

# *The Orion Leader*

## 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team



Annual Training Newsletter

Issue 1

9 October 2007

## **27th AT Launched at Drum Brigade Prepares for Mobilization**

Nearly 1300 Soldiers of the 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team from across New York, plus hundreds of additional training support personnel have arrived at Fort Drum for intense training as the federal mobilization date nears.

Personnel assigned to Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII will undergo continued individual training vital for validation and deployment. Non deploying personnel of the 27<sup>th</sup> comprise Task Force Orion and will be running training and providing essential support with support from members of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Training and Evaluation Battalion.



Members of HHC 27<sup>th</sup> BCT conducting first aid training from the left include SSG Frank Broncato, PFC Chris Vaeth and SGT Kurt Miller.

"It's essential that we approach this training period with the right level of intensity if we are going to succeed with the mission ahead," said Col. Brian Balfe, commander, 27<sup>th</sup> BCT. "We were productive in June, but we must forge further ahead now. Our nation and the Army are counting on us. I know we can prove ourselves worthy of that trust. This task force has what it takes to face and clear all challenges ahead. Orion!"

The Department of Defense went public at the end of July with the selection of the 27<sup>th</sup> BCT for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. As a result, news organizations have begun coverage of 27<sup>th</sup> units across the state. News organizations are expected to come to Fort Drum to cover the training during the initial two weeks.



BG Paul Genereux pins The Bronze Star Medal on SSG David Glidden from Tonawanda at the Syracuse Armory on 6 October.

## Community Salutes Latest Afghan Vets

As members of the 27<sup>th</sup> BCT were preparing to move from to Fort Drum for Annual Training, a special ceremony was held for Soldiers who had completed their Afghanistan mission.

A special team of 27<sup>th</sup> BCT officers and enlisted Soldiers deployed in 2006 as an Embedded Training Team to train, mentor and advise an Afghan National Army infantry force.

The unit arrived in theater in May 2006 and served under the Oregon Guard's 41<sup>st</sup> BCT for Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V.

In addition to living with and training the Afghans, the team frequently engaged in combat operations. Members of the team encountered Improvised Explosive Devices, participated in raids to capture weapons caches, negotiated narrow mountain passages in uparmored humvees, exchanged fire with dug in enemy forces and rendered emergency first aid to wounded Afghan and U.S.

personnel. The team came home in May 2007. It was NY's first ETT to serve in Afghanistan. A second team is there now, and several more teams will be part of the 27<sup>th</sup> BCT's mission for Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII.

## 200 Phoenix Troops Now on Federal Duty

Send off ceremonies were held at four locations across New York on 29 September for 200 members of the 27<sup>th</sup> BCT Security Force Battalion.



PV2 Christopher Chin is embraced by family after Camp Smith's Ceremony.

Platoons from four different units including Companies A, B and C of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry and Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry are deploying together as Company A.

Ceremonies were held at the Geneseo, Gloversville and Morrisonville armories and at Camp Smith in Cortlandt Manor. Hundreds of family members, friends and community leaders turned out at each location in a show of support for the deploying Soldiers.

Company A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry is beginning its deployment ahead of the task force main body. The unit will replace another SECFOR company presently serving in theater.