34th Infantry Division Association

Association WEB Page: www.34ida.org

7105 NW 70th Ave Johnston, IA 50131

Winter 2019 Issue -The 34th ID Assn. newsletter is published three times a year.



34th Inf Division HQ's in Kuwait



Maj. Gen. Benjamin Corell, 34th Red Bull Infantry Division commanding general and Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Hjelmstad uncase the Division colors during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, on Nov. 12, 2018.

The Minnesota National Guard unit's HQ's and HQ's Battalion (HHBN) assumed responsibility for the Task Force Spartan mission from the Pennsylvania National Guard's 28th Infantry Division. The 34th's HHBN is serving as a division headquarters for roughly 10,000 Soldiers conducting theater security operations in the Middle East. Camp Arifjan is located South West of Kuwait City.

34th Red Bull Infantry Division HHBN arrived in the Middle East in early November for a nine-month long deployment to the region. The unit will be responsible for leading Task Force Spartan which is focused on building partner capacity, regional self-reliance and increase security. Knowing that trust cannot be formed just in times of crisis,

Task Force Spartan is about fortifying relationships over time, said Master Sgt. Gregory Byrd, non-commissioned officer in charge of future operation.

"On behalf of the entire Red Bull Division, I can tell you, we are fully trained. We are prepared to seamlessly step in and execute the mission requirements," said Maj. Gen. Benjamin J. Corell, the 34th's commanding general. "These Red Bulls that I represent are honored to be assuming command of Task Force Spartan and take the lead of Operation Spartan Shield."

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. William Boecker)

Where is Camp Arifjan?

Camp Arifjan is a United States Army installation in Kuwait which accommodates elements of the U.S. Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. The camp was funded and built by the government of Kuwait. Military personnel from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Romania and Poland are also forward deployed there. Camp Arifjan is located south of Kuwait City, and west of the Shuaiba Port and Kuwait Naval Base.

Camp Arifjan is a US military installation used as a forward logistics base, for the entire Southwest Asian Theater, helicopter ground support base, and as a motor pool for armored and unarmored vehicles.

U.S. military vehicles that did not receive new additional armor plating in the United States prior to deployment to U.S. Central Command, received their "up-armoring" at Camp Arifjan. Additionally, many thousands of service members and contractors pass through Camp Arifjan either on their way to or from Iraq, Afghanistan or other countries in Southwest Asia.

The service members deployed to Camp Arifjan are in a variety of different statuses. Many are on active duty and come on a one-year Permanent Change of Station (PCS), while some active duty come in a Temporary Change of Station status. Additionally, there are many Guard and Reserve units that support a variety of functions in the South West Asia Theater that come on varied length tours. The base has undergone numerous changes including the construction of half a dozen barracks. hundreds of "temporary" or transitional barracks, three dining facilities, and the establishment of three base exchanges, as well as a major addition of paved roads throughout the Camp. The 34th ID soldiers, representing 220 communities across Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, North and South Dakota and several other states, will call Camp Arifjan, Kuwait home and essentially make it their little slice of America in the middle of the Middle East.

There are approximately 9,000 personnel stationed at Camp Arifjan Kuwait.

Association Members,

As winter is here, and the bitter cold has struck, let us keep in mind the hardships this division faced over the brutal cold during its tenure in WWII. I am writing this letter today on December 7th, a day we are all familiar with. Pearl Harbor. The 34th had been chosen as the first division to be deployed overseas. Within five weeks of Pearl Harbor, the first elements of the division secretly shipped out for Belfast, Northern Ireland, aboard HMTS Straithard. With headlines that the first Yank had landed, focus was on Pvt. Milburn H. Henke of Hutchinson, Minnesota, a member of Co. B, 133rd Infantry Regiment, who was first off the boat.

The following winter, with the commencement of Operation TORCH, the 34th ultimately landed at Algiers. The operation was successful and the 34th, pushed eastward into Tunisia.

The rest is legendary, costly fighting at Faid Pass and Fondouk Gap, Kassarine Pass, and into the spring with Hill 609.

I hope this time of year finds the holidays gracious, and always remember those who endured winters past in a foxhole shivering.

James F. Avrams

President, 34th ID Association

james.f.avrams.mil@mail.mil



34th Infantry Division Final Roll Call

Fall 2018

Ivan W. Carroll, 34th Inf Div
Fred King, K 168th Inf, 34th Inf Div
Gary W. Gezel, 34th Inf Div
Martin T. "Bud" Rollston, 34th Inf Div
Mark Edward Nakazawa,D 100thInf 34th ID
Reverend George Aki, 34th Inf Div
Jerold L. Greenfield, 34th Inf Div
Patrick Skelly, RA, Redstone Arsenal
Alfred F. Thiel, 34th Inf Div
Victor S. Izui, 100th, 442nd RCT
Joseph Cericola, 34th Inf Div
William B. Baker, 185th FA
Leslie W. Bailey, 34th Inf Div

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Marvin E. Kness, 2-168 Inf, 34th Inf Div Richard Brummel, 194th Cav Sqd, 34th ID James P. Moloney, HQ 3d Bn 168 Inf 34 ID Edward Herman Nishihara D 100 Inf 34 ID Henry Hideo Nakagawa, A 100th Inf, 34 ID Joe Takao Yamauchi, B 100th Inf, 34th ID Reginald M. Ballantyne, C 133rd Inf, 34th ID Lawrence Hanno 2-133rd Inf, 34th Inf Div James Ruden 2-133rd Inf, 34th Inf Div Sonsei Nakamura, B 100th Inf Div 34th ID Paul Takashi Kusunoki, A 100th Inf, 34th ID Ryoji Yamakuchi, A 100th Inf, 34th Inf Div Edward Crozier, 34th Brigade Cdr

Final Roll Call Prayer

May they have no
more hills to climb,
nor cold, nor rain, nor mud,
nor enemy fire,
and may they now rest in Peace.

National Office-34th Infantry Division Association

Iowa Gold Star Museum, Camp Dodge - Bldg 3692, 7105 NW 70™ Ave, Johnston, IA 50131

Secretary: MSG Shane Pankonen spankonen2000@yahoo.com

Association Website http://www.34ida.org

Treasurer: LTC (Ret) Mike Musel 515-252-4531

Email: michael.musel@iowa.gov Gold Star Museum

Facebook Webmasters: Herman Poggensee & Wayne Merick

WEB Site Manager: MSG Daniel Ewer sgtdaniel@aol.com

Trustee: COL (Ret) Russ Bierl E-mail: bierlhome@msn.com

daniel.r.ewer.mil@mail.mil

72nd Reunion...... 4-5 Oct 2019 Camp Ripley, MN

Facebook 34th Inf Div Assn: https://www.facebook.com/34InfDivAssoc

Internet 34th Inf Div Assn: http://www.34ida.org

Also, follow the 2-34th Red Bulls at! http://www.twitter.com/lowaRedBulls

& Historian

http://www.flickr.com/IowaRedBulls

1st BCT: http://www.facebook.com/MinnesotaRedBulls
2nd BCT: http://www.facebook.com/lowaRedBulls

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WWII Battle of Faid "Kasserinr" Pass Survivor Turns 100

John Ferlise was from Wheeling, WV, and was drafted in early 1942 for service in WWII. He was assigned to the 168th Inf Regt, 34th Infantry Division, a National Guard division from Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, at Ft. Dix, NJ, as they were loading for transport to Northern Ireland. The 34th Inf Div was the first U.S. Army division to arrive in Europe. John trained in Northern Ireland, Scotland and then loaded for the combat assault landing, with the 168th Inf Regt landing on Beer Bottle Beach, in Algiers, North Africa, on the British ship, "Empress of Australia." The 3rd Bn 135th Infantry and the 1st and 6th British Commandos, also landed at Algiers to take the harbor area. The remainder of the Division landed on the North West Africa coast at Oran. They initially fought against the Vici French, who were allied with the Germans in defending North Africa. The landing in the Mediterranean Sea off Algiers was frightening as it was their first real rope net descent into landing craft, with high waves, and the boat was bouncing into the side of the ship.

PFC John Ferlise served in the Communications Section of the HQ's, 2nd Battalion, 168th Infantry and later as a driver all through North Africa: Faid Pass, Sidi Bou Zid, Hill 609, then Italy: landing at Salarno, Cassino, Anzio, and Rome. He has the most vivid memories of the landing in North Africa and his harrowing escape from being captured by the Germans during the Battle of Faid Pass, 19-24 February 1943, when his Regiment was ordered to escape through enemy lines during the early Tunisia Campaign of World War II.

During the battle John talks about being strafed by German Stuka Dive Bombers. He said his battalion shot seven of them out of the air with their .30 & 50 Cal MG's and rifles. The only allied aircraft they saw was the British Spitfire that dropped a message to them, with a rock and a streamer, with orders to escape. The 168th Inf Regt lost 1,628 men killed missing or captured at Faid Pass. The 2nd Bn stood up only 420 men after all the stragglers came in. PFC Ferlise said he got separated from the other men in the night and crawled three miles, on his belly, out of the trap, under grazing German Machine gun fire. He said he saw one MG42 that was shooting high and he crawled toward it. He had only praise for Major Robert Moore, who gave the men directions of where to escape, and PFC Ferlise made his way back, 12 hours after the rest of the battalion.

The landing at Salerno, Italy was easy as they climbed into the Army DUCK landing craft and they were taken to the dry land of the beach. The fighting was fairly easy until they got to the Rapido River. He said, Monte Cassino was the worst! There was no cover for the soldiers and the enemy always had the high ground. He remembers watching the U.S. bombers bomb the Abby, and the men in the 168th Infantry battalion cheered!

For the Anzio Landing, the 168th Infantry, along with the rest of the 34th Infantry Division left the dock at Naples in a LST, and sailed near the coast, to the Anzio Beach. When they landed, he couldn't believe all the men and equipment that were assembled there. They were under constant artillery fire and aerial bombing. He remembers the dead, both U.S. and Germans being buried in long trenches with an Army bulldozer.



After the Anzio Breakout and the movement through Rome, the war moved fast as the German effort crumbled. Shortly after the 34th Infantry Division had made a major jump North of Rome, John and a few other "High Point" soldiers started to be rotated back to the U.S. PFC John Ferlise remembers his trip home from his discharge station in Indiana, to Wheeling, WV. He said he rode the train and street car all the way to his house, "wearing his civilian clothes!" John, who turned 100 years old in October 1, 2018, states, "I remember the early war years like it was yesterday." With a glow in his eye, John said, "I fondly recall how professional and caring the officers were to us young soldiers during training and in combat in North Africa. We were lucky to survive the war. The Interview of former PFC John Ferlise by Russ Bierl and Mike Musel,

Page 3 Winter 2019 34th Infantry Division Association, Camp Dodge, Johnston, IA.

34th INFANTRY DIVISION HQ'S, CAMP ARIFJAN, KUWAIT

Story by Sgt. William Boecker, 34th Inf Div, 11.03.2018

CAMP ARIFJAN, KUWAIT – More than 600 Citizen-Soldiers of the Minnesota National Guard's 34th Red Bull Infantry Division have arrived in the Middle East as they begin a nine-month long deployment to the region. The Minnesota, unit, representing 220 communities across Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, North and South Dakota and several other states, will be responsible for leading Task Force Spartan which is focused on building partner capacity, regional self-reliance and increase security.

Knowing that trust cannot be formed just in times of crisis, Task Force Spartan is about fortifying relationships over time, said Master Sgt. Gregory Byrd, non-commissioned officer in charge of future operation. It is a show of the United States' commitment to our partners to achieve a greater level of trust as well as working towards greater regional stability.

Since arriving overseas, the Red Bulls have assumed their posts at US Central Command locations throughout the Middle East. 34th ID Soldiers are using the time before the Transition of Authority to meet with their counterparts of Pennsylvania National Guard's 28th ID that they will be replacing to ensure the smooth shift of operational command and control of Operation Spartan Shield.

The Red Bulls are responsible for mission command of Task Force Spartan, which spans 20 countries through 6 time zones, with 22 ethnic groups speaking 18 different languages and a total population of over 550 million people. "It's all about building relationships with our partner nations," said Byrd. "We are ready to start operating at our normal battle rhythm and get to work at the job we have been training for."

This comes after nearly a month of pre-deployment training at Fort Hood, Texas, where the Red Bulls completed a vast array of training that has prepared them for their deployment to the Middle East. From completing soldier readiness processing to firing their assigned weapons at the ranges, the Red Bulls fulfilled all tasks and requirements prior to making their way to USCENTCOM's area of responsibility.

During their time at Fort Hood, the Red Bulls conducted a Culminating Training Exercise with 1st Army acting as Observer, Controller, Trainers. "What we are deploying to at Camp Arifjan is much more of a stable situation, so this exercise allowed us to re-calibrate, identify additional sections that need fine-tuning, as well as retraining ourselves for a more partner oriented day-to-day operational mission," said Brig. Gen. Charles Kemper, the Deputy Commanding General for Support of the 34th Red Bull Inf Div.

Improving the ability to work with partner nations is a high priority within USCENTCOM's AOR. The exercise revealed the divisions readiness to impact their operating environment in a way that positively affects the U.S. and partner nation interests. "The CTE was a great exercise to get us used to the battle rhythm and training we will be



Major General Ben Corell is shown addressing the soldiers and families at the sendoff for the 34th Infantry Division HQ's. The 34th Inf Division HQ's is expected to return to CONUS in August 2019.

conducting while we're in Kuwait as part of Task Force Spartan," Byrd said.

Maintaining a high level of readiness and proficiency, the Red Bulls are poised to support any contingency at a moment's notice. The 34th Red Bull Infantry Division, which is adept at leading and supporting unified land operations, is committed to maintaining a high level of lethality, to ensure we are prepared to fight and win our nation's wars.

"I feel like we are ready," said Kemper. "We're sharpened to a keen edge to this point, we're calibrated to our operational pace, and we have Soldiers that are well trained at the mission they will be conducting."

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Marvin "Mike" Kness, Reported for Final Roll Call

WWII Veteran, 34th ID Soldier and Army Ranger, Marvin "Mike" E. Kness, age 96, died on 6 Oct 2018, at Albia IA. He was mobilized with his older brother, Lester E. Kness, on 10 Feb 1941, as part of HQ's 2nd Bn, 168th Inf, Iowa National Guard, 34th Infantry Division, Audubon, IA. Cpl. Marvin "Mike" Kness, the younger brother of Lester, was a senior in high school in Audubon, IA when he was mobilized with the 34th Infantry Division.

The brothers trained at Camp Claiborne, LA with the 34th Infantry Division, and deployed to North Ireland where both of them later trained the British Commandos and joined the U.S. Army Rangers. The Kness brothers were

incorporated into the U.S. Army Ranger battalions, and served throughout the war, for a time, directly under COL William O. Darby. They participated in action in the landing on North Africa, Sicily, and Italy invasion.

On a special note, S/Sgt Lester Kness served in No 4 Troop, British Commandos, in the ill-fated British Army Dieppe Amphibious Raid in France, on 19 Aug 1942, along with at least fifty-one other U.S. Army soldiers, who were mostly recruited from the 34th Infantry Division. Four of the former 168th Infantry Regt. men were causalities, with three KIA and 1 WIA and captured. The Commander of the Dieppe Raid was British Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten.

Later, Lester E. Kness was commissioned as an officer and served as Platoon Leader of E Co, 1st Ranger Bn, and then Commander of Co A, 4th Ranger Bn. Lester was severely wounded in battle at Cappogna, Italy and was evacuated to the U.S. for recovery, and later medical discharge from the Army. Lester Kness was inducted into the US Ranger Hall of Fame in 2002 and died in 2012.

Both Marvin and Lester Kness are shown as members on the first roster of the U.S. Army Rangers, 1st Battalion, later known as Darby's Rangers. Marvin "Mike" and his brother Lester ended up in different companies but fought in

the same campaigns, initially with the 1st Battalion then with the 4th Battalion in Italy. Military service was a family ambition. Marvin and Lester had two cousins who were also mobilized with the 34th Inf Div on 10 Feb 1941. They were, William J. Kness, who served in Anti Tank Co, 168th Inf, 34th ID, Jefferson, IA and Bradley Kness, who served in Co I, 133rd Inf, 34th Infantry Division, Sheldon, IA.

The Kness boys were real fighters, they were both wounded in combat. They lived long lives after the war and were successful in family and business life. There stories are legendary! A Veterans Monument in the Monroe County Veterans Park shows a special honor marker for Lester and Marvin Kness, U.S Army Rangers, WWII.





MAJ Lester E. Kness older brother



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1-133rd Infantry Battalion

"Iron Man Battalion" Best Infantry Squad 2018

Iron Squad. From HHC 1-133 Pictured Front Row L-R: CPL Andrew Roster, SPC John Hendrickson, SPC Benjamin Pritchard, and SPC Dylan Vierkant. Back Row L-R: 1SG Rob Schwendinger, SPC Dustin Vice, SPC Zachary Katschke, SSG Nick Riley, SPC Chris Tjaden, SGT Devon Kregel and CPT Brett Darrow.

The IRONMAN Squad Competition is a time honored competition in the 1-133 Infantry Battalion. The competition began in 1989 to evaluate each of the 1-133 Infantry Companies best squads on their tactical and technical Infantry skills. The intent of the event is to build the Esprit de Corps with in the 1-133 Infantry Battalion. 2018s Winning Iron Squad from HHC, 1-133 Infantry Battalion (pictured above) completed all tasks and won five of the nine events.

The IRONMAN Squad Competition reinforced the individual and collective tasks that the IRONMAN Infantry Squad must perform. This year's event took place in October 2018. This year the squads were handpicked by each company. The squads consisted of: 1x E6 (or selected E5 in E6 position), 2x E5s (or selected E4 in an E5 position) and 6x E4 and below to fill out the nine man squad. All squad members were required to participate in each event.

The competition consisted of seven events and two prerequisite scores. Each event will be individually timed and squads will not be allowed to proceed to the next event until the event is complete. Each event is timed and an overall time for events two through six. The fastest time in the overall and each event received one point through six points. Overall low score were awarded the IRONMAN

"ROARING BULL

The 34th Infantry Division in the Global War on Terror" By Brian Leehan

Published October 2017, this book is made available through the efforts of the 34th Infantry Division Association, a non-profit organized to support the soldiers and veterans of the 34 Infantry Division.

The book is a comprehensive overview of the 34th Infantry Division's part in the Global War on Terror from 2001 to 2017. The book is bursting with stories of hardship, comradeship and the pride in service shared by Red Bulls in the deserts of Iraq, the mountains of Afghanistan, as well as in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sinai, Kuwait and sites within the US. The hardcover book includes maps, graphics and nearly 200 color photos that aid in telling the story.

Each 34th Infantry Division unit is covered; details of deployments, combat operations and the return home tell a universal story of all those who served. A special memorial section includes all soldiers who were killed in action while in service with the division.

Visit <u>www.34ida.org</u>, for information on the 34th Infantry Division Association and becoming a member.

The book is available for \$30 (includes mailing) online with Paypal at

www.34ida.org/paypal.html
or by mail with the form
below. Books can also be
purchased for \$25 at the
following museums:

Iowa Gold Star Military Museum Camp Dodge Bldg 3692 7105 NW 70th Ave Johnston, IA 50131

Minnesota Military Museum Camp Ripley Sutler Store Gift Shop 15000 Hwy 115 Little Falls, MN 56345

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34th Infantry Division National Membership Application Form

NOTE: If your address Label shows (L), (W), (T) or (9) you do not owe dues for the Current Year

() Enclosed is \$10.00 for my Annual Membership in the 34 th Infantry Division Association. Annual membership period is – 1 Sep thru 31 Aug of each year. (Open to past and present members of units / organizations assigned to the 34 th Inf Div or soldiers who have been members of the National Guard for six years or longer.)						
	•	34 th Infantry Division Association. (Annual Fee) (Periodet membership requirements, ie: Spouses , Friends, Other	•			
() Enclosed is \$ for my LIFE MEMB		he 34 th Infantry Division Association.				
(See Fee Schedule Below) {No Further Annua	=	At 200 60 % older \$50.00				
To Age 60	\$100.00	At age 60 & older \$50.00				
() Enclosed is \$ for my donation to t (Maintain all monur		antry Division Memorial Fund. annual flowers for the Cemeteries in North Africa, Italy	& U.S.)			
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<u>Museum Store - 34th Inf Div Assn Price Li</u> 34 th Red Bull Polo Shirts Size	\$ 25.00		\$5.00			
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