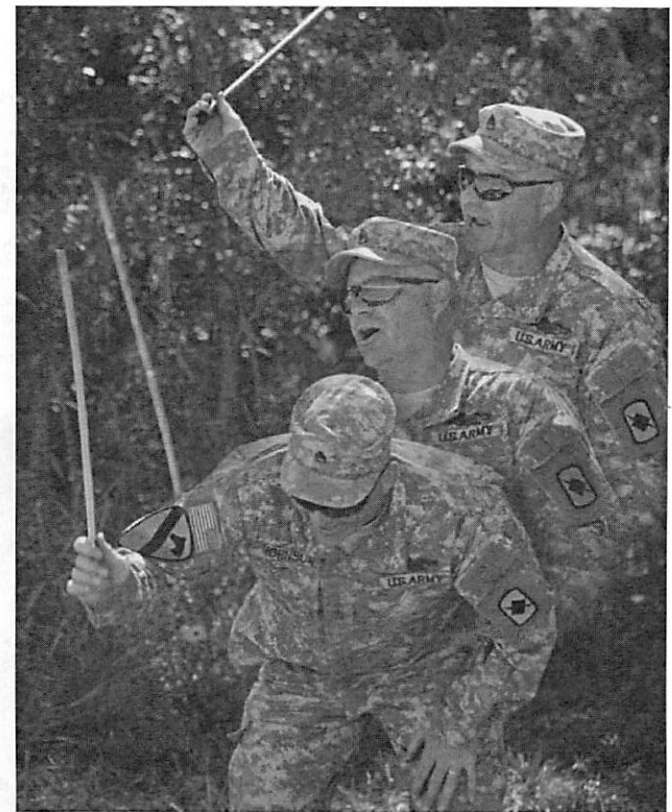
"You have gotta get down! You've got .556 rounds flying above your head and that man is trying to hit you! If he hits you, his commander is pinning a medal on his chest and you get a flag draped across yours! You're up, you're moving and you're down! Now, do it again!" screams out Staff Sgt. Johnson.

Nasty conditions, shouting, re-do's and a physically exhaustive environment might have brought back memories of basic training to these members of the Brigade; however, their intensity and motivation was high. This was a point of praise that Johnson was quick to point out as he talked with the troops after completing the course.

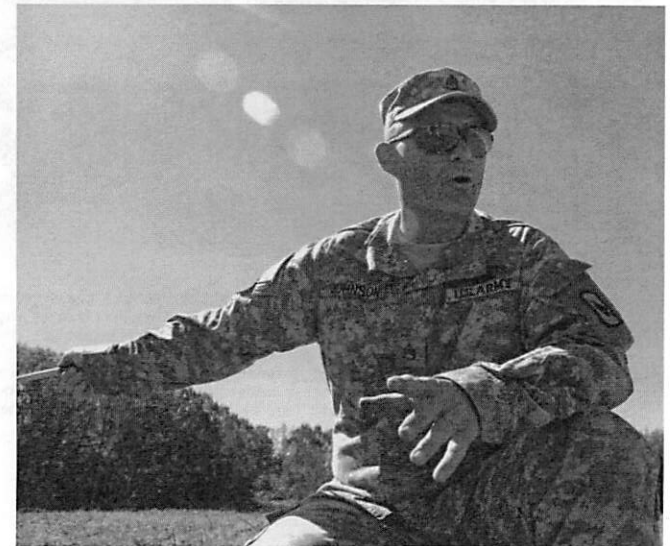
"Hey guys, I just want to thank-you for your motivation today," he said, as the mud-soaked team listened intently while trying to catch their breath. "This was a very hard course, and you gave it everything you had. I'm here to teach, but you are the one teaching. Your peers see you and your motivation and it makes them push themselves harder. Now that's NCO leadership. Great job!"

These Soldiers completed this Warrior Training Task—*only 39 more to go*—but the day is still young and the duty day is still long. Johnson directs them to use enough water to wash off their face and hands, "but don't be taking a shower in my water" before telling them to take a break before heading off to the next task.

While there's still a lot of training and long days ahead, these Soldiers—especially those that deployed last time and participated in training at Fort Hood, Texas—appreciate the opportunity to train in their own backyard.



As the Soldiers begin their advance, Staff Sgt. Johnson begins his count. . . . "one thousand one, one thousand two. . . ." Above, he gets to his five count and instantly slaps the ground with his pointer in frustration as the troops didn't get to the ground quick enough. Below, Johnson takes time for a thorough evaluation of the fire team's advance as a team as well as their individual performance. Far left, after scaling the obstacle a Soldier hits the ground with a muddy splash and much to the delight of Johnson as he screams out, "Outstanding!" Johnson was quick to encourage the troops to maintain their motivation from beginning to end, and they followed through.



**O**n the battlefield, the American Soldier is equipped with the best technologies in order to defend against enemy attack. And while Kevlar and body armor are designed to stop bullets, they provide no protection against leaky faucets, creditors or cars that refuse to start on cold mornings.

These are enemies of the home front—an enemy that Families of Deployed Soldiers face on a regular basis, yet fortunately, it's not a battle they have to wage alone. Just as a Soldier leans on a fellow Soldier in combat, those left behind turn to other family members for support when the enemy lurks or applies a direct attack.

While not a new concept in the military, Family Readiness Groups—commonly referred to in military channels as **FRGs**—are increasingly gaining more attention. Comprised of volunteers, civilians in the community and Family members of deployed Soldiers, the FRGs are organized at the company level. They typically serve as the liaison between Families of deployed Soldiers and the command, and their charter is simple—take care of Families.

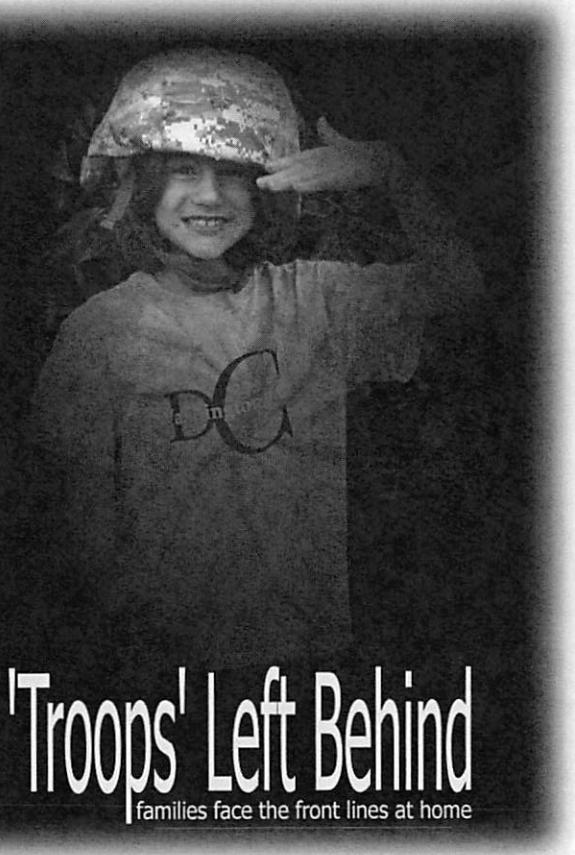
"They are designed to handle issues at the lowest levels, so the Soldier can focus on their mission while deployed as opposed to worrying about a broken

pipe," said Capt. Robbie Reed, Family Readiness Group liaison for the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade—Rear Detachment. "They do everything from creating care packages for Soldiers to helping a Family member whose car breaks down. It's a network designed to bring immediate resolution to problems that arise."

Like many of the 1,600 Soldiers returning to Iraq as combat veterans, many of the volunteers of the FRGs are, in a sense, veterans. Having experienced the hardships of having their loved one deployed, these men and women bring a lot of experience to the FRG effort.

(FAC) that the FRGs can turn to for support. Each FAC is managed by a civilian on a full time basis with the sole purpose of supporting Families of deployed Soldiers. And since it's not a part-time responsibility, they've proven to be very effective in resolving issues.

"They are basically available 24-hours a day by cell phone when they are not in the office (located in the armory)," said Reed. "And while they may not give cash, they can point the Family member in the direction of Army Emergency Relief Fund, Red Cross or one of many other organizations designed to



## Troops' Left Behind

families face the front lines at home

Once shared, this experience is as effective against the home front enemies as Kevlar is against bullets fragments.

While each company maintains a Family Readiness Group, there are eight regional support centers in the state known as Family Assistance Centers

assist Families during times of hardship. The Family Readiness Group is as strong as the volunteers that comprise its ranks, and the Arkansas Guard has proven the FRG mission a successful one throughout the various deployments."

ected by the mobilization.

"With a call for troops equating that of a unit's authorized strength, that particular unit's ability to support the call is severely hampered," said Brig. Gen. Richard Swan, the Arkansas National Guard's joint force land component commander. "On any given day, the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade has as many as 600 Soldiers that are non-deployable due to the fact they have yet to attend, or are currently attending, their initial entry training. Add to that number the Soldiers who are in line to retire, at the end of their enlistment contract, and anticipated to be determined non-deployable during the (Soldier Readiness Process) process and you have just lost an extremely significant portion of your strength."

"It was determined that this was not just a job for the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade," said Swan. "The most effective route to success would be the mobilization of Joint Force—Arkansas. . . . a package of Arkansas units, combined, to fulfill the personnel requirements of the mission at hand."

The following units will fall under the same mobilization order and be incorporated into the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade: From the 87<sup>th</sup> Troop Command—216<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company of West Memphis; Detachment 1, 216<sup>th</sup> MP Company of North Little Rock; 1123<sup>rd</sup> Transporta-

tion Company of N. Little Rock; Det. 1, 1123<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company of Blytheville; 224<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Com-

And now, they face a challenge as hard as the first deployment—preparing for a different mission within a familiar



pany of Mountain Home; Detachment 1, 224<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company of Marshall; 1038<sup>th</sup> Horizontal Construction Company of N. Little Rock. And from the 142<sup>nd</sup> Fires Brigade—217<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion to include Headquarters Company of Booneville; Company A of Lincoln; Det. 1, Company A of Berryville and Company B of Rogers.

### CREATING WAR STORIES

An afternoon with a 39<sup>th</sup> combat veteran will reveal a plethora of war stories; stories of heroism and honor of friendships and pride. The details of these memories are as clear as if they just happened considering they're only three years removed from the fighting.

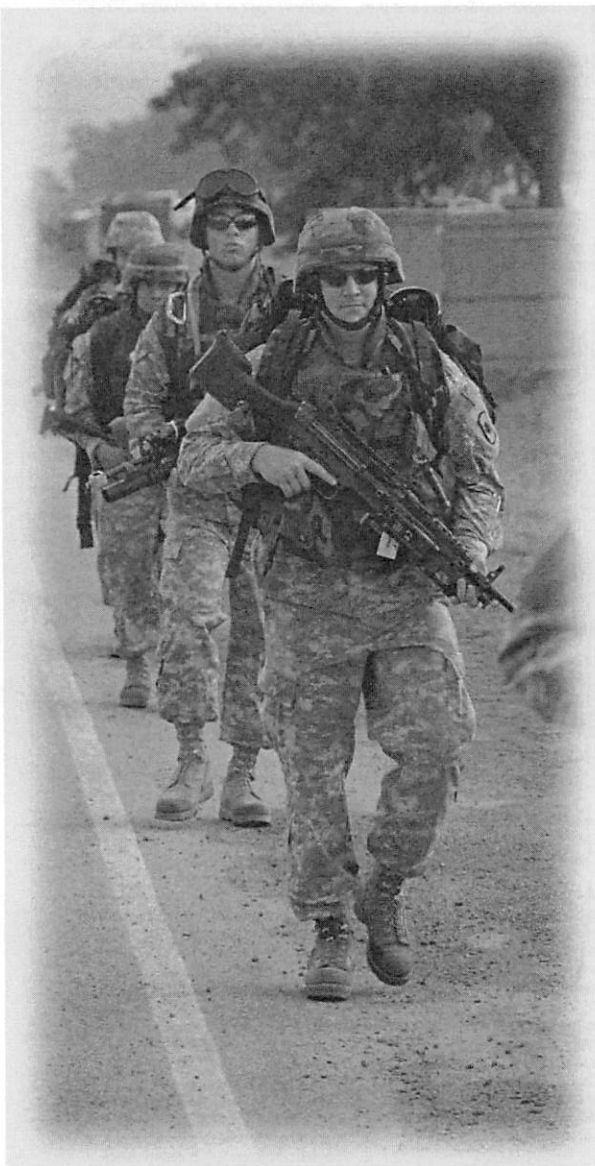
land and doing it with the same focus.

In essence, these hard-charging infantrymen are already building their war stories from events here within the state of Arkansas. And, there will be many more to come as the Bowie Brigade progresses through this deployment period. The important thing right now is for each leader and Soldier throughout the Brigade to remain battle-focused during their training to ensure success—to ensure they get to tell those stories to their children and grandchildren one day.





make sure this training, and everything associated with it, is done right. And, Command Sgt. Maj. James Megoloff, is confident he can identify what 'right' looks like.



**AN ARKANSAS BRIGADE**

"When I was asked to come in and help build this, I was told that I needed to see what 'right' looks like and then build it," he said. "Negative, we are go-

In direct contrast to the 2004 deployment, the Brigade will take a full contingent of Arkansas-based Soldiers when they deploy in 2008. And while

the Brigade has nearly reached its 3,200 troop strength numbers for this mission it hasn't been without some shuffling of troops as well as entire units from outside the Brigade, yet within the Arkansas Guard.

After conducting Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) at Fort Chaffee this summer, Maj. Slade McPherson, personnel officer for the Brigade, quickly realized he would need a long arm to reach outside the Brigade for nearly 1,000 additional Soldiers to attain the required numbers. The immediate question was, "Where do we get 1,000 Soldiers?"

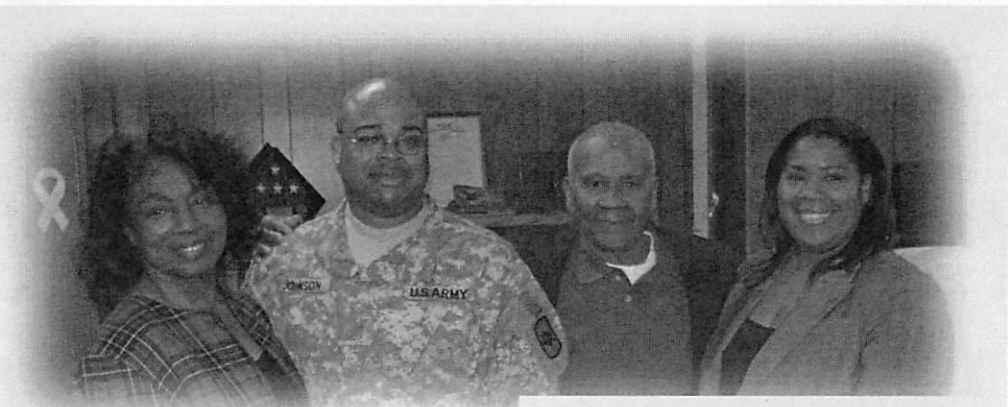
The answer was simple, the Arkansas Army National Guard.

In 2003, the 39<sup>th</sup> enlisted the support of units from nine other states to fill the gap. And while their Soldiers performed admirably, the adjutant general wanted a complete Arkansas family on this deployment and Col. Penn agreed.

"Arkansas was given a mission, and I think it's important that Arkansans step up to that mission," said Penn. "Every state across the nation has been heavily taxed with supporting the war effort in Iraq, and I think it's important for several reasons that we use our Soldiers. Soldiers are Soldiers regardless of their base, but why wouldn't we want to take 'our Family' of Soldiers. Soldiers that already have a bond and that bond is that they are from the same state. In many cases, they have worked together for years."

So, in addition to the units organic to the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade, the Arkansas leadership reached out across the state to fill the void. In all, 57 communities from all four corners of the state will be af-

ing to set what 'right' looks like, and we want to make sure everyone knows we're setting the standard."



As an added bonus for this deployment, the Bowie Brigade has been included in a pilot program for Family support funded by the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. The program provides the Brigade with two Family Readiness Support Assistants dedicated solely for Family support issues within the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade. Their offices are located at Ricks Armory in Little Rock, and they report directly to Reed.

Serving as the commander for Rear Operations for the Brigade, Lt. Col. Stephen Redman understands the importance of Family readiness. He has already started implementing his strategies for a successful Family support campaign.

"At the end of the day, it's the Family members that we should thank," said Redman. "They basically run the Family Readiness Groups, and they run the households for our Soldiers so they can focus on their mission. To underestimate their contribution in this deployment would be as big a mistake as underestimating our enemy in Iraq."

"At a regional level, I plan to conduct 'town hall' meetings quarterly for each battalion to understand the issues our Families are facing. We'll look to can-

vass the crowd for issues, and we'll also use the meetings as an information sharing opportunity as well," he said. "We're looking at ways to improve on an already successful program within Arkansas. But rest assured, the success wouldn't be possible without our volunteers and Family members."

The State Family Readiness Office recently held a statewide conference for leaders of the various Family Readiness Groups. The main focus for the weekend event was to outline the benefits available to Families such as Red Cross and Army One Source. Reed deemed the meeting a success.

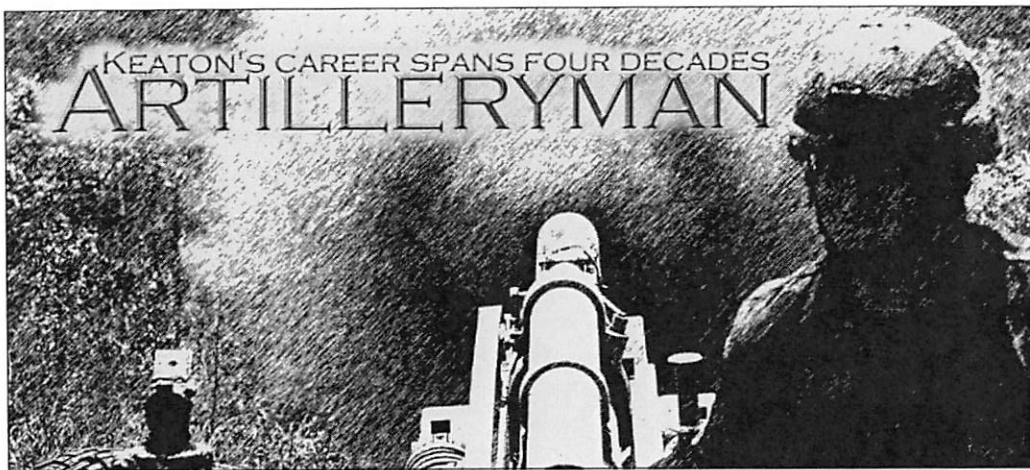
"Anytime you get this group together great ideas are the result," said Reed. "Networking is just one of the ways the program has become so successful, and I encourage Soldiers to get their Family member involved in the process early. If there are questions about who the Family Readiness Group leader is for the company, Soldiers can contact the company command for answers."

While nothing totally prepares a



Family for the absence of a loved one,—their Soldier—the 'FRG' body armor can provide those left behind with the protection (peace of mind) necessary to assist them through a year-long deployment.





# KEATON'S CAREER SPANS FOUR DECADES ARTILLERYMAN

**Y**ou could say that artillery is in Chief Warrant Officer Steve Keaton's blood. He was a young boy—about seven-years-old—when he first heard artillery rounds come down on their targets.

With a helmet too large for his head, a young Keaton stood on ranges with men more than twice his size. He was amazed as he watched the Soldiers in his father's unit load the guns and toss the smoking casings aside. On those crisp mornings in west Arkansas, he



knew he loved artillery and would someday follow in his father's footsteps as an Arkansas artilleryman.

"I remember going out to the firing ranges with my dad and watching the rounds fired. It was exciting, and I loved doing it," said Keaton. His father, Col. (retired) James W. Keaton, was a captain in the 326<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Battalion, which became the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 142<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Brigade in 1959.

### PATH OF SERVICE

Keaton was born in Russellville, Ark., on Aug. 26, 1947, and 18 years later, he enlisted in the Arkansas Army National Guard as a private first class. He was assigned to Battery C, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 142<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Brigade in August of 1966 before the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade was formed.

In 1967, the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade was formed and 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 142<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery was designated the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 206<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade. Keaton became one of the many Soldiers of the original Bowie Brigade—the brigade where Keaton would spend the next 41 years of his service.

Keaton remained in the 206<sup>th</sup> while attending Arkansas Technical University in Russellville. In 1971, he received his degree and was promoted to staff sergeant. Shortly after the promotion, he was approached by his battalion commander about becoming an officer.

"They told me that because I'd earned my degree it was time I followed in my father's footsteps and become an officer in the 206<sup>th</sup>," he said. "I had wanted to be a warrant officer, but OCS (Officer Candidate School) seemed like the next step."

Yet, he took his next step in a different direction.

### WARRANT OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL

Keaton attended his warrant officer certification course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma in 1971. An academically challenging course, Keaton said the weapons support radar course was more difficult than any course he'd ever taken in college.

"The fourth or fifth week of the course,



a gentleman came in with pocket protectors and glasses. He stood in front of the class and announced he was from General Electric and that we'd be spending the next week discussing the generation and propagation of micro-

have a different mission. Different in many ways, similar in one—Iraq is still a dangerous place. The 39<sup>th</sup>'s mission is considered a support operation with a primary focus of protecting supply convoys.

### THE VERBAL ORDER

Just seven months earlier, Arkansas learned in a verbal order that the history-rich Bowie Brigade was making history again by becoming the first National Guard JBCT to return to Iraq. While the details of the deployment would follow over the course of the summer, he immediately began planning for the reality of deployment.

The brigade commander, Col. Kendall Penn, told his leadership team, "We don't have the luxury of sitting idle in anticipation of a mobilization order. . . absolutely not! We have to focus on our Warrior (Training) Tasks and get these young men and women trained while taking advantage of our past experience in Iraq."

"Regardless of our mission, Iraq is a dangerous place. And with that said, we will not fail our troops by not providing them the best, most realistic and relevant training. We've got to mirror battlefield intensity in our training. The lives of these young men and women are dependent upon it," he said.

The strong emphasis Penn placed on Family has never waned as his vision included creating an environment of training that would lessen the hardship on his Soldiers and their Families. This is a hardship that he himself endured as a battalion commander in the last deployment as the Brigade, upon mobilization, went directly to Fort Hood, Texas for training—leaving their Families behind. Focusing on Family in words and actions, he was committed to taking advantage of the experience of his combat veterans as well as creating a brigade—an Arkansas Family—of Arkansas-based Soldiers to carry the 39<sup>th</sup> back to Iraq. And, he was determined that this 'Family' would train in the Natural State.

Facing a different mission this deployment, Penn remains determined to learn from the first deployment and make the necessary adjustments to

ensure success. In his mind, success is attained by bringing every deploying Soldier back in January of 2009—every Soldier.

"At the end of the day, we will define success through our Soldiers and their safe return," he said.

### TRAINING AT HOME

Penn's vision for preparing the Brigade would physically begin to take shape when over 2,000 Soldiers converged on the Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center in Northwest Arkansas for their regularly scheduled annual training. Focusing on individual training, each Soldier would begin a process that requires each to successfully complete 40 Warrior Training Tasks. These tasks, which include over 400 sub-tasks, range from weapons qualification to

spent in a barracks and not at home with wife, husband, kids . . . . at home in general. This opportunity gives us a much happier Family and, ultimately, a happier Soldier, which is an ingredient for success. We need our Soldiers happy and motivated so that they can concentrate on training during the duty day. We can't overlook this."

The creation of a special battalion of training evaluators from Arkansas' 233<sup>rd</sup> Regional Training Institute was a monumental undertaking as it was responsible for developing trainers and training as well as a plan to track the 3,200 Soldiers going through the training. Everything had to be built from scratch.

Documenting that each Soldier has



individual movement techniques on a battlefield. Every Soldier must achieve proficiency in each of the tasks.

While Soldiers are well immersed in training at this point, June's annual training marked the culmination of another vision—home station mobilization. The intent was to carve out a group of instructors from the Brigade's 1,600 combat veteran contingency to train the Brigade during the pre-mobilization period. Once the concept and funding was approved by the National Guard Bureau, it instantly created a caveat that allows Soldiers more Family time; something they did not get in the last deployment.

"Last time, the Brigade was deployed for a total of 18 months in which six of that was spent training stateside," said Penn. "Most of it was in (Fort) Hood; therefore, the end of the duty day was

completed each individual task and their related sub-tasks has proven to be a monumental event; however, leaders are able to track the progress of their Soldiers on a daily basis. While a monumental task, the tracking piece of the training is as important as the training itself in the eyes of Maj. Gen. William D. Wofford, the adjutant general of Arkansas, who will ultimately have to 'sign off' that the 39<sup>th</sup> warriors received the necessary individual training.

In short order, the battalion had to identify potential candidates to serve as training evaluators, train them and get them a course curriculum to focus on, all before annual training. Since home station mobilization of this magnitude—over 3,200 soldiers—is new, the Arkansas Guard is under a spotlight by state and national leadership. The state is under intense pressure to



**V**ivid memories of Iraq are still fresh for nearly 1,600 Arkansas citizen-Soldiers faced with leading their 'Bowie Brigade' back to the war-torn region for yet another deployment. This is a second tour of duty only three years removed from their return to American soil. With them, they bring an equal number of troops absent of war stories from the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team's 2003 deployment.

And while they may not have war stories to tell yet, they know the storyline—39<sup>th</sup> returns to Iraq. The prelude to this return began the first day of October as approximately 3,200 members of the 39<sup>th</sup> IBCT reported to their local armories on state active duty. The remainder of the year will be spent conducting pre-mobilization training in Arkansas at one of three training sites: Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, Camp Joseph T. Robinson or the unit's local armory.

The mission facing the 39<sup>th</sup> is considered a support operation, which is

much different than what the Soldiers were faced with in 2003 when they left for Iraq. But much like the last deployment, the threat level is still relatively high considering one of the primary roles for the Brigade will be providing security for convoys. Many of the incidents involving Soldiers have occurred on the roads as a result of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED)

Once the federal mobilization goes into effect in January, Soldiers will begin saying their first 'good-bye's' to Family as they board busses headed to neighboring Mississippi, in particular, Camp Shelby. At Shelby, Soldiers will participate in collective training conducting squad, platoon and company-sized drills as they will have the individual training requirements mastered. The training time on the ground in Mississippi will vary but Families should be prepared to see their Soldier leave for Iraq sometime around the March timeframe.

While reality of 'boots on the ground' in Iraq is still some time away, the Brigade commander continues to watch his plan for a successful deployment unfold. While not void of obstacles, the pathway to success almost certainly starts with an experienced brigade

of combat veterans. So much so that the 39<sup>th</sup> threw out the playbook from the 2003 deployment and revamped the way the unit is training up for Iraq—first of all, it's being done in Arkansas, our own backyard.

Initial signs of success can be found in troop motivation. Early mornings, late evenings and rainy conditions have not been enough to hinder a successful start that the Brigade experienced in October and throughout November.

When these Soldiers return from their 12-month federal deployment in 2009, the war stories they will tell should take on a different slant as they will



STORY/PHOTOS BY SGT. JOHN HEAVNER

wave energy. That was the nature of the course. It was very demanding and that excited me," he said.

While Keaton's class started with around 60 students, only five of them graduated in November of 1972. Keaton was the distinguished graduate with a 99 percentile grade average. No other student had received such a high rating in the course previously.

#### BOWIE TEAM EXPERIENCE

In his years with the Arkansas Army

when Lance "Sweet Willy Wine" Watson marched from West Memphis to Little Rock. It was a time when the Guard was frequently called out to handle civil disturbances, according to Keaton. A trained artillery unit was also an occasional police force, very much like the Bowie Team's modern mission.

"The most gratifying missions were tornado and rescue missions, civil service missions, missions where we aided people and helped them through hard times," he said.

in the Brigade. Soldiers, who were being coached by 101<sup>st</sup> instructors, began to advance their combat skills. With the training, which was developed from lessons learned in Vietnam, the confidence and camaraderie of the Brigade grew to new heights, according to Keaton.

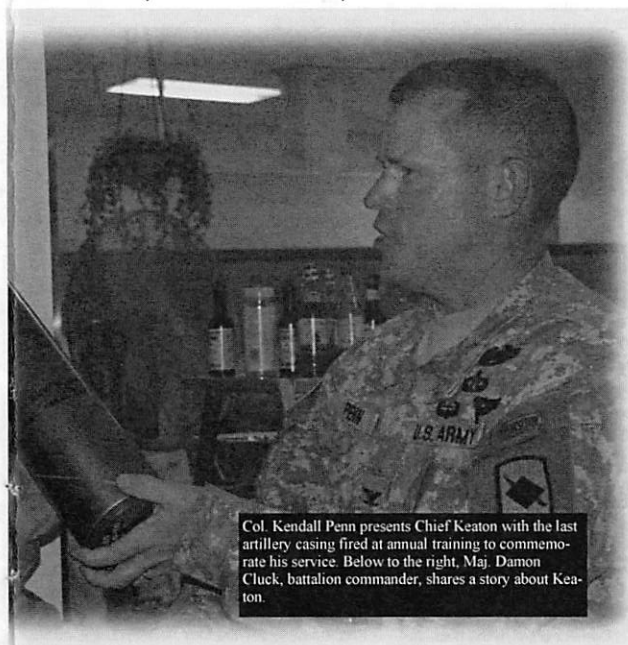
In 1987, the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade started participating in the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Chaffee, which was a strong morale builder for the Brigade, according to Keaton.

Soldiers started participating in more tactical combat missions. A lot of deep pride [was felt] during those times," he said.

#### BACK TO IRAQ

Keaton deployed to Al Taji, Iraq with the 206th Field Artillery during the last deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. His primary role was crater analysis in the Al Taji area. On July 8, 2004, he was injured on an analysis mission when unburned propellant was generating toxic fumes. The fumes burned his lungs and threw his heart rate into arrhythmia, which required surgery. He was evacuated to Landstuhl, Germany before ultimately being sent to Fort Hood, Texas and then on to Camp Joseph T. Robinson in North Little Rock until he recovered.

While Keaton had planned to retire in August of this year, he agreed to extend his contract in order to work on a project with the National Ground Intelligence Center in Charlottesville, Virginia. While he has gone on to support another mission outside the Bowie Brigade, he'll always remain a member of the Brigade which has been such a large part of its history.

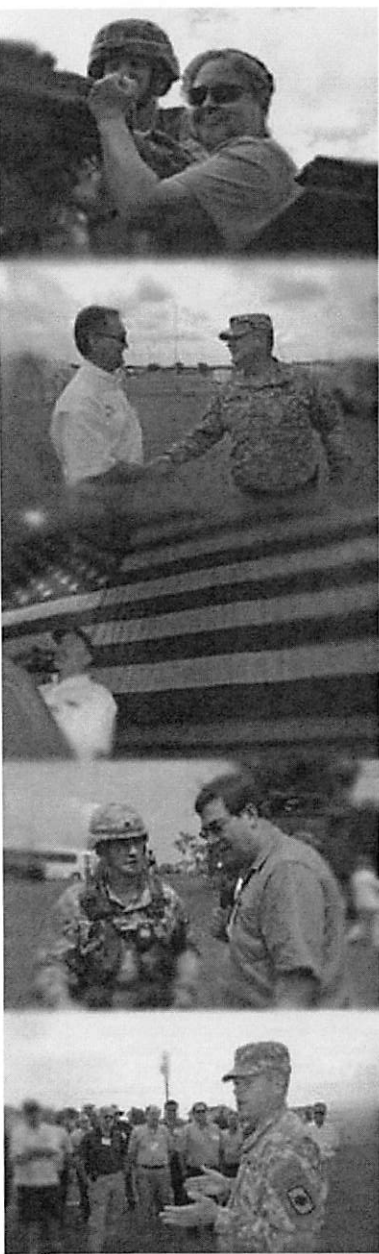


Col. Kendall Penn presents Chief Keaton with the last artillery casing fired at annual training to commemorate his service. Below to the right, Maj. Damon Cluck, battalion commander, shares a story about Keaton.

National Guard and the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade, Keaton has served on many missions. Some of the most memorable of these missions include assisting with security during the riots after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated and also

One of Keaton's most significant memories of the 39<sup>th</sup> was the affiliation with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division after the Vietnam War, when the Brigade began to reach a level of combat readiness Keaton had never seen in his time





**T**raining is to Soldier readiness as communication is to employer readiness. And, it's imperative that the citizen-Soldier maintain the lines of communication with their employer before and during the deployment.

Employers across the state—and even well beyond our borders—have continued to share in the burdens of war, yet, their support of the National Guard seems unwavering. Whether it's a small town police station sending its one-man force to Iraq or a global company sending hundreds into battle, the support is strong. Their sacrifices may be different, but their patriotism is equal.

"Clearly, it's not as big an impact if you work for Tyson or Wal-Mart as opposed to a small company with three or four employees," said Leanna Higginbotham, Employer Support Coordinator. "Regardless, we've got to continue to build the right relationship with employers, because for the most part, these are the guys that are making your house payment, car payment and feeding your family when you're not deployed."

For approximately 3,200 deploying with the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Uncle Sam will be the one helping them make those payments for now. And for many, he's been making many of those payments since 2003 as the Bowie Brigade has been the most deployed Brigade in the state. Deploying Soldiers as a part of the last Iraq deployment, Southwest border mission and Hurricane Katrina has placed some heavy burdens on employers as well as Soldiers.

In some cases, employers have not seen their employee since the first deployment in 2003, according to Higginbotham. And while much of that time away might have been voluntary, the relationship between citizen-Soldier and employer is good due to good communication.

And communication doesn't end when a Soldier hands a copy of the deployment order to the boss. In most cases, Soldiers have had verbal conversations with their employer warning of an anticipated deployment long before the order is printed. Regardless, this communication should simply be a starting point, according

to Higginbotham.

"We must continue to communicate with our employers," she said. "It can be as simple as an e-mail while you're in Iraq. Our employers are working with the Guard and supporting our efforts, and it's all because we're doing a good job of communicating. They are patriotic and feel like a part of the mission. We used to have a saying, 'you don't have to wear a uniform to be a patriot' and this is very true."

Higginbotham's office has received an influx of calls related to the most recent deployment, particularly regarding those Soldiers from outside the 39<sup>th</sup> that were moved into the 39<sup>th</sup> to round out the Brigade. The short notice has created some questions in the minds of the employers. However, Higginbotham says the content of the calls relates more to, "how can we support you" than on anything negative.

Those negative calls that do come in are quickly resolved with information. Questions such as, "My employee isn't even in the 39<sup>th</sup>, so why is he going with them to Iraq? Did he volunteer?" The answer to these questions are "no" because in about 1,000 cases, the Arkansas Guard had to look outside the Brigade to fill its ranks and meet the requirements for the mission in Iraq. And, just like the original members of the 39<sup>th</sup> prior to October 1, they are being told they are being activated.

"Employers just want to know the rules. If you keep them informed they will support you, trust me," she said.

There are many rules regarding employers and members of the National Guard; therefore, the reason people like Higginbotham are there to take the calls. The main one being that the Soldiers' job is protected while they are away serving their country.

And while there are many rules, the best one to follow might be as simple as communicating with your employer.



STORY BY MAJ CRAIG H  
PHOTOS BY SGT JOHN

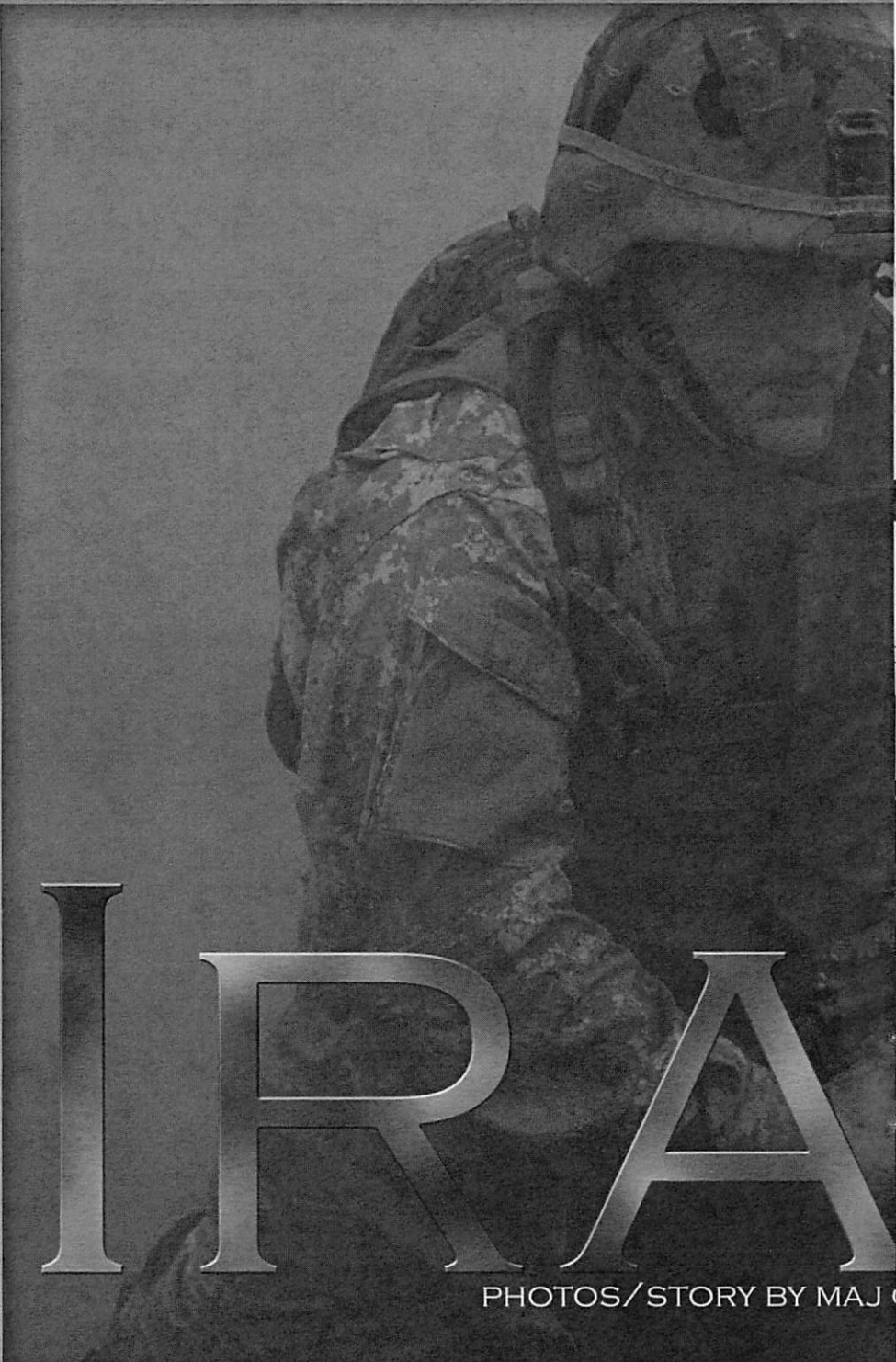
# BACK

# 2



CRAIG HEATHSCOTT

"We must continue to communicate with our employers," said Leanna Higginbotham, Employer Support Coordinator. "It can be as simple as an e-mail while you're Iraq. Our employers are buying into the Guard and supporting our efforts, and it's all because we're doing a good job of communicating. They are patriotic and feel like a part of the mission. We used to have a saying, 'you don't have to wear a uniform to be a patriot' and this is very true."



# employer

SUPPORT STRONG FOR 39<sup>TH</sup>

HEATHSCOTT  
HEAVNER

# IRAQ

PHOTOS/STORY BY MAJ



GOD BLESS  
the  
39th Unit

\*THANK  
YOU\*

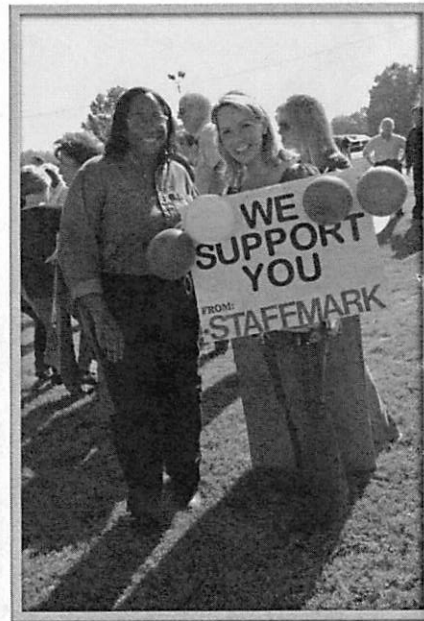
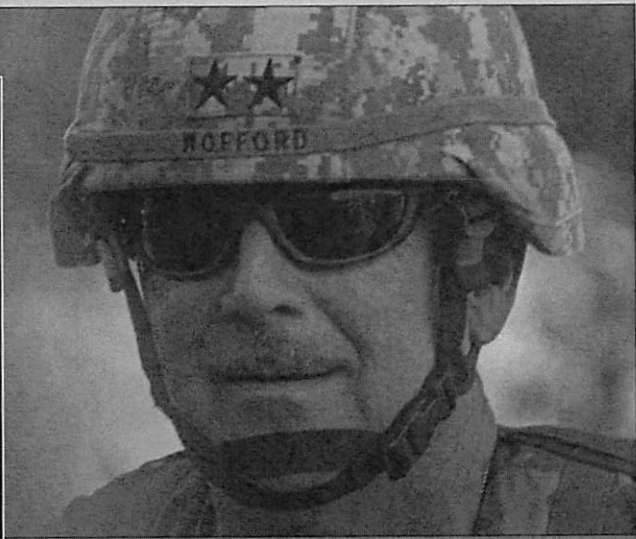
THANK  
YOU  
SOLDIER

# Special Guests @ CHAFFEE

Photos by Maj. Craig Heathscott & Sgt. John Heavner

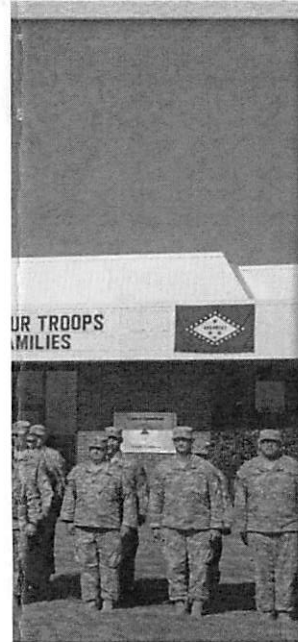


Since October when the Bowie Team began conducting individual training at the Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, the Brigade has been on the national spotlight. Several high-profile visitors have stopped by to view Soldier training. Arkansas' Governor Mike Beebe (pictured left) shows his support for the 39th with a Brigade t-shirt while sporting his military uniform. Above, Maj. Gen. Jay W. Hood, commander of 1st Army— East Division, takes time to speak with Bowie Soldiers to get a better understanding of the effectiveness of the training being conducted in the state. At right, Maj. William Wofford, Arkansas' adjutant general, has spent a couple days on the ground viewing Soldier training. Wofford is responsible for 'signing off' on all training that is taking place in the state. Maj. Gen. (retired) Don C. Morrow visits with Brig. Gen. Richard Swan during an employer support trip. (Below) A Soldier shows Maj. Gen. Ronald Chastain, previous Bowie Brigade commander, the Soldier readiness processing operations taking place at Chaffee. Mr. Robert Smiley, Office of the Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, addresses the employer support group and answers their questions related to troop deployments within the National Guard. Immediately below, Gov. Beebe takes time out to shake hands with troops from 1/206th Field Artillery before watching the Soldiers put on a display of artillery fire. (Bottom of the page) Employers pose with their Soldiers during a recent visit to Chaffee.





**L**ocal businesses in Conway recently came together to show their support for Soldiers of the Arkansas Army National Guard, in particular, the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion.



With smiling faces, handwritten signs, and American flags, employees of local businesses—Snap-On Equipment, Kimberly Clark, Wonderbox, Staffmark and Axiom—lined the streets to cheer the Soldiers home from pre-deployment training at Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center.

When Scott Champlin and Randy Spencer of Snap-on Equipment heard that troops were coming back to the National Guard Armory across the street,

they immediately began contemplating ways to show support. Having been a long-time community partner with the local unit, the two men wanted to continue to show support for their neighboring troops and their Families.

Before long, Champlin and Spencer had everyone in the plant wanting to get involved. When local media heard about what they were doing for the troops, Champlin and Spencer were asked to be interviewed on the two radio stations. With the help of the Magic 105 and 103.7 The Buzz—radio stations from Little Rock—Snap-on Equipment started a grass-roots campaign to welcome the troops back. The result was a crowd of over 300 supporters from the business as well as local citizens that came by to show support.

"We just thought it would be nice to have a couple of people from Snap-On out front with signs to say thank you as they return," said Champlin. "That's the heart and soul of the message we're trying to give. We've tried to be good

community partners with our local Soldiers. We've put together care packages and have helped with Christmas gifts for the families that are back in the states. This is just one of many things in a long relationship with our Guardsmen and our Military Families."

As the Soldiers began rolling into the industrial complex towards their armory, they were surprised by the welcome home. For about a 100-meter stretch of road, they could see civilians waving flags and homemade signs thanking them for their service.

The welcome was reminiscent of a return many of these Soldiers experienced just two and a half years ago as they returned from Iraq. And while they were only returning from a two-week training period at Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, the knowledge that the community supports its Soldiers this early in the process provides much comfort.

After returning to their armory around the corner, the unit commander, Capt. Brian Kilgore, had his first sergeant march his troops across the street to thank the crowd. The Soldiers marched in formation to the front lawn of Snap-On Equipment. As the Soldiers stood at attention, a large marquee—*Thank you to our troops and their Families*—helped complete the picture of an employer dedicated to the citizen-Soldiers in their community. Champlin took the opportunity to thank the Soldiers for their service and dedication.

"We simply wanted to take time out and thank them for what they did for us," said Kilgore. "It took a lot of work to pull this together, and you can see by the homemade signs that they've put a lot of work into this effort. It's important for all of us, as citizen-Soldiers, to take time to thank the community for their support. And in particular, Snap-On has been a great supporter of ours for years."

Once Champlin finished his comments, the first sergeant called his company to attention and then with the command, "fall-out," the Soldiers fell into the sea of supporters to thank them for coming out. After many handshakes, pats on the back and simple well wishes, the Soldiers formed back up and marched off to the cheers of the crowd.

Still early into the deployment, these Bowie Brigade Soldiers can find comfort in knowing the community is behind them and they'll look forward to the day they are welcomed home from Iraq.



**D**ressed in a black Stetson hat laced with a gold band and shiny silver spurs on his combat boots, the Calvary Soldier lifts a jug of what appears to be motor oil high into the air. He sounds off loud and proud to a room full of Soldiers dressed in the same attire as he pours the slow-moving liquid into a large punch bowl—a liquid that appears as slow as molasses.

"... defeating the Iraqi Army and liberating the nation of Kuwait. In honor of those brave cavalymen, I add crude oil to the Grog. cavalymen, charge your glasses and prepare to consume the Grog!" he shouts.

Adding crude oil, sand, and other non-consumables to a punch-bowl mix of frothy adult beverages might sound like the beginning of a fraternal initiation; however the focus of this event is honor, duty and country. Consuming this beverage, known as the 'Grog,' is actually a symbolic reflection of cavalry history and tradition. This most recent episode of tradition took place at a "Stable Call" at Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center.

History is something that these Soldiers—members of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 151<sup>st</sup> Cavalry of the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team—are no stranger to as the unit prepares for a second deployment to Iraq. The battalion is currently conducting pre-deployment training here in anticipation of their year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom which will begin shortly after the first of the year. The 39<sup>th</sup> IBCT is a history-rich brigade and traditions like these bring camaraderie and pride to young and old alike.

"It's important to introduce these traditions to our younger Soldiers so that they will carry the torch going forward. Tradition is such a large part of any military organization that I think it's extremely difficult to determine the value of such traditions in respect to camaraderie," said Maj. Chad Higginbotham. "If for no other reason,

carrying these traditions forward simply helps to bring our leaders—both enlisted and officer—closer together as a cohesive unit, which is very important for a battalion that is about to head back to Iraq."

Each ingredient added to the Grog is symbolic of a particular mission, conflict, or hardship that cavalymen have experienced throughout their years. While it may be maple syrup instead of crude oil, brown sugar instead of sand, or red wine instead of cavalry blood, the symbolic meaning remains the same to those who gulp a mug of the Grog. And while the taste buds might disagree, the Grog provides a delightful dose of pride and honor for all that partake.

"It helps you understand the lineage of the unit. With each drink that's added in, you hear stories of bravery and courage" said Sgt. Garland Alexander of Headquarters Troop, 1/151<sup>st</sup> Cavalry. "It's a unique experience and has always been a motivator for me."

Cavalymen of the 39<sup>th</sup> have hosted the annual "Stable Call" since E Troop—previously known as 3rd Battalion, 153<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment—was reformed into 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 151<sup>st</sup> Cavalry as a part of Army transformation.

The ceremony is an informal *esprit de corps* event that has other historical symbols honoring the cavalry tradition. It's an opportunity to wear the Stetson hat, which can be worn by any Soldier attending the dinner. Wearing the Stetson is a tradition believed to be started by Lt. Col. John B. Stockton at Fort Benning, Ga. It is a symbol of the pride cavalymen have for their profession.

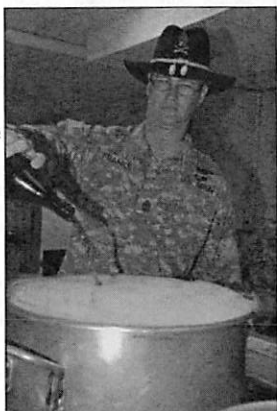
Another uniform modification, the cavalry spurs, must be earned. Gold spurs are authorized at special events to any Soldier that has deployed with a cavalry unit. Silver spurs are earned through a "spur ride", which is a cavalry challenge with tasks that must be accomplished. The tasks, which vary from unit to unit, challenge cavalymen on skills such as night land navigation, proficiency with weapons like the .50 caliber machine gun or MK 19 grenade launcher, obstacle courses along with other challenges to test the mastery of a cavalry scout's tasks.

Other historical traditions include the lighting of the lantern, which was a visible command years ago that let troops know that they could smoke and drink at ease. According to tradition, no cavalymen can smoke until the commander has called for the lantern to be lit. Bugle calls can still be heard at cavalry ceremonies through the Army, which historically represents

how field commanders were summoned to their superiors in the wars of early America.

"It's all about the history that comes with cavalry," said Capt. Joel Lynch of Headquarters Troop. "It gives troops pride in who they are and what they do."

Previously, 1/151<sup>st</sup> Cavalry has been equipped for reconnaissance missions, riding forward and gathering the information that helps brigade commanders make tactical decisions. These cavalymen of the 39<sup>th</sup> are preparing for a different mission with this deployment—a security mission—yet, they can rely on their camaraderie and cavalry spirit to ensure mission success.



"Last time, if you guarded the front gate you only did it for three months. If you did convoy security, it again, was just a three-month mission. The Soldier knew another mission was ahead," said Cluck. "In a short amount of time, Soldiers will grow complacent; particularly since it's the same location. And, this time since we don't have the artillery mission it becomes even more challenging, yet a challenge we're comfortable taking."

As of now, during the pre-deployment phase, his best protection against complacency is battlefield intensity during training. Cluck is ensuring that his Soldiers are focused and motivated while training on their Warrior Training Tasks (WTT), all 40 of them.

While they won't be sending 105mm rounds downrange this time, they did at least get one last opportunity this summer to practice their profession before deploying to Iraq. During annual training in July, at a time when the Iraq mission set for the 39<sup>th</sup> was still very immature, the 206<sup>th</sup> sent many rounds downrange towards Fort Chaffee's infamous Potato Hill—a hill made famous for it's constant pounding by artillery over the years.

The Soldiers weren't the only ones watching those rounds strike Potato Hill. Sporting a Kevlar and a brand new set of ACUs, Arkansas' Governor Mike Beebe braved the heat to watch the artillerymen in action. The governor spent a few hours on the ground to see first hand the Brigade's preparation for the 2008 mobilization.

But even 'durable' needs maintenance every once in a while. Cluck pointed out that many of the guns today are two-toned, meaning they have both green and desert tan parts on it. The desert tan components on these weapons systems are courtesy of similar guns captured from the Iraqi Army.

While the artillery pieces are collecting dust here stateside during this deployment, it won't be long before the dust becomes a permanent fixture to these weapons. Currently, the battalion is scheduled to field a new artillery piece, the M119, in fiscal year 2011.

"Last time, if you guarded the front gate you only did it for three months. If you did convoy security, it again, was just a three-month mission. The Soldier knew another mission was ahead," said Maj. Damon Cluck. "In a short amount of time, Soldiers will grow complacent; particularly since it's the same location. And, this time since we don't have the artillery mission it becomes even more challenging, yet a challenge we're comfortable taking."

The current 105mm Howitzers originally came to the Arkansas Guard in the mid 1980s from Indiana, according to Cluck. At the time, the artillery pieces were already aged since they were made around the 1967-68 timeframe and had been used in the Vietnam War. Considering they have been firing artillery for nearly 40 years, these artillery pieces have proven quite durable.

But even 'durable' needs maintenance every once in a while. Cluck pointed out that many of the guns today are two-toned, meaning they have both green and desert tan parts on it. The desert tan components on these weapons systems are courtesy of similar guns captured from the Iraqi Army.

"The interesting thing is that when we

got to Iraq last time we found nine M102 Howitzers that the Iraqi Army had captured from the Iranian's during their war. They were all 1970-71 model, and we were able to use the spare parts to keep our guns going. All of their guns were painted desert tan, so you'll see a lot of that on our weap-

ons," he said. The ability to improvise is a staple quality of the Army Soldier, and while the color scheme may be off just a tad you can ensure that the steel directed towards its target didn't have the same problem. The accuracy of these big guns is pretty high, especially when the crew members working them have trained together for many years as is the case in Cluck's battalion.

And while the 206<sup>th</sup> will be leaving their arsenal of big guns behind during this deployment, they carry with them confidence that they've successfully completed the Iraq mission once before. These artillerymen are headed back to familiar territory, *but this time*, their challenge is much different.







**M**aj. Damon Cluck is returning to Iraq, but *this time* he returns as a battalion commander.

He brings with him over 700 Soldiers, but *this time* over half are combat veterans.

The battalion is designated as field artillery, but *this time* the 'big guns' are staying behind.

Why does an artillery battalion leave their Howitzers stateside as they head

During the last deployment, Cluck said the battalion had a gun (105mm Howitzer) 'hot' at all times and were assigned one of the largest battle spaces measuring nearly 26 by 30 kilometers. Having pulled the lanyard nearly 1,500 times sending 105mm mortar rounds downrange into an area north of Baghdad in the last deployment, these artillerymen might feel a little incomplete without their M102 Howitzers. But, their experience in 2003 also prepared them for the current mission.

In addition to their artillery mission, the battalion was charged with many other missions outside their specialty, so they have experience on their side.

for VIPs and civil-military operations in addition to our artillery mission," said Cluck, who served as the Battalion's training officer (S-3) during the last deployment.

"The obvious benefit was that we were able to rotate everyone into these various missions which helped us fight complacency. We're now able to take advantage of those lessons learned as we go into this deployment knowing we're leaving the artillery behind," he said.

Cluck is quick to point out the benefits of having such a large number of combat veterans going to Iraq this time.

And, just as importantly, he notes the importance of the 'lessons learned' from also conducting so many different types of missions in 2003. Like his counterparts from the other battalions within the Brigade, Cluck's biggest concern is complacency. A problem that the Brigade's top enlisted Soldier—Command Sgt. Maj. Steven Veazey—has termed, "the enemy within."

"From a very positive standpoint, experience is a good thing. But, from a negative

standpoint, complacency can kill you," he said. "We just can't go in and rely on past experience."

The fact that he was able to rotate troops into different missions in 2003 helped prevent against complacency issues. Nonetheless, Cluck will have to find a new way to battle the issue this time.

"It's important to introduce these traditions to our younger Soldiers so that they will carry the torch going forward. Tradition is such a large part of any military organization that I think it's extremely difficult to determine the value of such traditions in respect to camaraderie," said Maj. Chad Higginbotham. "If for no other reason, carrying these traditions forward simply helps to bring our leaders—both enlisted and officer—closer together as a cohesive unit, which is very important for a battalion that is about to head back to Iraq."

# FIELD ARTILLERY 2006<sup>th</sup> LEAVING THE 'BIG GUNS' BEHIND

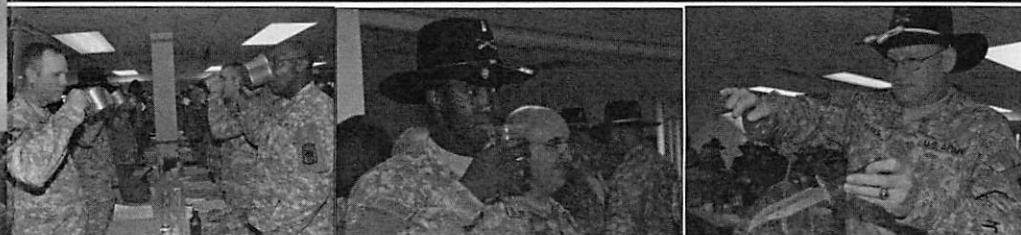
off to war? The short answer is the mission doesn't require them. Instead, these artillerymen will fall back on their basic infantry skills and assist in providing convoy security as well as force protection. Their primary weapon system for this mission will be the M4 rifle—comparatively speaking, it's much smaller, yet equally effective in engaging the enemy.

And like his fellow leaders within the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, Cluck is paying particular attention to the experience to ensure it doesn't become a hindrance.

"During the last deployment, we did a little bit of everything—cordon and search, route clearance, counter-rocket, counter-mortar, convoy security



Photos/Story by Sgt. John Heavner



The only battalion-sized element—217<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion—within the Arkansas Army National Guard that hasn't deployed in the last few years is answering the call—a 'long-distance' call from the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Now, they find themselves preparing for duty in Iraq.

Joining forces with the Bowie Brigade for this version of Operation Iraqi Freedom is a reunion of sorts for these members of the 142<sup>nd</sup> Fires Brigade. The two-year old battalion's headquarters once held the designation as Detachment 1, of the 239<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company of the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade prior to the brigade's transformation into a brigade combat team.

The 217<sup>th</sup>'s flag was unfurled in a May 2006 ceremony as Lt. Col. Tony Bryant took the reigns of the newly created 217<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion. In the same breath, those unit members that formerly sported the Bowie patch on their left shoulder, replaced it with that of the 142<sup>nd</sup> Fires Brigade, and the rest is history—or at least, the start of the unit's history.

In a very cold morning ceremony in January 2007, the battalion recorded another significant entry in their history as Bryant turned over the reigns to Lt. Col. James Treece. In taking the top spot, he was confident a deployment was in his future.

"As a new battalion with no mobe time, we knew we'd be looked at for deployment sooner or later. So, when we realized the 39<sup>th</sup> was going to need help from outside the Brigade we stepped up," said Treece. "We just wanted to

go as a complete battalion—carry our own flag. Cross-leveling breaks the command structure, esprit de corp, camaraderie, those tenets that make a successful unit.

The Brigade commander—Col. Kendall Penn—agreed with Treece's assessment that cross-leveling would not be in the best interest of the 217<sup>th</sup>, nor the Bowie Brigade. So, as the only battalion-sized element to join the Brigade, the 217<sup>th</sup> will march into Iraq with their infamous 142<sup>nd</sup> patch on their shoulder—which features an artillery round underneath the state of Arkansas flag.

And, nearly three months into individual training, the 217<sup>th</sup> finds motivation among its young troops high.

"Being reunited with all the Soldiers that I deployed with in OIF II makes me feel really good," said Staff Sgt. Robert Hardin, previously a member of the 239<sup>th</sup> who had served with the 39<sup>th</sup> for seven years. "Many of the guys I served with are now training us, and it's been exciting to see their faces again. And, coming into this, you might have thought that we wouldn't receive any respect for wearing the 142<sup>nd</sup> patch, but that is not the case. The 39<sup>th</sup> has accepted us as part of the team."

As a way to solidify the commitment to making the 217<sup>th</sup> feel like a part of the team, Penn has extended the Bowie knife tradition to the battalion, according to Treece. In fact five field-grade officers from the 217<sup>th</sup> have already received their Bowie knife in a presentation by Penn and more are waiting for the day that they can display the knife on their side.

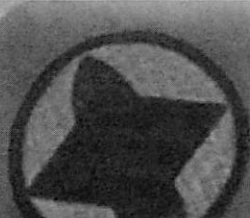
"As far as an outward showing of camaraderie, in my opinion, the Bowie knife is the most time-honored tradition for senior leadership," said Treece. "Colonel Penn just presented the knives to five of our guys, and it's a great honor that they will wear with great pride. From a non-commissioned officer perspective, most of our guys have always been 142<sup>nd</sup> guys, so I think by allow-

ing our Soldiers to retain their 142<sup>nd</sup> culture—to wear the patch—it has allowed them to keep their cultural identity. Again, all in all, we are a part of this team."

Sporting his Bowie knife recently at the Brigade Headquarters at Ricks Armory, Treece recalled his days with the 39<sup>th</sup> many years ago as a non-commissioned officer. Having served in Bravo Company, 2/153 from private thru sergeant, he left the Brigade to attend Officer Candidate School in Little Rock. And now, he returns as the battalion commander within the 142<sup>nd</sup> Fires Brigade, yet, he's very familiar with his peers from the Brigade.

"Having never deployed as battalion commander, I find myself working with commanders—peers—that have the experience and are very good at sharing that experience with me," said Treece. "I'm very familiar with the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade, and from a commander's perspective, I'd much rather deploy with a unit that I'm familiar with as opposed to going as a separate battalion. Our ranks are filled with a lot of youth, but we still have anywhere from 35 to 40 percent of our battalion that has previously deployed. Bottom line, our Soldiers are motivated and excited about this deployment."

As the Brigade continues to prepare for deployment, the only difference between the 217<sup>th</sup> and the other battalions is a shoulder patch.



Lt. Col. James Treece, commander of the 217th Brigade Support Battalion, 142nd Fires Brigade, and Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Gillmore display their Bowie knives which Col. Kendall Penn, commander of the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team presented to them in December. Treece believes that allowing the senior leadership of the 217th to be a part of the Bowie knife tradition solidifies Penn's verbal commitment to making his battalion feel like part of the Bowie Team and not simply "fillers". Above, the artillery round with the Arkansas state flag across it represents the 142nd Fires Brigade.

Bowie team, hooah! The motivation within the Brigade is outstanding, and each of you should be commended for your efforts to this point. But don't be quick to take a pat on the back at the end of the race. . . this is a marathon, and in reality, we're not even a half mile into the course; a course that will test every ounce of your endurance.

And as important as this race is to the Brigade, I want each of you to stop for a minute to think about what it takes to win the race—You! By this, I mean that I need each and every one of you to remain healthy and safe if we are eventually going to reach that finish line. . . complete the mission.

Enough of the analogies and back to realities; did you realize that since we started this training on October 1 that we have lost four of our fellow comrades? Four. Ladies and gentlemen, that's four to many and losing another one of you is not a reality we want to face. Granted, these troops were involved in accidents; however, we are going to have to be even more cognizant of our surroundings. Safety is of the utmost importance in everything we do. There is no training that is so important that we are willing to put safety to the wayside. And, the same concept should hold true for your personal time.

I want each of you to think about safety the next time you go over the speed limit because you're running late. Are you in such a hurry that you're willing to pass on a double yellow line? Do you automatically push down on the gas when the light turns yellow or will you slow down next time? Think about the seconds that it

would take to put that seat belt on. . . seconds that could save your life. Simple things we often don't think about. But I need you to focus on them Bowie team! And, I need you to do it now. Losing a Soldier under any circumstance is a tragedy. I'm convinced that when it's my time, it's my time; but I'm also convinced we don't

proper uniform—how can I expect we're going to do the right things once we're in country. Team, mistakes get people killed. Undisciplined Soldiers get people killed. And regardless of our mission this time, we are going into a very hostile and unstable part of the world once again. I need each of you to think about what it takes to be the

# BOWIE TEAM

# HOOAH

COMMAND SGT MAJ STEVEN VEAZEY

have to accelerate that time.

Four Soldiers in such a short time. If we were to continue to lose Soldiers at that pace we would be on track to lose more Soldiers to accidents than we lost in combat last deployment before we ever land in Iraq. We need to take that 'battle buddy' concept outside the battlefield as well and apply it to our everyday life. If you see a fellow Soldier acting in an unsafe manner you owe it to them to address the issue. You owe it to them, regardless of your rank!

At this point, you're thinking—Sergeant Major is preaching, right? Well, if that's what it takes, I'll preach, and I'll ask the Brigade Chaplain— Lt. Col. Rohrer—to come and help me. I'll take all the help I can get to protect my Soldiers. But team, it has to start with you. You have to focus on safety and safety should never take a rest.

While I'm preaching, I want to address another issue that's been on my mind—uniformity. For those of you that have been at Chaffee already you've possibly been on the receiving end of one of my tirades about being out of uniform. And again, it's probably running through your mind, 'Sergeant Major is on a rampage today.' But team, there is a reason behind my madness.

Let me explain. In short, uniformity goes back to discipline. Safety goes back to discipline. Keeping Soldiers alive goes back to discipline. Team, we've got to get disciplined! I can confirm that we train as we fight. I've seen your effort, and I've been very pleased with that effort. But, if we can't get the simple things right—like wearing the

best Soldier you can be, and then I need you to act on that. Do it for yourself. Do it for your battle buddy. Do it for Family. And, do it for me.

Bowie team, I'm convinced that when we return from Iraq the country will be singing our praises. We'll come home to parades, flag-waving loved ones and a proud nation. But those things don't come without a price, and I'm willing to pay a price to get them. But the highest price I'm willing to pay is long hours, hard work, high standards and discipline. I am not willing to pay the ultimate price—my Soldiers. Especially when I know that it's not necessary. We control our destiny. It's up to each of you.

So, if your first sergeant tells you full battle rattle is the uniform of the day. You know what you need to do. If you're running late, and you come upon a yellow light you know what to do. Now, take what you 'know' and act upon that and just do it.

If I've yet to convince you of the importance of safety and discipline ask yourself this question, or better yet, imagine this scenario—you've died because you ran that red light and got side swiped; imagine what your Family will go through. . . your mother, father, spouse or child. You're really going to be late now—forever kind of late. It's not worth it team.

In closing, be the Soldiers I know you can be. Bowie team, hooah!



*Story/Photos by Maj. Craig Heathscott*

217th BSB joins the

# Bowie TEAM

As the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team prepares for deployment to Iraq, the senior leadership is prepared to bring a knife to the gunfight—the Bowie knife. The knife is an addition to the uniform with roots that run deep in Arkansas history and has given the 39<sup>th</sup> the designation as the 'Bowie Brigade.'

After the 39th Infantry Brigade was formed in 1967, the Brigade needed a symbol that would represent the pride and heritage of "The Arkansas Brigade", as well as the fighting spirit of the Soldiers that carried that symbol. The Bowie knife—named after famous Soldier, explorer, and businessman James Bowie—would become that symbol.

In fact, the Brigade patch highlights the Bowie knife as it lays across a blue diamond, which represents the only diamond mine in North America located in Murfreesboro, Ark. The red area surrounding the diamond, along with the blue that outlines the patch are representative of the Arkansas state flag with the colors standing for loyalty (blue) and the blood (red) that

the 39<sup>th</sup> Soldiers have shed for both the state of Arkansas as well as the United States. Both the patch and the Bowie knife have become very distinguishable across the country.

As legend has it, James Bowie traveled to Washington, Ark., in 1830 to find a famous blacksmith and knife maker, named James Black. Because Black was such a well known knife maker, Bowie selected him to make a knife that Bowie had designed and whittled out of wood. Black agreed to create the knife, which would be made of the finest material, have a heavy hand guard and be balanced for throwing.

A month later, Bowie returned to Black's shop to find that Black had made two versions of the knife. One version was just as Bowie had asked while the second had a few modifications. The modified version had a curved point of two edges, also called a clip point, making it possible to stab and slash with the knife. Bowie liked the modifications and took the second knife as his own.

Soon after Bowie had acquired his new knife, he was attacked in Texas by three men hired to kill him. Legend tells that one man was almost decapitated, the other disemboweled, and the third's skull split open. This fight would make both Bowie and Black famous.

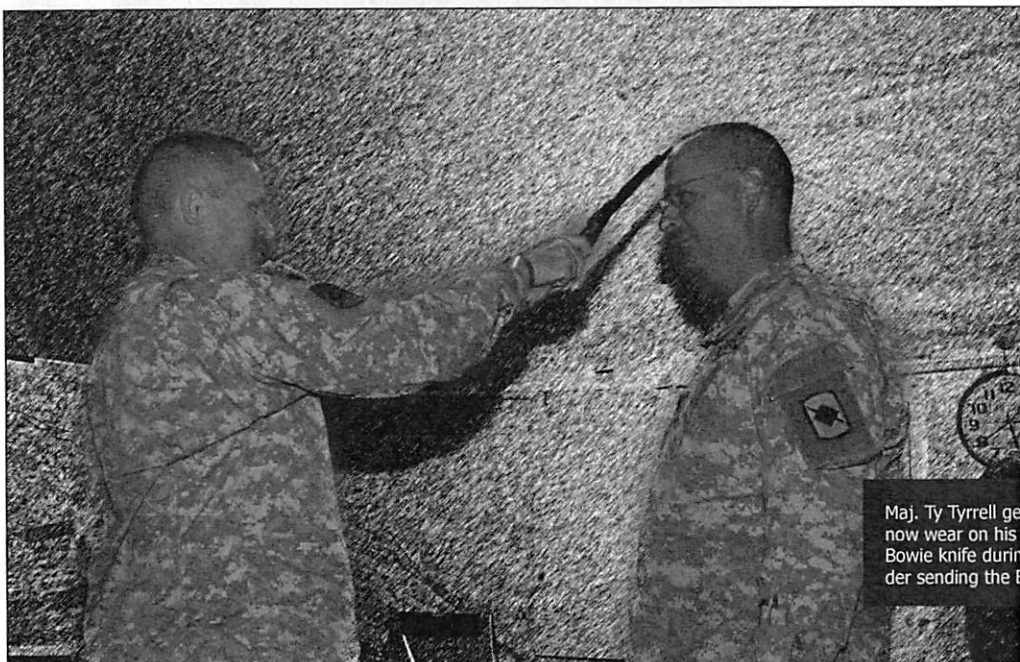
The 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade adopted the Bowie knife as part of the Brigade's insignia soon after its formation on December 1, 1967. It was originally the weapon

of brigade field grade officers, the commanding general's aide-de-camp, and more recently, the command sergeants major, sergeants major, and chief warrant officers (CW4). The commander of the brigade is authorized a Bowie knife with an ivory handle. Colonels wear knives with stag handles while all field grade officers wear knives with black handles. Command sergeants major and sergeants major wear knives with cherry wood handle and retired master sergeants are authorized cocobolo handles.

Bowie Brigade Soldiers are the only Soldiers in the Army authorized to wear the Bowie knife as part of their uniform. While it was originally an Arkansas tradition, it has been approved by the United States Senate for 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade Soldiers to wear the Bowie on military bases across the Army.

The same Bowie knife conceived in Arkansas is still produced in Arkansas. And, until his death, each knife presented to 39th Brigade Soldiers was hand made by Jimmy Lile of Russellville. Lile was also commissioned to make the knives used by Sylvester Stallone in the Rambo films. His family continues to make the blades for the Brigade, but along with the owner's name, rank, and unit, the family places a red strip of wood on the handle. This red strip is in memory of Lile.

Designed as a weapon for close contact fighting, the Bowie knife is 'indicative of the fighting spirit of the infantry' and is worn with pride by those authorized to wear it on their



Maj. Ty Tyrrell gets now wear on his s  
Bowie knife during  
der sending the B



BOWIE TEAM

**G**reetings, Bowie Team! With almost half of the Brigade's pre-mobilization training complete, I wanted to take an opportunity to address each of you and let you know what a magnificent job you're doing. We are a brigade preparing for war—we must train with a 'warrior' mentality. Regardless of our mission, Iraq is a dangerous place and we must always keep that in the forefront of everything we do. Always remember, we train as we fight. Even the most mundane tasks take on an air of importance as that very task could save a life, yours.

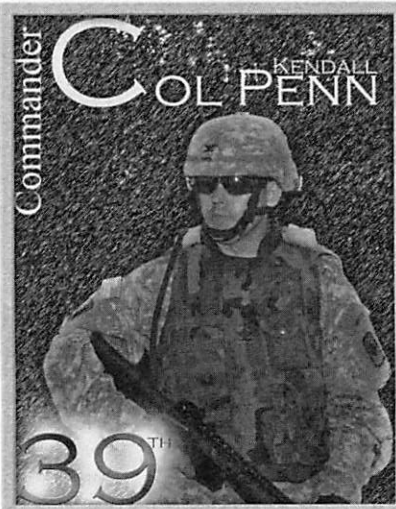
I target my comments on 'training as we fight' to everyone within the brigade, regardless of rank, position or age. But now, I'd like to focus my comments on four very distinct groups within our brigade—combat veterans, those that didn't deploy last time or have never deployed, new Bowie Team members and, finally, our Families.

First, combat veterans. I go into this deployment with a vast amount of confidence based on a brigade with nearly 50 percent of its returning Soldiers with combat experience from the last deployment. You have been there and know what to expect in Iraq. At the same time, I ask that you keep your guard up and don't rely solely on your past experience. We face a thinking enemy who changes his Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) based on what he sees us doing. Many of the TTPs we used during OIF II are no longer valid based on changes made by the enemy. I encourage you to keep an open mind as you go through your training at Camp Shelby. The Army has the most up-to-date methods that will address how we need to operate this time around. Maintain your positive attitude and focus on the details of your training—take nothing for granted.

We are faced with a huge undertaking with the pre-mobilization training we are conducting right now. Again, I look to your leadership to make it successful. My decision to fight for 90 days of pre-mobilization training was threefold—it takes care of Families, it takes care of employers, and most importantly, we get better training for our Soldiers. By taking a little extra time, we were able to postpone the Brigade's mobilization date until after the holidays. This allows our Soldiers to spend valuable time with their Family, while providing a specific date on which employers can begin to hire new employees.

Secondly, I want to focus on those of you that did not deploy in 2003 or have never deployed to Iraq. I'm simply asking you to lean on our combat veterans for guidance. Understand, I have put before them a somewhat daunting task of not just training you to standard but to exceed standards. I want you to be the best of the best, and I'm confident that you are up to this challenge.

Arkansas is setting the standard with this home station mobilization. The eyes of the country are on us to see if we can get it right. But first, we had to define what 'right' looked like. As I've walked the grounds of Fort Chaffee, I have seen excellent training and motivation from each of you. What this tells me is that we know what 'right' looks like. You are doing a magnificent job of demonstrating to the entire nation what a great job Arkansans can do.



The third group I want to address are those of you that came from outside the Brigade to fill our ranks and get us to our appropriate strength to complete this mission. You make us a true Arkansas Brigade and for that I thank you. We should all take pride in that as members of the Arkansas Guard.

You come from many different places, from every major command in the Arkansas Army National Guard. . . regardless, it doesn't matter. You are all now members of the Bowie Team. We have no "fillers," only Bowie team members. Many of you volunteered and others were told you were coming on this deployment. I just ask that you show your commitment through your actions. Make the Soldier on your right proud to serve with you. Make the Soldier on your left proud to serve with you. Make your Family and America as a whole proud of you for serving your country.

The final group I want to address is one that is common to us all—our Families. This home station mobilization has helped us create a 'Family friendly' environment for our Soldiers. We learned just how important that this is from our last deployment. A happy Soldier is one that gets time with his or her Family. I have instructed my battalion commanders to keep Family as a top priority.

With that said, the best thing I can do for your Family is to properly prepare you for the months that are ahead. I want to give you as much time on the front end as I possibly can but when it comes down to quality training and Family I have to choose training.

While addressing four very different groups, I now turn back to all of you and ask for your help in making these four into ONE. Together, we make up the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team. We have a challenge before us and divided we are assured of an unsuccessful outcome, yet, together we will ensure that the light at the end of the tunnel isn't a train. We will succeed.

hip.

The newest member of the Brigade to be 'knighted' with his own personal Bowie knife by Col. Kendall Penn, Brigade commander, was Maj. Ty Tyrrell during a quick ceremony during the summer.

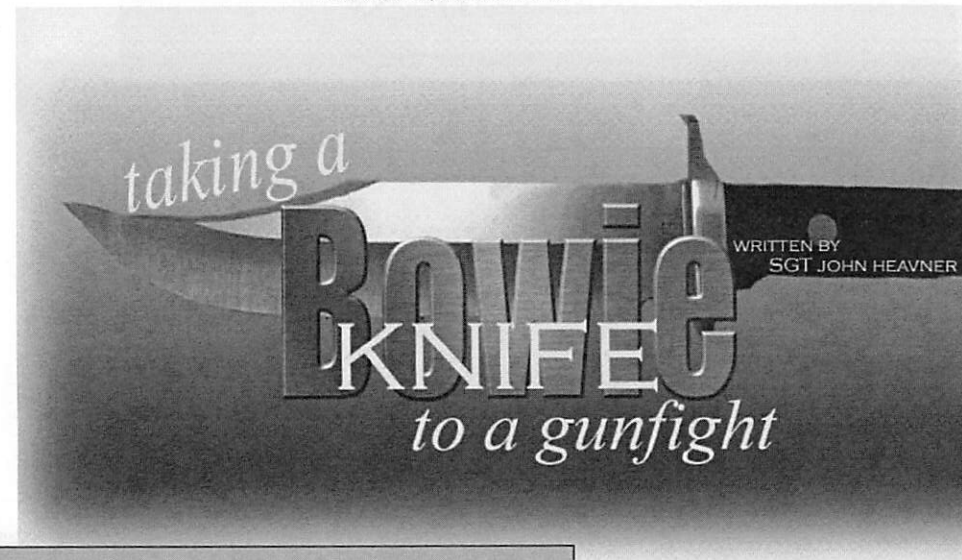
Tyrrell, executive officer for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 153<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment, has long understood the significance of this unique symbol. Having served in the Iowa National Guard from 1989 to

1993, he was well aware during that timeframe that the Bowie knife was a significant honor within the 39<sup>th</sup> and he's proud that honor has now been bestowed on him.

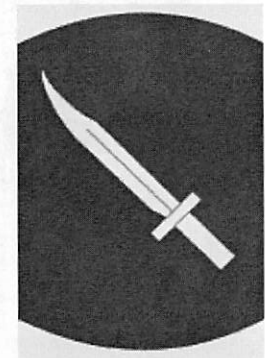
"We didn't have anything like the Bowie knife in the Iowa Guard. It's one of those symbols that tells people you're a part of the leadership of the 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade, an item that all the officers and senior NCOs strive for as they make their way through the ranks," he said. "It certainly makes me feel like

part of the 39th family."

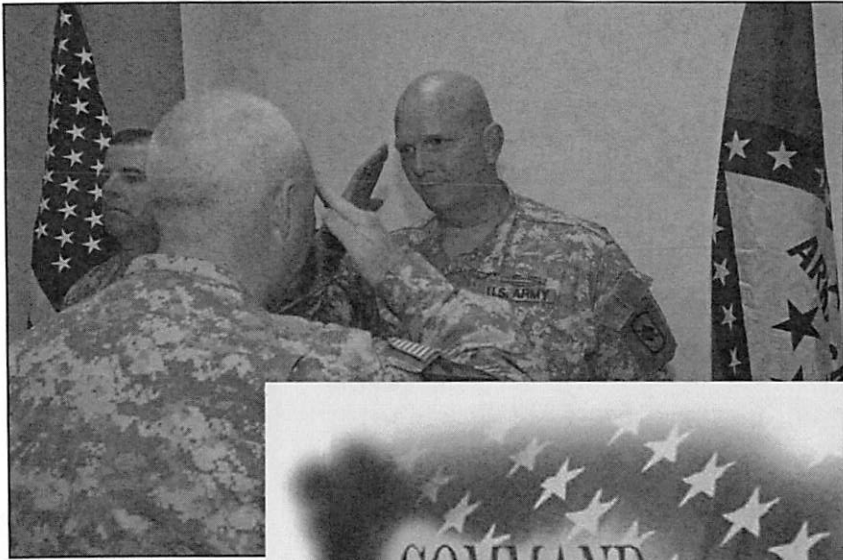
As the Brigade continues its march to Iraq, the troops attack their training with the same fighting spirit that the Bowie knife represents. And whether the weapon of choice is a rifle, pistol or a knife, these Soldiers are prepared for the fight.



The 39<sup>th</sup> Brigade adopted the Bowie knife as part of the Brigade's insignia soon after its formation on December 1, 1967. It was originally the weapon of brigade field grade officers, the commanding general's aide-de-camp, and more recently, the command sergeants major, sergeants major, and chief warrant officers (CW4). The commander of the brigade is authorized a Bowie knife with an ivory handle. Colonels wear knives with stag handles while all field grade officers wear knives with black handles. Command sergeants major and sergeants major wear knives with cherry wood handle and retired master sergeants are authorized cocobolo handles.



was 'knighted' by Col. Kendall Penn, Brigade Commander, with the infamous Bowie knife, which he will use as a field-grade officer within the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Tyrrell was awarded his 100<sup>th</sup> annual training as the Brigade began an intensive training plan in anticipation of the mobilization or return back to Iraq for a second time.



Newly promoted Command Sgt. Maj. Phillip Johnson (above) salutes Lt. Col. Mickey Stewart, commander of 2/153rd Infantry. Command Sgt. Maj. James Megoloff (right) salutes Lt. Col. Brad Cox, commander of 1/153rd Infantry during a promotion ceremony at Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center (photos by Sgt. John Heavner). Command Sgt. Maj. Kim Hubbard (far left), Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) salutes his Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Stephen Redman, during an early morning ceremony at Fort Chaffee.

As any military tactician will tell you—to win the battle you must know your enemy. As any public affairs officer will tell you, the media is not our enemy; therefore, we don't need a 'no comment' defense.

One of my major points is that the days of 'no comment' are long gone in military public affairs. Quite the opposite is true anymore with the influx of embedded media into our ranks—we're quick to give open, honest comments to a reporter. And, from my 21 year perspective in the business—for what it's worth—the military is better served with this approach.

In case you were not aware, the number one objective of public affairs is to 'tell the Soldier's story' and keep the American public informed on what their military is doing around the world. We do this by addressing all media queries in a timely fashion, and we do it with the utmost honesty. We've opened up ranks to the state media—particularly, the Arkansas Democrat Gazette who embedded with the 39th during the last deployment.

In accomplishing our objective, it's important to allow reporters to have access to each and every one of our Soldiers so that they can get a well-rounded story. So, if you've taken time out of your training since October to participate in a media interview, I, first of all, want to say thank you. But as I say in my briefs, you have a right to say no when it comes to a media interview, and most importantly of all, an reporter/interview should never take precedence over safety when it comes to training or an actual mission. Please don't forget that. We are going to Iraq to conduct a mission—a dangerous one at that—and safety must always come first.

Switching gears a moment, I want to address the internet, web pages, blogs and any other form of media that's out there for transmitting pictures and information back home to family. We definitely want our family to know what we're doing during training as well as when we're in Iraq, but again, mission first, so we must keep operational security (OPSEC) at the front of our brains at all time. Does the picture

a site within the website to store your pictures and newsletters for your families to see. It's not my intent to stifle your communications with family; however, we need to be good stewards of the information we share and how we share it.

Again, my mission is clear—"Tell the Soldier's Story"—and I need your help in doing so. As we move into Mississippi and on



you're sending over the internet contain classified images? Could they somehow jeopardize our mission in Iraq?

The military has very strict guidelines regarding the use of web sites and blogs by Soldiers. If you don't understand these guidelines, address your concerns with me, and I'll get you the answers you need. The last thing any of us want is to be transmitting information in a blog that aides our enemy against our cause. So, before you decide to create a website or a blog, you are advised to ask questions.

Over the last couple months, I've heard rumblings of battalions creating their own websites; however, we need to be sure the chain of command is aware of these; particularly myself as your public affairs officer. The Arkansas Guard has a public website, and I'm currently working to ensure—hopefully—that each battalion has

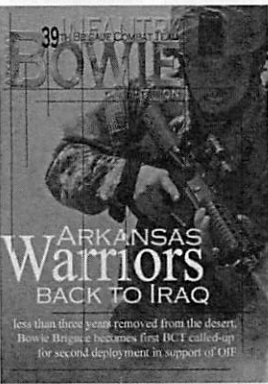
forward to Iraq, I'd ask that you assist me in the content for our magazine. Whether it's a quick email on an interesting/potential story or a digital image you take, I hope you'll share those with me. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Thanks again for those that have participated in interviews to this point; much appreciated. Send your emails to [craig.heathscott@us.army.mil](mailto:craig.heathscott@us.army.mil). I want to emphasize the 'Craig' in my email as many of you may remember the public affairs officer for the last deployment in 2003 was 'Chris,' or Cpt. Chris Heathscott, who by the way is your state public affairs officer. Surprisingly enough, many of you have confused me for him already. Guess the pressure is now on me to equal the job he did then. Stay safe.

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## ON THE COVER

Home from Iraq for less than three years, the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team finds itself preparing for a second deployment to the war-torn region making history in the process. The Brigade is the first National Guard BCT to return to Iraq. Col. Kendall Penn, 39th commander, and the Arkansas leadership fought hard for a home-station mobilization in order to provide Soldiers with a more 'Family friendly' deployment. Training in their own backyard has provided Soldiers to spend more time with Family, and at the same time, receive excellent training from the combat veterans that served in the last deployment. Cover photograph/story by Maj. Craig Heathscott.



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**30** EMPLOYER SUPPORT STRONG FOR 39TH

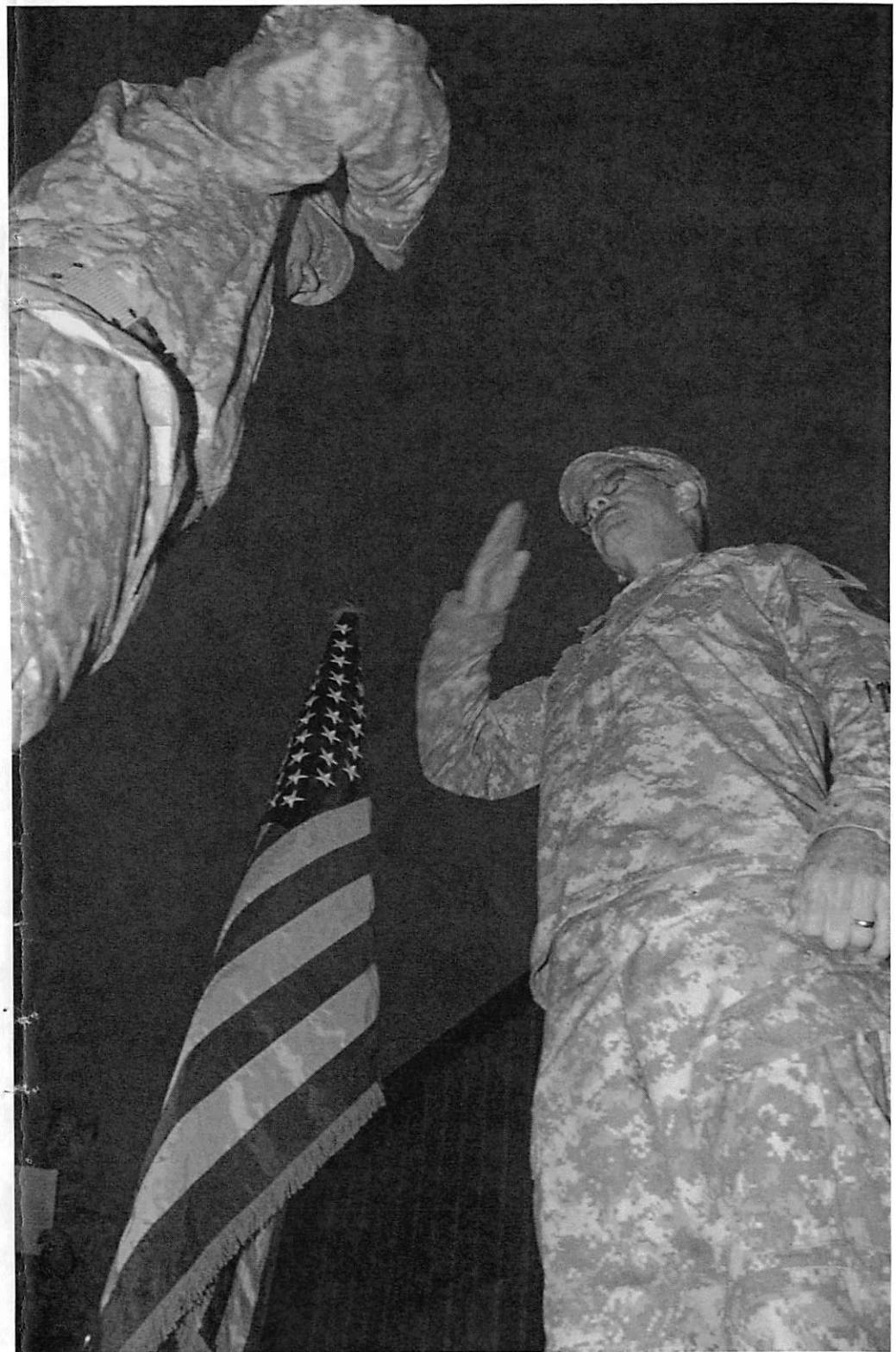
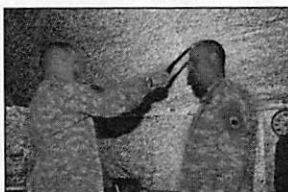


WELCOME HOME **32**

**34** A 'CAV' TRADITION



BRINGING A KNIFE TO A GUNFIGHT **36**



Remembering our  
**FALLEN HEROES**



ARKANSAS  
39<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY  
BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM  
**BOWIE**  
EDITION

Arkansas  
**Warriors**  
**BACK 2 IRAQ**

less than three years removed from the desert,  
Bowie Brigade becomes first Guard BCT to  
return for second tour of duty for OIF