

On 3 October, the Chief of Field Artillery Major General Michael D. Maples presented the 2002 Henry A. Knox Award for Best Active Component (AC) Battery to First Sergeant Franklin M. Jacobs on behalf of his command, B Battery, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment (AFAR), *The Bulls*, part of the 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The award was presented during the Senior Fire Support Conference Banquet at the Officers' Club, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The Knox Best Battery Award, a resurrection of a similar award presented from 1924 through 1940, is designed to promote, sustain and recognize excellence in US Army Field Artillery batteries. (See the related articles "Best Battery Awards: Knox Award Reinstated and Hamilton Award Created in 2002" and "The Knox Trophy and Medal: 1924-1940," the latter by Lieutenant Colonel Allen W. Batschelet, both in this edition.)

The award's submission packet included a statistical data sheet and the battery commander's narrative. The following was taken from Captain Yusef E. Good's narrative.

"*The Bulls* are a well-disciplined, highly motivated battery that has excelled while setting an intensive training pace in the past year. The battery's officers, NCOs and soldiers have proven continually they are among the best artillerymen in the Army.

"Currently, the battery is engaged in combat in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, providing indirect fires with 120-mm mortars. This combat deployment concludes a rigorous and highly successful year for the *Bravo Bulls*.

"B/1-319 AFAR began FY02 with a challenging rotation to the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California, in support of the 3d Brigade. During the rotation, the battery exhibited outstanding discipline and motivation when at-

tacked by the air assault opposing force's (OPFOR's) Task Force Angel. The ensuing battle resulted in 82 OPFOR dead and minimal casualties for the battery.

"At the conclusion of the rotation, the battery redeployed and immediately prepared for and passed a division inspection and assumed the mission as the division ready force battery responsible for assembling within two hours and deploying by parachute assault within 18 hours of notification.

"The intense training executed by Bravo Battery during the year included two battery field training exercises (FTXs) and one brigade FTX. During these FTXs, the battery improved its level in each of its mission-essential task list (METL) tasks. Additionally, Bravo Battery conducted two fire planning exercises and two iterations of fire support lanes in support of 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment (1-505 PIR).

"The battery has conducted five live-fire drop zone missions and participated in a total of 11 airborne operations. A drop zone mission requires the utmost discipline, teamwork, motivation and initiative of all paratroopers as the battery parachutes, assembles on an air-dropped howitzer, derigs the platform and puts the howitzer in position, ready to fire within 25 minutes. The battery also executed two live-fire battery air assault raids and danger-close fires in support of the brigade combined arms live-fire exercise (CALFEX).

"In total, the *Bravo Bulls* fired more than 3,000 artillery rounds in FY02.

"The battery has represented the long history of the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment honorably. During the year, the battery has had four troopers win Battalion Paratrooper of the Month and two NCOs selected as Division Artillery NCO of the Quarter. The battery also produced two Audie Murphy winners and two inductees into the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara. The battery fired two ceremonial salutes, one in support of the 82d Airborne Assistant Division Commander's (Operations) promotion and the other for the Forces Command (FORSCOM) Commander. Additionally, the battery showed its excellence as artillerymen by winning both the Battalion Best Howitzer and Battalion Best Fire Direction Center competitions.

"B/1-319 AFAR deployed to Afghanistan in July 2002. Initially, operational requirements called for towed 120-mm mortars as the heavy indirect fire asset. Bravo Battery cross-trained on the 120-mm mortar with a mobile training team (MTT) from Fort Benning, Georgia. The soldiers quickly mastered the new skills, and all sections certified on the new system in one day. B Battery is engaged in supporting the ground combat operations of 1-505 PIR and has fired hundreds of mortar rounds in close support of the task force.

"B Battery is taking advantage of the opportunity to forge new tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) for employing the towed 120-mm mortar via air assault, heavy drop and ground infiltration, adapting to the harsh environmental challenges of the Afghanistan.

"*The Bulls* are prepared, trained and ready to deliver fires with any fire support system—be it cannons or mortars."

# B/1-319 AFAR Wins 2002 Knox Best AC Battery Award



1-319 AFAR deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom in July 2002. B Battery Redlegs man this 120-mm mortar in Afghanistan.