

1st Silver Star Goes to 5th BCT Private

By Cpl. Bill Putnam
122nd MPAD

CAMP FERRIN-HUGGINS, Baghdad, Iraq – The 1st Cavalry Division's first Silver Star Medal for valor in combat during this deployment was presented to a 5th Brigade Combat Team Soldier Aug. 13.

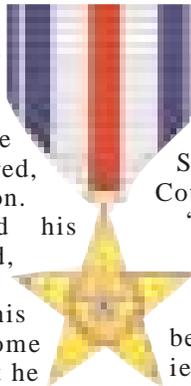
Pfc. Christopher Fernandez, of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment, stood proudly in front of his entire brigade as the division's commanding general pinned on the small medal with red, white and blue ribbon.

Fernandez said his family was proud, that they had even told members of his church back home about his award, but he didn't know if they understood that the Silver Star was a big deal.

"It's a great honor," said Fernandez a Multiple

Launch Rocket System crewman in Battery A, 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment. "I never thought it would happen."

The Silver Star is the Army's fifth highest medal for valor and the third highest during combat and is rarely given to enlisted Soldiers, much less privates.



Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, the First Team's commanding general, said Fernandez embodied the Army values of Selfless Service and Courage.

"Pfc. Christopher Fernandez is a hero," Chiarelli said. "He represents the best of us. He embodies the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos."

Fernandez was awarded the Silver Star for actions he had taken on the night of



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Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, congratulates Pfc. Christopher Fernandez for winning the Silver Star Medal. Chiarelli awarded Fernandez the Army's fifth highest medal at the 5th Brigade Combat Team headquarters Aug. 13.

May 5, when his unit came under attack. Fernandez, a Tucson, Ariz. native, was on a patrol through the city's Saidiyah neighborhood when insurgents ambushed his unit.

An improvised explosive device hit the patrol's rear vehicle. Immediately following the explosion, the patrol was barraged with small-arms fire. The

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By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Spec. Oscar Noyola and Sgt. LaFonsa Perry load a cabinet onto a truck.

3-82 FA Gives Orphanage a Lift

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Transcending the daily fare of security patrols and battery support, Soldiers of Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division broke from routine to lend a hand to some very special children.

Rolling up in front of the Dina Institute, an orphanage located in the Qadisiyah neighborhood of the

Mansour District, the Soldiers brought both a truck and their willingness to help move the institute's furniture to its' new home on July 31.

Capt. Evans Hanson, 3-82 FA civil military operations officer said the move was the culmination of a joint effort between the Iraqi government and the Multi-National Forces to find a new home for 60 special-needs children who had been overlooked since the war.

"In late April the

[Neighborhood Council] mentioned that there was an orphanage in our area of operation that had been overlooked, as far as support, by the government," Hanson said. "When we first saw their living conditions, which were very poor and unsanitary...We immediately got them a \$3,000 grant through the Commander's Emergency Relief Program [CERP]."

Hanson said they spent
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Soldiers Help Iraqi Orphanage

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the money on blankets, beds and food. They were also able to pay the back rent on the facility. The battery also brought in food, which they could use as a stable source of nutrition over the next few months Hanson said.

Knowing that the money would only provide a temporary fix to a long-term problem, Hanson met with the Iraqi Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the NC to find a permanent solution to the institute's problems.

"The ministry then sent

in a representative, who along with Mr. Najji-shakir [NC member], myself, the institute director and the battalion commander sat down and talked about the future of the orphanage," Hanson said. "Together, we came up with two options. One, they could become a public school and get subsidized support from the Iraqi government; or two, they could stay a private school and the government would do the best it could to get non-governmental [NGO] support."

Since that meeting, the

institute decided to remain a private school so it could raise its' own tuition even though half of the kids had been abandoned by their parents and the director has taken care of them without charge.

Hanson said a lot of people don't understand why the Soldiers get involved in projects like this, where there is nothing in it for them.

"After seeing the children, how could anyone ever turn their backs on them," Hanson said.



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. LaFonsa Perry, secures loaded furniture before transporting it to its' new location.

Private First Class Earns Army's 5th Highest Award

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patrol's crew-served weapons, a M-240B machine gun and a .50 caliber machine gun, immediately returned fire.

Two U.S. Soldiers were killed and five others were wounded in the IED explosion and their vehicle was inoperable.

Fernandez returned fire with his weapon, an M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon. He reloaded his weapon at least once during the short engagement, said Capt. Thomas Pugsley, Battery A's commander.

"There was a tremendous volume of fire coming



at them," Pugsley said.

In all the chaos, Fernandez saw the stricken vehicle's M-240B machine gun was unused. Acting on instinct, Fernandez knew that another weapon would suppress the enemy's fire long enough to evacuate the wounded and leave the area. He left his vehicle, ran to the disabled humvee

and recovered the weapon and its ammunition.

Fernandez then opened fire on the enemy.

What made all of that spectacular was the recovered weapon's condition, said Pugsley. The hand guards covering the machine-gun's barrel, so the gunner's hands won't burn, were blown off in the

explosion. That didn't matter to Fernandez though; he kept firing even though his hands were burning.

Almost 10 minutes later, the wounded were loaded onto the Fernandez's vehicle and the ambush site abandoned.

Pugsley said two other Soldiers were recommended for Bronze Stars with Valor devices for their actions that night. One received it; the other received an Army Commendation with V device, he said.

"He bought those Soldiers time," Pugsley said.

By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

**What does this mean?
Ma MA'Na HAZa?**

Tuesday
High: 108
Low: 80

Wednesday
High: 110
Low: 82

Thursday
High: 112
Low: 82

Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Police: Man Being Loud at Denny's

WATERTOWN, N.Y. (Watertown Daily Times)—A Fort Drum man who allegedly would not leave Denny's restaurant early Sunday was charged by Watertown police with trespassing. Duayne Tyler, 22, was intoxicated and loud while at the eatery at approximately 2:30 a.m. Sunday, police said. He was asked by police several times to leave, but wouldn't they said.

Army Medic on R&R Takes to Pulpit

TEMPLE, Texas-- Back from Iraq on R&R, Sgt. Toy Hodge returned to his post as first assistant minister at Eighth Street Baptist Church on Sunday. Hodge delivered a spirited sermon entitled "Looking unto the Lord while praising God" that stirred the congregation to its feet and filled the small chapel with shouts of praise. After the sermon Pastor Roscoe Harrison deadpanned to the congregation, "All I can say is, he's back." Hodge has been in Iraq since March 1, working as a medic with Fort Hood's aviation unit at Camp Cook in Baghdad. He splits his time in Iraq between treating injuries — medics are on call 24 hours a day — and the church. "A typical day over there," he said Sunday after the service, "is medical work and some type of church service. We are constantly having things going on at the church."

New Schools Celebrate their Openings

► *Killeen Daily Herald*
FORT HOOD — Just hours before their halls filled with students for the first day of school, two of the newest schools in the Killeen Independent School District were formally dedicated.

Ceremonies for Audie Murphy Middle School and Oveta Culp Hobby Elementary School were held Sunday.

The events attracted local, state and military officials; past and current school board members; KISD staff and faculty; members of the schools' construction teams; parents; and others from the community as the schools honored their namesakes.

The life of Texas native Audie Murphy was celebrated during the dedication of the middle school, located at 53393 Sun Dance Drive on Fort Hood.

Minerva Trujillo, principal of the new school,



Killeen Daily Herald

Members of the Killeen High School marching band color guard get in one more practice Friday morning before school starts, rehearsing the football halftime show at Leo Buckley Stadium.

said students will be able to draw inspiration from Murphy's life, despite the adversity they face.

Giant Logjams Built to Protect Highway

► *Seattle Times*
SEATTLE, Wash. -- The Hoh is the unruly teenager of Washington rivers. And it likes to eat. Four times, the Federal Highway Administration has funded emergency efforts to stop the river from gobbling up a stretch of U.S. Highway 101, 15 miles south of Forks, Clallam County. The Hoh, racing down from the glaciers of Mount Olympus, has chewed through 600 feet of bank in the past decade to the shoulder of the highway.

Last winter, the Department of Transportation placed



Seattle scientists, and highway officials plan the largest logjam to coax Hoh River from Highway 101.

1,000 truckloads of rock riprap on the Hoh's south bank to protect the highway. That held, but officials worry that the Hoh will just eat its way around the rock in the next flood, as it has done before. Now,

"No matter what, they have the power to come out fighting like Audie Murphy did," Trujillo said.

KISD dance group, the Tapestry Dancers, which was founded by Trujillo, performed during the dedication.

The Oveta Culp Hobby Elementary School also honored its namesake during the dedication. A native Killeenite, Hobby served in positions in both the state and federal governments. She was head of the Women's Interest Section of the War Department Bureau of Public Relations, helping to shape the concept of female participation in the Army. President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed her secretary of the newly created Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

"There could be no honor more fitting for my mother," said former Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, Hobby's son.

a Seattle scientist and state and federal highway officials are gambling their reputations and \$7 million on a project to coax the Hoh away from the highway using the largest engineered logjam ever built.

Women's Softball Team Stays Unbeaten in Athens

ATHENS, Greece (AP) - Not sun. Not wind. Not Japan. Right now, nothing can stop the U.S. Olympic softball team.

Helped by two errors, one on a ball lost in the unforgiving Mediterranean glare, the Americans scored three runs in the eighth Monday for a 3-0 win over Japan. The victory extends the U.S. team's winning streak to 73 games.

Cat Osterman, the U.S. team's youngest player, pitched a one-hitter with 11 strikeouts as the United States (3-0) remained the only unbeaten team in the eight-team Athens tournament.

After two blowouts to open round-robin play, the U.S. team couldn't get a hit for the first seven innings. But Japan couldn't score either, and the game went to the international tiebreaker where each team gets to start the eighth inning with a runner at second base.

In the nerve-racking inning, Kelly Kretschman hit a sacrifice fly, pinch-hitter Jenny Topping had an RBI single and Lovieanne Jung, who walked after battling Japan starter Juri Takayama during a 17-pitch at-bat, scored when Natasha Watley beat out an infield single.

Japan (1-2), which lost to the Americans 2-1 in the gold medal game four years ago in Sydney, made two costly errors in the eighth. One came when third baseman Reika Utsugi couldn't see Jung's easy foul pop.

The timing of the Americans' early-round matchup with Japan was



AP
Amanda Freed (right) scores a run on a sacrifice fly by Jessica Mendoza (2) in the eighth inning. The United States beat Japan 3-0 in eight innings Monday.

oddly similar to the U.S. team's game against them in 2000.

Just as they've done in Greece, the Americans shut out their first two opponents in Australia - then they had a 112-game winning streak snapped as Japan beat them 2-1 in 11 innings.

Takayama got the win in that game with 2 2-3 innings of relief, but she took the loss in the gold medal game when Laura Berg's eighth-inning single popped in and out of falling left fielder Shiori Koseki's

glove.

Takayama and her teammates have to be heartbroken following this one, too.

Neither team could get anything going on offense through the first three innings as Osterman and Takayama traded pitches. The hitters that they couldn't strike out or induce into hitting weak grounders were humbled by Greece's famed Meltemi wind, which whipped from left to right through stadium.

Japan didn't get its first hit off Osterman until the fifth.

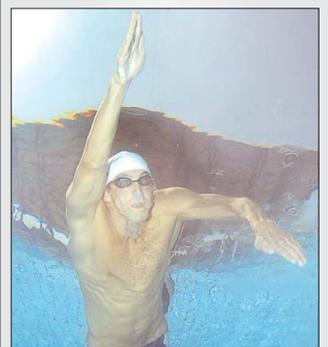
Sports Shorts

Gymnastics Medal for Men

ATHENS, Greece (AP) - Twenty years later, the boys are back on the medal stand. The American men's gymnastics program won the silver medal Monday, capping a four-year rebuilding project. The Japanese men's team took the gold medal.

No Chance For Record Gold

ATHENS, Greece (AP) - Michael Phelps of the United States men's swim team lost his bid to surpass the seven gold medals won by swimmer Mark Spitz in the 1972 Olympic Games. Swimming a leg on the 400-meter freestyle relay, Phelps and his teammates had to settle for a bronze medal as a team from South Africa broke the world record in the event Sunday. On Monday, Phelps settled for a bronze medal in the 200-meter freestyle, losing to Ian Thorpe of Australia.



Getty Images

American swimmer Mike Phelps fails in his bid to break a 32-year Olympic record for gold medals.