

The Ivy Leaf

Established in 1917 to honor those who serve

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MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION – BAGHDAD

“STEADFAST AND LOYAL”

APRIL 2, 2006

‘Rough Riders’ tackle new mission with Iraqi commandos

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The doctor is in
New medical center opens doors for Camp Striker

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Operation Glory Light reaps rewards, weapons caches discovered

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Combined forces launch Operation Northern Lights



Photo by Maj. Robert Krenzel, 1st BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.



Photo by Maj. Robert Krenzel, 1st BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.

ABOVE: Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, secure weapons and ammunition seized after searching for, and capturing, several weapons caches. Iraqi Security Forces, in conjunction with units from the U.S. Army, Marines, Air Force and Navy, kicked off Operation Northern Lights March 22 to capture suspected terrorists in the Abu Ghraib area west of Baghdad. **RIGHT:** The Soldiers estimated there were around 150 mortar rounds, 60 RPG rounds, 130 grenades, 120 rockets and more than 30,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition recovered from the weapons caches. There were also several launching devices for the mortars, rockets and grenades.

Story by Maj. James Crawford
1st BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div.

BAGHDAD –

Iraqi army and Coalition Forces, approximately 1,400 personnel, kicked off Operation Northern Lights March 22 to disrupt anti-Iraqi forces and to find and destroy terrorist caches in the Abu Ghraib area west of Baghdad.

The joint and combined operation began with 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division,

and 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, moving to blocking positions by ground before Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, air assaulted onto the objective to conduct a cordon and search.

By late that afternoon, approximately 400 Soldiers from the 3rd Bde., 6th Iraqi Army Div., discovered five weapons caches, containing a machinegun, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, three AK-47 assault rifles,

2,200 PKC machine gun rounds, two boxes of gunpowder, a RPG rocket, an Iraqi police jacket, 18 106mm tank rounds, 400 blasting caps, 40 artillery rounds, 17 pressure plate initiators, 20 Motorola radio initiators, and thousands of .50 caliber machine gun rounds. They also detained a suspected terrorist near one of the caches.

At another cache site, terrorists attacked Iraqi soldiers with small-arms fire, wounding one Iraqi policeman and an Iraqi child

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NEWS FROM THE FRONT

ISF, MND-B establish joint patrol base, "Paint the Town" to eradicate graffiti in Jurf As Suhkr

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Iraqi towns and communities all over the country are turning over a new leaf, kicking out unwanted terrorists and breathing new life into the communities.

Jurf As Suhkr is evolving into another Iraqi success story as the former hostile town is slowly turning around its fortunes and providing a safe haven for residents in which to live and work.

Coalition Forces completed construction of a patrol base March 17 in the town.

The base was built primarily as an integrated security effort between Coalition Forces and the Iraqi police from the Musayib police station while the Jurf As Suhkr police station is being built. The residents needed an established structure and security presence in the town to provide them a sense of safety.

"The patrol base is a sort of incentive to promote the stability the town required in order to get the construction of the new police station underway," said Lt. Patrick Donahoe, commander, 1-67 AR.

This project is the initial step in securing the town so the citizens of Jurf As Suhkr can enjoy the essential services most cities are working to improve, added Capt. William Kron, Company A, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

"We hope by bringing stability and security to the region it will also bring more projects and money into the area.

A shining example of the "new" Jurf As Suhkr was the "Painting the Town" program this month. Iraqi Security Force and residents painted over business, walls, and other structures littered with graffiti to help the town begin the transformation of a battle-riddled town to one with promise and hope.

Lt. Col. Ahmed, Musayib police chief, chipped in by painting over graffiti on several struc-



Photo by Sgt. Kristin Kemplin, 363rd MPAD

Annual pilgrimage to Karbala

NAJAF, Iraq – Thousands of Shi'a pilgrims fill the streets of Najaf March 18 on their pilgrimage north to Karbala for al-Arbaeen, a ceremony held forty days after the Shiite holy day of Ashura. The forty days signifies the mourning period for Imam Hussein, grandson of Prophet Mohamed, who was martyred at the battle of Karbala in 680. Soldiers and Iraqi Security Forces provided extra security during the holiday because increased attacks had marked the two previous annual pilgrimages to Karbala.

tures within the town. This project motivated citizens of Jurf As Suhkr to take pride in their town, we hope the interest continues in the future said Achmed.

(Courtesy of 1st Bn., 67th Armor Reg., 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.)

MND-B Soldiers discover roadside bomb, Iraqi EOD team conducts recovery

BAGHDAD – An Iraqi Explosive Ordnance Disposal team helped make a route east of Baghdad safer by ridding it of a roadside bomb found by Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers on March 11.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, found a hollowed-out tree trunk containing

wires, a 152mm round and a remote control base while they were on patrol. The disposal team responded to the scene and secured the round.

(Courtesy of MND – B PAO)

Iraqi citizen's tip helps MND-B Soldiers foil kidnap attempt

BAGHDAD – Responding to a tip from an Iraqi citizen, a patrol from Multi-National Division – Baghdad's 3rd Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, foiled a kidnapping attempt at approximately 2 p.m. March 19 in the New Baghdad district of Baghdad.

Soldiers received a tip from an Iraqi citizen that armed men were driving around in a black car. The patrol located and pulled over the vehicle.

During a search of the car, the Soldiers noticed pounding and screaming coming from the rear of the vehicle. Upon opening the trunk, Soldiers discovered an Iraqi man who said he had been kidnapped. The Soldiers detained the driver of the vehicle.

The incident is under investigation by Iraqi authorities.

(Courtesy of MND – B PAO)

MND-B Soldiers detain terrorist suspects, find weapons cache

BAGHDAD – Soldiers from Multi-National Division – Baghdad's 8th Battalion, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, detained four terrorist suspects March 13 after observing the individuals digging in southwest Baghdad.

The suspects were transported

to another site for further questioning.

Elsewhere, Soldiers from 506th Regimental Combat Team, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, detained three armed, military-aged males in northeast Baghdad. None of the males were in possession of weapons identification.

The suspects were transported to Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah for further questioning.

In another incident, Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, continued a cache search west of Baghdad.

Soldiers found 14 155mm rounds, six 120mm rounds, five 68mm rockets, one 60mm mortar round, 11,000 7.62mm rounds, four rifles and 25 blasting caps.

(Courtesy of MND – B PAO)

The Ivy Leaf

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Secretary General of Iraqi Nation Party optimistic about Iraq commends Iraqi forces for response to recent violence following bombing

BAGHDAD – The Secretary General of the Iraqi Nation Party addressed the current security situation in Baghdad and the continuing success of the Iraqi Security Forces Tuesday during a press conference hosted by the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team at Forward Operating Base Prosperity.

Mithal Al Lusi commended Iraqi forces for all the hard work they have done during the recent increase in violence after the bombing of the Askri Mosque, also known as the Golden Mosque, last month, maintaining that he is optimistic about the current situation in Iraq.

"We believe in our will to manage our own business by making the right decisions benefiting the commonwealth," he said.

"We want to get ourselves out of the crisis so we can control our borders and the future of the Iraqi people."

Lusi said that with the continuous strategic and diplomatic relationship between Coalition Forces and the Iraqi government, the terrorists will be defeated.

Col. Michael Beech, commander, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., agreed with Lusi and stated 2006 will be a year of transition for the Iraqi people as security improves throughout the country.

"Terrorists are afraid of the strength of the Iraqi army, police, the government and most of all, the citizens who again and again proclaim their right to a free and secure Iraq," Beech said.

(Courtesy of 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)

MND-B vehicle catches fire after roadside bomb attack in Baghdad

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad M1A2 Abrams Main Battle Tank caught fire March 10 at approximately 10 a.m. in east central Baghdad after it was hit by a roadside bomb attack.

The tank crew was not injured in the attack. Foam trucks were dispatched to the scene to put out the fire.

(Courtesy of MND – B PAO)



Iraqi Police commandos, from the Iraq Ministry of the Interior, and Soldiers from 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conduct a combined patrol in southern Baghdad March 10.

Cavalry Scout 'Rough Riders' tackle expanded mission, conduct joint patrols with Iraqi commandos

Story and photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel
4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Cavalry scouts serve as the commander's eyes and ears on the battlefield.

Historically, their main responsibility has been to conduct reconnaissance operations to obtain combat information on the enemy and the area of operations for producing combat intelligence; but as today's battlefield constantly evolves, so do the scouts.

A popular maxim within the ranks of the U.S. Army is "adapt and overcome," Troopers from 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, live this adage as they take on a wide array of missions in southern Baghdad.

"There are a lot of things involved in our job," said 1st Lt. Shawn Wiley, 2nd Platoon leader, Troop B, 8-10 Cav.

"Our primary mission is to conduct urban area recon, but on any given day, we have a responsibility to complete all kinds of missions," Wiley said, a native of Pine Bush, N.Y.

The "Rough Riders" from 8-10 Cav. have come a long way from their days of cavalry scout Advanced Individual Training at Fort Knox, Ky.

Aside from urban area reconnaissance, Wiley and his men conduct lethal and non-lethal engagements, carry out strike operations on suspected insurgent strongholds, conduct raids and act somewhat as a civil

affairs team – all while maintaining good relationships with the local populace in the west Rasheed district in southern Baghdad.

The Rough Riders are also

responsible for clearing supply routes of improvised explosive devices and must be able to remain ready to respond to any emergency in the battalion area of operations.

"A lot of the time, we will respond to IEDs and other emergencies," said Spc. Max Mielke, cavalry scout, Troop B, 8-10 Cav., a native of Iowa Falls, Iowa.

"We always remain ready for anything, no matter what mission we do," he said.

On a recent mission, approximately 15 scouts from Troop B's 2nd Platoon, conduct-

ed a joint patrol with Iraq's elite 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade Police Commando unit from the Iraq Ministry of the Interior.

It was the first joint patrol the platoon conducted with the Iraqi unit. The scouts conducted a tight operation, and the presence of the 40-strong commando unit added excitement to the patrol.

The commandos took control of the operation and were greeted by jubilant Iraqi citizens, a sign of climbing public opinion of the Iraqi Security Forces.

"We have been trained very well by the Americans," said Pvt. Mohammed Rashad, who is assigned to the commando unit, during a patrol in a densely populated area of West Rasheed. "Our forces are ready for the mission 24 hours a day."

"I enjoy my job," Rashad said. "Every day, we are on the streets working to make this country better and keeping our families and friends safe in Baghdad."

The West Rasheed area of operations has seen fewer and fewer attacks each month, and Wiley said he credits the ISF, as well his unit, with preventing terrorist actions against the people living in the area.

As the Rough Rider squadron continues to conduct the full-spectrum mission in southwest Baghdad, Wiley said he looks forward to continuing joint operations with ISF personnel to improve security conditions in West Rasheed.

502nd Personnel Services Battalion — What have they done for you lately?

Story and photos by Sgt. Ann Drier,
363rd MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY —

When Soldiers think of personnel services, they think of identification cards, records, life insurance forms and just plain old ‘paperwork.’ Paperwork may not be exciting, but without it, Soldiers would have an impossible time keeping anything straight. Just for starters, every Soldier wants to get promoted and get that new identification card that shows they have climbed another rung on the ladder of professional success.

“People come in to get ready for the (promotion) boards,” said Pfc. Jordan Sewell, records noncommissioned officer-in-charge at the Camp Liberty Personnel Services Battalion office which is currently being run by the 502nd Personnel Services Battalion.

“They need to get their records straight. I enjoy doing this because I get to interact with people and help them out. I can look at a record and see what’s wrong – do extra things for people before they go to the board.”

Records are only one aspect of the work behind the scenes performed by Soldiers in the 502nd Personnel Services Battalion.

If you have received a package, postcard, or letter in the last two months, a Soldier from the 502nd PSB’s post office handled it, sorted it, and sent it to the right location. Spc. James Conner, from Louisville, Ky., re-routes mislabeled packages at the Camp Liberty post office. Spc. Brian Wolfe, of N. Richland Hills, Texas, Spc. Wileen Footsman, from Tallahassee, Fla., and Spc. Michael Carver, of Sanford, Fla., sort and direct packages, ensuring they are placed in the right bin for pickup.

If you have changed your name, home or deployed address, been married or divorced, had a family addition or set up an allotment, a Soldier from the 502nd PSB handles the paperwork to make it official.

Chief Warrant Officer Sherrie Campbell, from Roberta, Ga., is the database operations chief for “deployed theater accountability software” at Camp Liberty.



Pfc. Blanca Chiquisinchi, Peekskill, N.Y., checking the flight manifest for Soldiers at the Baghdad International Airport terminal. A member of the 502nd Personnel Services Battalion, Chiquisinchi is the out-bound liaison for Soldiers going on pass or leave.

Campbell said she is proud of the job she does, remarking “I’m in a position to ensure that every Soldier is accounted for properly, which results in ‘no Soldier being left behind’”.

If you have put in for a pass or leave, a Soldier from the 502nd PSB not only did the paperwork, they also arranged for flights to get you to your destination.

At Camp Striker, Pfc. Jason Weaver, of Bossier City, La. serves as a logistics officer, in charge of maintaining accountability of Soldiers departing on four-day passes or fourteen-day environmental morale leave.

“I give them a briefing about what will happen while they’re here, which is usually about eight hours. I tell them about formations, where the DFAC and food court are, how to find the MWR tent and information about bus schedules. I assign living quarters for those Soldiers coming in from outlying FOBs while they’re waiting for their flight,” said Weaver.

When they leave Camp Striker, Soldiers will check in with Pfc. Blanca “Chiqi” Chiquisinichi, from Peekskill, N.Y., at the airport flight desk. “I check them on the manifest and let them know when their flight leaves,” said Chiquisinichi, and always adds “enjoy yourself!”

If one of your buddies is hurt on the battlefield, there will be a Soldier from the 502nd PSB at his or her side to collect important information that must be sent up to headquarters and to the Department of the Army to track their progress and status. The casualty liaison office has personnel at each brigade to assist Soldiers and medical staff in reporting accurate information about the injuries, condition of the patient, and whether transportation is required to a higher facility.

“When the casualty comes in, they talk to the Soldier,” said Chief Warrant Officer-2 Billy Fritiz, of the 502nd’s command staff. “They get all the information and medical statistics as quickly as possible. They notify D-Main of who the Soldier is, contact the unit for specifics and document the doctors’ perspective on the injury. They gather together all the information, combine it and create



TOP: (Clockwise from top) Chief Warrant Officer 2 Billy Fritiz, Spc. Rosa Arreguin, Spc. Erick Torres and Sgt. Maritza DeHaro, all members of 502nd Personnel Services Battalion Casualty Liaison office. Their mission with the 502nd PSB requires them to gather and disseminate casualty information within the 4th Infantry Division area of responsibility. BELOW RIGHT: Pfc. Jason Weaver, a native of Bossier City, La., is one of the liaisons for the 502nd PSB Striker at the Baghdad International Airport location. Weaver maintains an accountability log, assigns temporary housing and provides information for Soldiers preparing to take a four-day pass or 14-day leave. He provides a briefing with information to help Soldiers find the dining facility, internet cafe, bus schedules and contacts for travel at the Baghdad International Airport terminal. BELOW LEFT: Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sherrie Campbell, a native of Roberts, Ga., is the Database Operations Chief for Deployed Theater Accountability Software at Baghdad International Airport. “I’m in a position to ensure that every Soldier is accounted for properly, which results in ‘No Soldier being left behind.’”



a report that is sent up to Corps and to DA. All this happens in about two hours.”

“It’s an important job,” said Sgt. Maritza DeHaro, of El Paso Texas, casualty liaison at D-Main. “We have to be sure that all the information is accurate. The Soldier has to know that their family gets



the right information.”

The 502nd PSB has its fingers in a lot of ‘pies’ around the 4th Infantry Division. It has post offices at almost every location in the 4th Inf. Div. area of operation. Most of the PSB operations currently in Iraq were set up by the 502nd in 2003, according to Command Sgt. Maj. Divina Bobb. “It was taken over by 151st Postal when we left. It’s ironic to come back and continue our same mission from OIF-1,” said Bobb.

“Mail used to be trucked out to the outlying FOB’s in what we call rodeos. Now, we use helicopters and send it out at night,” said Bobb, adding that “we never go out as a company, usually as a platoon.”

“The only thing we’re doing the same as in the states is the PSS mission, except for



Spc. Eric Elliott, 152nd Maintenance Company, from Perry, Iowa, sends a package home from the postal office at Camp Liberty with the help of Spc. Sharlanda Banks of Lawton, Okla., and Spc. Tuere Hughes, of Tallahassee, Fla.

New recreation, dining facilities improve downtime for Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Iskandariyah



Spc. Nathan Strowmat, combat engineer attached to 1st Battalion, 67th Armor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, works out on a cardio machine in a newly erected gym here Feb. 15.

Story and photo by
Spc. Jason Thompson
4th Inf. Div. PAO

FOB ISKANDARIYAH, Iraq – War-zone deployments are often both physically and mentally strenuous for Soldiers as they are often required to working long hours in stressful situations.

However, the leadership of Multi-National Division – Baghdad is working hard to provide the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 67th Armor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, an opportunity to relax and relieve their stress during their downtime.

“We want to keep the morale high among the troops down here fighting the war,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Riling, 4th Inf. Div.

“These Soldiers are the ones going out on the streets every day fighting the war on terrorism, and it’s our responsibility as senior leaders of the division to provide these Soldiers an opportunity to relax so they can keep

their concentration when they’re out fighting.”

Since arriving in Iraq, Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Iskandariyah have seen a tremendous amount of improvements in their living conditions, to include a new dining facility, a recreational facility, new living tents and a new gym.

The new Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility offers Soldiers an opportunity to sit back and enjoy some of the luxuries they enjoyed before deploying into theater, said Pfc. Brian Robeck, bridge crewmember, 1-67.

“The MWR is great because we can go in there and watch movies, play video games, board games or

whatever else comes our way,” he said. “In short, it’s a great place to relax and hang out with our buddies.”

More showers were added to the complex as well to help cut down on waiting times for Soldiers to perform personal hygiene.

Pfc. Mohamed Diop, a supply specialist with 1-67 Armor, described the

improvements as miraculous, stating “when we got here, we had almost nothing. We had only a couple working showers that we shared between the entire camp, and now we have numerous showers to use. It feels good to not have to walk half a mile away just to wash my face.”

Soldiers also stated they felt the new dining facility was a vast improvement over the one it replaced.

The old dining facility was a tent that had been weathered badly over time, said Master Sgt. Robert Todd, operations noncommissioned officer, 1-67 Armor. “Morale among the Soldiers went up immensely after the new dining facility was opened,” Todd continued. “Soldiers now have a place that they can enjoy their meals without having to worry about getting rained on – that’s definitely a plus.”

Also added to the compound were additional cement barriers, which help protect Soldiers against terrorist attacks.

“We are constantly working to provide new structures to the smaller FOBs to help with security, safety and morale of the Soldiers out here,” said Riling.

“These Soldiers are the division’s most valuable asset – and the division is doing everything we can to make there jobs easier.”

“These Soldiers are the division’s most valuable asset – and the division is doing everything we can to make their jobs easier.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Riling
4th Infantry Division
command sergeant major

Promotion board tests capabilities of brigade’s future leaders

By Spc. Allison Churchill
Fires Bde. PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Ambitious junior enlisted Soldiers from Fires Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, faced four of their top enlisted leaders March 7 at brigade headquarters in a bid to join the noncommissioned officer corps.

Appearing before the board in full “battle rattle,” the Iron Gunners answered a wide range of questions — from the history of the brigade to demonstrating the proper functions check on their M-16A2 rifles.

“You’re going to be setting the standard now,” Command Sgt. Maj. Gilbert Canuela, Fires Bde., told the three prospective NCOs standing before him.

The Soldiers first appeared before the

promotion board as a group with their sponsors. After the introduction of the board, the Soldiers, Cpl. Christopher Fernandez, personal security detachment, Fires Bde.; Spc. Dan Zupan, radar repair, Battery A, 26th Field Artillery; and Spc. Tiffany Gray, transportation coordinator with 18th Transportation Detachment out of Hawaii, faced the board individually.

The Soldiers said they spent more than a month preparing for the board but admitted to being nervous when their turns finally came.

“I haven’t gotten a lot of sleep in the past 36 hours,” said Zupan, who noted that he had the added complication of equipment difficulties, which interfered with his plans for a “final cram.”

Zupan said he faced a “pre-board” two

weeks prior that he found helpful in tailoring his areas of concentration. He was advised to change his study focus from escalation of force issues to leadership and counseling knowledge, he said.

Gray, who is currently assigned to the 4th Infantry Division’s rear operations center, said facing a board of unfamiliar faces was stressful. She did not depend on standard study guides, she said, since the preparatory information from the board encouraged her to place more emphasis on having a thorough knowledge of basic Soldier skills.

Both leadership and Soldier skills are important, said Canuela, adding that units need to focus on building a strong NCO Corps and ensuring troops are equally efficient in their military occupation spe-

cialty and warrior skills.

The ability to face a promotion board with professionalism is far from being the sole determining factor as to whether Soldiers will become good NCOs, but it is a “rite of passage” and helps leaders see how a Soldier will appear to his or her subordinates, said Canuela.

He advised Soldiers to pay close attention to detail when appearing before the board. Some examples, he noted include failing to stand at parade rest while addressing the board or having a uniform that is not completely up to standard.

These details are noticed and immediately corrected by the board, which leaves a lasting impression for the members that the Soldier may not be ready to assume

SEE PROMOTION, PG. 9

6th Iraqi Army Division battalion assumes responsibility for Forward Operating Base Hope

Story by Pfc. Paul David Ondik
506th Inf. Regt. PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

FOB LOYALTY – The Iraqi army’s 3rd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Division, assumed control of Forward Operating Base Hope during a Transfer of Authority ceremony March 9.

Relinquishing control of the base during the ceremony was Multi-National Division – Baghdad’s 3rd Battalion, 67th Armored Regiment, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division.

“We stand in the company of those ready to accept the challenge of securing Iraq’s future,” said Lt. Col. Mark Bertolini,

the commander of 3rd Bn., 67th AR, as he passed on the responsibility to Col. Hussain, the commander of 3rd Bn., 2nd Bde., 6th IAD.

“It is our honor to accept responsibility and take over the sovereignty of Sadr City,” said Hussain.

FOB Hope is located in the northwest corner of the Thawra district in Baghdad and previously housed units of Saddam Hussein’s regime prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Hussain stated that his main objective for 2nd Bde., 6th IA Div., is building a unified, strong and independent Iraq. He

thanked coalition forces for their partnership.

“We work side-by-side with the dedicated soldiers of the ISF every day,” said Col. Thomas Vail, commander of 506th Inf. Regt., 101st Abn. Div. “The 2-6 IA is already patrolling and manning control points on a daily basis.”

“To my brother and friend, Col. Hussain, I’d like to say that your soldiers look magnificent today,” said Bertolini, a native of Long Island, NY.

The ceremony reflects the increasing responsibility for the Iraqis as their army gains control of more battle space through-

out the region.

The ceremony included the playing of the Iraqi National Anthem, the uncasing of the 2nd Bde., 6th IA Div.’s colors, and remarks by both the outgoing and incoming commanders. Also included in the ceremony was a display of the Iraqi army’s new motorized equipment, including humvees, and a martial-arts exhibition.

“The turnover of FOB Hope demonstrates the increased capabilities of the ‘Tiger’ Brigade, and thus the Iraqi army,” said Bertolini. “The 2nd Brigade has earned the reputation of a tough, well led and well trained unit.”



Iraqi army engineers in training react to sniper fire during a joint officer and enlisted capstone exercise at the end of engineer Enlisted Phase II and Officer Basic courses. The capstone exercise encompassed virtually everything learned in a given course of study and allowed Iraqi engineer soldiers to test their leadership as well as skills learned in the areas of route clearance, reacting to contact and security of a forward operating base.

Iraqi army engineers first to graduate from Iraqi army officer basic course

103 fully-qualified noncommissioned officers, enlisted soldiers also join Iraqi army ranks

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Ballog
16th Eng. Bde. PAO
CAMP TAJI, Iraq –

In another visible demonstration of the great strides being made daily by the Iraqi army, 126 fully-qualified Iraqi army engineer officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted soldiers graduated March 9 from the Engineer Officer Basic Course and Engineer Enlisted Phase II training, held simultaneously here.

The officers also had the distinction of being the first engineers in the Iraqi army to participate and graduate from an officer basic course, which helps prepare them to support their country's democratic progression.

"You are the first officers to graduate, and we expect hard work from you and for you to use your knowledge to develop your units," said Staff Col. Alaa Hadi, commander, Iraqi army engineer school, to the 23 newly-graduated officers. The officers were mostly from the 5th and 9th IA divisions, with a handful from other units.

"As you go forward to lead troops and build Iraq, you will be setting the standard for all Iraqi army officers to come," Radhi emphasized.

Brig. Gen. Robin Timmons, commander, 16th Engineer Brigade, also attended the graduation ceremony and presented certificates to the top three officer graduates.

"It's quite an honor for you to be the first OBC graduates, and through your efforts, education, leadership and dedication, you will be able to take the Iraqi army engineers to a higher level of expertise," he said.

The NCOs and enlisted soldiers graduated in a separate ceremony March 8.

"My team and I, and all Coalition Forces in Iraq, find it an honor to train and work with you. We wish you well as you go forward and are proud to serve with you," Maj. Carey Bond, senior IA engineer adviser, U.S. Army Reserve's 80th Division, said talking to the NCO graduating classes.

The U.S. military's eight-member training team was made up of Marine and Army engineer officers and NCOs who served as instructors and advisers for the IA engineer students. All were attached to the school from U.S. engineer units currently deployed to Iraq. The Taji-based school is one of two IA engineer schools currently operational in Iraq, with the other being conducted by British army engineers in Basra.

"Our team first reviewed the IA engineers' future mission plans, then identified the coursework and skills the officers and enlisted would need to succeed with a future eye on where their engineers could make the most effective contribution," said Capt. Matt Keith, a U.S. Army engineer officer attached to the Taji team from the 5th Engineer Battalion, 16th Eng. Bde.

The IA engineer training was based on the U.S. Army's engineer Advanced Individual Training and OBC and included classes in troop leading procedures, route clearance, combat lifesaving, construction, equipment and infantry operations.

Additional training emphasized the roles of officers, NCOs and enlisted soldiers – a new concept for the IA. The former Iraqi army consisted of officer and enlisted positions but none of the enlisted soldiers were considered to be in an NCO leadership role.

The goal for each course was to prepare IA sol-

SEE OFFICERS, PG. 16



Capt. Matt Keith (walking toward camera), a U.S. Army engineer officer for the 5th Engineer Battalion who serves as an advisor to the Iraqi army Engineer School, supervises IA engineer soldiers during their joint exercise here. The intensive 84-hour capstone exercise encompassed everything learned and afforded the IA engineer officers and enlisted soldiers an opportunity to test the skills they learned during six weeks of training in the Engineer Enlisted Phase II and Officer Basic courses here in February and March.



An Iraqi army engineer soldier works on concertina wire at a forward operating base "taken over" during a recent officer and enlisted capstone exercise held in February and March.

MND-B Soldiers take to farmlands

Leaders visit Obeid region residents

Story and photo by
Maj. Anna Friederich
2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FOB KALSU, Iraq — Elements of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, paid a visit to residents in the farmlands of the Obeid region near Diyarah March 8.

Co. A Soldiers conducted combat patrols through an area that has seen very little Coalition or Iraqi Security Force presence since Operation Iraqi Freedom began.

“Our goal was to talk to residents in areas surrounding Obeid to find out what their concerns were and how we could address them,” said Capt. Dave Zaino, commander, Co. A, 2nd Bn.

A key area of concern raised by residents in the area, is the poor supply of water for the region. The water system is currently closed off, resulting in poor water conditions threatening the health of their families and livestock.

“Most of the residents we talked to were very concerned about the water system coming from Al Lutyfyiah,” said Staff Sgt. Logan Griffith, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

“They have to conserve every drop of water, which could have dire conse-

quences if a resolution cannot be found soon,” said Griffith.

“We are currently working with the Al Lutifyah city government to address the issue.”

“The state of security in the Diyarah farmland area is also a concern,” added

Zaino.

Several families talked about kidnappings and murders that had occurred in the past involving family members that resulted in little to no action from the current security forces.

“We wanted to let them know we,

along with the Iraqi Security Forces, are here to provide for their security,” said Zaino.

“We hope as our relationship with the local farmers grows, so too will their confidence in the security provided by the ISF and CF,” said Zaino.



Capt. David Zaino, commander, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, meets with local farmers March 8 and listens to their concerns near the city of Diyarah in the Babil Province.

Excess equipment in Iraq, Kuwait to return to Army supply system

Story and photo by
Sgt. Brandon Bonner LeFlore
363rd MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – The 4th Infantry Division has begun retrograding unnecessary and excess equipment from forward operating bases in Iraq to Kuwait.

The retrograde operations will eliminate waste by identifying, and then redistributing, excess equipment back into the Army supply system.

Examples of the equipment being moved under the program would be level-two and level-three up-armored humvees and certain types of track vehicles.

The number of vehicles in Iraq that will become excess as the Army reduces its numbers in theater offers an opportunity to increase its implementation theater-wide. It will also reduce the demand for repair parts and maintenance on these vehicles. Redistribution of vehicles is only the first step in what is hoped to be a process that eventually includes other Army equipment.

“As Iraqis take on more and more battle space, and we reduce our footprint here, it’s important for us to move our unused equipment back to the states or to the preposition fleet,” said Lt. Col. Gregory Sudman, logistics operations officer for the 4th Infantry Division.

Those vehicles sent back to the United States can then be reassembled, or even completely rebuilt if needed, and given to Soldiers as a more practical and useful training aid than strictly classroom study.

As part of the Army’s new Strategic Mobility Program, the AMC has structured a 16-ship preposition fleet, containing vehicles and equipment, to deliver heavy forces early in a crisis. Through a lateral transfer, units in Kuwait can use the equipment and vehicles from the proposition fleet to either train with, or conduct missions, as needed.

As a result of retrograde operations, the Army will spend less money on the maintenance and upkeep of vehicles left behind in Iraq when units return to their stateside bases, said Sudman.

There are several steps in the process for reducing excess vehicles in theater. First, brigades and their subordinate units must identify which theater-provided vehicles are no longer required to complete their missions, he said. A list of those vehicles is sent to the division logistics section for review.

After review, the 4th Infantry Division logistics section publishes a turn-in schedule for those vehicles identified for redistribution. Each brigade supply officer then coordinates the movement of unused vehicles to the Centralized Receiving and

Shipping Point on the Camp Victory complex for a scheduled turn-in date. When the excess equipment arrives at the CRSP, said Sudman, it is lined up for serial number and paperwork verification and put on trucks for initial shipment to Kuwait.

Although it may seem like a long and arduous process, once CRSP receives the vehicles, it is only a matter of days before the excess equipment is shipped out. The initiative accomplishes a great deal of good because “it gets equipment not needed here in theater back into the Army system,” said Sudman.

Retrograde operations helps the Army out, said Sgt. Roy Lewis, a gunner with Company A, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Inf. Div. “We can get rid of a lot of vehicles that either we can’t use or can’t take off the forward operating base,” Lewis said.

Additionally, reducing the amount of excess vehicles kept in theatre reduces the overall presence of U.S. forces in Iraq.

“It’s an indicator that things are on track,” said Sudman.

Thus far, Multi-National Division – Baghdad and CRSP have processed more than 1,000 total vehicles, including humvees, 5-ton trucks and trailers for transport to Kuwait and anticipate shipping nearly 1,800 vehicles by the time the initiative approaches completion at the end of March.

To find out more information about reducing your unit’s unused vehicle stores, contact your brigade supply officer.



Sgt. Justin Peterson (in hatch) and Spc. Blake Sinclair (inside vehicle, driving) move an M113A armored personnel carrier so the vehicle’s serial number and paperwork can be checked before loading it for shipment to Kuwait. Both Peterson and Sinclair are from Company B, 1st Squadron, 71st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

Two aircraft mechanics in aviation support battalion, answer the most-asked question about themselves ... **Is that your wife or your sister?**

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Reginald Rogers
Combat Aviation Brigade PAO,
4th Inf. Div.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq –
The thought of having one's brother or sister serve alongside you while performing your duties as a Soldier can be described with just one word – Cool.

That word is an exact description of brother and sister tandem for Staff Sgt. Eric and Pfc. Jennifer Cool, both of whom are assigned to the Combat Aviation Brigade's Company B, 404th Aviation Support Battalion.

The Cools are both aircraft mechanics and, at one point, were working within the same platoon. But here in Iraq, older brother Eric now works in Quality Control, while Jennifer, who is five years younger, continues to work in the maintenance section.

Last fall, Jennifer arrived at Fort Hood and was immediately greeted by her older brother, who said he had no idea she was even coming to Fort Hood or that she would be assigned to his unit.

"I found out the day she showed up," he said. "Last I knew, she was supposed to go to Korea – and then she ended up coming to Fort Hood. I picked her up at the airport and dropped her off at the Soldier Center. Then later on that day, I was told, 'hey, you got a new Soldier.' I went down to the personnel department and sure enough, it was her."

Eric said he thought to himself, "What are the odds of that

happening?"

He said despite the fact that she was at Fort Hood, he was even more surprised that she came to his exact unit.

"It was very exciting, knowing that I was going to get to work with my brother at my first duty station," Jennifer said.

According to Eric, it was somewhat awkward, but he could see the happiness in his sister's face.

"It was weird," he said, with laughter in his voice. "She had this big ole smile on her face and was like, 'hi brother.' So I took her to the unit and back down to the first sergeant and told him, 'look at this, it's my sister.' He couldn't believe it. Everybody always asks me, 'is that your sister or your wife?' ... 'No, definitely not my wife.'"

Eric said although they are both combat Soldiers, he continues to be the protective big brother in some cases. The Cools actually have one other sibling. Their younger brother, Josh, lives in their native Emporium, Pa., which is near Punxsutawney, Pa., a town famous for its relation to Ground Hog's Day.

He said it has been a pleasure serving with his sister. They continue to be professional Soldiers but also maintain close family ties.

"It's nice to have a shoulder you can lean on in the sense of being away from home," he said. "But we're here together, so we bring that family togetherness. When I'm having a bad day, I can go talk to her. It's someone I know I can turn to. If she's having a problem, she knows she



Combat Aviation Brigade siblings, Staff Sgt. Eric and Pfc. Jennifer Cool, are both assigned to the Brigade's Company B, 404th Aviation Support Battalion, where they serve as aircraft mechanics in the battalion's maintenance section.

can turn to me at any time. It's just nice having a family member here."

Jennifer echoed her brother's comments, saying she also enjoys having someone whom she can talk to after a rough day.

"It's been pretty cool actually," she said. "We're both here for each other and provide support for each other."

The Cools agreed that their parents were excited that both of their children were serving so closely together.

"Mom and Dad, they liked it," explained Eric, who along with his fiancée, is expecting a daughter later in the year. "Mom really liked it. She doesn't like the fact that we're over here, but she feels more comfortable that I'm here and can look after (Jennifer)."

He jokingly pointed out that

he hasn't had any problems out of his sister – yet. He also said they worked closely together back at Fort Hood, although Jennifer was in a different squad. Even though they don't work directly together here in Iraq, they are only yards away from each other.

She said she's also happy that they are able to serve together here in Iraq. It provides some comfort to their family members back in the States.

"The rest of the family is doing pretty well, knowing that we're both over here, supporting each other," said 20-year-old Jennifer.

"There's a lot of support for us back home."

Other Soldiers in the battalion's maintenance section said they're also happy that the Cools are able to serve together.

"I think it's good," said Sgt. Nathan White, who also works in the Quality Control shop with Eric.

"I think they'll have a chance to stick together. They are both professional; there's never an issue on the work side."

White said that once they found out about the siblings serving together, they teased Eric quite a bit.

"We teased him a little," White said. "We called them Cool & Cool, or Cool and the Gang, stuff like that. It was all in fun."

Serving in the CAB as an aircraft mechanic is arguably one of the best jobs an aviation Soldier could have. But when you're performing that job alongside family members and friends, there's only one way to describe it – Cool.

NORTHERN LIGHTS,

Continued from pg. 1

caught in the crossfire.

Iraqi soldiers returned fire, wounding and capturing a terrorist. All of the wounded were treated by Coalition Forces personnel.

Another cache found consisted of seven RPG launchers, 12 RPG rounds, 14 82mm mortar rounds, two 120mm mortar rounds, ten 155mm rounds, a mortar bipod and 2,000 small-arms rounds, some of which were armor-piercing rounds. A suspected terrorist was detained at the site.

The combined forces continue to search for terrorists and bomb-making materials.

So far through the operations, Iraqi and Coalition Forces have detained two persons of high-value interest and 16 suspected terrorists.

The operation is based on intelligence, including tips from local Iraqis, that terrorists are operating in the area and are stockpiling roadside bomb and truck bomb-making materials to prepare for future attacks in Baghdad.



Lt Col. Craig Osborne, commander, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, met with more than two dozen Al Dulaimy tribal sheiks in southern Baghdad the first week of March. The meetings are held regularly to further trust and cooperation between the U.S. and Iraqi residents in the 1-22 area of operation. The leaders discuss matters of mutual interest including security concerns, identifying and eliminating insurgents and re-building infrastructure.

Spc. Tanya-Jo Street, 363rd MPAD

Currahee mechanics at Forward Operating Base Loyalty keep vehicles rolling

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mary Mott
363rd MPAD

FOB LOYALTY, Iraq – In the motor pool at Forward Operating Base Loyalty, driver Pfc. Lewis Khari, originally from Manhattan, N.Y., gazes upon his M1114 up-armored humvee with what can only be described as love.

“Her (the humvee’s) name is Paris Hilton, because she came to me rich and with lots of good stuff,” he joked. “I did have Keesha, but she had issues; now I got Paris, and she can do ‘bad’ all by herself.”

Khari, a Currahee Soldier from the 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, like all of the humvee drivers at the FOB, is on hand when mechanics per-

form maintenance on his vehicle.

The drivers can identify “noises they heard and tell us other stuff that we would not know about,” said Spc. Mario Alzate, a mechanic from 4th Bn., 320th FA Rgmt.

“The mechanics work six days a week, nine hours a day but are on call 24-7 and stay here every day till the job is done,” said Sgt. 1st Class

Anthony Mobley, from Hollywood, Fla., who serves as both motor sergeant and platoon sergeant for 4th Bn., 320th FA Rgmt. Mobley and other senior noncommissioned officers in the unit work seven

days a week so their Soldiers can have Sundays off, he said.

The 20 mechanics on FOB Loyalty service humvees, cargo and fuel trucks. Approximately 15 additional mechanics

from the unit are out with military transition and quick reaction force teams in even more remote locations so that they can take care of the

“The first sergeant said ‘find a way to put some more protection on those doors,’ so we did.”

Spc. Jason Lynch

*4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment,
4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division*

vehicles without having them brought back to base camp.

Alzate, from East Stroudsburg, Pa., is one of the mechanics who performs regular quality assurance quality checks, QAQC or “quack” for short, checking for fluid levels, breaks, loose belts, bolts and other indications that the vehicle may not be completely safe.

“These vehicles get real banged up sometimes when they are out on a mission so we do whatever we can to make sure they are safe,” said Alzate. “The drivers are proud of their vehicles, and they should be – they can save their lives.”

Naming their vehicles is another indicator that the drivers care about the vehicle and try to keep them in good shape, he said.

The mechanics also are responsible for towing in vehicles when they break down, and “midnight emergency calls” do happen, said Mobley.

“The weight of the up-armoring does stress some parts,” observed Master Sgt. Bruce Wilson, from Chester, S.C., battalion maintenance supervisor.

The teams operating out of FOB Loyalty bring their vehicles in on separate

days. Since there are almost 60 humvees, plus the other larger vehicles that must be serviced weekly, this makes the operation more efficient, said Mobley.

Although the workload can be stressful, “for most of the mechanics, (especially the) first timers in Iraq, they have matured more in the two months we have been here than they would have in a year at Fort Campbell. They are handling the stress exceptionally well,” said Mobley.

The goal of the mechanics at Currahee base is to “make sure our patrols and QRF teams are able to perform their missions, and they need those vehicles to do that. We are able to meet the challenges of getting the vehicles out there,” said Wilson.

The mechanics are also encouraged to be innovative if they see something that would help add to the safety of the humvees.

When Sgt. Michael Gillette, of Hopkinsville Ky., noticed some humvees coming in from other FOBs with additional protective glass around the top gunner turrets, “we decided we needed to do that too,” he said. They obtained supplies through channels and not only installed tempered glass around turrets but also had Spc. Jason Lynch, of Fort Worth, Texas, and Pfc. Terry Witzel, of Richmond, Ky., design additional protection for the doors.

“The first sergeant said ‘find a way to put some more protection on those doors,’ so we did,” said Lynch. “We had it figured out by the next day,” added Gillette.

For drivers and crew members, the mechanics back at Currahee are their primary safety check. “When the mechanic is working on my truck, I’m here,” said Sgt. Marley Brunache, of Columbia, Md., a cannon crew member. “We (he and mechanic, Staff Sgt. Justin Cramer, from Columbus Grove, Ohio) work on it so everything is right. It has to be,” he said.



Staff Sgt. Justin Cramer, left, mechanic, works on an M1114 up-armored humvee at Forward Operating Base Loyalty, Iraq. Assisting him is the vehicle’s driver, Sgt. Marley Brunache. Both Soldiers are with the 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

Water storage tank project supports fresh water for Iraqis

Story by Maj. David Olson
1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

TAJI, Iraq – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers tested water storage tanks March 13 in four communities north of Baghdad, signaling the successful completion of the vital project to supply the local citizens with fresh drinking water.

Soldiers from 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment and Company A, 490th Civil Affairs Battalion, are building relationships with the Iraqi citizens of local communities by assisting them with infrastructure improvements and providing essential

services designed to improve their quality of life.

“We are happy,” said Sheik Modar Thamir, the leader in one of the communities. “Now we have fresh drinking water.”

“This is the first project we’ve started and completed,” explained Maj. Herb Joliat, civil military operations officer for 1st Brigade Combat Team. “The immediate impact was the storage tanks. (The previous unit) put in the compact water treatment units, but they couldn’t be used because they weren’t connected to anything.”

The water pump takes the water from the canal network, and the com-

pact water treatment unit purifies the water. Generators provide electricity to run the pump and the CWTU. The new tanks store the purified water and have faucets on the outside to allow the local population to fill household containers and bring the fresh water home with them.

The communities serviced by the water storage tanks are Al Raood, Banat Al Hasan, Tarbulia and Uhm Najim.

“This (project) is something we gave them,” added Joliat.

In the 1st BCT area of Iraq, relationships are being built daily between the citizens and the Coalition Forces. The Iraqi Security Forces, supported by the Coalition Forces, are helping the people of these villages by providing infrastructure and essential services in addition to providing a safe and secure environment to set the stage for a prosperous future.

“[The previous unit] put in the compact water treatment units, but they couldn’t be used because they weren’t connected to anything.”

Maj. Herb Joliat
*civil military operations
officer, 1st Brigade Combat
Team, 4th Inf. Div.*

PROMOTION, Continued from pg. 5

sponsored Fernandez. He said he did not recall as much having been asked of himself and the other Soldiers who went before the promotion board during the 4th Infantry Division’s first deployment to Iraq in 2003.

Turner said he spent about six weeks helping prepare Fernandez for the board. He said he believed their shared experiences on the personal security detachment helped enforce Fernandez’ tactical knowledge.

Mentoring relationships, such as the one between Turner and Fernandez, are good for Soldiers and help build a strong future NCO Corps, said Canuela.

“Some day, one of those Soldiers will be a first sergeant, command sergeant major or even sergeant major of the Army,” said Canuela. “That’s a reward in itself, to be part of training a future senior NCO.”

In addition to Canuela, other members of the board were 1st Sgt. Brian Bruce, Battery A, 26th Field Artillery; 1st Sgt. Kenneth Carmickle, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; and 1st Sgt. Allen Braswell, 324th Network Support Company.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS UPDATE

Corps of Engineers complete last major demolition in Iraq, prepare for new mission in overseeing depot operations

ARLINGTON DEPOT, Iraq – After almost three years of hard and dangerous work, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers celebrated the last major demolition under the Coalition Munitions Clearance Program in Iraq on March 16.

Col. John Rivenburgh, commander of the Huntsville Engineering and Support Center, Dr. John Potter, chief of the Ordnance and Explosives Directorate, and Bill Sargent, program manager of the Coalition Munitions Clearance Program, traveled to Iraq to witness the last major demolition and initiate the next phase of the ordnance destruction work.

“The last demo consisted of over 248 tons of stockpiled ammunition,” Potter said. “Even though this was the last big one, there will still be some minor demolitions.”

The demolition of stockpiled munitions took place at the Arlington Depot Feb. 14.

That depot was controlled by Saddam Hussein’s army before the war and is located 170 miles north of Baghdad.

“When the U.S. Army started taking over control of the Iraqi depots, they experienced many challenges,” Sargent added.

“The Iraqis had no storage or compatibility procedures. High explosive items were stored with detonators, which could cause a big explosion. The Corps organized the depots and folded six depots into two.”

The destruction of ordnance items was taking place almost every day. This demolition contained items that either the new Iraqi Army did not need or the insurgents could use during attacks, including rocket propelled grenades, hand grenades, landmines and other large ammunition.

The completion of the last demolition signifies a change in mission, Sargent said. Instead of a clean-up mission, the Corps will now oversee a depot operation mission.

“One Corps employee per depot will handle quality assurance, contract surveillance and oversee the depot operations,” Sargent said.

The Corps hired a new contractor, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technologies, Inc., to operate the depots and train the Iraqis to take over running them.

“The Iraqis will learn how to maintain, pack and store ammunition, along with securing a depot,” Potter said. “When they’re ready, we will leave.”

Engineers refurbish Imam Ali School in Karbala Province

Construction is complete on the Imam Ali School, in Karbala, Karbala Province. The scope of work required refurbishment of an existing school including new floor tiles, doors, roof, windows, and a security fence.

This school will provide a better educational environment for approximately 960 students. In the Karbala Province there are 15 school projects planned, with 13 completed, or 86 percent.

Karbala receives two new fire stations, two more on the way

Construction is completed on two fire station projects in the Karbala Governorate. Both fire stations were refurbished to include new doors, windows, electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems, flooring, wall repairs and painting. The stations cost \$110,000 each and are two of four fire station projects programmed for the Karbala Province that are finished, for a 50 percent completion rate.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Corps of Engineers Project Manager
Newly employed local nationals use shovels to dig up the trash that has built up around the city of Mahmudiyah, Iraq, in February.

Construction continues in Iraq: Current progress report from Corps of Engineers indicates many key essential services restoration projects nearing completion

Information courtesy of Gulf Region Division and Project and Contracting Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Iraqi workers, engineers work to complete road improvement in Tarmiya

Construction is now complete on a \$421,000 road improvement project in Tarmiya, Baghdad Governorate.

The project employed an average of 12 Iraqi workers daily for 1.5 months. The workers cleared 4 kilometers of road of surface trash and debris, graded the foundation, lay gravel and wet the expedient material and compact.

These road improvements benefit potentially 100,000 local people of Tarmiya by providing easier flow of traffic and less congestion. In the total reconstruction program, there are 106 village road projects with 85 completed, or 80 percent.

Engineers complete 1st 2 healthcare center projects for Baghdad Governorate

Construction is complete on two primary healthcare centers in the Baghdad Governorate. The \$613,000 Kamiyah Clinic has the capacity to service 150 patients daily, while the \$653,000 Istiqlal Clinic is open to accommodate the approximate 15,000 families in the surrounding community. Both facilities are essential to relieving the over-burdened outpatient care at existing hospitals. Both clinics are two-story, 1,155-square-meter facilities with space and capability for both medical and dental examination, treatment and x-ray, as well as space for immunizations, laboratory, pharmacy and public education. These are

the first two of 30 primary healthcare center projects in the Baghdad Governorate to be turned over to the Ministry of Health.

Water treatment project complete; 3,500 to receive potable water daily

Rehabilitation is complete on a water compact unit project in Baghdad Province. The \$26,000 Fanooz Aziz Water Compact Unit project required rehabilitation of two water compact units in Mada’in that will produce potable water for approximately 3,500 Iraqi residents.

At full capacity the two units will produce 720 cubic meters per day of potable water daily. Currently, 16 of 35 water treatment projects programmed for the Baghdad Province are completed, or 46 percent.

40,000 to benefit from improved sanitary sewer services in Mansour

Rehabilitation will be completed on a sewer lift station project that will improve the sanitary sewer services for more than 40,000 residents in Mansour, Baghdad Province. The \$188,000 CERP-funded project’s scope of work entails installing five pumps of various sizes, rehabilitating a five-ton and a seven-ton crane, installing a 750 kVA generator; and performing associated civil, mechanical and electrical work.

Students receive new single-story girls school

Construction is complete on a school project for the 480 students of a school for girls in Khairat, Karbala Province. The \$153,000 project included demolition of the old school

and construction of a new single-story school with 12 classrooms. Of the 16 school projects planned for the Karbala Province, 14 are completed, or 88 percent.

\$2 million project to provide water to 200,000 in Al Anbar Province

Construction started on a water project that will produce, treat and provide water to approximately 200,000 residents of Fallujah, Al Anbar Province.

The statement of work for this project requires construction of a 9,600 cubic meters per day water production and treatment plant, including intake cribs, generators, filtration and chlorination systems, pumps, piping and perimeter security walls. A storage reservoir and approximately 6.2 km of transmission piping to the Askari sector of the city will also be installed. The \$2 million project is funded by the Commander’s Emergency Response Program.

The CERP are grass roots funds coordinated between community leaders and their maneuver unit commanders for more immediate relief of local community needs.

Construction began in February on a water pump station project in Fallujah, Al Anbar Province, that will be completed this month and will pump storm water from the southern area of Fallujah (which is prone to flooding during the rainy season) to the Euphrates River. The \$354,000 project is funded through the CERP.

Numerous water, power generation, electric, point of entry, road, school, police and rehabilitation center construction projects are also underway in the provinces of Iraq.

New 'Strike' Memorial Troops Medical Clinic opens sturdy doors, not tent flaps, to Soldiers

Story and photo
by Spc. Kelly K. McDowell
2nd BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

BAGHDAD —

For five months, the wounded and sick Soldiers at Camp Striker have been treated in older, deteriorating tents.

A sick Soldier from 2nd Brigade Combat Team would have to walk through the mud and gravel only to sit in the entrance of a dark, hot tent and wait on wooden benches to be seen, but on March 17, this all changed when a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for the new "Strike" Memorial Troops Medical Clinic.

Before 2nd BCT deployed to Baghdad, the commander, Col. Todd Ebel, had a plan to provide proper medical care for his Soldiers in a sturdy, well-built and clean facility that could offer the right care in the right environment.

"Frankly, I was discouraged upon my arrival to Camp Striker. I was looking deep as my role as a commander of a brigade combat team, which I knew would go into the most lethal of all areas in Iraq," said Ebel. "I was discouraged in that a facility, that we will now enjoy and can benefit from, was not even in the forecast for my Soldiers nor for the soldiers that transit through Camp Striker."

The plan came full circle for Ebel and the medics of Company C, 526th Brigade Support Battalion, when the construction of the new medical facility was completed and the lights turned on.

"The medical facility is the first thing I asked to be built, it seems like it should never even have been requested," said Ebel. "It should have been understood that we would always take care of our soldiers on Camp Striker."

The new TMC offers more than adequate space for each sec-



Medical supplies are neatly aligned for the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the "Strike" Memorial Troops Medical Center March 17. After the ribbon-cutting ceremony, guests were invited into the new clinic to receive a tour of the facility and meet the medical staff.

tion of medical care. There are offices and rooms for examination, physical therapy, pharmacy and dentistry.

"The old location was two tents, our dentist was actually working in a very crowded corner," said Capt. Shannon Rowe, Company C commander.

"Now he actually has an entire room dedicated to dental care where he can do dental x-rays which was very limited in the old facility."

Through a set of double wide doors, easily accessible from the road, is the large trauma center. In this spacious area, centered in the TMC, patients requiring trauma care can receive x-rays and be stabilized before being moved smoothly out the back door to be evacuated if nec-

essary.

"We also have a seven bed patient hold ward which can hold up to 15 [patients], our old facility could only hold up to six," Rowe said. "This is important because we can hold soldiers who have been wounded in combat for up to 72 hours, keep them here with the BCT and allow the leadership to take part in the healing, so that has been extremely beneficial."

In addition to more room for inpatient care, the new TMC also now has dedicated rooms for the lab as well as x-ray. "The providers have their own separate area which helps the medics with patient privacy," Rowe said.

Space is not the only challenge the medics were faced with in the old facility, the capability

to treat certain wounds and illnesses was extremely limited and the medics had to send Soldiers away from Camp Striker for treatment.

"This facility, with in the last three weeks we have been here, our patient numbers have gone up 50 percent," said Rowe. "We are actually holding more patients here and we are able to do a lot more on site care. We could do some limited care in the old tents, but right now we are actually evacuating less people and keeping them here closer to the fight."

This facility is not only a blessing to the Soldiers who may need care in the future, but it will benefit the medics who are serving on Camp Striker now and in the future.

"[The new TMC] actually has been a huge motivational jump for [the Soldiers], it was kind of disheartening to be one of the few medical units here that wasn't in a fixed facility," Rowe said.

"When we moved over here

five months into the deployment, morale skyrocketed."

Each Soldier of Company C, 526th BSB, spent countless hours working on the new building. Some Soldiers built shelving units for the medical supplies, some set up the offices and others even helped with the construction just to offer the proper care to their patients.

"It's been hard work," she said. "This has given them a huge sense of purpose and a sense of pride."

The medics also have the ability to work hand in hand with all providers now, before it was very limited but actually all of the brigade providers work out of the "Strike" Memorial TMC so there is actually a better interaction with doctors and the Soldiers, she said.

Ultimately, the new medical facility offers more than an immediate solution to proper medical care for the Soldiers at Camp Striker.

"This TMC isn't just for the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division" Rowe said. "It is for who ever follows us on [Camp Striker]."

Editor's Note: "Hammer time" Soldiers from Company A, 62nd Engineer Battalion, 16th Engineer Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, were responsible for construction in of the 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, Strike Memorial Troop Medical Clinic on Camp Striker, Iraq.

This is the second Soldier improvement facility project taken on by the 62nd Eng. Batt., but only the first project for Company A. Hammer time's Company B has been engaged in building a new dental clinic facility on Camp Liberty which will be completed in March.

The 62nd Eng. Batt. is the only construction battalion in Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

LIAISONS, Continued from pg. 4

Reserve and National guard," said Bobb. "When they mobilize we assist their installation and the units with soldier readiness packets and such."

"The beauty of our personnel operations is that we have pretty enthusiastic Soldiers, eager to learn new jobs. So long as we have electricity, we can do the job whether at peace or at war," said Bobb. "Without electricity, we can't verify eligibility for IDs or CAT cards, but we can still do manual IDs; we can't update promotion packets because it's an internet-based system, and without the means to transmit to the Veteran's

Administration, we're limited on verification."

With indigenous troops, as well as those cross-leveled from across the country, the 502nd PSB is spread across the whole of the 4th Inf. Div. AOR. Troops are located on Liberty, South Victory, Baghdad International Airport, Balad, Rustamiyah, the International Zone, Falcon and Arifan handling newspapers, mail, promotions, leave and records.

"We think of them as a force multiplier," said Lt. Col. Todd Garlick, commander of the 502nd. "I believe that if you take care of soldiers morally, ethically and legally, and treat every action like it is your own, you can't go wrong."

Hamada's Helpful Phrases

By Spc. Mohamed "Hamada" Karika
4th Inf. Div. PAO

English

How old are you?
What is wrong with you?
Where are you going?
Can you help me?
How much did you pay for that?

Arabic (phonetic)

Esh gad omrak.
Sh-beek.
El wayne rayeh.
Ta-kder-tsaiddni.
Besh eshrata.



Is there an arabic phrase you would like to see in the paper? Contact us at kristin.kemplin@mnd-b.army.mil



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Sgt. Kenneth Rogers, an infantryman with Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Inf. Reg., pulls a fellow Soldier from a canal south of Baghdad during Operation Glory Light. Wading across obstacles was just one of the challenges facing the Soldiers while they searched for terrorists in the area. ABOVE: Spc. Brandon Griffis, Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division scans through the scope of his M-14 rifle to scan for enemy activity March 7 during Operation Glory Light. Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Forces conducted combined operations to clear known terrorists from the west Mahmudiyah Qada and north Babil areas. RIGHT: 2nd Lt. Mark Ivey, Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Inf. Reg., stays in contact with command while on a patrol south of Baghdad during operation Glory Light. BELOW: Spc. Paul De Concini, a medic with Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment scans the area while on a foot patrol south of Baghdad during Operation Glory Light.



Operation Glory Light

Photo page by Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD



Coalition Forces, Iraqi army soldiers secure terrorist stronghold in Sadr-Yusufiyah area

Story by Maj. J. Frank Garcia
2nd BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

BAGHDAD —

Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, combined with soldiers of the 6th and 9th Iraqi army divisions, conducted operations in the city of Sadr-Yusufiyah, near the Euphrates River, to secure a terrorist stronghold earlier this month.

The operation began March 2 with the air insertion of 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment to an area south of Sadr-Yusufiyah, followed by the air insertion of 2nd Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt. and elements of 4th Brigade, 6th IA Div., to an area north of Sadr-Yusufiyah. The entry into the city was met with minimal resistance.

"This combined operation was conducted based on overwhelming credible evidence and probable cause that terrorists were using this area as a haven to build roadside bombs and to stage attacks against Coalition Forces and the Iraqi people," said

Col. Todd Ebel, commander, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

Despite not encountering significant enemy contact, signs of a terrorist presence were found.

While clearing an objective, Soldiers of 1st Bn., 9th IA Div. uncovered the first of 17 caches near Sadr-Yusufiyah. Throughout the course of the ensuing nine days, the following items were found: 13 122mm rockets, 54 120mm rounds, 10 82mm rounds, 67 60mm rounds, nine 50mm mortar rounds, two boxes of 60mm mortar primers, four rockets, one rocket-propelled grenade launcher with nine RPG rounds, nine RPG boosters, eight machine guns, two vehicles rigged with explosives, 300 lbs. of dynamite, several rolls of detonation cord

and a large amount of materiel normally associated with the making of roadside bombs.

"The mission was a success. Whenever you find these types of munitions and IEDs, you have saved lives," said Ebel.

"We were prepared to use force to secure the area. Fortunately, we were able to accomplish our task without a significant fight from the enemy."

The Soldiers of 1st Bn. secured an area south of Sadr-Yusufiyah to allow freedom of maneuver for 2nd Bn. Soldiers. The 1st Bn. Soldiers were the first to be inserted and expected a fight. They experienced some small-arms fire; however, it did not prevent them from accomplishing their mission.



Photo by Photographers mate Second Class Samuel Peterson
Soldiers of the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division prepare to enter and clear a house in Sadr-Yusufiyah, Iraq near the Euphrates River March 3.

"We know Arabic culture and are able to pick up on body language and other indicators that assist us in establishing a good relationship with the locals."

Fox said he is a true believer in a positive future for Iraq and is happy to play a role in its future. His brother also serves as an interpreter for the U.S. Army. "As an English speaking Iraqi, I feel it is important to work with the U.S. Army and learn what we can. The Iraqi army gets stronger everyday. It is our country, we must be responsible for its security," he said.

The commander of 2nd Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt. said he was very happy with the way the operation unfolded. "This operation was vital to our battalion and the local Iraqis living under fear of terror," said Lt. Col. Robert Haycock, commander, 2nd Bn. 502nd Inf.

"We cleared anti-Iraqi forces and foreign fighters from Sadr-Yusufiyah and established a presence in the town to keep the terrorists from returning into the area."

Haycock said he was very impressed by the Iraqi army participation. "The 4/6 Iraqi army were the ones who led the cache searches and are mostly

responsible for gathering the information from locals about the whereabouts of the terrorists and caches," said Haycock.

"These Iraqi soldiers found a complex, vehicle-borne improvised-explosive device that was rigged and ready for movement to its target. Thanks to their bravery and discipline, this VBIED will not hit its target."

Iraqi soldiers and 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div., Soldiers continue to patrol the Sadr-Yusufiyah area in search of terrorists and those that harbor them.

"I am very proud of the Soldiers who participated in this operation. They continue to make a difference in this difficult environment," Ebel said.

"They are heroes. Most importantly, the Iraqi soldiers are heroes to their country. This operation shows that Iraqi soldiers are on their way to protect their country from terror."

"I am very proud of the Soldiers who participated in this operation. They continue to make a difference in this difficult environment. They are heroes."

Col. Todd Ebel

Commander, 2nd Brigade Combat Team,
101st Airborne Division

1st Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt.

The primary effort was in the north, where Soldiers from 2nd Bn., and soldiers from the 6th and 9th IA divisions, established a security presence in Sadr-Yusufiyah.

The Iraqi army played a key role in the operation, arriving at night in helicopters alongside their U.S. comrades.

"The Iraqi army is able to communicate well with the locals," said an interpreter for the Iraqi army who goes by the name Fox.



Photo by Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD

Pvt. Danny Perry, Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, provides security while his team completes a mission to collect information from area residents south of Baghdad during Operation Glory Light.



Photo by Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD

2nd Lt. Mark Ivey, a platoon leader for Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, sets up a road block south of Baghdad during Operation Glory Light.

Remodeling complete in Al Buhaira School

All-girls elementary school is gift to children, Soldiers

Story and photos by
Spc. Karl Johnson
363rd MPAD

FOB MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq – Amongst the smiles and shouts of excited children, U.S. and Iraqi military officials came together March 13 to celebrate the completion of the Al Buhaira Elementary School remodeling project in Mahmudiyah.

During an emotional ceremony held inside the all-girls school, eager students greeted their guests with cheers and applause. Proud young Iraqi students sang while escorting 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division Soldiers through the school in order to view first-hand, the progress made during the two-month project.

“When we first visited the school, it was horrible,” recalled Brig. Gen. Mahdi Chark Zier Kadim.

“The building was horrible,” he reiterated, “but the students still had a desire to study and learn. They pushed us to get this project done.”

The completion of the project marks one more success in the continuing effort by Iraqi forces to show support for the communities in which they operate. Iraqi army units throughout the country have begun what Mahdi referred to as a “dual strategy for fighting the terrorists.”

“Projects like these are a powerful weapon against the terrorists because it allows us to fight them in two ways,” said the Iraqi commander.

“We will continue to squeeze the terrorists and hunt them down wherever they are, but we will also continue to improve our relationships within the community by completing these projects.”

Mahdi said he predicts these



Eager students line the hallways of Al Buhaira Elementary School as they await visiting members of the U.S. and Iraqi Armies. A two-month reconstruction of the school was just completed as part of the Iraqi army's continued effort to support the local communities.

new relationships will spawn the trust and cooperation necessary to build a positive future for all Iraqis.

“Only when we are all working together will we be able to defeat the terrorists,” he said.

The hard-luck school, which nevertheless boasts some of the highest test scores in the country, first came to the attention of U.S. and Iraqi military forces when it was used as a polling location in December's elections. Littered with broken glass, dilapidated ceilings and crumbling walls, it was hand-selected as a candidate for reconstruction.

“General Mahdi chose this school because it was in the worst condition of any school in Mahmudiyah,” said Lt. Col. Eric Conrad, commander of the Brigade Troops Battalion, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div., and serving as Military Transition Team chief for 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi

Army Division.

“When the project started, he not only sent his own soldiers to help with the reconstruction, but also contributed with monetary assistance.”

Struck by the school's amazing transformation, an emotional Conrad said the building's condition just two months ago reminded him of the “bleakness” he had witnessed as a young boy visiting East Berlin.

“The first time we went in the school, the children were crying,” said Conrad. “This time, because of the children cheering and singing, it was the Soldiers who had a tear in their eye.”

Also swept up by the emotion of the event was the school's staff. Overwhelmed by the children's cheers, several tearful school officials expressed their inability to adequately thank the soldiers who had made the project possible.

“This community has always been proud of its students,” said Conrad.

“Now they can be just as proud of their school.”

Mahdi reminded on-lookers that, “This is not the end of our work. We will continue to support our communities and to hunt down the terrorists who threaten them. Our relationships with the people of this area will last for many years.”

“We didn't fire a single shot today, but based on what we did in that school today, there is no doubt that we got rid of some terrorists,” said Conrad.

In a nation marked by many years of conflict and struggle, it is hoped that the efforts of those who want to build a better future for Iraq don't go unnoticed, and the cheers and tears of joy brought on by the success at the Al Buhaira Elementary School will prove to be contagious.



Brig. Gen. Mahti Kadim, 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army commander, greets a student at Al Buhaira Elementary School. The Iraqi leader's visit was part of a ceremony celebrating the completion of a two-month long reconstruction project at the school.

425th Civil Affairs Battalion helps Iraqis recover from rocket attack, distributes blankets and hygiene items to Karkh residents

Story and photo by
Spc. James Hunter
49th Public Affairs Det. (Airborne),
MNCI-PAO

BAGHDAD – Soldiers from Company A, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion, part of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, distributed approximately 100 blankets, 50 hygiene kits and a box of soccer balls to Iraqi families Saturday during a humanitarian assistance mission in Karkh.

Nearly three months ago, a rocket was fired at a building within the International Zone in central Baghdad. The rocket misfired however and hit the residential area, destroying many homes.

Initially, Coalition Forces went into the area following the attack and distributed

clothing, food and water. They did not have enough materials to distribute to the entire area – so the Soldiers returned to continue the mission.

When the Soldiers arrived, Karkh District Council members requested the Soldiers place the items in a certain location. The troops took a step back, pulled security and watched while the council handed the humanitarian aid to their fellow Iraqis.

“The area is very poor, and the people need these supplies to get by in their everyday life,” said Abdul Satar

Alrobeaee, chairman, Karkh District Council, as he helped distribute the necessities to his people.

“It's not about us. It's about helping the Iraqi people and getting their government involved.”

Capt. Scott Ginsburg
Team leader, Company A,
425th Civil Affairs Battalion

The chairman said he hopes that one day a national government will be united into one family.

“The key is wanting to do everything we can for the Iraqis,” said Capt. Scott Ginsburg, team leader, Co. A, 425th CA Bn. “It's not about us. It's about helping the Iraqi people and getting their government involved.”

Ginsburg said the mission is important because it helps legitimize the Karkh

District Council.

“People come to them with a need,” he said. “So if we can assist (the council) and supply them, then their people are going to have more respect for their government.”

A civil affairs Soldier's job is to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people, said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Wyatt, team sergeant, Co. A, 425th CA Bn.

The council participated in the process of distribution, showing the residents their government cares about what happens within their neighborhoods, explained Wyatt, and the local leaders are being proactive in resolving the issues many Iraqis face.

“As long as you give them the chance, they will play a greater role in the mission,” Ginsburg said.

Culture Experts



By Jake Lester,
Senior Cultural
and Political
Advisor, MND-B

About mosques and Husayniyahs

Many of you may not know that not all mosques look like mosques, and that there is more than one kind of mosque.

The simplest definition of a mosque is that it is a Muslim place of worship. A mosque may be a building, or a part of a building, dedicated to Islamic prayers. Often, mosques are also community centers where social functions, such as wedding ceremonies and funeral observances, are performed.

In Iraq and other countries where Shiite Muslims live, there is a certain type of unique mosque called a Husayniyah. The Husayniyah is a mosque in which the Shiite ceremonies of mourning the Shiite Imams in general, and Husayn in particular, are performed – in addition to fulfilling the regular functions of a mosque.

The sole distinction between a Husayniyah and a regular mosque is that the husayniyah has the added function of being the place where Shiites congregate to perform the ritual ceremonies of mourning. This type of mosque is especially used during the days of the Muharram period of mourning, from Ashura' to Arba'iniyyah. A husayniyah is always Shiite, but not all Shiite mosques are husayniyahs.

Although some of the more notable mosques display impressive architecture and are adorned with exquisite ornamentation, mosques are not always elaborate structures with minarets, courtyards, columns and domes. A mosque may be a simple building, or part of a building consisting of no

more than one room where the five daily prayers are performed. Most mosques in Iraq and the rest of the world are basic buildings, or parts of buildings, and do not uniformly display any specific architectural features.

Mosques may be no more than a section of a residential building or a school, hospital, etc. that has been dedicated to prayer. This is similar to the chapel found in a hospital or in some schools in the U.S.

In many Middle Eastern countries including Iraq, it is not uncommon for the owner of a building to dedicate most of the ground-level floor as a mosque. It is also not uncommon for the mosque to temporarily take up additional space outside the "normal" space, such as during Friday prayers when attendance is much higher than usual.

In these cases, mosque personnel will lay down mats on the sidewalks, and even on the road itself, to accommodate the overflow. As long as these mats are still on the ground, and especially when Muslims are in prayer on these mats, any area covered by the mats is deemed to be a part of the mosque and should be treated as such.

To a Westerner, it may be difficult to tell whether a building is, or contains, a mosque or not – especially since a great many of them have little to distinguish them from other buildings by way of either architectural features or decoration. However, there are always a few indicators:

There is always some form of sign indicating the name of the mosque;

There are always loudspeakers hanging on the building somewhere for the call to prayer;

The floors will be completely covered in carpeting or mats;

The persons inside will either be all male, or will be strictly segregated into a main male-only area, and there will be a female prayer annex, to which entry by males is prohibited; and

All mosques contain a mihrab. A mihrab is a niche, or an image of a niche, painted on the wall and indicating the direction of Mecca, to which Muslims are expected to face during prayer.



A mihrab, or prayer niche in a mosque. Image courtesy of Wikipedia. Permission is granted to copy, distribute and/or modify this document under the terms of GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2 or any later version published by the Free Software Foundation.

Fifth in series: Lawrence of Arabia



T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia)
British Soldier and Author
1888 - 1935

By Maj. Derrill Guidry
OPSEC Mgr., IO, 4th Inf. Div.

The 27 Articles Published by T.E. Lawrence, from The Arab Bulletin, Aug. 20, 1917, are essentially the operating concept of T.E. Lawrence who led the Arab revolt in 1917-1918.

His insights regarding the tribes, clans and sheiks that are more important with the Sunni than was the case with the south with the Shia, where imams and mosques dominated the community more so than did the sheiks, are valuable us even now.

Lawrence understood the tactics and

the Arab approach to warfare, which are important in framing our perspective on what we can expect from the police and ICDC we train and recruit.

Editor's Note: As promised in the last edition, The Ivy Leaf will feature several of Lawrence's 27 Articles every issue. Lawrence's own forward will be repeated each time to put his observations in context.

"The following notes have been expressed in commandment form for greater clarity and to save words. They are, however, only my personal conclusions, arrived at gradually while I worked in the Hejaz and now put on paper as stalking horses for beginners in the Arab armies. They are meant to apply only to Bedu; townspeople or Syrians require totally different treatment. They are of course not suitable to any other person's need, or applicable unchanged in any particular situation.

Handling Hejaz Arabs is an art, not a science, with exceptions and no obvious rules.

At the same time we have a great chance there; the Sherif trusts us, and has given us the position (towards his Government) which the Germans wanted to win in Turkey. If we are tactful, we can at once retain his goodwill and carry out our job, but to succeed we have got to put into it all the interest and skill we possess."

16. If you can, without being too lavish, forestall presents to yourself. A well-

placed gift is often most effective in winning over a suspicious sheikh. Never receive a present without giving a liberal return, but you may delay this return (while letting its ultimate certainty be known) if you require a particular service from the giver. Do not let them ask you for things, since their greed will then make them look upon you only as a cow to milk.

17. Wear an Arab headcloth when with a tribe.

Bedu have a malignant prejudice against the hat, and believe that our persistence in wearing it (due probably to British obstinacy of dictation) is founded on some immoral or irreligious principle. A thick headcloth forms a good protection against the sun, and if you wear a hat your best Arab friends will be ashamed of you in public.

18. Disguise is not advisable. Except in special areas, let it be clearly known that you are a British officer and a Christian. At the same time, if you can wear Arab kit when with the tribes, you will acquire their trust and intimacy to a degree impos-

sible in uniform.

It is, however, dangerous and difficult. They make no special allowances for you when you dress like them.

Breaches of etiquette not charged against a foreigner are not condoned to you in Arab clothes. You will be like an actor in a foreign theatre, playing a part day and night for months, without rest, and for an anxious stake.

Complete success, which is when the Arabs forget your strangeness and speak naturally before you, counting you as one of themselves, is perhaps only attainable in character: while half-success (all that

most of us will strive for; the other costs too much) is easier to win in British things, and you yourself will last longer, physically and mentally, in the comfort that they mean.

Also then the

Turks will not hang you, when you are caught.

19. If you wear Arab things, wear the best. Clothes are significant among the tribes, and you must wear the appropriate, and appear at ease in them. Dress like a Sheriff, if they agree to it.

"All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dream with open eyes, to make it possible."

T.E. Lawrence,
from "Seven Pillars of Wisdom"

GUIDANCE

Environmental Morale Leave

Health consideration to ponder before going on that long-awaited vacation from war zone



By Maj. Mitch Meyers, Preventive medicine officer, 4th Inf. Div.

Soon after arriving in Iraq, most of us start thinking about when and where and what we'll do on our two weeks of Environmental Morale Leave. Here are 12 considerations to help you stay healthy and safe while away on leave.

EML Health Consideration # 1: Packing List.

EML Health Consideration # 1: Packing List.

In addition to the usual grooming items in your shaving or toiletry kit, consider carrying a small first aid kit with bandages, antibiotic cream, disinfectant, etc. Ear plugs, a sleeping mask, inflatable pillow and poncho liner or thin blanket can help you get some quality sleep on the plane. If you wear glasses or contact lenses, bring an extra pair and a copy of your eyewear prescription. Consider bringing a pair of sunglasses for protection from sun and dust.

If vacationing overseas, it is a good idea to bring a copy of your shot records. You can download your DD Form 2766C Vaccine Administration Record from the AKO Medical Readiness portal.

EML Health Consideration # 2: Medications.

Take a one-month supply of any medications you use on a regular basis and carry them on your person just in case your luggage gets lost. Put a copy of your prescriptions in a wallet or purse, especially if you are taking a controlled substance like a narcotic pain medication. This could help avoid problems with Security or Customs at the airport.

People prone to air sickness may want to get a scopolamine patch or some meclizine pills. Tobacco users should consider bringing some Nicorette™ gum or nicotine patches to avoid withdrawal symptoms. Afrin nasal spray™ is a good medicine to carry on your person during air travel. It can rapidly clear congested sinuses that lead to ear pain on descent.

EML Health Consideration # 3: Germs.

About the last thing you want to happen is to get sick on leave. Airplanes and airports are teeming with germs from all over the world. Clean hands are happy hands. Be careful of what you touch, and wash your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol based sanitizer like Purell™. Only rub your eyes with your elbows. Stay hydrated.

The air that gets recirculated on airplanes is usually of low humidity and can rapidly dry out your nasal passages and mucous airways. This makes it much easier for germs to get past your bodies defenses and cause infections like colds and flu.

EML Health Consideration # 4: Economy Class Syndrome.

Sitting for extended periods of time can lead to pooling of blood in the leg veins. This can become a blood

clot there called a Deep Venous Thrombosis that will break off and become a Venous Thromboembolism. This can lead to a Cerebrovascular Accident, Myocardial Infarction, or a Pulmonary Embolus. The way to avoid these problems is to stay hydrated, exercise leg muscles while sitting, and stand up and walk around every hour or two during the flight.

EML Health Consideration # 5: Jet Lag.

Many of your bodily functions, such as appetite and sleep-rest cycles, are affected by circadian rhythms. Traveling quickly through multiple time zones can significantly alter these cycles.

The rule of thumb is that if you try to get adequate rest, you can reset your internal clock by about one hour per day. Therefore it would take about a week to acclimate back to Texas time from here.

Fortunately, jet lag is usually milder going in the direction of the sun from east to west. Try to get to sleep at a set time like 10:00 p.m. in the new time zone and expose yourself to bright sunlight or artificial light first thing in the morning to help you fully wake up. If you anticipate problems with jetlag and insomnia, talk to your physician about taking prescription sleeping pills such as Ambien™ or Sonata™, or over the counter medications like Benadryl or Nyquil™.

EML Health Consideration # 6: Exercise.

Don't cheat your body! Going on leave is not an excuse for letting yourself go physically. You are a Soldier regardless of where you are in the world, and you need to remain fit to fight on a moments notice. Your body thrives on regularity, so continue with your usual fitness regimen to avoid deconditioning.

EML Health Consideration # 7: TRICARE Health Benefits.

Traveling with TRICARE can be tricky, especially if you are vacationing overseas or in a different TRICARE region than you are enrolled. In a life threatening emergency, don't wait for TRICARE approval, just call 911 and go to the nearest emergency room for care.

For non-emergency care, you still need to contact your Primary Care Manager for approval and instructions on getting medical care. Active Duty soldiers stationed at Fort Hood are already enrolled in TRICARE Prime for TRICARE Region South. Be sure to carry their toll free phone number – 1-800-444-5445 – in your wallet or purse while traveling. Non-Fort Hood-based soldiers can go on line at: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/>, for your region's toll free number and additional information on what Tricare offers.

EML Health Consideration # 8: Stupid is still stupid!

A problem with trying to cram 12 months of fun into two sleep-deprived weeks is the tendency to do things we usually wouldn't otherwise do, like falling asleep at the wheel, or saying things we later regret because we are tired and irritable. Think before you talk. Think before you act.

EML Health Consideration # 9: Alcohol.

About 15 percent of adults in the U.S. are alcoholics.

If one of your main goals just before flying over here to this deployment was to get drunk to the point of insensibility, or if you obsess about drinking alcohol at an airport at the first available opportunity, there's a good chance that you may be an alcoholic. People under the influence of alcohol tend to do stupid things (see Consideration #8) that could ruin their military careers. Drink in moderation, and only when and where it is appropriate.

Don't be one of those guys who survive a hard one year tour in Iraq, only to die a week later from a drunk driving injury in a motor vehicle.

EML Health Consideration # 10: Drugs.

Military careers have been destroyed as a result of Soldiers on leave taking medications that were not prescribed for them. If you get a headache or other ache or pain while on leave, do not take a prescription medication from a spouse or friend – it could cause you to fail the urine drug test that is administered after returning from leave.

Do not ever, under any circumstances, take a prescription drug that was not prescribed specifically for you (see Consideration #8). You have TRICARE health benefits – use them if you get sick.

EML Health Consideration # 11: Party Hats.

A problem with trying to cram 12 months of fun into two sleep-deprived weeks is the tendency to take personal risks we usually would not take. Remember that venereal disease is nothing to clap about and condoms should be worn (see Consideration #8).

EML Health Consideration # 12: Culture Shock.

Remember the old adage – nothing stays the same. During this tour you have changed, as have your family and friends. Sometimes, during absence and hardship, your bonds with those you love may grow stronger. Sometimes, people grow apart or relationships may have gotten strained. While on EML you need to take care of your social, psychological and spiritual health just as much as your physical health.

If you feel severely stressed, anxious, or depressed, think about Consideration #8 and don't be afraid to seek counseling. Remember, your Army family and friends care about you and will always be here for you.

Take care of yourself and have a great trip!

Tricare Prime regional toll-free numbers

- Tricare Region South**
1-800-444-5445
- Tricare Region North**
1-877-874-2273
- Tricare Region West**
1-888-874-9378
- Tricare Overseas**
1-888-777-8343

OFFICERS,

Continued from pg. 6

diers to conduct missions in conjunction with their U.S. counterparts and also broaden their understanding of U.S. military doctrine and practice.

The culmination was a jointly-held intensive 84-hour exercise, commonly referred to by the U.S. military as a "capstone," which encompassed virtually everything

learned in a given training arena. The capstone allowed both the officer and enlisted students an opportunity to demonstrate their newly acquired skills and roles by conducting platoon attacks, route clearance, urban operations, constructing and hardening an entry control point and performing a cordon and search mission as a unit. While the students commented that the training was both mentally and physically

challenging, especially for those with little former military experience, they concurred it was the best training they'd had to date.

While the future of IA engineer training continues to transition as the soldiers are integrated into the whole of the Iraqi army's on-going mission, the goal of the U.S. military advisory team is to train and prepare them to train their own soldiers, said Keith.

He noted that future training

may include partnerships with U.S. engineer units and possibly a route clearance course, but that the primary challenge faced by IA engineers is a lack of equipment for them to use in training and actual missions.

"These officers and soldiers have definitely proven they can get the job done, and once they overcome those challenges, they will be a very effective force in the Iraqi army," Keith added.

"Even though we had a language barrier and other challenges, the general focus for our team and the IA engineers we advised is that of sharing a common goal: to make them better engineers. Overall, we each feel we accomplished our mission very successfully," said Gunnery Sgt. Ken Thomas, the U.S. military team's senior enlisted advisor from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Brass band tuba player Staff Sgt. Jeff Smith

Story by Sgt. Kristin Kemplin
363rd MPAD

At six feet two inches tall, Staff Sgt. Jeff Smith and his polished, gold tuba stand out in a crowd. Literally. The tuba player has become a welcome and familiar sight as he weaves his way slowly through diners at the "Oasis" division dining facility, pumping the beat of a tune familiar to 4th Infantry Division's brass band performances. Many in the audience may not know the name of the song is "Taking it to the streets." Rather, they simply remember it as "the song where the tuba player follows people around." And that is just what Smith, a native of Little Rock, Ark., does.

"It started out as a joke," Smith recalled. He would play the tuba as he walked toward the DFAC to "grab something and bring it back to the band." People would react with laughter when Smith collected food or drinks, all the while rocking his tuba to the beat and never missing a note.

"In that particular piece, I have a real easy part," Smith explained. "It's basically four measures repeated the entire song."

The traveling tuba routine caught on and has now become a staple in brass band performances.

Smith, who was promoted to staff sergeant April 1, did not originally plan to join the military.

"I swore up and down I wouldn't join the military," said Smith. But "college happened." After attending Florida State University for five years and graduating with a bachelor of arts in music, Smith "needed to

find a way to pay off \$56,000 in student loans."

"That's what led me to the Army."

Smith's parents, Ron and Fran Smith of Satellite, Fla., were supportive of Smith's decision.

"My dad was ecstatic," Smith recalled. Smith said he felt that in a small way he was following in the footsteps of his father, who retired as a master sergeant from the Air Force after serving for 22 years.

"I have been doing jobs way above my head for a long time," said Smith, referring to the many military occupational specialties he has served in since he joined the military in 1998.

In addition to being an Army bandsman, Smith has been a tanker, truck driver, range control noncommissioned officer and band director during his eight-year career. And Smith is just getting started.

Smith, a devoted tuba player since he started playing in middle school, originally wanted to be an Army bandsman when he walked into a recruiter's office in Tallahassee, Fla. The recruiter could not get him a slot in the Army band but offered him a combat arms job as a tanker instead.

His first assignment sent him to Fort Carson, Colo., to Company A, 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. While stationed there as a tanker, Smith began playing for the post choir, he said.

When the band director left, Smith, a specialist, was requested by the band to fill the slot normally filled by a sergeant first class. His unit agreed to the transfer, but felt "that couldn't be

my only job," said Smith. So Smith simultaneously transitioned from his line unit to work range control – a staff sergeant slot.

"I pulled them both down," said Smith. "It was one of my proudest moments."

"Then 9-11 happened," said Smith. He returned to Company A and was put in charge of his own tank and crew. As the unit prepared to deploy in April 2003 to Tuz Khurmato, an airfield one hour south of Kirkuk, Smith was again pulled, this time to be a truck driver, and transferred into Support Platoon, 1-68 Armor. The unexpected job change ultimately gave Smith the opportunity to audition for the 4th Infantry Division Band. It was the slot his recruiter had originally been unable to give him. The 4th Infantry Division's rock band put on a concert at the airfield and "I got hooked again," said the tuba player.

"I was thinking to myself 'I can't believe I have gone this long without music,'" said Smith. About a week later "I was up on a stage in Tikrit auditioning for them," he said.

Two years later, he is preparing to realize yet another dream.

He is currently preparing his warrant officer packet, as well as his flight packet, in a bid to become a Blackhawk helicopter pilot. Smith said he hopes to get picked up for warrant officer school "basically when I get out of here."

But Smith added, "My love of music will always be at the top; that's what keeps me going."

"I'll be able to pass that on to my kids, and they will be able to appreciate music too."

Smith and his wife, Heather,



Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD
Staff Sgt. Jeff Smith, tuba player for the 4th Infantry Division Band, is well-known for his comical antics at brass-band performances. Smith, a former tanker, has been playing with the band since auditioning in Tikrit during his first deployment to Iraq in 2003.

of Killeen, Texas, have three children: Giovanna, 10; Tristen, 8; and Gerald, 3. Heather has been instrumental in helping Smith prepare the paperwork for his advancement, Smith said. She motivated him to "get my head in the game." Putting the packet in "is something I have been wanting to do for a long time," he said.

But until he leaves Iraq and "moves on," Smith will continue to entertain diners and fans alike with his musical antics. Smith

has expanded his routine to include following unsuspecting Soldiers, imitating audience members and sitting down next to diners at the dining facilities. And Smith does not reserve his humorous escapades to lower enlisted Soldiers. He also enjoys stepping out into the crowd and targeting "the uppers."

"I'm impartial," said Smith. "I'll pick on anybody."

If he sees a sergeant major or lieutenant colonel walk through the door, "I'm going for them."

Upcoming Band Events:


April 7
Woodwind Quintet: Cafe De Fleury DFAC @ 11 a.m.

April 11
Brass Band: Blizzard DFAC @ 11 a.m.

April 12
Brass Band: FOB Prosperity DFAC @ 11 a.m.
Country Band: Concert at FOB Prosperity @ 8 p.m.

April 14
Woodwind Quintet: Camp Victory 1.2 DFAC @ 11 a.m.
Rock Band: Scorpion MWR @ 7:30 p.m.

April 15
Woodwind Quintet: Camp Liberty "Oasis" Division DFAC @ 11 a.m.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Division MWR Calendar 						1 Reggae Night @ 8:30 p.m. April Fool's Day
2 Closest to the Pin (TBA)	3 Texas Hold'em @ 8 p.m.	4 Movie Night @ 8 p.m. 4 on 4 Volleyball Tourney @ 8:30 p.m. 8-ball Tourney @ 8:30 p.m.	5 Karaoke Night @ 8 p.m.	6 Salsa Night @ 8:30 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball Captain's Mtg. @ 6 p.m.	7 R&B Night @ 8:30 p.m.	8 5 on 5 Basketball Tourney (TBA)
9 Jazz/Old School Cards Night @ 8:30 p.m. Closest to the Pin (TBA) Palm Sunday	10 Chess Tourney & Texas Hold'em Poker Tourney @ 8 p.m.	11 Movie Night @ 8 p.m. Ping Pong Tourney @ 8 p.m. Volleyball "pickup" play @ 7 p.m.	12 Karaoke Night @ 8 p.m.	13 Soccer Team Captain's Mtg. @ 6 p.m. Passover Begins	14 Spades and Dominoes Tourney @ 8:30 p.m. Good Friday	15 Soccer Tourney (TBA) Reggae Night @ 8:30 p.m. 5K Bunny Hop @ 6:30 a.m.
16 Closest to the Pin (TBA) Easter	17 Texas Hold'em @ 8 p.m.	18 Movie Night @ 8 p.m. 4 on 4 Volleyball Tourney @ 8:30 p.m. 8-ball Tourney @ 8:30 p.m.	19 Karaoke Night @ 8 p.m.	20 Salsa Night @ 8:30 p.m. Flag Football Team Captain's Mtg. @ 6 p.m.	21 R&B @ 8:30 p.m.	22 Flag Football Tourney (TBA)
23 Bench Press Comp. @ 6:30 p.m. Jazz/Old School Cards Night @ 8:30 p.m. Closest to the Pin	24 Chess Tourney & Texas Hold'em @ 8 p.m.	25 Movie Night @ 8 p.m. Ping Pong Tourney @ 8 p.m. Volleyball "pickup" play @ 7 p.m.	26 Karaoke Night @ 8 p.m.	27 Softball Team Captain's Mtg. @ 6 p.m. Country Western Night @ 8:30 p.m.	28 Spades and Dominoes Tourney @ 8:30 p.m.	29 Softball Tourney (TBA) Reggae Night @ 8:30 p.m.

GUIDANCE

Navigating Reserve Component transfer process

Active-duty Soldiers can manage military service obligations if choosing not to reenlist

The Reserve Component transfer process is one that is often overlooked and misunderstood by many Soldiers.

All Soldiers leaving active duty with a remaining military service obligation are required to transfer to the Reserve Component. Soldiers who enlisted after June 1, 1984, automatically incurred an eight-year obligation.

For example, a Soldier completes four years of his eight-year military commitment on active duty and decides not to reenlist: the remaining four years must be completed in one of the reserve components. The RC consists of the Army Reserve, the National Guard and the Individual Ready Reserve. Soldiers will not be allowed to out-process without receiving a mandatory interview by the reserve component career counselor. The 4th Infantry Division has two RCCCs in theater to perform initial interviews on all Soldiers not reenlisting. These interviews will begin approximately 180 days before a Soldier is scheduled for expiration of term of service or redeployment. During the briefing, the RCCC will discuss basic benefits available to the Soldier, current options and determine eligibility for bonuses and special programs.

It is very important that all Soldiers receive their initial interview while in theater; this will prevent delays in the out-processing procedures upon redeployment. The RC offers a variety of incentives and programs to those who qualify. Soldiers must see their RCCCs to determine eligibility. Below is a list of current incentives and programs available in the RC. These incentives are updated semi-annually each fiscal year.

SELECTED RESERVE INCENTIVE PROGRAM.

Affiliation Bonus: Soldiers with a remaining MSO who join a unit of the Selected Reserve may qualify for the SRIP affiliation bonus. For every month left on their MSOs, the Soldiers receive \$200, to a maximum \$10,000.

Enlisted Affiliation Bonus: The Army National Guard is currently offering a bonus for a three-year or six-year enlistment in the National Guard. The Soldier receives a \$10,000 bonus for a three-year, and \$20,000 for a six-year, enlistment.

Prior Service Enlistment Bonus: Soldiers can join the Army Reserve and receive a bonus of \$15,000 for a six-year enlistment or \$7,500 for a three-year enlistment.

Montgomery GI Bill: Soldiers enlisting in the Army National Guard or the Army Reserve for a minimum of six years may qualify to receive the Selected Reserve Montgomery GI Bill. In addition, the Federal Tuition Assistance Program pays up to 100 percent of tuition up to a maximum amount of \$4,500 annually.

This program can be used for National Guard or



Sgt. Maj. Arlene Horne, Retention Sergeant Major, 4th Inf. Div.

Army Reserve Soldiers. The MGIB Kicker is a program that offers up to an additional \$350 per month for college for Military Occupational Specialty-qualified Soldiers in critical skills. Soldiers must enlist for six years and be eligible to receive the GI Bill benefits.

Student Loan Repayment Program: The Army National Guard offers the Student Loan Repayment Program for Soldiers who have the student loans. The National Guard will pay back 15 percent or \$500 – whichever is greater – for each year served in the National Guard, not to exceed \$20,000. The Army Reserve Student Loan Repayment Program offers up to \$10,000 in repayment of current or future student loans. The Army Reserve will also pay the loan(s) back at 15 percent or \$500 – whichever is greater – not to exceed \$10,000.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS/OPTIONS.

Military Intelligence Augmentation Detachment and Military Intelligence Readiness Improvement Program Augmentation Management Platform: Military Intelligence Soldiers with select MOSs who join the Army Reserve may qualify for the Military Intelligence Augmentation Detachment. This program allows the Soldiers to transition if there are no positions in their MOSs within 50 miles of their residence. The Soldiers affiliates with a unit outside the 50-mile radius, but attends their weekend drills at a local Army Reserve unit with occasional temporary duty trips to the units of assignment.

The Military Intelligence Readiness Improvement Program Augmentation Management Platform is designed for MI Soldiers with select MOSs who join the Army National Guard. This allows the Soldiers to affiliate with a National Guard MI position in their MOSs when there is no vacancy within 150 miles from their residence. Soldiers attend monthly training at a local unit and quarterly training with their units of assignment, with the unit providing funding for the quarterly training, travel and per diem.

Active Guard and Reserve Program: The AGR Program is designed to support the readiness of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Soldiers must complete an application process and accept the assignments before being put on active-duty orders. The pay and benefits are identical to Active Army. Retraining or additional-skill training are sometimes available as well.

Officer Candidate School Enlistment Option: The Army National Guard State Officer Candidate School Option is available to qualified Soldiers that desire to become a Commissioned Officer.

“Try one:” The “Try One” and “Try a Year” programs allow transitioning Soldiers in skill levels one and two to enlist or transfer into the Army National Guard or Army Reserve for the remainder of their MSO; however, they are only obligated to serve with their SELRES Unit for one year.

Drill Sergeant: Soldiers transitioning into the Army Reserve have the opportunity to join a drill sergeant (Additional Skill Identifier “X”) unit. To qualify, a Soldier must have a General Test Score of 100 or better,

must be physically fit, less than 40 years of age, display good military bearing, have demonstrated leadership capabilities, no record of court martial convictions, must have three years time in service, and must be an Spc. or above.

Retraining: Qualified Soldiers are able to retrain in a new MOS if there is a vacancy. These qualifications include, but are not limited to: ASVAB scores, physical screening, moral requirements in accordance with Department of the Army Pamphlet 611-21 and other applicable guidance.

Stabilization: Soldiers affiliating with any units in the Army National Guard, who were deployed for Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom within the last six months prior to joining, will be exempt from Federal Mobilization for their first 12 months in the unit. This applies even if the Soldier’s unit of assignment is mobilized during this stabilization period. If Soldiers wish to deploy with their units, they must waive their stabilization in writing.

Many of the state National Guard units offer their own stabilization policies, which differ from 12-24 months depending on the state, and some states do not require the OIF/OEF participation. The list of states offering their own stabilizations continues to grow. Soldiers need to check with the RC Counselor to see which states offer stabilization.

All Soldiers who have deployed for OEF/OIF within their last 12 months prior to transferring into the Army Reserve will be authorized a 24-month “Mobilization Deferment” from the date of assignment to the unit. If the Soldiers deployed for OEF/OIF between 12-24 months prior to transferring into a reserve unit they will receive a 12 month “Mobilization Deferment.”

MSO Reduction: Soldiers leaving Active Duty (officers and enlisted) will have an opportunity to reduce their MSO by joining a unit in the Selected Reserve, either National Guard or Army Reserve, by the amount of time they join the unit, not to exceed 24 months. The Soldier must be able to serve a minimum of 12 months in the unit and must be MOS qualified, unless being assigned to a drill sergeant duty position. Example: Soldiers agree to serve in the National Guard or Army Reserve for 24 months, reducing their MSOs from eight to six years. The MSO Conversion Chart below illustrates the reduction based on how much time the Soldiers have remaining on their MSO upon transitioning into the SELRES Unit, the length of time in months the Soldiers affiliate with the unit, and then how much their MSOs are reduced. Soldiers may qualify for the “Stabilization Policy” and any applicable bonuses in conjunction with the MSO Reduction. Officers must affiliate for a minimum of three years in order to receive the affiliation bonus.

For detailed information on the above incentives and programs, contact your RC Counselors, Master Sgt. Donna Bass and Sgt. 1st Class David Porter. They can be reached via e-mail at donna.bass@mnd-b.army.mil; david.porter1@us.army.mil; or telephone DSN 847-2352 or VOIP 242-4115.

Military service obligation conversion chart

Remaining military service obligation at Transition	Time in months											
	48-72	46-47	44-45	42-43	40-41	38-39	36-37	34-35	32-33	30-31	28-29	26-27
Selected Reserve obligation	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13
Military service obligation reduction	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13

G1 Word: Update your personnel records



Chief Warrant Officer 2
Christopher Immomino,
Chief of officer
management, G1

Time goes by, and before you know it, you receive a message that it's time for the promotion board. Oops! Your records aren't updated!

Your career manager is scratching his head trying to determine what is good for your career, but the problem is that your officer record brief or enlisted record brief does not reflect your current job or training. Yes, we are deployed and mission comes first – but it is still important to take the time to

sit down periodically and review your personnel records. It is not enough to just update your emergency documents prior to deploying.

You need to keep up with your official record brief, or enlisted record brief, and your official military personnel file. Both records can be viewed through your Army Knowledge Online account or by visiting the Army Human Resources Command, My Record Portal, at: <https://www.hrc.army.mil/porta/default.aspx>.

tal/default.aspx.

Your personnel section and the personnel services detachment can assist you in ensuring your information is updated.

Some data on your ORB/ERB can only be changed by your career manager, including skill qualification identifiers additional skill identifiers, and military education level codes.

You will have to contact your battalion intelligence section for assistance with security clearance data – it is automatically updated

by the security personnel at AHRC headquarters.

Other items are automatic entries and cannot be changed by you are: current duty assignment location, evaluation end date and physical date. All changes need to be verified with supporting documents.

If you have documents that need to be added to your OMPF, you can submit them to the PSD, or officers can e-mail them to: offrcds@hoffman.army.mil for submission.

From the Victory Base Complex Military Police Desk

Traffic Accidents WILL alter your life!

Since Nov. 1, there have been 64 traffic accidents on Victory Base Complex and 106 in the prior 10-month period. During this 14 month span, VBC has witnessed a fatality, two near-death accidents, two injured Congressmen, and numerous other accidents. What they all have in common is the life-altering after



By Lt. Col.
Jack Miller,
Provost Marshal,
Victory Base
Complex

effects to these accidents. For example: One young Iraqi soldier in a hurry to get home after graduating from training rolled his car down West BIAP Road for 160 feet. He was air-evacuated to a hospital with severe injuries from head to foot. He was not wearing a seat belt. In another accident, a young Soldier was returning from Sather Air Force Base, bringing three fellow soldiers back to Camp Victory, when a large truck crossed over into his lane. The three passengers suffered numerous injuries, and the driver is still in a coma almost a year later. In yet another accident, a Soldier was so intoxicated, he drove the M988 he was driving right into the rear end of a moving M1114 gun truck. Yes, traffic accidents do alter lives – and sometimes forever.

Whether the accidents are big or small they all leave their own kind of physical, emotional and mental scars on those involved.

Many of these accidents are caused from reckless driving, speeding, inattentive driving, inability to control the vehicle, reduced vision/muddy windows and driving under the influence. At least 50 percent of these accidents are listed as "\$1,000 or greater" in damages. Most occur from lack of attention or over-confidence by the driver.

Remember an important fact: Victory Base Complex is a large city (59 square kilometers) of 32,000 occupants, with large, heavy vehicles driving on narrow roads that were never intended to carry such traffic. These roads are traveled in all kinds of weather, sand storms and in the dark. Accidents ARE avoidable by simply slowing down, paying attention to what is going on around you and obeying the traffic and speed limit signs.

Please Drive defensively! Drive safely! Go home alive!



The Soldiers Creed

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

**Take a good look
at the robot now...**

**... so you can
watch outside the
cordon later.**



STAY ALIVE



0012

IEDs KILL

GUIDANCE

RELIGIOUS SERVICES, AA MEETINGS,
AND MANDATORY R&R BRIEFINGS

VICTORY CHAPEL SERVICES, BLDG 31

Sunday

7 a.m. and 8:45 a.m.
Traditional Protestant Worship
10:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
noon Gospel Protestant Service
2 p.m. Mormon Worship
4 p.m. Episcopal/Lutheran
Worship
6 p.m. Contemporary Protestant
Service

Monday

10 a.m. SGM's Meeting
1:30 p.m. Protestant Gospel
Prayer Meeting
3 p.m. R&R -- Reunion and
Suicide Intervention Briefs
7 p.m. Gospel Protestant Bible
Study

Tuesday

7 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday

9:30 a.m. R&R -- Reunion and
Suicide Intervention Briefs
7 p.m. Korean Bible Study
8:30 p.m. Protestant Music
Rehearsal

Thursday

6 p.m. Roman Catholic Music
Rehearsal
6:45 p.m. Men's 'Purity' Bible
Study

Friday

1 p.m. Jumuh (Islamic Prayer)
5 p.m. Prayer Gathering Service
6:30 p.m. Contemporary Worship
Music Rehearsal
8:30 p.m. Protestant Music
Rehearsal

Saturday

9 a.m. Seventh-Day Adventist
Music Practice
11 a.m. Seventh Day Adventist
3 p.m. R&R -- Reunion and
Suicide Intervention Briefs
4 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal
7 p.m. Roman Catholic Music
Rehearsal
8 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass

ENGINEER CHAPEL

Sunday

8 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
10 a.m. Traditional Protestant
11:30 a.m. Lutheran Worship
1 p.m. Latter Day Saints
7 p.m. Traditional Protestant

Tuesday

7 p.m. Bible Study

Wednesday

7 p.m. LDS Bible Study

Thursday

7 p.m. Bible Study

Friday

9 p.m. Prayer & Praise

Saturday

10 a.m. Reunion & Suicide Brief

WARRIOR CHAPEL

Sunday

9:15 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
10:30 a.m. Contemporary
Protestant
12:30 p.m. Gospel Protestant
5 p.m. Latter Day Saints
7 p.m. Non Denominational
Christian

Wednesday

7 p.m. Gospel Prayer

Thursday

7 p.m. General Protestant

Friday

6:30 p.m. Wicca Circle Meeting

DIVISION CHAPEL

Sunday

9 a.m. Contemp. Protestant Worship
10:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
1 p.m. Episcopal Worship Service
3 p.m. Gospel Worship
8 p.m. Collective Protestant Worship

Monday

6 p.m. EML Chaplain's Briefing
7 p.m. Bible Study

Tuesday

7 p.m. Bible Study

Wednesday

6 p.m. EML Chaplain's Brief
7 p.m. Bible Study
8 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous

Thursday

6:30 p.m. Bible Study (Women)
7:30 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal

Friday

12 p.m. Islamic Prayer
6 p.m. EML Chaplain's Briefing
7 p.m. Bible Study

Saturday

7 p.m. Bible Study (Men)
8 p.m. Contemporary Protestant
Praise Band Rehearsal

CAMP VICTORY CHAPEL,
BLDG 2

Sunday

9 a.m. Orthodox Liturgy

Monday

4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass
7 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous

Tuesday

4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mas
Music Rehearsal

Wednesday

4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass
7 p.m. Men's Gospel Fellowship

Thursday

4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass
7 p.m. Spanish Bible Study

Friday

4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass
6:30 p.m. Shabbat Service
8 p.m. Women's Gospel Bible Study

Saturday

5 p.m. Orthodox Vespers
11 a.m. Seventh Day Adventist

CAMP STRIKER CHAPEL

Sunday

9 a.m. Catholic Mass
10 a.m. Contemporary Protestant
10:30 a.m. Protestant (Pad 6, Tent
410)

11:15 a.m. Traditional Protestant

4:30 p.m. Protestant

6 p.m. LDS

7 p.m. Praise Service (Gospel)

7:30 p.m. Praise and Testimony (Pad
6, Tent 410)

Monday

9 a.m. Catholic Mass

Wednesday

9 a.m. Catholic Mass

6 p.m. LDS Bible Study

7 p.m. Prayer/Bible Study

7:30 p.m. Prayer/Bible Study (Pad 6,
Tent 410)

Thursday

5 p.m. Purpose Driven Life

7 p.m. Praise Choir Practice

Friday

9 a.m. Catholic Mass

11:15 a.m. Catholic Mass (TOC
Conference room)

Saturday

6:45 p.m. Catholic Mass (Pad 6,
Tent 410)

Daily 6:30 a.m. TOC Prayer Service
(TOC Conference room)

Chaplain's Corner
Discover, explore and
live out your faith

It has been said that war consists of a few short moments of intense anxiety and excitement, surrounded by long periods of boredom. During your deployment to Iraq, how are you spending your time? Many of us have much more time on our hands than we had imagined we would on a deployment over-

seas. There are occasions when we "cocoon" ourselves into our rooms and link up to the latest television show or Website, or make phone calls back home.

There are also plenty of opportunities for "bull sessions" with our fellow Soldiers. You know those times – when you and a couple of battle buddies solve not only the problems in your company or platoon, but the problems of world hunger, peace in the Middle East, what makes first sergeants act the way that they do ... and maybe even come up with a cure for the common cold! I am convinced that during those "bull-sessions," there are also discussions about faith and religion.

Paul wrote these words to the church at Phillipi, "... continue to work out your faith with fear and trembling."

As a chaplain, I would like to hear the results of those "faith and religion is the topic" bull sessions. Each one of us needs to be about the business of working out our faith. My job as a chaplain basically falls into three categories: helping people Discover their faith; Explore their faith; and Live Out their faith.

I would like to hear about your faith journey, whatever it

may be, and I would like to share with you from the Judeo-Christian faith tradition regarding these three key points.

Moses was in the remotest part of the desert when he discovered a burning bush; probably the last thing that he expected to happen right then was for God to start speaking to him.

Like Moses, some of you may

not be expecting God to speak to you while you are stationed here in Iraq. But remember, you are in the land that Abraham left to find Canaan ... the land where the Jewish people were carried off into captivity from Israel

... where Jonah finally spoke to the people of Ninevah after a "whale of a story!" This is the land where the Garden of Eden was believed to have been! It is hard to ignore the historic and religious significance of our current area of operations. And so, I encourage you to discover your faith, here in Iraq.

The nation of Israel roamed around in the desert for forty years, exploring their faith and what it meant to be a part of the chosen people of God. It was in the desert that they received the Ten Commandments. Manna (bread) in the morning and quail in the evening, along with water, were provided while they remained in the desert.

God provided a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night so that the Jewish people would know that He was with them. Once they entered the Promised Land, the pillar of cloud and fire disappeared, as did the food and water, since they no longer had need of it.

As the nation of Israel then occupied the Promised Land, God was calling them to live

"You may not be expecting God to speak to you while you are stationed here in Iraq. But remember, you are in the land that Abraham left to find Canaan ..."



By Chaplain (Maj.) Michael Allen, Brigade Chaplain, 4th Fires Brigade, 4th Inf. Div.

out their faith. God had placed them at a strategic location where three continents converge – Europe, Africa and Asia. They were to live out their faith so that other nations would know that there was a God of Israel. The Old Testament of the Bible documents their heroic struggles to be recognized as the people of God.

I encourage you to discover your faith while you are here in Iraq. I became a Christian when my father was stationed in Libya. Our family attended an Easter sunrise service and God made Himself real to me, there on a beach next to the Mediterranean Sea. There will be an Easter Sunrise service at Camp Liberty – perhaps that is where you will discover your faith, and I hope to see you there.

If you have already discovered your faith: I encourage you to explore your faith. There are numerous Bible study groups and discipleship groups conducted by unit chaplains throughout the Multi-National Division – Baghdad area of operations in Iraq. If you are of the Christian faith, we have numerous copies available of the "Purpose Driven Life" to aid you in your exploration. Just stop by any chapel and pick one up.

Finally, if you have discovered and explored your faith, then I encourage you to live out your faith. Many of our deployed service members volunteer to be Scripture readers, lay leaders, music leaders and some lead Bible studies and preach as well. As Paul said, "... continue to work out your faith with fear and trembling."

NO SOLDIER
LEFT BEHIND

Sgt. Matthew Maupin
**"I will never
leave a fallen
comrade."**

These well known words from the Warrior Ethos ring true for Sgt. Matt Maupin. Maupin is an Army Reserve Soldier from 724th Transportation Company who was captured April 9, 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2. Sgt. Maupin – we are still looking for you, and we will find you. You have not been forgotten.



Criminal Justice Statistics

On 15 March 2006, a military judge, convicted a Sergeant First Class in 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, in accordance with his plea, of two specifications of Dereliction of Duty, two specifications of Wrongful Use of a Controlled Substance, three specifications of Larceny of government property valued at less than \$500, and one specification of Wrongful Appropriation of government property valued at less than \$500.

The military judge sentenced him to the maximum authorized punishment at a Bad Conduct discharge Court-Martial, a reduction to E1, twelve months confinement, forfeiture of

2/3 pay per month for 12 months, and a Bad Conduct Discharge.

On 16 March 2006, a military panel convicted a Sergeant in 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), contrary to his pleas, of one specification of indecent assault.

The panel sentenced him to reduction to E-2, six months confinement, and a Bad Conduct Discharge.



\$ Pay Attention \$

230th Finance Battalion "Always There and Ready"

By Sgt. 1st Class Austin McLaughlin, 230th Finance Battalion, internal control noncommissioned officer

Coming this summer – Service members deployed to certain locations in Iraq (at this time those are identified as Liberty Complex, Life Support Area Anaconda and Camp Speicher) will soon have a new way of managing their cash – The EagleCash Stored Value Card! The EagleCash card is very similar to a debit card. The cardholder places value of the card and then, as each transaction takes place, the value on the card is reduced.

Adding value to the card is easy. Service members can go to the local finance office and receive casual pay, write a check, or exchange cash, and instead of receiving dollars, the value will be immediately added to their EagleCash card. The embedded microchip technology, much like the new military identification card, allows the funds added to the card to be immediately available to the customer.

Once the service member has stored value on the EagleCash card, it can be used at the post exchange, the post office and at most local vendors located throughout Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and Afghanistan. There are no fees or interest incurred for using this card. Another important benefit of the EagleCash card is the ability to recover funds that are stolen or lost. If a service member loses cash, it is gone forever. With the EagleCash card, the service member simply goes to the finance office as soon as the loss is noticed and has the card turned off. The remaining money on the card will then be placed on a new card. At the end of tour, the service member may also receive a cash refund for any value remaining on the card.

Another convenient aspect of the EagleCash card is the kiosk. The kiosk is an automated-teller-like machine that allows a service member the ability to perform transactions on their card 24-hours-a-day, 7-days a week, without having to visit the finance office and wait in line. Using the kiosk will allow the service member to transfer value directly from the bank account of choice onto the card – no checks or casual payments required! Funds can be loaded to the card, or unloaded from the card, into the service member's bank account. Funds can also be transferred between two cards and the kiosk can also be used to check the balance remaining on the card. Service members need not worry about the security of their EagleCash card because the service member will have the ability to select his or her own Personal Identification Number, which is then entered into the kiosk to process a transaction, and can be changed at any time by the service member at a kiosk.

The EagleCash card and the kiosk will be a convenient, simple and fast way for service members to manage their money without the need to carry large sums of cash and without having to wait in long lines at the finance office.

Finance Office Hours and Locations.

Liberty Finance Office: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, 9 a.m. to noon.
 Stryker Finance Office: Mon.—Wed., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sunday, 9 a.m. to noon.
 Abu Ghraib Finance Office: Bi-Monthly Thur.—Fri., 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 Victory Finance Office: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to noon.
 Seitz Finance Office: Bi-Monthly Friday 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
 Justice Finance Office: Bi-Monthly Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Rustamiyah Finance Office: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to noon.
 Taqaddum Finance Office: Mon.—Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sat.—Sun. 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
 Falcon Finance Office: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 9 p.m. to noon.
 Diwaniyah Finance Office: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 Scania Finance Office: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to noon.
 Kalsu Finance Office: Mon.—Sat. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 Prosperity Finance Office: Mon.—Thur. & Sat. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 CPA-US Embassy Finance Office: Mon.—Sat. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Joint Finance Office: Mon.—Thur. & Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Victory Contracting Office: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to noon.
 IIGF Disbursing Section: Mon., Wed., Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (by appointment)
 CERP Disbursing Section: Mon.—Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to noon. (by appointment)

Iraqi Court Convictions

Central Criminal Court of Iraq.

The Central Criminal Court of Iraq hears cases involving Iraqis or foreign nationals who are accused of committing crimes against the Iraqi people or Coalition Forces. Most of the convictions are based on the testimony and information Soldiers provide at the point of capture. The results of some CCCI cases for the month of December 2005 are summarized below:

1. An MND-B unit captured a detainee after finding weapons stored in his residence. The detainee was charged with, and convicted of, possession of illegal weapons, consisting of two tons of weapons parts stored in factory crates. Propaganda flyers were also found.

The detainee was sentenced to three years in Iraqi prison.

2. An MND-B unit captured a detainee after finding weapons stored in his residence. The detainee was charged with, and convicted of, illegal possession and transportation of special category weapons, being RPGs, an RPK machinegun, AK-47, improvised explosive device materials, gas masks and a stolen Iraqi police motorcycle. Counterfeit license plates, passports, identification cards and \$2,200 U.S. were also found.

The detainee was sentenced to 15 years in Iraqi prison.

3. An MND-B unit captured a detainee after finding weapons stored in his residence. The detainee was an insurgent connected with attacks and weapons trafficking. He was charged with, and convicted of, possession of illegal weapons consisting of a sniper rifle, an RPG, C-4 explosives and TNT.

The detainee was sentenced to six years in Iraqi prison.

4. An MND-B unit captured a detainee, who admitted to illegally entering Iraq with the assistance of known insurgent groups. The detainee also participated in the torture of an Iraqi national, who later died, and the detainee helped dispose of the body. The detainee was charged with, and convicted of, illegal border crossing and crimes against the state.

The detainee received a life sentence, which is the equivalent of 20 years in Iraqi prison.

5. An MND-B unit captured three detainees after discovering they planned vehicle-borne improvised-explosive devices. The detainees were charged with, and convicted of, illegal border crossing and crimes against the state. Each detainee received a life sentence, which is the equivalent of 20 years in Iraqi prison.

Easter Sunrise Service

Camp Liberty Service:
6:30 a.m. in front of
4th Infantry Division
Headquarters

April 16
Camp Victory Service:
6:30 a.m. at
Victory Chapel

For information on services conducted at other locations, please contact your local chaplain.

Order of Catholic Liturgies for Holy Week at Victory Chapel.

Palm Sunday: 8:00 p.m., Saturday April 8, and 10:30 a.m. Sunday April 9

Holy Thursday: 7:30 p.m., April 13

Good Friday: 4:00 p.m., April 14

Holy Saturday Vigil Mass, 8:00 p.m., April 15

Easter Sunday, 10:30 a.m., April 16.

ENTERTAINMENT

Ask Uncle Troy

“Ask me a question. I dare you.”

Roommate takes credit for others’ ideas

Dear Uncle Troy
I have a friend who is deployed here with me in Iraq. In fact, we are in the same unit and we are roommates. We have always gotten along good and we share a lot of the same interests, etc. But lately, he has been taking credit for stuff that I do and ideas that I have.

We work in the same office and the NCO, who is our boss, keeps telling me how smart my friend is – and it usually ends up that he mentions something that my friend “thought of” that was actually MY idea. I am really getting irritated about this, but I don’t know how to approach him. We talk about work when we are eating dinner, etc., and if I have an idea of how to make things better, I just tell him. But then the next day, he goes in and acts like he thought of it. I think maybe he is even going to get some kind of award for one of the ideas that I came up with that he has taken credit for.

I don’t want to end the friendship, and I don’t want to try to watch every word I say. If I go to our NCO and say “hey, I thought of all this stuff, not my friend,” then the NCO will probably just think I am a jerk. What should I do?

– Confused in Camp Liberty

Dear Confused in Camp Liberty,
You’re a jerk if you do ... and a jerk if you don’t. There is only one person to blame here – You!

Have you ever heard the phrase “loose lips sink ships?” Helloooooooo “OPSEC!” There are two ways to think about your situation.

First alternative: So what if your “friend” gets the credit for your ideas? So what if people think he is smarter than you? So what if he gets an award? And, so what if your so-called friend has totally taken advantage of your friendship? There are plenty of other things you should be more concerned with in a war zone, right?

You said that you two guys are friends. You have common interests, and you don’t want to ruin your friendship. So, the alternative is to eat your frustration and jealousy, drive on, and try to keep your big mouth shut from now on. It’s unfortunate that you have to monitor what you say, but life, as you know, is never fair.

Or ... second alternative: You should have noticed what was going on with your “friend” the first time it happened. You probably did, but you continued to let it happen. How come you didn’t step up

and put your buddy in his place from the get-go? The world is full of all different kinds of people – some nice, some not so nice. But one thing is a constant no matter where you go: if you let people walk all over you, they will!

If you like being a human doormat, then fine ... but, if you want your just desserts and the recognition you feel you deserve, then stick up for yourself and start confronting your friend about his tendencies to “borrow” your ideas. Demand that he starts telling the truth and let him know that you’re tired of his “sugar-honey-ice-tea” routine. Sure, some people may still think you’re a jerk, but at least they will know you’re a jerk who sticks up for himself.



Uncle Troy
363rd MPAD

TO THE EDITOR

As someone who was once EOD in Vietnam it gives me great pleasure in knowing that we are making progress against IEDs in Iraq. Tell any EOD troops that you come across that I tip my hat to them and everyone else over there fighting terrorism.

Karl Bossi
Lt. Col. USAF (Ret)
Gondola Press
Venice, Fla.



Photo by Spc. Ernesto Mora, Company B, 5th Eng. Bn. Baghdad, Iraq – 1st Lt. Michael Shaughnessy, 3rd Platoon, Company B, 5th Engineer Battalion, coordinates with 6th Iraqi Army Division soldiers, after his platoon discovered an unexploded mortar round near a major intersection’s off-ramp in western Baghdad Feb. 26. The platoon secured the site until IA Explosive Ordnance Disposal responded and successfully removed the threat. According to 5th Eng. Bn soldiers at the site, partnering with the IA soldiers was beneficial as they were extremely responsive and ensured local Iraqis remained out of harm’s way until the mortar round was rendered safe.

Help Wanted

The Camp Liberty Division Main Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center is looking for DJs and fitness instructors. Apply in person at the MWR or contact Timeka at Iraqna 0790-191-0483 or Lawrence “Linc” at Iraqna 0790-191-0496.

CARTOON CORNER

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BY CHRIS ASHBY - WWW.ELUSIVE-CONCEPT.COM





Sports Roundup with Staff Sgt. Christian Farrell 363rd MPAD

What kind of sports fan are you? From high school to the pros, there is room for ALL of us!

So ... what's YOUR preference in the upcoming Final Four contest? Chose from the University of California at Los Angeles, better known to one and all as UCLA, Louisiana State, Florida, and #11 seed George Mason. George who? George Mason, that's who! Not Perry or Anthony Mason, but the Patriots of George Mason University. These are your entries in this year's men's college basketball Final Four.

You say you've never heard of George Mason? The Fairfax, Virginia school, named after the founding father who withheld his name from the U.S. Constitution because it did not abolish the slave trade, pulled off one of the biggest upsets in the history of

the tournament, knocking off #1 seed Connecticut in overtime to earn its ticket to college hoops heaven.

The madness of March was alive and well this spring. But when you think about it, isn't it always? The tourney never lets you down. How come March is always "maddening," but the Super Bowl isn't always a super game nor is the Fall Classic always something to truly remember – although to be fair, in my opinion the "entire" National Football League Playoffs are always mint quality! That thought however, leads me to the question – do Soldiers prefer watching PRO athletes block and tackle, dunk and drive, hit homeruns and score goals, or do they prefer to watch the COL-

LEGE kids perform those same feats? In the fall, is Saturday or Sunday afternoon a "can't miss football TV day" for you? True sports fans are probably split on this.

One big factor in this case discussion is where you grew up. If you grew up in and around a big city that is home to multiple professional sports teams, then you may be inclined to root harder for teams like the Yankees, Lakers, Steelers and Canadians. You will pay a ridiculous amount of money to watch the big-name teams, but you are spending your money to see the best athletes in the world compete.

There are some sports fans that care almost nothing at all about how "State U" did last week. But, if you grew up in a

college town or out in East Nowhere, where professional sports were akin to having a famous movie star drop by for tea, then for you nothing can compare to being shoulder-to-shoulder in a stadium with 100,000 other fans just like you, singing a fight song and cheering on the local college team.

The casual fan though – my third category, in case you didn't notice – I think gravitates more toward the pro games. Why?

Because they can identify with the players by name – they know who Kobe, A-Rod and Peyton are, and because of that they'll watch a "big" game from time-to-time.

My Mom, who raised five boys in a home where Sports was King, where "pass the bread" at the dinner table meant, be ready for a piece of Italian bread coming in your direction via a "no-look" or "behind the back," pass, would only watch football games if John Elway was playing. Elway was my Mom's "man," besides my Dad, of course. I, on the other hand, love 'em all – and that includes HIGH SCHOOL sports.

If I have to choose between

the pro and college games, then I'll take: March Madness (Texas-West Virginia and UConn-Washington ... need I say more, UCLA-Gonzaga), Major League Baseball (college teams still use aluminum bats), the National Hockey League (great playoffs and fighting is within the rules) and, my toughest choice, college versus pro football – The Michigan Wolverines winning the Rose Bowl trumps Tiki leading the New York Giants to the Super Bowl.

Thus, I choose the college kids ... but only by the length of a football.

Sports Writer's Note: Only four Soldiers in last edition's Ivy Leaf March Madness Tournament correctly picked a team that reached the Final Four. They were: Spc. Cal Turner from the Media Operations Center – UCLA; Chief Warrant Officer-3 Richard Francois, Division Troops Company – Florida; Lt. Col. Jonathan Withington. 4th Inf. Div. PAO – UCLA and Staff Sgt. Christian Farrell – George Mason ... just kidding. I did get one out of four – the Florida Gators.

Camp Speicher's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center presents...

Rock 'n' Roll Marathon and 1/2 Marathon

Saturday, April 29 from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Kicks off at Camp Speicher's Main MWR Gym.

Choose to run 2 laps (26.2 miles) or
1 lap (13.1 miles) around the scenic camp.



For registration form and volunteer sign-up, contact Capt. Janet Tye at janet.tye@us.army.mil or register at Camp Speicher's Main MWR Gym by 3 p.m. Friday, April 28.

Free T-shirts to all finishers!

Volunteers are needed for race day check-in, water and aid stations, crowd control, finish-line operation and teardown and clean-up.

Soldiers share their thoughts

What was your childhood fear?



"Clowns! My uncle had me watch the movie 'It' when I was three or four, and when I was eight, I got kicked out of a birthday party for assaulting a clown," said Spc. Tom Juneau, heavy construction mechanic, Company B, 62nd Engineer Battalion.

"I was afraid to drown in the water. When I was a kid, I got pushed into a pool by my cousins," said Sgt. Richard Jones, supply, 16th Engineer Brigade.



"The movie 'Jaws' gave me a fear of the ocean. Even today, I can't go above my knees (into the water)," said Spc. Sean Martin, infantryman, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry Regiment, 48th Brigade, Georgia National Guard.

FACES AND PLACES



Photo by Spc. Jason Jordan, 1st BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.

IBRAHIM EIN ALI, Iraq – A Soldier with the Company C, 2nd Battalion 22nd Infantry Regiment, pulls security as an Iraqi family bakes bread for them. A combined effort mission termed “Operation: Northern Lights,” comprised of the Iraqi army and Coalition Forces, was conducted in the Baghdad area to disrupt terrorist activities and destroy weapons and explosives caches.



Photo by Spc. Jason Jordan, 1st BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.

IBRAHIM EIN ALI, Iraq – A Soldier with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, watches for activity as he pulls security during Operation Northern Lights March 22. The operation began with 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, moving to blocking positions by ground before Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, Multi-National Division – Baghdad air assaulted onto the objective to conduct a cordon and search.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Bonner LeFlore, 363rd MPAD

LEFT: CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Chasity Jackson, native of Houston, Texas, and civilian administration specialist for Kellogg, Brown and Root, performs a poem she wrote titled “Justice” at the Camp Liberty Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center’s “Gong Show” competition March 17. Jackson said she wrote the poem about four years ago while in high school. BELOW: CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Panelists at the 4th Infantry Division Women’s History Month Observance listen to poem presentations March 25, from left to right: Command Sgt. Maj. Michelle Jones, 230th Finance Battalion, 4th Inf. Div; Sgt. Maj. Arlene Horne, 4th Inf. Div. Retention; Sgt. Maj. Angela Rodriguez, G6, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Inf. Div.; and Command Sgt. Maj. Divina Bobb, 502nd Personnel Services Battalion, 4th Inf. Div. The observance was held at the Iron Horse Conference Center on Camp Liberty, Iraq. The four senior noncommissioned officers fielded questions from the audience, ranging from how their career choices had effected their marriages and family life to whether all military occupational specialties, including combat arms, should be open to female Soldiers.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mary Mott, 363rd MPAD