

Visit to wounded brothers at BAMC

BY SGT. KARL WILLIAMS
3rd BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

Soldiers and family readiness group leaders from 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, traveled July 13 to Brooke Army Medical Center, in San Antonio.

The visit was to let their wounded warrior brothers know their unit is still behind them and to encourage them to continue their mission of recovery and rehabilitation.

Soldiers and FRG leaders had lunch at BAMC's dining facility, where they talked about the upcoming deployment and the progress of the injured Soldiers.

Recuperating from injuries sustained in Operation Iraqi Freedom 09-11, Pfc. Sean Beck, a former 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment Soldier, was happy to see familiar faces.

"We fought side-by-side with these guys and to see them again is definitely a morale boost," Beck said. He suffered injuries to his face, arms and legs from shrapnel when an insurgent tossed a grenade under his vehicle at an Iraq Police check-point in Mosul, Iraq.

"It means a lot to me personally that my unit cared enough about us to let these guys come here for a visit, and I know the other Third Brigade Soldiers rehabbing here appreciate these visits as well. It reminds us that the leadership and the Soldiers in the units are still behind us, encouraging us to get better," Beck said.

Sgt. 1st Class Charles Armstead, a former platoon sergeant with Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry

Regiment, 3rd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., knows his former unit is training for next year's deployment, but was eager to recollect with Soldiers with whom he trained and deployed.

"With so many new Soldiers in the company and so much training on their schedule, the fact that they would take time to come here and reminisce with us is awesome," Armstead said.

However, for one Soldier the trip was not about getting time off from the training schedule, but about supporting family.

"We want our brothers here to know that even though we are training up to deploy without them, we still have their backs and appreciate the sacrifices that they have made," Sgt. Marion Deboe said.

"It's important to stay in touch with these heroes who have sacrificed so much, and to do whatever is necessary to assist them in their recoveries," he added.

Smiles and laughter served as reminders that these Soldiers were close, as the Soldiers told stories about former and current Soldiers from their units.

Lori Carpenter, the 3rd Brigade FRSA, said the visit to BAMC was just what the visiting and recovering Soldiers needed.

"The visit allowed Soldiers to see their buddies, share a few laughs, catch up on current events, but more importantly, it allowed them to see that their buddies and their families were being cared for and that's something they can take back to their companies and share with the other Soldiers who could not make the trip," Carpenter said.



It's important to stay in touch with these heroes ...

- Sgt. Marion Deboe



Photo by Sgt. Karl Williams, 3rd BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

ABOVE, Sgt. 1st Class Charles Armstead, a former platoon sergeant with Co. D, 1-12th Cav. Regt., 3rd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., smiles as Lori Carpenter, 3rd Brigade's Family Readiness Support Group leader, shares a private moment during a brigade visit to BAMC July 13 to encourage its wounded warriors to continue their mission of recovery and rehabilitation. BELOW, Sgt. Christopher Stevens, Co. D, 1-12th Cav. Regt., 3rd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., shares a "Man Hug" with Sgt. 1st Class Charles Armstead during a visit to BAMC July 13. Armstead lost his leg after being shot in the stomach while at his outpost in Hamman Al Alil, Iraq, by an insurgent on May 2, 2009.



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