

# A Welcome Home f

BY ELIZABETH FARINA

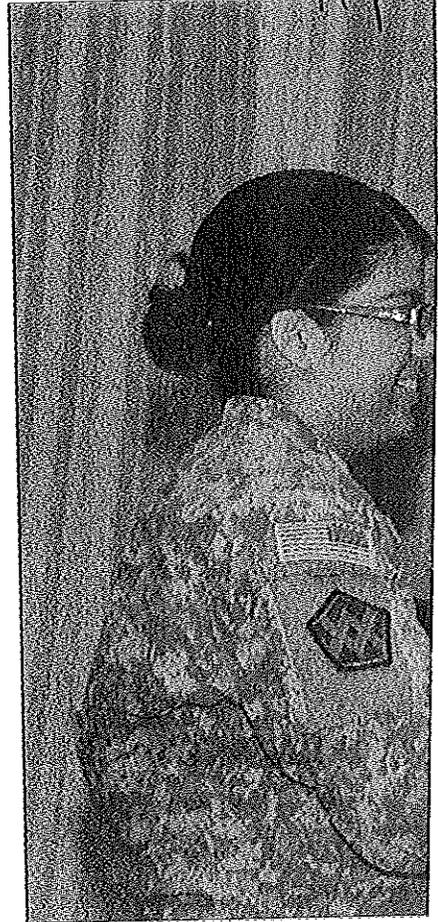
FORT LEE – Family, friends, fellow soldiers, and dignitaries welcomed home from Iraq over 70 soldiers from the 275th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion on Sunday, Jan. 9 during a "Welcome Home Warrior Citizen Ceremony", which included a presentation of a United States flag to several service men and women. Also, in attendance for the ceremony were U.S. Congressman J. Randy Forbes and Virginia Delegates Rosalyn Dance and Riley Ingram.

For Chesterfield County resident Sgt. Jacob Sandsbury, it was good to be home. "I'm just excited that it's coming to an end. A year-long deployment, I've missed my wife (Erin), my family, and even my dog (Tank). It's good to come to a point that after this [ceremony], it's over and I'll get to hang out with my bride and my family," he said.

Although Sgt.

Sandsbury has had a chance to call his wife each day, and sometimes Skyped, which would drive the dog "crazy with the computer", it was great to be home. Besides missing family, he missed good food and a good night's rest. "My wife makes this broccoli chicken casserole that's amazing. It's a simple dish, but it's awesome. And then, sleeping in my own bed and not sleeping in a cot, which we had to do for awhile," Sandsbury said.

Sgt. Jessica Figueroa, who is from Northern Virginia, was relieved to be home. "We got used to it over there, but when you come back, you feel good and you remember all the little



Congressman J. Randy Forbes welcomed the 275th Combat Sustainment Battalion during a redeployment ceremony to leave Iraq.

things you didn't have over there like being able to sleep in your own bed and not having to walk 100 yards to the shower and all those things you appreciate," Figueroa said.

Capt. Dassie Jones, Jr. appreciates being home to spend time with his wife Shaneysha and their children who are 11 and 7 years old. Although it's not his first deployment, he noted that it's something one doesn't get used to. "There are some things we have in place as a family that insures that everything is okay and there is some normalcy," he said.

*Hogewell  
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# for the 275<sup>th</sup> CSSB



PHOTO BY STEPHEN J. BAKER, FORT LEE PUBLIC AFFAIR)  
comes home Spc. Figueroa Cortes with the 275th Combat Support  
ployment ceremony at Fort Lee Jan. 8, 2012. The unit was the last CSSB

Capt. Jones is ready to go back to his 9-to-5 workplace routine, but not before watching his children play in a few basketball games and see a few swim and track meets in the spring. "I'm going to enjoy the family and take some time and vacation," Jones said.

Battalion Commander Lt. Col. (promotable) Christopher "Sam" Houston added that it felt very good to have everyone home safely and that they accomplished their mission. "It was a history-breaking mission in the history of Army logistics - U.S. Army or U.S. Military. Our battalion was the back-

bone of what was the largest single combat retrograde of forces since World War II," Houston said, "Everything we did in drawing down forces from Iraq was under the threat of enemy action. In that regard, we drove over 3.5 million miles over some of the most dangerous roads in the world under constant threat of enemy attack. We accomplished our mission and we brought everyone home safely and that's what we're all feeling the most excitement right now," he said before the cere-

See **SCHOOLS** page A-3

Spc. Jasmine Johnson and Spc. Monte Loganare happy to be home.

## 275TH

mony.

The battalion, a first of its kind, was deployed for 10 months, during which it operated from three separate locations during the draw down of forces in Iraq. It was one of the last groups of American soldiers to leave Iraq. Lt. Col. Houston explained during the ceremony that the CSSB never lost its capabilities during each move. "For each move, we grew in mission and size," he said, "By the time we reached [Camp]Adder, we were the largest CSSB in the history of Iraq."

The battalion had over 1,400 soldiers that included four transportation companies, and inland cargo transportation company, a quartermaster company, a field-service maintenance company, and an ordnance detachment. "Our soldiers operated throughout Iraq on an unprecedented scale. We were designated the finest CSSB in Iraq and maintained

the largest inner-theater transportation to the end and supported the largest retrograde of forces since World War II," Houston said.

Houston added that besides the 3.5 million miles logged by the CSSB, it also completed 10,000 transportation management requests, conducted 1,100 combat logistics patrols, safely hauled over 360,000 short tons of cargo, while distributing 1.8 million cases of bottled water and over 16 million gallons of fuel.

The inland cargo transportation company managed and closed the largest cargo receiving and shipping points in Iraq while processing over 40,000 shipping containers, 23,000 vehicles and major end items, 9,000 palletized pieces of cargo and 49,000 skid-mounted pieces of cargo. The ordnance detachment operated the largest ammo supply point in the history of operations in Iraq, issuing over 16 million of rounds of var-

ious types of ammunition and then, eventually closed the supply point. In short, the 275th CSSB division supported and closed United State Division North, United States Division Center, and United States Division South. "We put the "R" in retrograde," he said.

The only remaining mission, Lt. Col. Houston said, was for everyone to successfully reach home. "Your mission is not complete until you're all safe and home with your families, who are also members of our team," he said.

Houston added, in closing, "Everyone of you will know that we are always family. I will serve with you any time, any where. No matter where our nation needs us, I know that you will answer the call and I will gladly be there with you, forever more. We will always be mission first, soldiers always."