

# WARRIOR LEADER

Volume 8, Number 1

Operation Warrior Forge,

Fort Lewis, Wash.

July 2, 2004

## The Height of Excellence

Warrior Forge tests cadets to do their best

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Welcome to the first-ever "WARRIOR FORGE." For our cadets, cadre and support Soldiers, this year's summer training will be challenging, fulfilling and memorable. The evolution of the National Advanced Leadership Camp into Warrior Forge has brought a new level of rigor to our training, and greater challenges for our cadets.

To our cadets – welcome and keep your heads in the game. As you transition swiftly from the boredom of the medical examinations line to the thrill and anxiety of Squad and Patrol STX, your summer will fly by. On the way, you will train hard, learn to lead well, and perhaps more importantly, learn to follow and support your fellow cadets. By the time you successfully graduate on Watkins Field on Main Post, you will be well on your way to achieving a momentous goal in life: the gold bars of a second lieutenant in the finest Army on earth.

Our support Soldiers this year are the great troopers of Task Force Warrior, comprised of soldiers from Fort Lewis, Fort Sill, Fort Campbell, Fort Bragg and Fort Bliss ... truly a "team of teams" and they are providing us outstanding support. We cannot execute our summer training mission without these great troopers. More importantly, they provide a magnificent "first impression" of our enlisted ranks for a great many of our cadets.

The contributions of the Citizen-Soldiers of the United States



**Col. Steven R. Corbett**

Army Reserve are critical to our safe and competent training in vital Soldier tasks such as Rifle Marksmanship, Hand Grenade, NBC and Automatic Weapons. These outstanding troops come to us from across the nation and serve as true examples of self-less service, as well as the marvelous diversity of working America.

Warrior Forge 2004 will probably go down in Cadet Command history as the "Summer of Change." We have a new evaluation system, a restructured training schedule, increased physical and emotional challenges ...the list goes on and on. What has not changed and never will, is our core mission: to train, assess and develop the future officer leadership of the United States Army. Here at Warrior Forge, the spirit, effort, endurance and focus of our cadets remains honed to a keen edge.

Stay sharp, train safely, and try as hard as you can at all times. I am very proud of the Warrior Forge team.

Cadet training on much of Fort Lewis and North Fort Lewis has started in earnest again at Operation Warrior Forge. On campus, this critical part of ROTC training is known as the Leader Development and Assessment Course, or LDAC. As in past years, our training cadre have begun the process of evaluating this year's cadets. Cadre members are looking at individual cadet performance, as well as sensing and keeping track of trends throughout the 14 regiments. Those cadets who will meet the challenge and graduate have a variety of traits needed to be a leader, among them a positive attitude. Attitude plays a crucial role in executing successful LDAC performance.

And performance is significantly up this year. Several indicators have already set the course for what promises to be a great summer. This is a testament to cadets being better prepared to come to camp than in past years. It is also a tribute to campus cadres across Cadet Command who have taken the right steps to help set the cadets on the path for success at LDAC.

Some of the key events that every cadet must successfully negotiate at LDAC have been expanded or added to the critical requirements for graduation. This year LDAC will be more challeng-



**Command Sgt. Maj. Lewis Ferguson**

ing to better reflect the current missions the U.S. Army is undertaking in the Global War on Terror. We do this to better prepare each of you as Army officers. Some of our cadets, such as several of the Green to Gold and SMP cadets, are already veterans of those conflicts and wish to serve their nation again as officers. I salute their patriotism and appreciate their willingness to share their hard-won expertise with their fellow cadets. On the whole, cadets are showing they can step up to the challenges placed for them at LDAC.

We have more than half of the regiments on the ground now and a lot of work and effort remain to complete camp. I encourage you to do your very best while here at Fort Lewis. Work not only for your own success, but for that of your fellow cadets as well. I'll look forward to seeing you throughout the training and finally on Watkins Field for graduation. Good Luck.

## Leaning Out in Faith

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Thomas Joseph  
Warrior Forge Chaplain

In 1998 three friends, decided to climb Mt. Lyell, the highest peak in Yosemite National Park. Their base camp was less than 2,000 feet from the peak, but climbing to the top would take almost an entire day, mainly due to a rather formidable glacier they'd have to cross.

The morning of the climb, every one was in good spirits, ready and daring to go. As

the hours passed, the two more experienced climbers opened up a wide gap between Ben and his less experienced partner. Being competitive by nature, Ben began to look for shortcuts to beat them to the top. Finally, he spotted an outcropping of rock to his right and, deaf to the protest of his companion, he went for it, never considering why the two most experienced climbers didn't choose this particular path.

Thirty minutes later Ben found himself trapped in a cul-de-sac of rock atop the Lyell

Glacier, looking down several hundred feet of a sheer slope of ice. He was only ten feet from the safety of a rock, but one false move and he wouldn't stop sliding 'till he hit the valley floor some fifty miles down. It was almost noon and the warm sun had the glacier glistening with slippery ice. Ben was stuck – and scared.

It took an hour for the experienced climbers to find him. Standing on the rock, he tried to reach one of them leaned out, and using an ice axe, chipped two little footsteps in the glacier. He then gave Ben the following advice ...

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**Col. Steven S. Corbett**

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input based on space limitations and command policy. Letters and inquiries should be addressed to: HQ, Western Region, U.S. Army Cadet Command, ATTN: ATOW-ZP (PAO) MS 83 Bob Rosenburgh, Box 339500, Fort Lewis, Wash. 98433-9500, Phone: (DSN) 357-99841 or (Commercial) (253) 967-9841. E-mail address: rosenb@4rotc.lewis.army.mil

Editor - Bob Rosenburgh  
Staff Writers: 2nd Lt. Jared Hill, Spc. Monica Wehri, 2nd Lt. Stephan Arnold, 2nd Lt. Douglas Blevins, 2nd Lt. Scott Fennell, Rebekah Courson, 2nd Lt. Daniel Psoinos, Andrew J. Van Den Hoek

# Forging Warriors at Fort Lewis

By Maj. Woody Stone  
Western Region, Cadet Command

This summer nearly 5,000 Army ROTC cadets, most of whom are juniors in colleges and universities from across the nation, are coming to the Pacific Northwest between June 4 and Aug. 13 to attend the U.S. Army ROTC Operation Warrior Forge.

Operation Warrior Forge is the new name for the Army's only ROTC National Advanced Leadership Camp (NALC), held annually at Fort Lewis, Wash., since 1997. The name change occurred to emphasize its mission more clearly, reflecting the Army's commitment to develop lieutenants who can effectively lead Soldiers in any environment during peace or war.

The name change and new designation as an operation do not change Army ROTC's summertime mission at Fort Lewis to train and evaluate cadets who will become the Army's future junior leaders.



At Warrior Forge, cadets must demonstrate their mastery of such soldier skills as rappelling.

However, to better explain Operation Warrior Forge on academic campuses, ROTC cadre will use "Leader Development and Assessment Course" (LDAC) as the operation's official name in all college and university publications that refer to Army ROTC course work.

About 400 cadets will arrive every three days to form the 14 training regiments during Warrior Forge. Additionally, more than 800 officer candidates, belonging to Army National Guard units from states all over the country, will occupy part of the Warrior Forge footprint on North Fort Lewis to complete the third phase of their officer-candidate training. About 30 British cadets from the Universities of London and Cambridge will also conduct concurrent training during Warrior Forge.

Cadets participate in the rigorous, 32-day



Spc. Monica Wehri

"Duty, Honor, Country," are called out as the Warrior Forge Salute Battery fires their cannon in an accolade for the Regimental Activation Ceremony.

leadership-development course - a requirement for all ROTC cadets to become officers in the U.S. Army - expecting to show off their leadership strengths and learn where they can hone their skills. At the completion of Warrior Forge, the cadets will return to their campuses to prepare next year's cadets for Warrior Forge 2005 and to complete their final year on campus before accepting commissions as second lieutenants. Some, who have already completed their academic requirements, will receive their commissions at the Warrior Forge graduation ceremony.

Army ROTC's Operation Warrior Forge is the single most important training event for Army ROTC cadets or National Guard officer candidates. The operation incorporates a wide range of subjects designed to develop and evaluate leadership ability. The challenges are rigorous and demanding, both mentally and physically, testing intelligence, common sense, ingenuity and stamina. These challenges provide a new perspective on an individual's ability to perform exacting tasks and to make difficult decisions in demanding situations.

The operation places each cadet and officer candidate in a variety of leadership positions, many of which simulate stressful combat situations. Platoon training officers and noncommissioned officers evaluated cadets with a critical eye, ensuring the future Army leadership is prepared to assume command of America's sons and daughters. In addition to proving their leadership ability, cadets and officer candidates must meet established standards in physical fitness, weapons training, communication and combat patrols. They also need to demonstrate their ability in a number of military skills.

Training at Operation Warrior Forge progresses from individual to collective skills. Cadre members first evaluate the cadets' physical endurance by giving them the Army Physical Fitness Test. Confidence training helps cadets overcome fear and tests their physical courage with

rappelling, water safety training, one-rope-bridge construction and a very challenging obstacle course. The cadets then put their leadership skills on display at the Field Leadership Reaction Course, which is designed to build teamwork and evaluate leadership.

Other training includes learning to fire the M-16 rifle and the Army's primary machine guns, conducting land navigation and calling for and adjusting artillery fire support. Cadets also throw live hand grenades and learn to survive and perform tasks in a biologically or chemically contaminated environment. The collective training includes squad-level situational training exercises and patrolling lanes. Both lane training committees focus on developing cadets' leadership in stressful, fluid environments.

Day-32 is the culmination of training, as cadets assemble on Watkins Field, the main parade ground at Fort Lewis, to deactivate their regiments and fold the regimental colors, then march in their graduation ceremony. The 1st Regiment of cadets graduates July 5, while the 14th Regiment graduates on Aug. 13, the same day the 1st OCS Regiment also completes its training. The 2nd OCS Regiment finishes Aug. 20. The officer-candidates from both regiments return to their respective states to participate in their commissioning ceremonies.

Personnel conducting training and providing training support include ROTC faculty members and newly-commissioned lieutenants from universities nationwide. More than 1,500 Soldiers from I Corps and III Corps units, as well as mobilized U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard Soldiers support the training effort.

Since its inception in 1916, ROTC has provided the Army with more than half a million lieutenants. ROTC graduates, from 271 universities and colleges nationwide, enter the active Army, Army Reserves and National Guard each year as second lieutenants. ROTC programs produce about two thirds of the Army's lieutenants annually. 

# Operation Warrior Fo

## regimental training schedule

	APFT	CWST	RAC	FLRC	Hand Grenade	Confidence Course	Land
<b>1st Regiment</b>	6 June	7 June	8 June	9-10 June	9-10 June	11-12 June	13-14 June
<b>2nd Regiment</b>	9 June	10 June	11 June	12-13 June	12-13 June	14-15 June	16-17 June
<b>3rd Regiment</b>	12 June	13 June	14 June	15-16 June	15-16 June	17-18 June	19-20 June
<b>4th Regiment</b>	15 June	16 June	17 June	18-19 June	18-19 June	20-21 June	22-23 June
<b>5th Regiment</b>	18 June	19 June	20 June	21-22 June	21-22 June	23/25 June	26-27 June
<b>6th Regiment</b>	21 June	22 June	23 June	25-26 June	25-26 June	27-28 June	29-30 June
<b>7th Regiment</b>	25 June	26 June	27 June	28-29 June	28-29 June	30 Jun-1 Jul	2-3 July
<b>8th Regiment</b>	27 June	28 June	29 June	30 Jun-1 Jul	30 Jun-1 Ju	2-3 July	4-5 July
<b>9th Regiment</b>	30 Jun	1 July	2 July	3-4 July	3-4 July	5-6 July	7-8 July
<b>10th Regiment</b>	3 July	4 July	5 July	6-7 July	6-7 July	8-9 July	10-11 July
<b>11th Regiment</b>	6 July	7 July	8 July	9-10 July	9-10 July	11-12 July	13-14 July
<b>12th Regiment</b>	9 July	19 July	11 July	12-13 July	12-13 July	14/16 July	17-18 July
<b>13th Regiment</b>	12 July	13 July	14 July	16-17 July	16-17 July	18-19 July	20-21 July
<b>14th Regiment</b>	16 July	17 July	18 July	19-20 July	19-20 July	21-22 July	23-24 July
<b>OCS 1st Regt.</b>	NA	7 Aug	1 Aug.	1 Aug	NA	NA	NA
<b>OCS 2nd Regt.</b>	NA	14 Aug	8 Aug.	9 Aug	NA	NA	NA

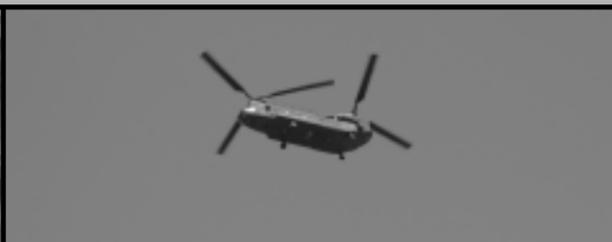


# Large 2004



NOTE: This schedule does not show retests, maintenance and recovery or other administrative events.

Navigation	BRM	Fire Support	Automatic Weapons	NBC	ITT	Branch Orientation	SQD STX	PTRL STX	Graduation
15-16 June	18 June	18 June	19-20 June	19-20 June	24 June	22-26 June	27-30 June	5 July	
18-19 June	21 June	21 June	22-23 June	22-23 June	24 June	26-29 June	30 Jun- 3 Jul	8 July	
21-22 June	25 June	25 June	26-27 June	26-27 June	24 June	29 Jun-2 Jul	3-6 July	11 July	
25-26 June	28 June	28 June	29-30 June	29-30 June	24 June	2-5 July	6-9 July	14 July	
28-29 June	1 July	1 July	2-3 July	2-3 July	24 June	5-8 July	9-12 July	17 July	
1-2 July	4 July	4 July	5-6 July	5-6 July	24 June	8-11 July	12-15 July	20 July	
4-5 July	7 July	7 July	8-9 July	8-9 July	24 June	11-15 July	15-18 July	23 July	
6-7 July	9 July	9 July	10-11 July	10-11 July	15 July	13-17 July	18-21 July	26 July	
9-10 July	12 July	12 July	13-14 July	13-14 July	15 July	17-20 July	21-24 July	29 July	
12-13 July	16 July	16 July	17-18 July	17-18 July	15 July	20-23 July	24-27 July	1 Aug	
16-17 July	19 July	19 July	20-21 July	20-21 July	15 July	23-26 July	27-30 July	4 Aug	
19-20 July	22 July	22 July	23-24 July	23-24 July	15 July	26-29 July	30 Jul-2 Aug	7 Aug	
22-23 July	25 July	25 July	26-27 July	26-27 July	15 July	29 Jul-1 Aug	2-5 Aug	10 Aug	
25-26 July	28 July	28 July	29-30 July	29-30 July	15 July	1-4 Aug	5-8 Aug	13 Aug	
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3-6 Aug	8-11 Aug	13 Aug	
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	10-13 Aug	15-18 Aug	20 Aug	



Photos by  
Spc. Monic Wehri

Graphic by  
Bob Rosenburgh

# President visits Fort Lewis during Warrior Forge

Story and photos by  
Spc. Monica Wehri

A busload of Warrior Forge staff members had the opportunity to join thousands of Soldiers who assembled to see and hear President George W. Bush speak June 18 at Gray Army Airfield on Fort Lewis, Wa.

Bush, who was introduced by Arizona Sen. John McCain, thanked the troops repeatedly for their service in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world. Backed by a wall of seated Soldiers in a hanger decorated by large American flags, Bush's comments inspired soldiers and defined America's mission in Iraq.

Second Lt. James Gill, Chief Safety Inspector from the Warrior Forge Safety staff said, "The speech was very motivational. I think it was



**President George W. Bush came to Fort Lewis to visit the hi-tech Stryker Brigade, which has units in Iraq, and thank the Soldiers and families for their support and service to the nation. The event also provided a busload of Soldiers and civilian staffers from Warrior Forge an opportunity to see and hear the Commander in Chief.**

a good morale booster for the Soldiers, especially for the ones that are about to be deployed over there [Iraq]. I think it gave us as military

people a better understanding of why we began this to begin with," he continued. "It wasn't just because of oil."

"It was a great honor to shake the President's hand," said Master Sgt. David Worley from the Warrior Forge Safety staff. "It's not often you get to see your Commander in Chief in person let alone shake his hand."

"He reassured all the Soldiers there," Worley recalled, "that whatever you need to get the job done, you are going to get it. He's not going to cut us short on everything. That's something you need to know."

The event took a little bit of Soldierly endurance. Several thousand Soldiers packed into a hot hanger and waited three hours until the President made his appearance at 8 a.m. Several people passed out during the wait. A live country band entertained the mixed crowd of civilians and Soldiers as they waited.



## You might call it "Operation Don't Drown"

By 2nd Lt. Scott Fennell

One of the major changes that Operation Warrior Forge brings to LDAC is an event that had less significance in previous years. On Day-Four of their training, cadets undergo the Combat Water Survival Test. The new test consists of five events, The 25-meter Swim, where cadets must swim 25 meters in full BDU's without drowning, the Three-Meter Drop, where cadets are blind-folded, shoved off a three-meter diving board and required to swim to safety, the 15-meter Combat Swim, in which they must swim 15-meters with an M-16 rifle and the Unexpected-Entry Equipment Drop. There, cadets are shoved into the water and required to thrash their way out of an LBE before surfacing. Finally, you have the Expedient Floatation Device. In this, four cadets must remove their pants, tie knots in the legs, fill them with air, and use them to keep afloat their "injured" comrade.

Successful completion of the test is a requirement for commissioning – also a change from last year when the training was similar, but successful completion was not a graduation requirement. It is important that cadets pass the CWST for

two reasons. First, the technical skill of swimming is important. According to Lt. Col. Scott Rutherford, the Officer In Charge of the event, "Forty-seven people in Iraq have died while they were in water. In the Army, we're constantly around water," he continued. "Seventy to ninety percent of the Earth is water, depending on whether you count lakes or not." Second, some of the CWST events are mildly frightening, especially the Three-Meter Drop, and the stress serves to build the cadets' self-confidence. 2nd Lt. Ryan Miller, a Platoon Evaluator, said, "It tests their ability to deal with personal courage situations."

Not all cadets are well prepared for the CWST. CWST staffers identify weak swimmers, then designate them with a white strip of engineer tape. Those cadets are also given remedial swim training. CWST cadre also find the strong swimmers, tasking them to instruct their weak-swimming peers. University of Idaho Cadet Levi Lewellyn, a strong swimmer, was eager to help. "When we become leaders, we need to be able to lead from the front. If we can do it, then our Soldiers will be motivated to drive on."



## 2nd Louie

By Bob Rosenburgh



*Rosenburgh*

# Warning: Heat injuries can kill

It is essential that we inform soldiers and cadets of the hazards associated with the sudden pike in temperatures during the summer season.

These are the ten commandments for preventing heat injuries:

1. Provide adequate water and ensure water breaks are taken every 15 to 20 minutes. Do not exceed 1.5 quarts per hour. Thirst is not an adequate indicator of dehydration. Alcohol, coffee, soft drinks and sports drinks are not good substitutes for water. Do not use salt tablets!

2. Ensure Soldiers gradually adjust to working in the heat. Acclimatization is essential in

preventing heat injuries.

3. Schedule work/rest periods. Schedule heavy work for the cooler part of the day (morning or late afternoon). The body generates more heat when heavy work is being performed.

4. Avoid overexertion. Use mechanical aids whenever possible. Assign tasks between several cadets to reduce the stress on individuals.

5. Use shaded areas (trees, buildings, and tents) to reduce radiant heating. The temperature in the sun and under the canopy of a tree can vary from 5 to 20 degrees.

6. Encourage use of sunscreens to protect

exposed skin.

7. Wear loose fitting, lightweight. Light colored clothing.

8. Monitor Wet Bulb Globe Temperature so the heat stress index can be evaluated. Temperatures above 70 degrees, direct sunlight, and humidity add to heat stress.

9. Train cadets to recognize and treat heat injuries and encourage them to monitor each other for signs of heat stress.

10. Conduct safety briefings to emphasize heat related procedures.

– Warrior Forge Safety Office 

## “Faith,” from Page 2

“You must step out from where you are and put your foot where the first foothold is; when your foot touches it, without a moments hesitation, swing your other foot across and land it on the next step. When you do that, reach out and I’ll grab your hand and pull you to safety.”

This sounded pretty good to Ben. However, the next instruction frightened him more than ever: “But listen carefully,” his friend said, “as you step across, do not lean into the mountain! If anything, lean out a bit. Otherwise, your feet may fly out from under you and you’ll start sliding down.”

Now as with most of us when stuck on the edge of a cliff, Ben’s instinct was to hug the mountain; to become one with the mountain, not lean away from it. But that is what he was told to do. So, based solely on the word and good will of his friend, in a bold act of faith and trust, Ben stifled the impulse to cling to the mountain for safety and, instead, he leaned out, stepped out and found his way to safety. In a matter of two seconds Ben found his faith to be well founded.

First, Ben’s experience on the Lyell Glacier is an appropriate illustration of the kind of faith God asks us to exercise in our life. Yet it’s ironic, don’t you think, that people who talk of faith, read about faith and accept God’s offer of salvation by faith tend to walk less by faith than by sight. We tend to talk a good game, but when push comes to shove—when we’re asked to lean out from the mountain, rather than cling to it, for safety—we struggle so with walking the walk.

Secondly, this story is appropriate for you at LDAC, that is have faith in your cadre and their instruction. They are all experienced veterans and they are here to help you to sharpen your skills and demonstrate your leadership. In his address to the Cadets at the Regimental Activation Ceremony, Col. Corbett pointed out that, “many of the soldiers, who will train you here have fought in Grenada, Panama, Afghanistan and Iraq and conducted peacekeeping, peace enforcement operations in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. These soldiers were trained by the veterans of Vietnam, who in turn were trained by the veterans of Korea and the Second World War, they in turn were taught by the veterans of World War I. Many of the lesson that you will learn here are stained with the blood of our predecessors, and the tears of their families—do not take these lessons lightly.”

Wish you all a successful and safe training at the Warrior Forge.

(Story is adapted from an article in Normandy Net)

## Commander emphasizes proper uniforms

The improper wear of Army uniforms has been observed with some regularity during the opening weeks of Warrior Forge 2004. These uniform violations have been observed in both cadets and cadre. Leaders at all levels should emphasize proper wear of Army uniforms, and the importance of presenting a neat and well-groomed appearance appropriate to the Army image both on and off duty, whether in uniform or in civilian clothing. A thorough review of AR 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia (particularly Chapter 1 addressing general appearance and grooming) is recommended.

The most common trends noted in recent weeks, as identified by the Warrior Forge Inspector General office, are identified below, along with the appropriate reference in AR 670-1:

**Fingernail length:** AR 670-1, Chapter 1, Paragraph 1-8c., which states: All personnel will keep fingernails clean and neatly trimmed. Males will keep nails trimmed so as not to extend beyond the fingertip. Females will not exceed a nail length of 1.4 inch, as measured from the tip of the finger. Females will trim nails shorter if the commander determines that the longer length detracts from the military image, presents a safety concern, or interferes with the performance of duties. Paragraph 1-8b.(1)(b) addresses the use of nail polish, and states: Females will not wear shades of lipstick and nail polish that distinctly contrast with their complexion, that detract from the uniform, or that are extreme. Some examples of extreme colors include, but are not limited to, purple, gold, blue, black, white, bright (fire-engine) red, khaki, camouflage colors, and fluorescent colors. Soldiers will not apply designs to nails or apply two-tone or multi-tone colors to nails.

**Hair length:** AR 670-1, Chapter 1, Paragraph 1-8a. describes proper grooming and appearance of hair for both male and female soldiers. In general, hairstyles are to be neat and conservative, and will not interfere with the proper wear of headgear. Colors other than natural tones, or hairstyles which interfere with the proper wear of headgear, are

prohibited. **Mustaches:** AR 670-1, Chapter 1, Paragraph 1-8a.(2)(c) establishes the guidelines for the proper wear and grooming of mustaches: Mustaches are permitted; if worn, males will keep mustaches neatly trimmed, tapered, and tidy. Mustaches will not present a chopped off or bushy appearance, and no portion of the mustache will cover the upper lip line or extend sideways beyond a vertical line drawn upward from the corners of the mouth. Handlebar mustaches, goatees, and beards are not authorized.

**Jewelry (watches and bracelets):** AR 670-1, Chapter 1, Paragraph 1-14a. establishes the guidelines for wear of bracelets with Army uniforms: Soldiers may wear a wristwatch, a wrist identification bracelet, and a total of two rings (a wedding set is considered one ring) with Army uniforms, unless prohibited by the commander for safety or health reasons. Any jewelry soldiers wear must be conservative and in good taste. Identification bracelets are limited to medical alert bracelets and MIA/POW identification bracelets. Soldiers may wear only one item on each wrist.

**Jewelry (earrings):** AR 670-1, Chapter 1, Paragraph 1-14d. establishes the criteria for the wear of earrings with Army uniforms: Earrings may be screw-on, clip-on, or post-type earrings, in gold, silver, white pearl, or diamond. The earrings will not exceed 6 mm or 1.4 inch in diameter, and they must be unadorned and spherical. When worn, the earrings will fit snugly against the ear. Females may wear earrings only as a matched pair, with only one earring per ear lobe. *Under no circumstances are male Soldiers authorized to wear earrings.*

Mixing of civilian attire and Army uniforms is addressed in AR 670-1, Chapter 1, Paragraph 1-10e., which states in part: The wear of a combination of civilian and military clothing is prohibited. Additionally, Paragraph 1-13 provides guidance for the wear of civilian clothing, and requires Soldiers to adhere to the appearance standards in AR 670-1.

# From Afghanistan to Operation Warrior Forge

By 2nd Lt. Jared Hill

**Operation Warrior Forge** is a training ground for future leaders of the United States Army. Here cadets learn skills they will take with them into battles fought for freedom through out the world. Among these cadets are some who have already sacrificed for liberty. One such cadet is Cadet Christopher Pratt from Denver, Colo. currently attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He is a member of the Utah National Guard 19th Special Forces Group, 1st Battalion, Bravo Company, as a Simultaneous Membership Program cadet. Currently, he is assigned to Warrior Forge, 1st Regiment, Bravo Company.

**As a member** of the 19th Special Forces Group, Pratt was pending a contract as a SMP cadet in the fall of 2001. However, his unit was activated and deployed, assigned to Afghanistan to fight the Global War on Terror. Pratt had a choice to sign a Reserve Officer Training Corps contract and be exempt for deployment or to go with his unit. He decided to go and was soon on his way. The unit first stopped in Ft. Campbell, Ky., on their way to Uzbekistan. From there they made their way into Afghanistan to support the ground war against the Taliban. As a result of the combat actions that followed, he received the Bronze Star and Combat Infantry Badge for his service.

Now a cadet training to become an officer, Pratt commented on his experiences in Afghanistan. He said he decided to go because, "That's why I am in the Army. ... It's rewarding to be able to actually go and do what you are trained to do." He noted how the poverty and differences in culture are drastic. "It was a once in a lifetime experience to go to a place like that. It was an eye opening experience."

**While in Afghanistan** there were good and bad times. He said the best times were related to dignitaries visiting the warlord they were assigned to, noting, "We got to see and meet some important people that otherwise someone like me doesn't get to meet." The worst times were "those five, six day road trips through the dusty Afghani roads."

Pratt also discussed the people of Afghanistan and how they treated him. "They treated us well. We lived in a palace for a while, for free. We had a whole host of Afghans that worked with us and served us. We paid them, but not very much." Ultimately he wanted it known that "People are basically good everywhere in the world you go." He said, "The Afghans are good people. They had some weird customs ... certainly would not want to live there, but deep down everybody is pretty good."

**Pratt said he was very happy** to return home. "It was just good to be home. We were all ready to leave after six months." Yet, Pratt



The bearded tanker popping from a Soviet-made T-55's turret is none other than Cadet Christopher Pratt from Brigham Young University. At the time of the photo, he was an enlisted soldier with the 19th Special Forces Group fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. Sometimes, U.S. troops had to "go native" to fit in with their allies.



A cleaner-shaven Pratt is majoring in Political Science and plans to continue his Special Operations career and fighting the Global War on Terror as an Army officer.

will always remember his experience. On his transition back to normal life he said, "any time you go somewhere like that it leaves a mark on you."

After returning, Pratt re-enrolled at BYU

and is currently majoring in Political Science. He also married his finance', Bonnie, upon his return and they have a new four-month-old son.

Now Pratt is at Operation Warrior Forge engrossed in training. While he is here, he plans on improving his leadership skills. He says, "We all have things that we can work on and do better. I know I have got as many weaknesses as the next guy, so, take these leadership positions and the follower positions and see what you do that is not helping. Identify those for the future and work on that." This is his plan for improvement. He also has a very positive impression of his fellow cadets so far. "We kind of make this place an equivalent of basic training for officers, he said, "But, if this was basic training these are pretty high-speed privates. All of them are on the ball. I think everybody is doing a good job of learning and looking at themselves and trying to improve themselves. That is what they need to do."

**After Warrior Forge**, Pratt is going to training with his unit. He will participate in advanced urban warfare training. Then in August he will participate in summer mountain warfare school with his unit.

In the future Pratt plans on staying in the Utah National Guard. He wants to become a Military Intelligence officer. Eventually he wants to take command of a Special Forces team and lead them as long as his he physically can. On the civilian side, he plans on going into law. He also hopes to participate in public service through politics. 