

It's Time to Get the Word Out

By Jerry Newberry

"Two previous embeds with infantry units in Iraq and Afghanistan coupled with the tours I did as a grunt in Vietnam verified that some things never really change for the Joe's who end up doing the fighting.

Rucking up and humping up and down a mountain or three isn't any different (except it's a lot harder at my age); the blisters, sweat, dirt and grime remain the same as does the pucker factor when the stuff hits the fan.

However, what remains the same forever are the anger, sorrow and grief that are felt when a friend or fellow soldier is wounded or killed.

Although the enemy speaks a different language and the geography and environment differs, when it comes down to it — bad guys are bad guys no matter where they come from, and in every war, their sole intention is to eliminate you or your buddies.

Like I said, Vietnam and a couple of embeds should have been enough — but it wasn't. It's no secret that for the most part, the media in general does a horrible job of letting the folks back home know about the multitude of accomplishments — the good things our military has managed to do — in Afghanistan and Iraq. To say they've fallen short of truthful and accurate reporting on the wars is an understatement. More importantly, in my book, the media have failed miserably in relaying stories about those who are

fighting the wars...and how they do it at such great personal sacrifice.

But what's been glaringly obvious in the media's abdication of reporting is that of our Guard and Reserve forces.

And that angered me.

What is different today is the fact that every day, men and women in the Guard and Reserve, stand ready to answer any mission no matter what the task. Our Citizen Soldiers often have had to put their lives on hold at great personal sacrifice for multiple deployments around the world. THEY defend and protect us at home and abroad and again, in many cases, have...and are dying or being wounded in Afghanistan and Iraq.

But most people back here in the "world" don't know that.

So I made a call to Reserve Command and it paid off. This embed is worth it.

It's time get the word out. It's time to tell some of their stories."

Jerry Newberry recently returned from an embed in Afghanistan. His embeds capture stories that help remind America of the personal sacrifices of our service members. Complete journal entries and remote interviews can be heard at <http://vfnationaldefense.blogspot.com>.

Newberry is also the VFW Director of Communications and co-host of the national syndicated radio show The National Defense.



AmeriForce Publishing's Brian Dunbar (third from the left) and Julie Miller (second from the right) are shown here with members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Reserve & National Guard Matters at the Pentagon in April 2008.

Publishers **Brian Dunbar**
Managing Editor **Sara Graves**
Contributing Editor **Jennifer Williams**
Graphic Design **WestPub Inc.**

ADVERTISING OFFICES

PHILADELPHIA

Brian Dunbar
(215) 343-8404
Fax: (215) 343-8405
BDunbar@AmeriForce.net

WASHINGTON D.C.

Julie L. Miller
(703) 909-1992
Fax: (301) 972-2543
JMiller@AmeriForce.net

CHICAGO

Mary Collins
Phone: (847) 786-4229
Fax: (847) 786-4230
Mary@AmeriForce.net

OKLAHOMA CITY

Glenn Knight
Phone/Fax: (405) 748-3938
GKnight@AmeriForce.net

DETROIT

Mike McNew
Phone: (248) 647-8043
Mike@mcnewmedia.com

GERMANY

Ursula Hirschhaeuser
+49 (0) 69-15053980
Ursula@AmeriForce.net

P.O. Box 54648
Irvine, CA 92619-4648
www.ameriforce.net

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