

The Marne Express

"Mission, Soldiers, Teamwork"

Volume 2, Issue 12

Serving the Soldiers of Task Force Baghdad

July 31, 2005

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Courtesy Photo

Medics from C Company, 26th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, at Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah, rush an Iraqi child to a waiting Blackhawk helicopter after the boy was critically injured in a terrorist attack July 13.

U.S. Medics rush to save lives

Maj. Russ Goemaere
2nd BCT PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE RUSTAMIYAH – Since a July 13 car-bomb attack, which killed more than 30 children and one U.S. Soldier in East Baghdad, many articles have been written about what was happening in the Iraqi hospital where most

of the Iraqi children were treated.

Iraqi doctors, however, were not the only ones working to save the lives of the young innocent victims of the terrorist attack that day.

According to Task Force Baghdad officials, this is what happened at the U.S. medical treatment facility at Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah.

"At about 10:35 a.m., I heard a boom," said Capt. Laura DePalma, commander of the medical company for 26th Forward Support Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division. "I always look at my watch now when I hear a boom. Often it means I have to get my company ready to provide treatment and

See RUSH, page 17

Operation Warrior's Rage nets 60 terrorists

By Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

CAMP TIGERLAND, Iraq – Since July 14, units from 6th Iraqi Army Division and 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, have worked together during Operation Warrior's Rage, a series of cordon-and-search missions and combat patrols to capture known Anti-Iraqi Forces.

Their joint efforts brought in more than 60 terrorists through targeted raids seeking out specific individuals suspected of participating in actions against Iraqi and Coalition Forces.

The operation's main players came from 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division; and Task Force Bandit's 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry

Regiment, 256th BCT. On the first day of the operation, Soldiers captured three detainees who were positively identified as brigade targets.

Capt. David Bauer from Webster, N.Y., commander of E Troop, 101st Cavalry, attached to 256th BCT, said his Soldiers provided the security while the Iraqi Forces conducted operations against the targets.

"We concentrated on supplying a quick reaction force and elements to secure the route, and ensured that it was safe for the (Iraqi troops) to maneuver," Webster said. "This allowed the IA to work independently."

Bauer said the teamwork during this mission made the relationship

See RAGE, page 17



Courtesy Photo

256th BCT Soldiers secure the area where a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device targeted their patrol. No American Soldiers were killed but three were slightly wounded.

Marne Six Sends Know your General Order number 1

Maj. General William G. Webster Jr.
Task Force Baghdad Commander

Terrorists are constantly looking for vulnerabilities to attack. All of us are at risk even when we are back at base camp.

Therefore, any use of drugs and alcohol that impairs judgement and performance places the entire team at risk – making all Soldiers vulnerable to attack.

Mission ... Soldiers ... Teamwork

Rock of the Marne!

10 December 2004
General Order Number 1 (GO-1)

TITLE: Prohibited Activities for U.S. Department of Defense Personnel Assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division or Present Within the 3rd Infantry Division Area of Responsibility (AoR).

PURPOSE: To identify conduct that is prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline of all forces assigned to the 3rd Infantry

Division or present within the 3rd Infantry Division AOR.

AUTHORITY: United States Central Command (USCENTCOM), General Order 1A (GO-1A), paragraph 5. Unit Command Responsibility; Partial Waiver of USCENTCOM General Order 1A, paragraph 4.

APPLICABILITY: This General Order is applicable to all United States military personnel, and to civilians serving with, employed by, or accompanying the Armed Forces of the United States, while assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division or while present in the 3rd Infantry Division's AOR except for personnel expressly excluded under USCENTCOM GO-1A. This General Order also applies to all United States military personnel, and to civilians serving with, employed by, or accompanying the Armed Forces of the United States, while under the operational control of the Commander, 3rd Infantry Division and present for duty in Kuwait or Iraq. Such duty includes but is not limited to pre-deployment site surveys, leader's recons, and advanced party deployments. This General Order is not applicable to any person-

See ORDER, page 19

Secure the incident site.



A second device could be waiting for you.



0004 IEDs KILL

THE ARMY VALUES

Duty *Fulfill your obligations. Accept responsibility for your own actions and those entrusted to your care. Find opportunities to improve oneself for the good of the group.*

Which summer activities do you miss back home?"

The Word on the Street

"I miss going to the beach and spending time with my kids."



Staff Sgt. Robert Safley
3rd Inf. Div. Band
California, Mo.

"I miss wearing the summer clothing: wearing shorts, tank tops and a bathing suit."



Spc. Latekeyia Glover
HHSC, STB
Augusta, Ga.

"I live near the coast, so I miss swimming and jet-skiing."



Spc. Derrick Freshour
MNFI SCJS
Hattiesburg, Miss.

"I miss playing ultimate frisbee back home with the G2 section staff."



Capt. David Dilly
HHOC STB
Arcadia, Calif.

"I miss swimming in the pool in the backyard of my house. I would practically swim every-day during the summer."



Pvt. Jill Holdwick
3rd SSB
Harbor Beach, Mich.

Marne Express

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Commentary

Healing process of Iraq begins with children

There is one group of people in Iraq who are generally innocent of all of the fighting going on around them. They are the Iraqi children.

The children here are like kids anywhere else in the world. They are curious and playful. Their wants and needs are simple.

Candy or a soccer ball will win most Soldiers a gap-toothed grin from an appreciative child.

Knowing that a child has food, safe water to drink, and a safe place to live, in turn, warms a Soldier's heart and eases his mind.

When a Coalition Forces convoy drives by, children can be seen running toward it from half of a mile away to get a chance to wave at the passing Soldiers and give them a "thumbs up."

These kids know nothing of politics.

Many become victims of the bombings and gunfire that rages in the streets of any given city at any given time. They are like children anywhere else. They

have loved ones who constantly strive to keep them out of danger. Unfortunately, many times it doesn't happen.

Many children here are survivors of intense daily stresses that we can only imagine. The weariness and emotional drain of witnessing and experiencing violent times makes them seem much older than they really are. Yet, their youthful spirit shines through the violence and poverty that has aged their precious faces.

Their resiliency is amazing. Many of the kids here in Iraq speak English fairly well. They've learned it in school and more recently from talking to Americans and other English speakers of the coalition.

I've watched them wrestle and play in the streets like any normal kid does.

These children are the future of Iraq.

It is important for all Soldiers to show them a positive example of who we really are. Their early age impressions of us will become evident in the years to come. Soon, they will be the voters, policemen, Soldiers, businessmen and politicians who run this country. The very same country we have strived so hard to rebuild.

It is evident that the Soldiers who patrol the streets every day



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

A group of Iraqi kids smile for a group picture during one of the 1st brigade's missions among the locals. These kids are workers in the city of Samarra. They keep the area clean and work on various city projects.

are the ones who are most important in the development of these children's opinions of us. They are excited and curious about the strange Americans with all their gear and weapons in tow.

Before we came, the only thing they knew about us is what they heard from their par-

ents or the Iraqi media. Some perhaps, have seen examples of western culture depicted in movies.

Long after we are gone, these children will remember our presence and the distinct impressions we left upon them. Impressions more true to life than any future movie or televi-

sion show could portray. Impressions that will help foster a positive mind set and help build future relations.

The healing process is underway, albeit one child at a time.

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane is an Army journalist with 1st BCT

Commentary

Helping hands symbolic of improving U.S. Soldier, Iraqi relations

As I travel on assignments photographing the major and minor successes of 256th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers, I am witnessing not only military missions in progress, but the progress of personal, face to face relations between, we the Soldiers, and the Iraqi people.

As an Army photojournalist, I speak with many and all types of Soldiers during the course of my duties. Many of them have "good faith" stories they share with me and their buddies.

The following incident, which I personally witnessed, is just one of many such testaments which I feel shows improving relationships based on understanding one another's situations and basic common goals. Understanding why we, the Soldiers are here to help, and why they, the common Iraqi populace, have taken so long to warm up to us.

On June 27, Staff Sgt. Shane Garrard from Lafayette, La., of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 256th BCT was traveling through the Shula district when his humvee's passenger-side front tire violently lurched to the right and rapidly dropped off the edge as the standard highway gave way to the weight of the vehicle. Luckily, since the vehicle was moving slowly, there were no injuries.

Like a knight in shining armor, an Iraqi citizen stopped to give a helping hand. In a matter of moments, the lone rescuer was joined by others.

Luckily for Garrard and his team, a boom truck with the ability to lift a

heavy vehicle such as a humvee was traveling the same road. Once the boom truck's operator began helping, many folks from the village gathered around to assist, offer their advice, or just enjoy the entertainment.

Unfortunately, the humvee landed in a sewage ditch. The Soldiers were hesitant to wade through the foul-smelling murky waters to connect the hoisting chains. Noticing this, several villagers waded in, knee-deep, to assist the Soldiers out of their "stinky" situation.

The citizens seemed so excited and willing to help the U.S. Soldiers, that it seemed as if they considered their help as a somewhat type of "payback" for Americans helping them become a free people. Their loud uproar of cheers shattered the quite morning air when the humvee was finally pulled out of the sewage ditch and safely placed back onto the road.

This simple, yet symbolic team effort got me thinking...

During my talks with Soldiers, they said the most frequently asked question they hear when on their two weeks rest and relaxation leave was something along the lines of: "Do the Iraqi people really hate you and want you out of their country?"

From what I've witnessed and heard from countless others, both Soldiers and Iraqi civilians alike, it appears a majority of the Iraqis recognize the need for us to be here and that our efforts are noble.

But from a mass media stand point, good news is great, but bad news sells.

"Some attacks on Shiites have been conducted by foreign terrorist elements to fan the flames of sectarian sedition with the object of destabilizing the country," said John Houston, a cultural advisor for the 3rd Infantry Division.

"Foreign terrorists, such as those in the network of Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi; have as their objective to abort the success of the American enterprise in Iraq, so as to inhibit the spread of what they see as the 'American empire' across the Islamic world," Houston explained. "These terrorists may target Iraqi civilians and (Iraqi) Security Forces, as well as Multi-National Forces, indifferently. Their basic objective is to create mayhem and prevent the emergence of a new secular and progressive Iraq."

I've noticed as our convoys drive through the city streets or along the long winding country roads, children can be seen all over, running at top speed to greet us.

When returning from patrols, Soldiers report that they felt appreciated and admired by the Iraqi children.

Many Iraqis recognize the necessity of Coalition Forces remaining in Iraq until security throughout the country is restored, but at times, it is not safe for them to show any outward appreciation for our presence. They can not take risks by haphazardly showing their emotions of happiness as the children can. But, I have noticed when the adults feel it's safe, a smile appears from ear to ear. They always seem to find a way to communicate their thankfulness to the Soldiers.

Recently, a Baghdad bakery shop owner's life was threatened, and worse, so was his family's. The owner asked members of 256th BCT Military Intelligence Company to stop patronizing his bakery.

"The merchant fears for his life now, just for selling bread," said one of the Soldiers.

If it's perceived by terrorists that an Iraqi is helping "the infidels," he will soon meet his demise.

Despite the ever present dangers, Iraqis are standing up against terrorism. They have a newfound pride and respect for their Iraqi Security Forces. Soldiers from 256th BCT are training ISF personnel in all aspects of warfare and domestic violence to increase their success against insurgents.

It was by no means a small gesture that a community turned out to help the Soldiers out of the ditch. Instead of succumbing to the fears and intimidation of terrorism, the villagers did what they considered the right thing to do.

The rescuers demonstrated courage, because in this volatile country, helping American Soldiers out of a ditch could land them in the very same ditch - face down.

Sgt. Thomas Benoit is an Army journalist with 256th BCT



Sgt. Thomas Benoit

Florida town bonds with 'Sister City' in Iraq

2nd BCT PAO

Media Release

BAGHDAD – Thanks to the initiative of a hometown hero, Kissimmee, Fla. is close to formalizing a "Sister City" agreement with Zafaraniya, Iraq.

Despite the 7,000-mile distance and significant cultural differences, citizens of both communities are working to establish a powerful bond to improve both cities, said Capt. Matthew Wheeler, commander of Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, and a decorated veteran of two tours in Iraq.

Wheeler set the wheels in motion with a hometown connection to Kissimmee, and an innovative idea of bridging the cultural gap between Iraq and America, said Lt. Col. Steven Merkel, commander of 1/9 FA.

Wheeler wrote a letter to the Kissimmee City Commission spawning the idea of a "Sister City."

Upon receiving Wheeler's letter, Kissimmee City Manager Mark Durbin was instantly excited about the possibility and began corresponding with the non-profit organization Sister Cities International. Durbin said he believes opening lines of communication with the Zafaraniya Neighborhood Council has the potential to make an immediate impact on city services in Iraq.

Dr. Mohammed J. Al-Rubeiy, the Zafaraniya NC chairman, said he is excited at the possibilities of a blossoming relationship between Kissimmee and

Zafaraniya.

Mohammed is hoping for an opportunity to travel to Kissimmee to meet Durbin and discuss the future potential of their combined efforts.

Both city councils are filling out the applications and other necessary forms to become members of the Sister Cities Organization.

Once accepted as a member, numerous programs and grant possibilities become available that should positively impact Zafaraniya, Merkel said.

The program can last anywhere from six months to two years and has substantial goals with specific needs in mind.

Grants could be available targeting specific infrastructure projects such as sewer and water distribution, power generation or trash collection.

Merkel said while it may take time to develop the relationships and begin the process of cooperation, this agreement between people separated by such vast distance and culture is indicative of the spirit of friendship between Iraq and the U.S.

It is not only Soldiers and diplomats who have sacrificed and showed willingness to aid in the rise of a free and prosperous Iraq, but also citizens in cities such as Kissimmee who are willing to take

part in the spread of democracy, Merkel said.

Through some creative thinking and a well-written letter by an Army captain, a simple request of dialogue between cities has grown into a unique opportunity to improve the lives of Iraqis.

"The Sister City relationship between Kissimmee and Zafaraniya is important for a number of reasons," Merkel said. "First, this relationship demonstrates to the Iraqi people that our commitment of support to them and to the establishment of a representative government in Iraq is not just a hollow promise. Local leaders here in Iraq were overwhelmed to learn that the City of Kissimmee is willing to dedicate its time and resources to making a difference for the people of Zafaraniya in southern Baghdad.

"The relationship is also important because it demonstrates to our Soldiers the strong support back at home for our mission here in Iraq," Merkel added. "I cannot help but think that the people of Kissimmee will watch with great pride as Iraq takes its rightful place in the world community, knowing that they made a difference in a Sister City half a world away."

"First, this relationship demonstrates to the Iraqi people that our commitment ... is not just a hollow promise."

Lt. Col. Steven Merkel
commander 1/9 FA

Camp Taji medics, emergency services respond during exercise

Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq—A Chinook helicopter sits on the far side of the forward arming refueling point. Soldiers and civilians lie on the ground or stumble around in confusion, some are still inside the aircraft.

As the sun beats down on the concrete pad, Soldiers from the FARP carrying litters race towards the waiting helicopter. As they move among the Soldiers on the ground and in aircraft, they assess injuries and begin to move Soldiers away from the aircraft.

Thankfully, this was not a real emergency, but a joint mass casualty drill conducted on July 8 by Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), Aviation Brigade, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, and HHC 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance).

Training of this type is conducted quarterly, said Maj. Christopher K. McGraw, HHC, Avn. Bde., to practice for medical emergencies and to test the systems used to handle those emergencies.

"It's more likely that we'd get a (dining facility) or PX hit," said McGraw, "but this gets people to think about what might happen."

Location and simulated emergency weren't the only things switched up in this training. With so many aviation assets at Camp Taji, any badly injured Soldiers or civilians would be transported by helicopter to combat area support hospitals (CASH) in

Balad or the International Zone.

For this exercise, however, weather conditions were said to be too dusty to fly. Not being able to fly the injured Soldiers out forces the medics to evaluate patients more closely, said McGraw, to see whether patients can be stabilized for a convoy to a CASH.

After the exercise started, the Soldiers at the FARP notified the Airfield Defense Operations Center (ADOC), which then notified the Base Defense Operations Center (BDOC), and from there to the various supporting troop medical clinics (TMC), as well as Camp Taji emergency services.

Letting the ADOC know what had happened was just the first step for FARP personnel. After clearing the aircraft, casualties were evaluated. Casualties who could walk or could help others were directed to a staging area away from the "burning" aircraft. Litter crews hurried to move Soldiers who were too badly "injured" to move themselves.

As the first medics arrived, casualties were sorted into categories, from worst to least injured, loaded on field litter ambulances and whisked away to various TMCs.

Arriving on the scene to observe the combat lifesavers and mortuary affairs, 2nd Lt. Tammy K. Guillet took the reins as medical incident commander (MIC) after realizing the appointed MIC hadn't arrived on scene yet. Camp Taji emergency services had appointed an incident commander, but had not appointed a triage, treatment

or staging officer.

"The lack of communications equipment on the ground was frustrating" said Guillet, since she couldn't communicate with the various TMCs to determine how many patients each could handle.

Despite that, Guillet was impressed with the response. "The evac guys were taking to each other," she said, "and everyone came together as a team." Guillet also praised the firefighters for their quick, professional response.

The lack of communication between the ADOC, BDOC and TMCs proved to be a valuable lesson learned in this exercise.

Despite initial confusion as patients were evacuated, Spc. Glen B. Ordinario, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance) was pleased with his TMC's response.

"We did well responding and reacting," said Ordinario. "I got to do treatment in the FLA, which was good training for me."

Working together to stabilize patients at the TMC was good experience because "it gets the flow going, and shows you what equipment you have, what works, and what deficiencies you have" said Ordinario.

"I think it went very well under the circumstances," said Ordinario.

After being stabilized as much as possible, FLAs from the various TMCs met at the 550th Area Support Medical Company, Division Support Battalion to prepare to convoy to a CASH.



Spc. Jennifer Fitts

Spc. Yancey O. Devoy, a medic with Headquarters Support Company, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, helps stabilize a patient during a mass casualty exercise July 8.

Despite some initial confusion, medics gained confidence as the exercise progressed, said Guillet. "This was a huge team effort," said Guillet.

Poetic creativity by the troops, for the troops

Sgt. David Kerr
70th Eng. Bn.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Personal time to pursue the activities each person holds dear to their heart or think they are suited for is hard to find in the day-to-day hustle and bustle of the working world. Whether you are an accountant, a foodservice provider, a stay-at-home parent or any of the other multitudes of professions in our world, extra time is always needed to pursue your own dreams.

But what about those who are serving during wartime overseas, separated from their friends and families, pulling long hours and getting little rest? What do they do in the limited spare time they dredge up? Does their creativity die with the hardened environment?

Soldiers in the 70th Engineer Battalion of Fort Riley, Kan., would answer that question with a resounding "NO!" When you look beneath the surface at who these Soldiers really are, you can find out some interesting information about what they do during their free time.

At Camp Taji, there are many morale, welfare, and recreation activities that are standard fare at a military camp. Weekly boxing matches and nightly basketball games are some of the popular activities along with dancing and movies.

But some Soldiers are looking beyond the boxing ring and the basketball courts.

Every week the MWR facilities sponsor Poetry Night, giving brave individuals the opportunity to

stand in front of their peers and recite the meaningful words they've pulled from their brains and their hearts.

Some of the readings are humorous, some are dark and morose, while others are slightly perverse. No doubt, all of them are unique.

Poetry Night is attended by a mixture of all ranks; from colonels and sergeants major, all the way down to privates, all looking to share their take on the world with those willing to listen.

Despite the military rank structure, everyone is an equal at the poetry readings. Most everyone is respectful of each performer's thoughts; all of them knowing the courage it takes to share one's inner-self with strangers.

If audience members don't respect the performers, a group of four enlisted members who began the weekly event, politely excuse them.

As the performers begin, the disc jockey listens for a moment and then quickly finds music to match the poems' rhythm and character.

Pfc. La Donna Gorman has been attending the Poetry Night for several weeks and has performed with an array of styles on stage. When asked about which style she likes best, she replied, "I don't really have a style."

While some who craft thoughts into rhythmic verse stay with one style or pattern, Gorman refuses to pin herself down with just one type of poem.

She writes from the heart – from the loss of a fellow Soldier, to a relationship she has put on hold because of her deployment.

"I write from real life experiences," Gorman said. While her words may make some blush, there is definite style in her performance.

The guidelines are clear. While onstage, poets' words must have meaning and not be slanderous to the military or other persons.

Slang and foul language are acceptable, but are only used when artistically necessary.

For Gorman, it relieves stress to read her poetry to an audience.

Sometimes, she finds herself a little embarrassed by the crowd's reaction to her words, but she has never been offended.

"I like to get the reaction," she chuckled when asked why she reads some of her most provocative poems. "Some of the stuff I write about is really sultry."

The audiences have always remained respectful of her performances.

"It's like Christmas," Gorman said, explaining her feelings of anticipation for her next performance.

Poetry Night is her venue for stress relief. It has helped her remain calm.

Gorman experiences a boost even when she's not performing. Especially when others at the camp who have listened to her artistic words tell her she hit home with her last performance.

Perhaps on her return to Fort Riley, Kan., Gorman will seek out poetry reading venues with her fellow performers. If so, the local population could enjoy what many here at Camp Taji already have – a simple night's enjoyment of creative rhythm and rhyme.

U.S. Soldiers provide safe water to villagers

Sgt. Jennifer J. Eidson
22nd MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE O'RYAN, BALAD, Iraq – Turning on the kitchen sink to get a glass of clean water is not an option for Iraqis in villages near Forward Operating Base O'Ryan, but Task Force Liberty Soldiers are helping change that by bringing fresh water close to their front doors.

The area has palm trees, green grass, fresh crops and a variety of water sources to include canals, lakes and streams, but the villagers still don't have fresh drinking water, that is why members of Task Force 1-128 are installing water treatment facilities to turn non-purified water sources into safe, drinkable water.

Task Force 1-128 is composed of Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, Wisconsin Army National Guard; Troop K, 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment of the Tennessee Army National Guard, and Soldiers from 411th Civil Affairs Battalion. Together, they are working with locals and government officials to improve the villager's quality of life.

Clean water is something the Iraqi people need, said Sgt. 1st Class Jean Briggs, a civil affairs team sergeant with 411th Civil Affairs Battalion, Danbury, Conn.

"Basically, water is life, especially in a place like this," he said. "It's a necessity. It's definitely not just something people can do without and it has been our primary focus."

Briggs said they began the project by purchasing four water purification systems for the area and they've been busy working with local Iraqis to run water lines to the homes.

"Task force commanders have been paying locals to lay down pipe from the water tanks and run it along the roads," Briggs said. "We install spigots in front of each house."

Providing clean water for the Iraqis is important Briggs said, but he hopes someday the Iraqis will get purified running water in their individual homes.

"It is the best we can do right now," he said. "It is a quick fix until we get to a point in this whole operation where we can install plumbing directly into the homes, but for them here, it is a big step just to have it at the front door."

Providing a clean water source available to the Iraqis will lower their chance of getting waterborne illnesses, said Sgt. Desire Michaelian, a civil affairs Soldier with 426th Civil Affairs Battalion, and a native of Westhills, Calif.

"It gets rid of all the possibility of waterborne diseases," said Michaelian. "Not only that, but it is for crops as well. Eventually the irrigation (systems) will

be using clean water as well, which will make the vegetables and fruits a lot healthier and better for you."

Completing these water projects will provide villagers with something that many people in the world take for granted, said Westchester, N.Y. native Spc. Octavio Vila, a civil affairs Soldier with 411th CA Bn.

"It is so simple to us, but to be able to bring clean water is a huge step as far as hopefully getting rid of disease and things like that," Vila said.

Briggs said the water filtration system is basic in design. Hoses run from water sources such as canals, ponds, lakes or streams which transport the water to the system where it goes through six primary filters to remove any large sedimentation. Water then passes through a second system where chemicals are added to kill any bacteria. Finally, the water is pumped into a storage holding tank.

Michaelian said helping the Iraqis acquire water purification systems is important for the future of a healthy Iraq.

"I believe it is because of the children," he said. "I have two children of my own and going around to these villages and seeing that they don't have clean water ... or electricity, (this) feels like something that we should do. We are fortunate enough to be Americans, why not spread a little bit of it to them."



Sgt. Jennifer J. Eidson
Sgt. 1st Class Jean Briggs, 411th Civil Affairs Battalion, civil affairs team sergeant, explains how a water treatment plant they had installed in a village near Forward Operating Base O'Ryan, purifies the water taken from a nearby canal.

**No
Soldier
left
behind**

Sgt. Matthew Maupin

"I will not 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.



Weather forecasts can be life-or-death in Iraq

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The forecast for Baghdad: hot and dusty.

While this prediction might seem obvious, the process of forecasting the weather is a science that combines a high level of training and a lot of practice; with a bit of luck thrown in for good measure.

The weather controls our everyday decisions, from what we decide to wear to our daily activities.

For Soldiers of 3rd Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, however, knowledge of the weather can be information that is a matter of both mission completion and life or death.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Aviation Brigade Weather Team is formed by five Airmen trained to anticipate weather patterns in order to help the brigade in their everyday missions.

Savannah, Ga., native Air Force Tech. Sgt. Julie Moretto, 15th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron and the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Weather Team, feels the team has many responsibilities.

“The weather team is in charge of observation of current weather,” Moretto said. “We also forecast the weather for the aviators, and keep the Tactical Operations Center and brigade informed on the weather so they can better

make decisions regarding missions.”

Weather team personnel play a vital role in the well-being of pilots. It is their responsibility to make sure pilots have essential weather information pertinent to their missions.

“We give a heads-up on weather that can affect future missions, and whether flights will be delayed or on time,” Moretto said. “For every helicopter that goes up, we provide that pilot with a briefing. Without the briefings, aviators won’t know what to expect. We basically help provide safety for the pilots so they can get the mission done.”

Jacksonville, Ark., native Air Force Senior Airman Thomas Hughes, 154th Weather Flight, found forecasting the Iraq weather patterns a difficult and unique experience.

“The dust here is quite a hassle,” Hughes said. “It is almost impossible to forecast. I have never worked in an environment with this much dust.”

Moretto agrees the dust in Iraq can make her job difficult. She has been to Iraq before, but this is the first time she has worked with dust of such severity.

“The summer weather pattern is one of the hardest to forecast,” Moretto admitted. “No two dust storms are alike. They all differ in thickness and visibility.”

The weather team uses sophisticated equipment to handle challenges such as



Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Tech. Sgt. Julie Moretto (left) and Senior Airman Steven Hollatz, both of 15th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron, check their observation equipment on the roof of the Tactical Operations Center.

dust storms to help in their forecast. The equipment allows the team to gauge such important facets of flight such as visibility, atmospheric pressure, temperature, lightning detection and turbulence.

“We have very good communication systems and weather models,” Moretto said. “Satellite dishes and tactical observation equipment allows us to get minute-to-minute weather updates.”

Their forecasting equipment is located on the roof of the Tactical Operations Center, where they often check for updates.

“We check the system,

power supply and equipment at least once an hour, sometimes more during degraded weather conditions,” Moretto said. “We also check the visibility both by the automated system and the human eye. We like to see the weather for ourselves for verification.”

Weather team personnel take great pride in what they do.

For Hughes, it is job that is very self-gratifying and well worth the six months of training at forecasting school.

“It is great ... technical work where I get a lot of job satisfaction,” Hughes said. “If we miss a step, it can be

hazardous for the pilots, but when we are right (in our forecast) it means the pilots get to fly and do their mission.”

Moretto couldn’t agree more. “This job is very challenging, but at the same time very rewarding,” she said. “I get my satisfaction knowing that I did my job correct and that I played a part in a pilot’s safe return.”

While the weather can be unpredictable, what is easy to forecast is the steadfast nature of the weather team and their commitment to the mission and the safety of the brigade aviators.

IA Soldiers taking the lead



Sgt. Thomas Benoit

A Soldier from 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, stationed at Camp Hawk, displays his country’s flag with pride by wearing it on his helmet. U.S. Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Brigade Combat Team, provided the outer cordon while IA Soldiers conducted searches inside Ameriyah July 21.

Civil affairs teams win hearts, minds

Spc. Christopher Mallard
4th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – In June, more than 800 Soldiers from the 351st Civil Affairs-Psychological Operations Command arrived in Iraq and began replacing their predecessors in the theater of operations.

The task force began mobilizing at Camp Roberts, Calif. in April and continued on to Fort Bragg, N.C. Their training was intensive, exhaustive, and drew on many of the lessons learned from previous rotations to prepare the Soldiers for the specific missions they will conduct while serving in Iraq.

Civil affairs Soldiers have garnered significant attention over the last few years for the unique skills and mission-enhancing role they bring to the combat zone. Generally, CA is considered an augmenting force that assists maneuver commanders by helping to separate, protect, and improve the lives of local citizens as the war is brought to the enemy on an asymmetrical battlefield.

Although civil affairs missions are often associated with the phrase “winning the hearts and minds,” CA officials said people should not confuse their missions with simply placing a pretty face on an often ugly war. Their missions have, at times, found them in the crosshairs of terrorist activity.

As Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 continues, a new battalion has come to Baghdad to relieve the old and its Soldiers are taking on the projects, assuming the commitments and trying to forge new relationships with emerging leaders during this critical period as a new Iraq takes shape.

The 448th Civil Affairs Battalion is based out of Fort Lewis, Wash., and is commanded by Lt. Col. John Froelicher. The unit began assuming its

duties at forward operating bases in and around Baghdad during June. Teams 3 and 4 of A Company, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion, based in Santa Barbara, Calif., provide direct support to 1st Battalion, 448th Infantry Regiment, and recently took to the streets in their area of operations after 10 days of “left seat-right seat” replacement training.

CA Soldiers are tasked with recognizing opportunities as they spring up, as well as mitigating disputes when they erupt or turn into a deadlock.

They can be proud of their efforts of jump starting the local economy, making the political process reflect the goals of the local population and moving reconstruction projects forward.

Some of the many projects that the 425th CA Bn. will facilitate during the next year will involve working with sub-contractors to improve essential services.

One example of this teamwork is the water treatment plant which is beginning to treat sewage and redirect it from flowing into and contaminating the Tigris River.

Another project is returning a meat-packing plant back into a functional facility in the Al-Rashid District. Once it comes on-line, it will employ more than 3,000 people.

CA teams are ever present at district and neighborhood advisory council meetings to help foster local democracy. This often means hitting the muhallas or villages and conducting “atmospherics” – a spontaneous, but very accurate method of taking the pulse of the neighborhoods.

The company is comprised of four teams which move about their area every day. They travel through the neighborhoods as subject matter experts and leave a lasting imprint on the people to whom they bring hope.

Rebuilding Iraq one stitch at a time

Maj. Alayne Conway
4th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – One mission that has remained constant for Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division since arriving in Iraq is helping rebuild the civilian infrastructure.

Assistance is provided in many different ways, but the overall intent is to offer guidance as the Iraqis themselves rebuild their country.

Although a small project for the Al Rasheed district, the opening of the Jihad Sewing School July 5 was an encouraging step toward improving the local economy.

“The school is small but they are training about 15 to 20 women and when they finish, they will be able to go directly into the work force and put their skills to use,” said Capt.

Christian Neels, 3rd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt. civil-military operations officer, and native of Muscatine, Iowa.

The school teaches women to use sewing machines to make clothing and a variety of other items. These crafted items can be sold on the local economy or the women can get a job in a local factory.

The project was nominated by Menar Fadhel, one of the leaders from the Jihad neighborhood council who also serves on the Al Rasheed District Council Neels said. She and another woman are volunteers who manage the sewing center and offer two training sessions per day.

The sewing school was funded with Commander’s

Capt. Christian Neels
3/7th Inf.

Emergency Relief Project money at a cost of \$5,000.

“Menar is stepping up to improve the community and giving the women in the Jihad area an improved quality of life,” Neels said.

“The school is small but they are training about 15 to 20 women and when they finish, they will go directly into the work force.”



Courtesy Photo

Two women refine their skills at the Jihad Sewing Center in the Al Rasheed District. The school celebrated its grand opening July 5. The school trains 15-20 women at a time and teaches the women to use sewing machines to make clothing and a variety of other items. These items can be sold on the local economy or the women can get a job in a local factory.

**The 425th Civil Affairs motto:
“Win the Peace”**

**Uphold the Warrior Ethos. Obey all regulations and General Orders. Serve with honor.
“Rock of the Marne!”**

48th Brigade brings water to farmers

Spc. Tracy Smith
48th BCT PAO

YUSUFYIAH, Iraq – The Tigris River is the lifeblood of the Arab J'Bour village and other rural farming communities in Yusufiyah, Iraq. With that in mind, 48th Brigade Combat Team civil affairs Soldiers paid a visit to Yusufiyah Pumping Station Number One July 4 to follow up on the progress of military engineering efforts designed to give the people of that region their own independence.

Thousands of families will benefit from the water supplied by the Yusufiyah pumping station. As a predominantly farming region, the need for water factors greatly into the community's ability to survive on its own.

Servicing a vital irrigation reser-



Abou Hamid (foreground, kneeling) an apricot farmer, and his friend, Abou Najem, visit the Yusufiyah Pumping Station to offer any assistance they can in maintaining the station July 4. The Tigris River is the 'lifeblood' of the Arab J'Bour village and other rural farming communities in Yusufiyah, Iraq.

voir, the pumping station draws from the only abundant water source, the Tigris River. Maintaining functionality of the pumping station has been challenging.

The 48th BCT Civil Affairs team has been working with Iraq's Ministry of Electricity, said Lt. Col. Scott Carter, the civil affairs officer for 48th BCT.

"The goal is to have 12 hours of power a day," he said. "But because of the necessity for rolling blackouts, the down-time puts significant demands on the pumping system."

The blackouts are mandatory, as the electrical infrastructure is re-worked to give consistent electrical service throughout Iraq.

"We are very proud and very thankful for the U.S. military's help," Abou Hamid stated through a translator.

Hamid, an apricot farmer who lives 25 kilometers away from the pumping station and the Tigris River, said he felt no one had previously taken an interest in the region's situation. He said he appreciates the caring the military and the 48th BCT Soldiers have shown to the people of Iraq.

"I see the situation getting better," Hamid added.

Initial requests for blackout exceptions were for the hours of 6 a.m. through 6 p.m. This allows farmers to get and store any resources they may need during the day.

Initial surveys indicate 12 pumps are needed to supply the region. However, only eight are operational when full electrical power is available. Generators can supplement the shortfall of power, but the antiquated generators the station currently uses are difficult to repair consistently. Wiring issues do not permit more than eight pumps to operate at one time. A new generator has been delivered to the site and the civil affairs team has arranged for the delivery of two additional generators. These will benefit farming efforts by supplementing the existing power deficit.

As a close-knit community, the villagers are very considerate of one



1st Lt. Anthony Bittar, a Soldier with 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, 48th Brigade Combat Team, takes time to talk to a local boy during a visit to the Yusufiyah pumping station in Iraq July 4. The pumping station had not functioned for some time. The U.S. military and the Iraqi government have worked together on this humanitarian project to bring water to outlying areas in this region.

Photos by Spc. Tracy Smith

other. They desire peace, to be successful and self-sufficient. Carrying out that theme of community cohesiveness, some villagers have set up private pumping systems.

"We do not want to (impede) the pumps' ability to filter to other areas," Adb Allah Umran said.

He and his cousin, Hashim Yousif Salah, manage their family's farm, which is very close to the pumping station. They have been permitted to set up a private system there.

"Because our farming area is large and so close to the river, this does not interfere with our neighbors' ability to appreciate the irrigation waters," Umran said.

Because of the arid conditions of this region, a farm cannot sustain itself for more than two weeks

without water.

"I thank you for everything," Hamid said, enjoying a cool sip of water. "My dream is to one day visit your country and repay you for all of your kindness, God willing."

"I thank you for everything. My dream is to one day visit your country and repay you all for your kindness, God willing."

Abou Hamid
Yusufiyah resident

'IED alley': from mean street to main street

2nd BCT PAO
Media Release

BAGHDAD – Each day, Coalition Forces throughout Baghdad travel along key road arteries on a variety of missions; and each day, these patrols risk attack by insurgents using improvised explosive devices and small-arms fire.

Recently, one such route notorious for IED attacks and hijackings in southeast Baghdad has shown a dramatic turn for the better.

It was in early June, that Bulldog Battery, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, received the mission of securing one of the key avenues of approach into Baghdad.

"During May, the route had 32 IED attacks and was nicknamed 'IED Alley' by the Soldiers who frequented the dangerous stretch of road," said Capt. Roy Beeson, battery commander. "By June, we had reduced the number of attacks to just two."

The battalion commander praised the efforts of the battery.

"The security improvements along the route are due to the extraordinary efforts of the Soldiers of Bulldog and their commander," said Lt. Col. Steven Merkel. "I gave them a tough mission with an issue to solve. I wanted the route secure, and that is exactly what they have done."

"The security improvements along the route are due to extraordinary efforts of the Soldiers of Bulldog and their commander."

Lt. Col. Steven Merkel
commander 1/9 FA

The Bulldogs employed various techniques to improve the security of the route.

"To combat these deadly attacks, we employed a number of patrolling tactics, techniques, and procedures to counter the various Anti-Iraqi Forces methods for emplacing and observing IEDs," Beeson said.

But the major key to their success was placing an emphasis on building strong relationships with the residents and workers in the area.

"We spend a lot of time talking to the people who live and work here," Beeson said. "In less than a month our patrol leaders knew the names of all the

home and business owners in the area."

Maj. John G. Clement, battalion executive officer said, "Bulldog has gotten the job done because they gained the support of the local nationals who now serve as just another set of eyes and ears helping to keep the road clear."

"It's long days of physically demanding work; walking and driving the routes, but in this case it is great that our Soldiers can directly see the positive impact they are having on the safety of a community," Beeson said.

1st Lt. Scott Alpaugh, a platoon leader in Bulldog and a native of Rochester, N.Y., agreed.

"It's hard work ... out for long hours each day, but it's worth it when we have Iraqis approach us with IED locations, or tell us where insurgents are hiding," he said. "Every day we help someone, it compounds the amount of trust and confidence that the citizens of Iraq have in our abilities."

While Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Forces are the visible personification of the changes in Iraq, it is the Iraqi people themselves who are making these changes possible.

"The Soldiers of (Bulldog) Battery know that each friendship gained through trust and respect is another weight added to the side of safety and security along their stretch of road," said Merkel. "(It's a) road now traveled with assurance instead of fear."

1/13 Armor honors fallen comrade

Spc. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

TAJI, Iraq – An officer stands at a lectern memorializing a Soldier he commanded, a chaplain offers scripture to help the grieving members of the crowd get through their pain, and a friend talks about how a fallen Soldier touched his life during their brief friendship.

Soldiers of B Company, 1st Battalion, 13th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, 3rd Infantry Division, and many others gathered to honor and remember Pfc. Anthony M. Mazzarella, a Blue Springs, MO., native, in a ceremony July 9.

Mazzarella, an armored crewman for B Co., was killed in a vehicle accident during a combat patrol July 5.

“What makes Pfc. Mazzarella notable and special is not the last moment of his life, but rather who he was in his life itself,” said Lt. Col. Eric J. Wesley, commander of 1/13 which is nicknamed the “Dakota” battalion.

“He was a young man. He came to the Dakotas after we had already deployed,” Wesley said. “Nonetheless, he quickly integrated into this team with impressive effectiveness and charisma.”

Wesley pointed out that Mazzarella was part of a generation of Soldiers who entered the Army after the Global War on Terror began and chose to put their lives on the line, not because of a draft, but because they believed in serving their country in its time of need.

He encouraged the crowd gathered at Warrior Chapel to listen to the words of Mazzarella’s company commander and one of the Soldiers he served with to learn about the Soldier’s legacy.

“Anthony Mazzarella, or ‘Motts’ as some of his fellow Soldiers called him, came to us after we deployed, but he was a much needed breath of fresh air,” said Capt. Charles J. Querriera, B Co. commander.

Querriera said he would always remember Mazzarella’s humor and ability to enjoy any situation life threw his way.

“A part of him remains with us,” he said. “His good nature, his cheerfulness will live on in each and every one of us.”

One of the people who knew that sense of humor best was Spc. David Kersey, Mazzarella’s brother-in-



Spc. Matthew Wester

Pfc. Anthony M. Mazzarella’s helmet is displayed during a memorial service for him at Camp Taji June 9. Mazzarella, of B Company, 1st Battalion, 13th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, was killed in a vehicle accident during a combat patrol July 5.

arms and friend.

“His morale was so high he took the situation, whatever it might be, and lightened it,” Kersey said. “He never failed to make me laugh.”

Kersey described his friend as a prankster, but also a dedicated Soldier who became a hero when he lost his life serving his country.

“He now transitions from a great Soldier, great person and a great friend to a hero,” he said.

Chaplain (Capt.) Jeff Bartels offered his thoughts on that transition, encouraging the Soldiers at the memorial not take their lives for granted, but also not

to dwell on the possibility of their lives ending prematurely.

“Let us not forget life,” Bartels said. “We do not understand why death claims the lives of people, especially those so young and in the prime of life. While death is inevitable, life is more powerful.”

Kersey said Mazzarella believed in that as well.

“We can’t let his absence get us down. He wouldn’t like that,” Kersey said. “He would want us to go on and remember that he’ll never really be gone. He will be a Bravo Company ‘Roughneck’ forever and a hero for eternity.”

U.S. Forces, Estonian platoon work together again during cordon-and-search missions

Spc. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

TAJI, Iraq – An Estonian soldier raises his rifle to cover an American scout who is searching a house.

Their uniforms, weapons, and even languages are different, but their goals here are the same – find illegal weapons and munitions, and disrupt terrorist activity.

Task Force Baghdad elements of 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, teamed up with Soldiers from an Estonian Army platoon while conducting a cordon-and-search mission northwest of Baghdad.

The Soldiers started their searches before dawn and the raids continued into the sweltering afternoon hours.

The operation was part of a transition for 2/70 Bn., which recently moved to a new area of operation northwest of Baghdad.

“We were just assigned to the area of operations here, so (the operation) gained us familiarization within the area,” said Maj. Tony D. Forbes Jr., executive officer for the battalion. “It allowed the Soldiers to get their boots on the ground.”

Forbes said the operation was the first time his battalion mobilized a large force of Soldiers to

cordon and search in their new area, and it was a valuable experience because the Soldiers got to know the terrain and interact with the residents.

“Basically, we just get out in the area and do what we can to learn,” said Capt. Anton W. Kemps, commander of 2/70’s Scout Platoon. “We do all sorts of patrols out there to get our leaders and our squads oriented to how the land works.”

Kemps said unit assignments to different zones are very fluid and his battalion’s troops have done their best adapting to the various places they have been assigned during their deployment.

The search was also a chance for local citizens to see Coalition Forces actively engaged in protecting their neighborhood and rooting out terrorists.

“By doing an operation there, you get closer to the people,” Kemps said. “You let them know you are going after the bad guys and hopefully you catch some of those bad guys.”

Kemps’ platoon moved from building to building, searching every room, every cabinet and even a chicken coop.

The Estonian Soldiers were part of the effort. Although they’ve only been in Iraq for a short time during this tour, their history with 2/70 Bn. goes back

to the liberation of Iraq in 2003.

“They came to us for a portion of Operation Iraqi Freedom,” Kemps said. “The Estonians requested to come with the battalion just because of the impression we left on each other while working together during OIF 1.”

“The Estonians are not new to us,” Forbes said. “We’re honored to have them working with us again.”

Forbes said the search operation was an opportunity for the leadership of the platoon-sized Estonian element to mesh with his battalion’s leadership.

“We integrated the Estonians into the search so that we could see how they did things and they could see how we did things,” Kemps said.

The partnership was fruitful. “Our finds were significant from the intelligence perspective,” Forbes said. “We found some weapons that weren’t authorized and we did have several detainees.”

Forbes said the intelligence gathered from the detainees has already proven valuable. The raid was the first of many operations the battalion and the Estonian troops will plan and execute in their new sector of responsibility.

“We’re doing our best and we’re learning,” Kemps said. “I think we’re doing pretty well.”



Spc. Matthew Wester

An Estonian soldier covers a squad of scouts from 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, during a cordon-and-search mission northwest of Baghdad June 27.



Photos by Spc. Matthew Wester

Dr. (Maj.) Gregory Martin (right), a San Antonio, Texas, resident and clinic physician for C Company, 125th Forward Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, and Dr. (Maj.) Troy Denunzio, an El Paso, Texas, resident and field surgeon for 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, examine an Iraqi woman during a humanitarian medical mission northwest of Baghdad July 4.

U.S. Soldiers treat illness, connect with community

Spc. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

TAJI, Iraq – Dozens of residents of an Iraqi village near Taji waited patiently to see Army doctors, who set up an impromptu clinic in a local school July 4.

Outside the school, smiling kids formed a long line while civil affairs Soldiers handed out toys, shoes and soccer balls.

The American Soldiers, far away from the fireworks and July 4th barbecues taking place in the United States, reached out to an Iraqi community in need of help.

Soldiers of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division's 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Regiment and 125th Forward Support Battalion, spent their Independence Day conducting a humanitarian mission northwest of Baghdad.

"We're here to help the people of this village, medically, in any way we can, and we're also here to spread goodwill," said Dr. (Maj.) Gregory Martin, a San Antonio, Texas, resident and clinic physician for C Company, 125th FSB.

"We're doing basic medical outreach for this community," said Dr. (Maj.) Troy Denunzio, from El Paso, Texas, a field

surgeon for 70th Armor Regt. "We're establishing a good relationship with the community, creating an atmosphere of friendliness."

Denunzio said the medical Soldiers treated minor illnesses and distributed humanitarian supplies.

In a shady breezeway on one wing of the school, villagers received one-on-one consultations with the Army doctors.

The physicians examined the locals closely, talked to them about their medical complaints via translators, and recommended medications for them from the two large boxes of medicine brought to the site.

"We're able to treat minor illnesses," Martin said. "Sometimes we can help with more severe infections; we have medications for that."

Martin said people with chronic diseases or serious medical conditions still need to get treatment at an Iraqi hospital, but that his team could help alleviate a lot of common non-life threatening illnesses.

"We've treated a lot of gastrointestinal problems, skin infections and respiratory illnesses," Denunzio said.

After receiving their treatments, the children received an extra treat – toys and shoes

courtesy of 490th Civil Affairs Battalion.

"We're doing a little humanitarian aid distribution to go along with the (medical mission)," said Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie Reece, an Abilene, Texas, native and a team sergeant for A Company, 490th CA Bn. "We're trying get shoes out to the little ones who don't have any shoes ... feel-good stuff."

The medical troops also felt good about what they contributed to the community during the mission.

"It's great," said Spc. Charley A. Gates, a medic for 2/70 Armor Bn. "Hopefully, after we do this, they can sustain themselves with their own medical care."

Denunzio was positive about the results of the mission and, like Gates, saw it as part of a transition for medical care for residents in this part of Iraq.

He said the medical team treated more than 50 people and treated the symptoms of approximately 100 more.

"I don't think this is to establish continuous care," Denunzio said. "Most of them need to follow up (with Iraqi doctors), and our intention down the road is to transition to that."



Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie Reece, an Abilene, Texas native and a team sergeant for A Company, 490th Civil Affairs Battalion, hands an Iraqi woman a pair of shoes for her daughter during a humanitarian mission northwest of Baghdad July 4.

Vehicle recovery team ready at moment's notice

Sgt. David Bill
48th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – Staff Sgt. Steven Dowling, 48th Brigade Combat Team, has a tough mission. As the recovery team noncommissioned officer in charge, it is his team's responsibility to be ready day and night to recover any vehicle disabled or destroyed by an explosive device.

Dowling, of B Company, 148th Support Battalion, and a resident of Jesup, Ga., is a maintenance team chief, but since arriving in Iraq he has been assigned to run the Catastrophic Damaged Vehicle Recovery unit for the company.

"I don't mind doing it ... but I hope for no more than one (recovery) per shift."

His 12-person crew is divided into three teams of four Soldiers with varying maintenance experience.

"The goal is for six people per team ... but there are not enough trained Soldiers currently available."

After returning from his first recovery mission, Spc. Michael Quinones, of Eastman, Ga., a wheeled vehicle mechanic for the unit, said everything went well.

"It was okay, you don't know how bad the vehicle was damaged (until you see



Sgt. David Bill

Combat-damaged vehicles being transported hundreds of miles away to a repair facility in Kuwait.

it), but everyone was on the ball," he said. "The 648th had good security for the mission."

The disabled vehicle belonged to the 648th Engineer Battalion, and it was those Soldiers who provided security for the recovery team.

"Once we got the vehicle

back to the motor pool for 648th, they turned right around and went back to the business of their mission," Quinones added.

When the call comes in for the recovery team to respond, it means a convoy has been hit by some sort of attack and they (the convoy) can not "self recover" the damaged

vehicle using a tow rope, tow bar or just by pushing the vehicle out of the area.

The process of recovering a vehicle with catastrophic damage is challenging. The condition of the vehicle and its location can make that challenge even more difficult. The process requires that the crew manipulate a wrecker

into position to lift the vehicle, which may require pulling it from a ditch or turning it over, and then moving a flatbed "low boy" trailer underneath the damaged vehicle so it can be lowered down and strapped onto the low boy for transport.

"We had no training for this prior to our arrival in country," Dowling said. "We've gained experience on the ground, doing 'right-seat' rides with 10th Mountain Division's (support battalion)."

Additional equipment and training will aid the process of the often difficult task of vehicle recovery. A large flatbed truck with the Palletized Loading System will be added to the arsenal of equipment Dowling's team will use to expedite the process.

"With the PLS, it should take 15 minutes from getting on the incident scene to moving out," Dowling said.

Lt. Col. Jeffery Edge, Commander of the 148th Support Battalion, 48th BCT, emphasized the importance of his unit's mission.

"We have to be able to get out to the Soldiers on the side of the road with a broken-down vehicle and recover them quickly so they can continue their mission."

Double excellence nets Fort Stewart \$2 million award

Catherine Caruso
Special to The Marne Express

Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield's recently announced win of the Army 2005 Community of Excellence award and Commander in Chief's Award for Installation Excellence brings a total of \$2 million to the installation.

Now garrison commander Col. John Kidd just needs to figure out what to spend it on.

"Fear not, we can figure out how to spend the money. It's how best to spend the money," he said. "We have some plans, but we really want to know what the community wants."

The awards recognized the installation as the best in the Army, and in the Department of Defense, for achieving its mission - supporting units, Soldiers, and military families.

"Being named the best in the is a great honor," Kidd said. "But competing for awards never detracted from the installation's primary mission."

"The evaluation team arrived just as we were loading ships for Iraq," he said. "In some ways, we weren't able to spend the time and effort we should have liked with them. But, even as busy as we were, our submission was quite competitive."

The team evaluates the installation for efficiency, effectiveness, and customer focused services.

Janet Blanks, director of plans, analysis and integration, submitted a portfolio of strategic planning processes the size of a book.

The installation's garrison manag-

ment actually is a book, used as part of the curriculum at the Combined General Staff College's manager's course.

"When someone reaches the level we've reached, people want to know how we (did it)," Blanks said.

Customer feedback is a big part of that process. Those customers include Soldiers stationed here, military family members, retirees, and even other units who come to the installation for training or mobilization.

In fact, much of the evaluation process focuses on how well the installation outfits units, moves equipment, and trains Soldiers for war.

According to the Army, and now the Department of Defense, no installation is doing better than Fort Stewart.

"The division's mobilization proved those plans don't just look good on paper, but work when they are put in action," Kidd said.

A customer-focused philosophy also guided the post's suggestion process for how to spend \$200,000 awarded in 2000, which was used to install reader boards at the main entrances to the cantonment areas at Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield.

In 2004, the \$1 million Army Community of Excellence cash award was put to work building walking and running trails around the installation after the community spoke up.

The installation continues that tradition with the \$2 million award this year. A formal community survey will begin after the award is presented to determine how to best use the money, Kidd said.

"We will go to the community and

solicit how our community thinks we should spend it. How to get the most bang for our buck ... this award allows us to do some things that, normally, we should not be able to do," he said.

Of course, there's no need to wait for an award to be announced if you have a good idea.

"We are always looking for good ideas," Kidd said. "Every time I see a kid on this post, they're asking me about a skate park. I talk to people at Hunter, they're looking for a library."

"We don't fully get a vote, but, we certainly want to get some good suggestions."

Another high-profile award, the Army Performance Excellence Award, will be announced later this year.

"We're not resting (on) our laurels. We're working hard to be even better. Not just to win awards," Kidd said.

"Winning awards is fine, but what we're really all about here is taking care of Soldiers and their families. That's why we do this."

History of Excellence

2005
Chief of Staff, Army, First Place Winner, ACOE Award
Commander in Chief's Award for Installation Excellence

2001
President's Quality Award Finalist

2000
Chief of Staff, Army, Winner, ACOE Award Georgia
Oglethorpe State Quality Award Finalist

1997
Chief of Staff, Army, Runner-up, ACOE Award

1995
Chief of Staff, Army, Honorable Mention, ACOE Award

Laying the underground work of communication

Sgt. David Bill
48th BCT PAO

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – The daunting task of connecting the 48th Brigade Combat Team so each unit can communicate with one another through a high-speed fiber optic cable has been given to Staff Sgt. Tom Laidlaw.

“We (48th BCT) are building permanent infrastructure for fiber optics and for future operations and units,” Laidlaw said.

Directed by 3rd Infantry Division, “this project will provide for high-speed and real-time information from the brigade headquarters to each battalion and company headquarters building, the Mayor’s cell and the local prison,” Laidlaw added.

The project has been underway for the past month and Laidlaw expects that this phase of the project should be completed in another month.

Laidlaw, of the Georgia Army National Guard, and a brigade operations non-commissioned officer, was selected because of his civilian experience. He has designed and engineered fiber optic networks for the past 10 years. He is currently an outside plant engineer/manager for Dynamic Technical Services, based in Lewisville, Texas.

With the support of 220th Combat Support Engineers from Festus, MO., and 327th Signal Company from the 3rd Inf. Div., each phase of the project is conducted in three parts: survey, design, and engineer.

Surveying the project includes walking the areas, looking at the terrain, and marking the ground where underground utilities are located.

Designing the project requires drawing out the best, and the most cost-effective route to build, which includes looking at connections, extensions from a main line and fiber distribution panels.

The engineering aspect of the project requires digging the conduit and fiber optic lines from point to point. This is where Soldiers of 220th CSE and 327th Sig. Co. lend their expertise.

“They’re good operators,” Laidlaw said of the engineers and signal Soldiers. “They know what they’re doing and build it the way it is designed.”

The overall project involves digging more than 44,500 feet of conduit and running 48,000 feet of fiber optic cable.

Laidlaw and his team expect to be very busy during their deployment with additional projects considered in the near future.



Sgt. David Bill

Sgt. Ray Eilerman, 34, of Kansas City, Mo., of the Festus, Mo. based 3rd Platoon, 220th Combat Support Engineers, digs a trench for fiber optic cable conduit for the 48th BCT headquarters complex at Camp Striker.

“Thanks for the Soldiers’ work”



Courtesy Photo

Chief of Staff of the Australian Army, Lt. Gen. Peter Leahy, presents an award to Col. Mohammed Fa'ek Raouf, commander of 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division July 11.

DSB Soldier leads from the front

Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick
DSB PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – “Lead from the front” advised World War II hero 2nd Lt Audie Murphy, 3rd Infantry Division.

Another dedicated Marne Division lieutenant has taken that advice to heart as he leads his transportation platoon through its daily missions.

“He’s out in front,” said Sgt. 1st Class William C. Small, referring to 1st Lt. James B. Glaze, the platoon leader for 2nd Platoon, 396th transportation Company, 87th Corps Support Battalion. “The Soldiers will do anything for him.”

Small, the platoon sergeant for 2nd Platoon, said Glaze is the type of leader who won’t ask a Soldier to do anything he won’t do himself.

Small, who is from Camden, Ga., said Glaze doesn’t have to help with tying down loads on the Palletized Loading System vehicle and trailers or unload at the delivery points, but he does it anyway.

“His care for Soldiers is wonderfully obvious,” said Capt. Nadine A. Terese, commander of 396th Trans. Co., which is a Division Support Brigade unit.

Terese, who hails from Santa Monica, Calif., said that, without being asked, Glaze went on convoys as a driver or a truck commander, thereby freeing up an enlisted Soldier to take some valuable time off.

“Giving them a break is an added bonus,” said Glaze, who was born in Richmond, Va. “I just like to do it.”

Enjoying what they’re doing is important to both Glaze and Small.

“We have a real good time,” said Glaze, a May 2003 graduate of The U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.

Glaze said they laugh at one another and also with each other.

“They’re very tight and have a lot of respect for each other,” Terese said.

Respect for Glaze not only comes from his Soldiers and platoon sergeant.

Everybody respects him throughout the battalion, said Small.

According to Terese, Lt. Col. Steve E.

Lambert, commander of 87th CSB, has been impressed with Glaze’s dedication to mission accomplishment.

Mission accomplishment is job one.

Terese said the platoon’s mission is to support the Marne Division by hauling both containerized and non-containerized cargo to forward operating bases throughout the division’s area of operation. Glaze and his troops haul a variety of cargo types, providing needed parts and equipment that keeps the division combat ready.

“He’s always doing his best and never settles for less,” Terese said.

The secret to success is Glaze’s priorities.

Glaze, who is the first in his family to join the military, said he first wants to keep his Soldiers safe. He does that through preparing himself and his platoon thoroughly before each mission.

Small said Glaze’s approach to the mission gives the surprising impression that he’s had more than two years in service and is on his first deployment.

“He seems like a veteran,” said Small, speaking of his platoon leader’s high level of confidence in everything he does.

“He makes his job look easy,” Terese said.

Glaze said his approach to the job comes from the leadership lessons he learned from his parents through playing sports, and from the values shown by his fiancée, 1st Lt. Lauren M. Rowe, also stationed in Iraq.

The values he took to heart growing up now contribute to the leadership Glaze exhibits today.

He demonstrates leadership values that place him in front of his Soldiers.

Audie Murphy would be proud.



1st Lt. James B. Glaze

Combat Security Team: ready for anything

Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

CAMP TIGERLAND, Iraq – “Until the possible becomes the actual, it is only abstraction. Be mindful of what is and what may be.”

The words of Sgt. 1st Class Derek Shire, from Hessmer, La., are the motto of 256th Brigade Combat Team’s Combat Security Team, made up of Soldiers from 199th Forward Support Battalion, the “Lightening” element, and 1st Battalion, 52nd Maintenance Company “Black Bear”, out of Augusta, Maine.

“We don’t know what we’ll be doing tomorrow, but for now we’re running with this,” said Shire, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 256th BCT CST.

The team’s missions vary in diversity and can be anything from escorting high ranking officials to transporting vehicles across Baghdad.

Maj. Andre Vige, from St. Martinville, La., is the officer in charge of the team. He said the concept was born out of sheer necessity.

“The 199th was supposed to have a quick reaction force,” Vige said. However, because another unit was also tasked with that, and our team was trained in all the battle drills, the CST was created.”

A combat security team is much like a quick reaction force in that Soldiers answer a call at a moment’s notice. Unlike a QRF, the CST not only tends to calls of distress, but also to requests for escorts, to provide security, and to provide transportation.

“We’ve escorted VIPs, EOD (Explosive Ordnance Detachment) elements, and we’ve been the escorts for every detainee release mission,” said Vige. “You name it, we’ve done it.”

In addition to providing security in the inner and outer cordons for various cordon and search missions and conveying 346 vehicles from Scania to the 48th Brigade, the CST also transported the criminal evidence documents of Saddam Hussein from the International Zone to a designated location in Baghdad.

As a whole, the team has executed more than 203 missions, and to date they’ve traveled every route in the Baghdad area of operations, including having crossed three Division boundaries. They did all of this with no physical orientation to the land. Each area of operation is different and the team



Soldiers from 256th Brigade Combat Team, combat security team, search local men during a mission in the Baghdad area. *Courtesy Photo*

had to gain knowledge of all of them, without the luxury of being trained by an outgoing unit.

“It was pretty much the school of hard knocks, just get out there and run,” said Vige. “But in spite of that handicap, on top of the 203 missions we’ve had, we haven’t (had) one casualty on the team or anyone in our convoys,” he said.

That’s not to say the CST has not had a few close calls.

On their third mission, they were the target of a coordinated attack on Route Irish, and were hit with two improvised explosive devices and two rocket propelled grenades. They took heavy small arms fire from roughly eight insurgents on the ground.

Cpl. George Wells, from New Orleans, La., is a mechanic by trade, but said he would not want any other job than to be a gunner with the CST.

“I really enjoy it, and there’s nothing else I’d rather be doing,” he said. “I can’t stand being in the FOB (forward operating base). It doesn’t matter what the mission is, if it comes, I’ll go.”

Wells said the biggest joy he’s found

during his missions is interacting with the Iraqi people, and that his viewpoint has changed since his arrival into Baghdad.

“When I first got here I saw them all as the enemy, but after going into the city and talking with people, I realized not everyone out here wanted to kill us,” Wells said. “It feels good to help people, and once you sit down and actually talk to them, you understand what this is all about.”

Wells learned one of his most important lessons while maneuvering through Baghdad traffic. “Don’t get me wrong, I’ve had my days with some of them, but the majority of these people are just trying to get from point A to point B,” he said.

Wells realized Iraqis, like Americans, cannot wait to get home after a long day at work, where they are trying to make a living to support their families. There were times; however, when Mother Nature tricked him into thinking otherwise.

“Some days you’re trying to stop a car and the sun is right in your face, so you can’t really see what’s going on inside, all you know is that car is not stopping,” Wells explained. “So you holler, you blow your whistle, you even run your siren. They don’t stop so you go to draw (your weapon) on them, then as they pull forward the view becomes clear and you realize they couldn’t see you either.”

“You apologize with as much body language as you can and so do they, most times they smile and wave as they pass by.”

Wells also claimed that some drivers will not take a chance on passing by without knowing the Soldier saw them.

“One guy wanted to make sure we knew he wasn’t doing anything dirty. He had his hands in the air, his flashers going, and his horn blaring, all at the same time,” Wells recalled.

Chief Warrant Officer Dale Cullivan from Palermo, Maine, officer in charge of the 1-52nd Black Bear element, said he is amazed at how the teams came together, both logistically and as a family.

“We’ve made multiple adjustments in the trucks to make sure we have the right crews in the right trucks; people

who can talk to each other,” Cullivan said.

“The guys get along like brothers, fight like brothers, argue like brothers, but can talk to each other like brothers, and that’s important when you run the amount of missions that we do.”

He is proud of the Soldiers, in both the Lightening and Black Bear teams. Their record is so strong, Special Forces units request daily to ride out with them on their missions. Additionally, the CST has trained more than 100 Soldiers, including units of the 3rd, 7th, and 11th Armored Cavalry Regiments.

Vige agreed with Cullivan, that the Soldiers became like brothers after sharing this experience.

“This is a close-knit group and they share a brotherhood that has grown from their experiences outside the wire,” Vige said.

Vige also affectionately claimed he was given the misfits of the 256th BCT.

“I feel like Lee Marvin with the Dirty Dozen,” he smirked, “they can pull some fast ones on you.”

No matter how many times the Soldiers try to pull the wool over his eyes, Vige maintained they are all heart when it comes to their job.

“Their service to this country has been impeccable,” Vige said with pride. “They’re a very unique group of guys who give 200 percent every time we go outside the wire, which is everyday. I’m very proud of them.”

Cullivan said once the 256th and the Lightening element of the CST return to the United States; he does not know what is in store for 52nd Maint. Co. Black Bears.

Until then, his priority is to keep his Soldiers focused.

“We’d love to continue doing a mission like this, but we are going to take whatever we’ve done with pride and if we go back to doing maintenance, we’ll do it well,” Cullivan said. “I talked to everybody on the team, and told them to be proud of what we’ve done and what we’ll do in the future. We don’t know what it holds for us, but for now we’re accepting these challenges and we wouldn’t want it any other way.”



Courtesy Photo

A Soldier of 256th Brigade Combat Team’s combat security team, comprised of elements of 199th Forward Support Battalion and 1st Battalion, 52nd Maintenance Company, directs traffic during a mission in the Baghdad area of operations.

Security teams keep commanders safe

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

CAMP LOYALTY, Iraq – A group of hand-picked, combat-tested Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division are charged with a special mission: keeping the Spartan command staff safe.

“The deputy commander has a lot of freedom of movement, and it’s our job to take him wherever he wants to go and keep him safe,” said Staff Sgt.

Robert Sentz, HHC, 2nd BCT, Bradley Fighting Vehicle section leader from Detroit. “We go along on raids and checkpoints and look at infrastructure projects. Sometimes we’ll just check the atmospherics – like go see how friendly people are down some alley in Kamaliya.”

Almost everyone on the personal security detail is an infantryman or a tankner by trade, and nearly all have combat experience.

“We bring a lot of experience to the table from previous deployments,” Sentz said. “Specialist (George) Woods is a veteran of (Operations Iraqi Freedom) 1, 2 and 3.”

Out on patrol, Lt. Col. William Wood, 2nd BCT deputy commander, stops frequently to speak with locals, and the personal security detail team is right with him, watching everyone and everything.

“We call him ‘Wild Bill’ because he always wants to go out and see places we haven’t been yet,” Sentz said of Wood. “Sometimes we’ll go out three times in a day, and we’re lucky if we get three days off a month.”

Interacting effectively with the Iraqi public almost always requires a good interpreter, and the PSD has that in Spc. Tommy, a Soldier who grew up in Baghdad.

“I lived in Baghdad until I was about 16, so I know a lot about the city and its people,” said

Tommy, who doesn’t go by his birth name for security reasons. “The people here are amazed that there are Iraqis in the U.S. Army. They all think the Army would discriminate against me, but now they have a new idea.”

Tommy, who is also a humvee driver, said he is proud to serve in his former home, and feels his duties help both the U.S. troops and the Iraqi people.

Sentz proudly displays a calendar with nearly every day for the past six months annotated with a combat patrol his team has been on.

Sentz’s PSD section is equipped with Bradleys as well as humvees, and they occasionally take the hulking tracked vehicles to a large operation.

During a battalion-sized mission, Wood acts as a liaison between the battalion commander on the ground and 2nd BCT assets, like attack helicopter support.

Sentz said his team also escorts VIP guests through the Spartan area of operations and is responsible for their

“Wherever he goes, we go, too. We’ll do whatever it takes to bring him home.”

Spc. Matt Williams
Personnel Security Detail
2nd BCT

security.

While out on patrol, PSD members do everything they can to improve local perceptions of Coalition Forces, said Spc. Matt Williams, PSD gunner.

“We try to win hearts and minds every chance we get,” said Williams, from Lacrosse, Wis. “We’re always giving out candy, humanitarian assistance bags and soccer balls. The kids love us.”

Williams, who was a member of his company commander’s PSD during OIF 1, said he enjoys getting out and seeing the Baghdad area every day.

“I definitely like going out and seeing the changes in sector firsthand,” he said. “Yeah, they have work to do and they need protection, but the city’s come a long way since last time I was here.”

Williams and his comrades transport the command group anywhere and everywhere, allowing them to gain a more complete understanding of the



Spc. Ben Brody
Spc. Tommy, HHC, 2nd BCT, PSD driver and translator, gives candy to children at a water pumping station in Baghdad. Tommy moved to the U.S. from Baghdad when he was 16.

battlefield and the troops under their command. “Wherever he goes, we go, too,” Williams said of Wood. “We’ll do whatever it takes to bring him home.”

Nearly 1,000 Iraqi Police graduate join fight against terrorism

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

CAMP SHIELD, Iraq – Distinguished police and military leaders turned out to watch 931 new Iraqi Police officers graduate from their training course at Baghdad Police College on Camp Shield July 21.

The graduating IPs stood in formation as their senior leaders praised the hard work and dedication the students demonstrated during their training.

The eight-week course covers the basics of policing, including communications, patrols, domestic violence, lawful

use of force, stress management and ethics. It also includes instruction in learning English.

The IP band played as the entire group marched past the reviewing stands, showing off both their new uniforms and status as IP officers.

The new officers will be assigned to one of many police stations all over Iraq. They will be issued a weapon and given further training.

Honor graduate Reyad Abed said he joined the Iraqi Police to serve his country and to protect his people.

“It’s important for the future of Iraq that we help the country become stable,”

Reyad said. “We are here to serve our citizens and keep them safe.”

Baghdad Police College was formerly a three-year academy which produced commissioned officers. The facility is now adapting to its new role – training nearly 1,000 new IPs every month.

“My favorite part of the training was learning defensive tactics, and shooting at the range,” Reyad said. “We’re well prepared to fight the terrorists because we have good training and strong spirits.”

The graduating class included 29 female IP officers, and Reyad said he enjoyed working with them. “The female officers are like our sisters,” he said. “We treat each other with every respect.”

The new class will be able to support fellow veteran IPs all over the country.

“You are now trained and prepared to help you brother and sister IPs as we fight the terrorist threat,” said Brig. Gen. Osama Badri, the dean of the college and keynote speaker.

He said the priority is fighting corruption, protecting human rights, reinforcing law and order in the society and focusing on securing the safety and stability of Iraq.

“I applaud your self-sacrificing spirit,” he proudly told the officers.

During a silent moment in the ceremony, the booming low thud of a controlled detonation used to destroy captured terrorist munitions and equipment, reminded everyone of the dangers IPs face daily in Iraq.

“I know the work is dangerous, but it is my duty to keep my country safe, no matter what,” Reyad said. “Any IP will tell you the same thing.”



Photos by Spc. Ben Brody
New Iraqi Police officers celebrate after their graduation ceremony at Camp Shield, Iraq, July 21.



A female IP officer waves the Iraqi flag during an IP graduation ceremony at Camp Shield, Iraq, July 21. The ceremony brought forth nearly 1,000 new police officers to serve the Iraqi people.

Female Iraqi Soldiers tackle basic training

Sgt. Thomas Benoit
256th BCT PAO

CAMP JUSTICE, Iraq – Breathing, squeezing the trigger and keeping the enemy in sight are just a few of the technical shooting techniques taught by 1st Sgt. Amir Jabar Taleb of 1st Iraqi Army Brigade, 6th Division, to some of the first female Soldiers inducted into the Iraqi Army.

For the first time in Iraq's history, Iraqi leadership at an Iraqi base conducted an all-female IA basic training course. The initial group of 27 female recruits received intensive training learning the necessary skills to become an IA Soldier.

"They learned how to use weapons, map reading and battle tactics to engage the enemy during combat," said Brig. Gen. Jaleel Khalaf Shawail, commanding general of the 1st Iraqi Army Bde., 6th Div.

"And with the help of my American friends, this course has become successful. The Americans did not participate physically in the training, but observed," he added.

Amir instructed the Soldiers on riot control and how to calm an angry crowd without losing control of the situation. Amir said the cadets performed almost flawlessly. He was honored to be one of the first instructors to teach such an important class.

"An obstacle like inducting female Soldiers into their security force is a very difficult task. Jaleel is trying to accommodate both the cultural sensitivities and the practicality of training these females," said Lt. Col. Mark Kerry, commander of Task Force Bengal, 256th BCT.

The basic training academy is located on Camp Taji, where Iraqi males are also indoctrinated into the security forces. Though the facilities are not structured to accommodate females, Camp Justice provided the necessary flexibility that Camp Taji could not.

"The cadre at Camp Justice did not minimize or downplay the academic or physical training mandated by the curriculum," said Command Sgt. Maj. Hassan Abid Khadim, the senior enlisted noncom-



Sgt. Thomas Benoit

1st Sgt. Amir Jabar Taleb with the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade, 6th Division, is passing on knowledge he gained from NCO Academy instructors from the military transition teams comprised of Soldiers from 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

missioned officer of the 1st IA Bde. The women received the equivalent training as the males from the academy.

Instructors Amir and Sgt. 1st Class Mohamad Mohsen Shheib both described the female Soldiers as some of the bravest women in Iraq, because there are men in this country who are afraid to wear the military uniform.

"Every time I look at the Iraqis, I say to myself, 'Let them do it, let them figure it out,'" Kerry said. "We should not put an American template on top of

them."

The brigade's success will be the model for the rest of the Iraqi Army and inevitably it will help the entire country.

The Iraqi women are fighting and defying cultural trends that are stacked up against them Kerry added.

Many of the female Soldiers have lost their husbands in previous wars, Jaleel noted.

"Even under these circumstances, with such a strain on raising a family, they are still brave and worry about their country.

First all-female IA basic training class graduates

Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

CAMP JUSTICE, Iraq – They were the first, but if they have their way, they won't be the last.

On July 16, a group of determined and proud female Iraqis took a momentous step in creating a new world for Iraq; giving little girls across their country positive role models to look up to. These women became the first all-female class to graduate from Iraqi Army basic training, coming from separate battalions of the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade.

The training, taught entirely by Iraqi instructors, consisted of weapons qualifications and physical fitness development.

"In addition to being the first all-Iraqi staff, it is also the first time we (Iraqi leadership) trained Soldiers on our base," said Command Sgt. Maj. Hassan Abid Khadim, senior noncommissioned officer for the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade.

The basic training courses are usually held at a U.S. Army camp with Coalition Forces helping to some degree.

Hassan said the females learned various skills of the Army, regardless of their specified job. They most often serve in an administrative capacity, but are called upon at times to accompany the infantry on missions, in case they are needed to search females.

A 19 year-old military



Sgt. Thomas Benoit

The graduating class from 1st Iraqi Army Brigade's basic training course following the ceremony July 16.

intelligence sergeant said this was one of the proudest days of her life.

"I joined because all I have left are my brother and sister, and I wanted to defend them and my homeland," she said.

The group of women said they were happy they made it through the course, and can now start focusing on their future.

"It feels good that we can almost touch the spirit of Iraq," said one graduate. "We're

Soldiers who will defend our country."

Brig. Gen. Jaleel Khalaf Shawail, commander of the 1st IA Bde., said the mothers, daughters, and sisters in Iraq fulfill dual roles; taking care of their kids, family, and home, while helping fight terrorism in the streets with their brothers-in-arms.

"These men (terrorists) don't dare wear this uniform, but the women do," he said. "We should salute these brave

women for their contribution to democracy and freedom."

Jaleel said women make up 60 to 65 percent of the Iraqi population and they have the right to be part of it in all facets of life.

"We cannot exclude such a huge percentage," he said.

Master Sgt. Linda Litchfield from Carencro, La., chief legal noncommissioned officer for 256th BCT Staff Judge Advocate, and several other female Soldiers from 256th

attended the graduation. They supported their sisters-in-arms by displaying their approval as they walked through the ranks of the formation to congratulate each new IA Soldier individually.

"I was very proud to be there, because women have always played such an important role in society," Litchfield said. "I thought it was great that they were making such a huge step in their country, and I was very proud of them."

Litchfield said she heard several stories of the Soldiers' lives, and how they came to be members of the Iraqi Army. She said one woman, in particular, stood out to her – the Soldier's husband had been killed and she now had eight children to support.

"The majority of these women have kids and families to take care of," Litchfield said. "I just think it's awesome that their families are so supportive."

The women said their families were proud of them.

Some of the female Soldiers even have husbands, brothers, sons, and fathers in the Iraqi Army as well. However, one woman said her family's prior service in the military did not influence her decision to enlist one way or the other.

"This is something I wanted to do for my country," she said. "I would be here no matter what."

Taji Soldier refines artistic craft in Iraq

Sgt. David Kerr
70th Eng. Bn.

TAJI, Iraq – There has never been any dispute that the military can bring out the best in people. The military is known for giving people the confidence to achieve what they might have otherwise thought unreachable.

The military at war presents challenges to all who serve – the challenge to stay fit during long hours of duty, the challenge to remain calm in the most heated of situations, and the challenge to pursue one’s hopes and dreams using what little free time a Soldier can muster.

Serving at Camp Taji, Iraq, for the second time in three years, Staff Sergeant Trinidad Gutierrez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 70th Engineer Battalion, finds time in his busy schedule to pursue his goals and further refine his special talent.

He is an illustrator and he spends his off-duty hours sketching characters and scenes from his expansive and creative imagination.

Using every free moment, including his brief lunch periods and before lights out at night, Gutierrez entertains no notion of swimming or watching movies.

There is work to be done; and he intends to finish it.

His fascination with art started back when he was little child. With the help of his brother and sister, he pestered his father repeatedly to draw anything they knew he could create.

It was the pivotal day that Gutierrez was told to sit down and draw for himself that changed everything.

It was then that he picked up the art bug.

Gutierrez said at first he was dissatisfied with the poor quality he was putting out, but with help from his father, he quickly progressed to “scale-drawing” characters out of comic books, mostly enlarging them for his own collection.

For no other conceivable reason than adolescence, he abruptly stopped pursuing his artistic talent when he was in high school.

It wasn’t until he met the woman he loved that his hiatus from drawing became history.

While Gutierrez and his future wife were dating, she showed him old drawings that another man had

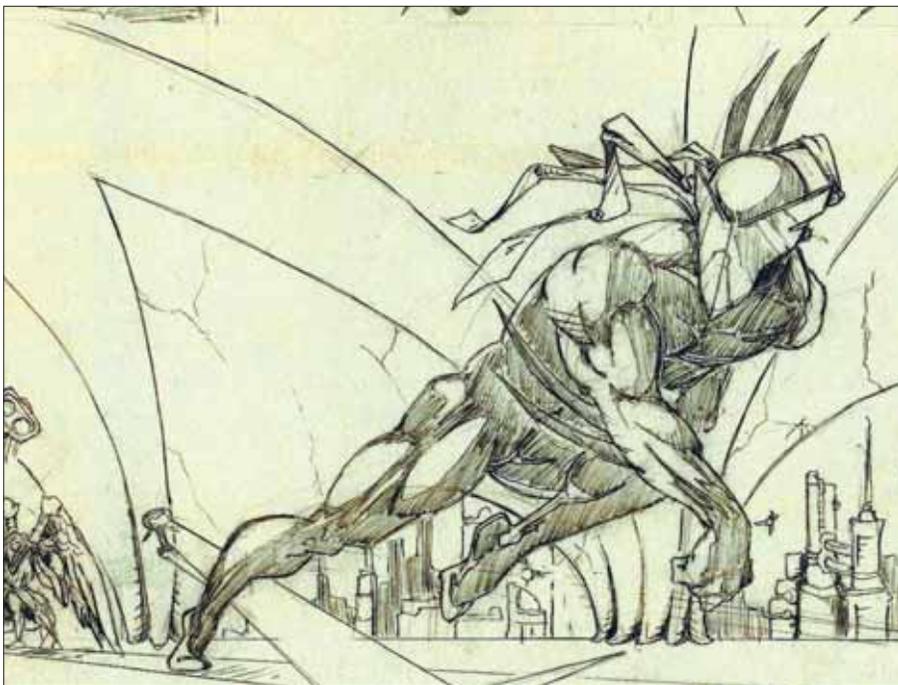


Photo Courtesy

Staff Sgt. Trinidad Gutierrez’s background as a military graphic illustrator allowed him to practice his skills in the Army, made for her.

Not happy with what he saw, and perhaps a little jealous, he told her he could do much better.

When Heidi saw what he was capable of, she was astounded and started pushing him as his father had done so many years before. She is still relentless in her support.

She bought him his first art table and set aside a studio room in the house they bought together. It is his private room, free of distractions where he can draw in peace.

His son, Ryan, has been extremely supportive as well, often asking Gutierrez to draw for him. He watches his father’s art sessions and even pushes him on to finish his current projects, just so he can see the end results.

Ryan, a possible third generation artist, has talent that Gutierrez helps him develop, taking after his own father decades ago.

Gutierrez, a “penciler,” calls his style “realistic American.” He dreams of having his artwork support his family and be a driving force to their comfort when they finally are able to settle down in the Tacoma, Wash. area.

Fully intending to retire from the military, he is using his time in the service to further develop his skill and continue building his portfolio.

While his art is beautiful and dramatic, he knows the time it takes to create one page of frames is not within the industry standard. With his continued practice and current projects, he is slowly coming closer to the standard he seeks.

He credits the military and his previous specialty as a military graphic illustrator, as furthering his ability and making his dreams possible.

Gutierrez, who is currently a supply specialist, said he will always have his artwork, no matter what else he does.

“I’m always going to be asked to draw stuff whether it be for the military or for people in the military or whatever else,” he explained.

His dream of becoming a name in the comic book annals is closer to fruition.

His artistic talents are evident in an independent publication, called “Varied

Scaries” (available for review at www.comixpress.com) published by Ronin Studios.

Another project, due out in August, is a World War II commemorative by the same company. Gutierrez said his own private project now seems like an addition to an already up and coming career.

With all these ventures taking hold, it may come to pass that he can boast that his illustration career found its roots right here in the “Cradle of Civilization.”

“I’m always going to be asked to draw stuff ... for the military or for people in the military or whatever else.”

Staff Sgt. Trinidad Gutierrez
70th Eng. Bn.



Courtesy Photo

Staff Sgt. Trinidad Gutierrez, HHC, 70th Eng. Bn., finds time in his busy schedule to keep up his craft drawing new cartoons.

Useful Arabic Phrases

| English | Arabic | English | Arabic |
|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------------|
| Come with me | taAl ma_lai | Come here! | Ta_lala hna! |
| My name is | Isme... | Yes | Ba-lay, Na_lam, Eay |
| How long? | Min ashqad? | No | La |

RUSH, continued from page 1

life-saving care to an American Soldier."

In this particular case, a terrorist had deliberately targeted a group of Iraqi children who were standing near a U.S. Army humvee.

What DePalma did not know was the scope of the casualties. "The first reports that were coming into the aid station said one casualty was on the way," DePalma recalled. "Shortly, the reports kept growing and we really had no idea just how many casualties we would be facing."

She said more than 50 medical personnel were mobilized to prepare for the incoming casualties.

"All the medics, orderlies and doctors were assembled for one purpose – to save the life of a fellow Soldier," DePalma said.

The first casualties arrived on Bradley Fighting Vehicles.

"You cannot imagine the power of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle charging into a FOB as the crew is fighting for every bit of time to save the life of one of their friends," she said.

"When the Bradleys dropped their ramps, we were there to start triaging the wounded." Three American Soldiers had been wounded and evacuated from the bombing site for treatment.

"My crew – medics, doctors, admin folks – immediately went to work to save the life of the most critically injured. It was Spc. Benyahmin Yahudah, he was very seriously hurt, and he was our priority. We gave him every bit of attention and care that is possible to give, but were unable to save him," DePalma said.

She said the other two Soldiers, with serious but non life-threatening wounds were stabilized, so her crew immediately transitioned to consoling the other Soldiers who brought in fatally-wounded Yahudah.

"A somber tone always fills the aid station when someone dies," said Capt. Jeremy Edwards, a pediatrician and sur-

geon for 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry. "We stay professional and focused on treating the living, but losing a life is not easy on us."

In this case, many of the medics not only knew the Soldier they couldn't save from death, but were close friends with him.

Yahudah was also a fellow medic.

Just as the medical staff began to relax from the trauma of trying to save a fellow Soldier, they were surprised by unannounced casualties.

"Other Soldiers started to rush through the doors carrying wounded children in their arms," Edwards said. "We had no warning that children would be coming through the door, but our philosophy is we will treat anyone who needs us."

DePalma said two children were brought in with massive burn wounds, one with more than 90 percent of his little body covered in burns.

Three children between the ages of 7 and 9 were eventually brought to the aid station. Edwards said two of the injured children were in very critical condition. The third child had serious, but not life-threatening wounds.

"Fifteen minutes until air evacuation," someone yells. "Fifteen minutes," echoes the entire staff.

At Charlie Med, situational awareness is mandatory for those working trauma. Commands are often echoed so everyone knows what is happening, DePalma said.

The aid station was focused on stabilizing and treating the wounded while preparing them for air evacuation to a better-equipped hospital.

"Patients need eye protection and other measures before we put them on a flight," Edwards said.

DePalma remembered that two of the children were unconscious while one child was awake, scared and in pain.

"I stroked his head and talked



Courtesy Photo

Medics from C Company, 26th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, prepare to air-evacuate a critically-injured Iraqi child following a terrorist attack July 13.

to him in soothing tones," she said. "He was able to calm down and let the pediatricians work on his wounds."

"Ten minutes for MEDEVAC," one Soldier said. "Ten minutes for MEDEVAC," the entire aid station echoed.

Capt. Julie Burmeister, the incoming commander of 26th FSB's maintenance company, was visiting her friend, DePalma, that day. She was able to observe the action from an unused corner of the aid station.

"The work to treat the wounded continued and it looked like everything was happening in chaos, but it was all part of a well-orchestrated tempo," Burmeister said.

"It was simply amazing to watch the care being provided to the Soldiers and children. Every

worker in the aid station knew exactly what to do and no one got in anyone's way."

After the patients were stabilized, a sense of quiet and calm came over the aid station as they awaited the air ambulance.

"Five minutes for MEDEVAC," one Soldier said. "Five minutes for MEDEVAC," the entire aid station echoed.

As the personnel in the aid station continued to work, the MEDEVAC arrived.

Out of the dusty haze of Baghdad, the helicopter swooped down on FOB Rustamiyah to take all five of the wounded to the next higher level of medical care.

Merely fifteen minutes after the children arrived at the aid station, they were whisked away.

As the MEDEVAC lifted off,

the aid station staff did what they always do when a fellow Soldier is evacuated – they saluted.

The two Soldiers who were hurt were moved on to Germany for more treatment.

Two of the wounded children died and one survived. Soon, he will be reunited with his parents.

"It was a difficult day for the Soldiers of Charlie Med, but they can be proud they did every thing they could to save the lives of Soldiers and Iraqi civilians," said Col. Joseph DiSalvo, commander of Coalition Forces in Rusafa (East Baghdad). "The terrorists committed an unspeakable crime. The Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Forces Soldiers who worked to save Iraqi lives are heroes."

RAGE, continued from page 1

between the two forces stronger, and also allowed the IA to "further validate their professionalism."

Separate areas were searched simultaneously as 1st Lt. Jeremy Falanga, executive officer of A Company, 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, and his 2nd Platoon Soldiers searched neighborhoods in the Ameriyah District of Baghdad.

At the same time, 3rd Platoon conducted joint cordon-and-searches with the Iraqi Soldiers.

The joint operation led to the detainment and capture of a specific person they were targeting.

Falanga, of Baton Rouge, La., said the family lied about the identity of the man, but his Soldiers knew better than to believe them.

"They continued to search the home until they found the proof of identification they were looking for," he said. "And now, he's in our custody."

Col. Ronnie Johnson of New Orleans, La., deputy commander of 256th BCT, said the collaboration of

this mission was different, in that the IA not only conducted the searches, they gathered the intelligence and developed the targets as well.

"They brought much of the intelligence in and U.S. and Iraqi officers decided together what targets to go after," Johnson said.

This was the first time the two forces worked together on the analysis side of an operation. Johnson said it is a major step to total independent operations for the Iraqi military and it is following a progressive plan set forth and put into motion by 256th BCT.

"When we first started, U.S. Forces were right beside the IA when they went into a cordon-and-search, then we progressed to where our Soldiers would set the outer cordon, while the Iraqis entered the homes and searched," Johnson explained. "This time, our forces were on the very outskirts on the main roads, and the Iraqis executed their own plan."

Johnson said the IA decided which targets they were going to hit, when they were going to hit them, and how many forces they were going to use.

"That was a huge step forward," he said.

Capt. Stuart West from Pineville, La., commander of B Company, 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, said his Soldiers were thoroughly impressed with the Iraqi Soldiers' execution of this particular operation.

"Soldiers in my command expressed they were pleased by the efficiency at which the (Iraqis) conducted their cordon-and-search missions," he said.

As a result of the IA's intelligence gathering, they successfully captured a target on the brigade's list.

"On July 17, the forces apprehended a Syrian national suspected of AIF activities in the vicinity of Ameriyah," West said.

The IA conducted several traffic control checkpoints and searched more than 40 vehicles for vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices.

Through teamwork, the Soldiers captured more than 60 terrorists, as well as a number of contraband items and weapons. Three AK-47 rifles, two pistols, a list of documents, and a

general officer's uniform of the former Iraqi regime were among the items recovered. In some cases, it was the Iraqi people themselves who steered forces in the right direction. This further exemplifies the growing faith the Iraqi people have for their own military.

Maj. William Rachal from New Iberia, La., plans officer for 1st Battalion, 156th Armor Regiment, said in the Khadra area of Baghdad, he and his troops witnessed the growing bond between the citizens and Iraqi Security Forces.

"Many homeowners were outside observing their Army in action and you could see a sense of pride as the citizens waved, laughed, and talked with their Soldiers," he said.

West agreed, and said the promise of a new attitude was also evident in his area.

"The overall climate of the people in our sector is now one of inspiration and encouragement," West said. "They often expressed this to my Soldiers, in reference to seeing Iraqi Soldiers patrol their neighborhoods."

Schoolteachers learn ABCs of medical aid

Staff Sgt. Raymond Piper
4th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – Students and instructors gathered around first aid supplies, all eager to teach and to learn. Surprisingly, this time it was the teachers who were soaking up the knowledge.

Soldiers from B Company, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, taught basic first aid procedures to teachers of six different schools in the Karradah District at the request of its neighborhood council July 17.

"The goal was to provide basic first aid classes to the teachers and staff of this school so they could provide it to the children or anyone in the area who was hurt," said Capt. Daniel Green, 4-64 Armor battalion surgeon and Atlanta native.

The unit provided the schools with aid bags that are tailored for the more common injuries a child might receive at school.

"We spent an hour talking about how to apply the bandages,

how to make a sling, use a splint, and how to take care of burns," Green said. "We also talked about using the Heimlich maneuver for choking."

Green said the training covered the basics and gave the teachers an understanding of how to use the aid bags.

"Generally, when teaching medicine, you keep first exposure simple so you don't overwhelm them too much," he added. "There is a lot more that can be discussed at a later date if they are interested."

As U.S. Soldiers train more and more teachers, they will slowly graduate to other areas of treatment and prevention.

"As we go in the future, we're going to change up the material a little bit," said Peoria, Ariz. native Pfc. Christopher McMullen, a medic with 4-64 Armor. "In the future we'll teach them how to prevent diarrhea and what to do for common colds – what medicines are used to help them deal with the kids at the school."

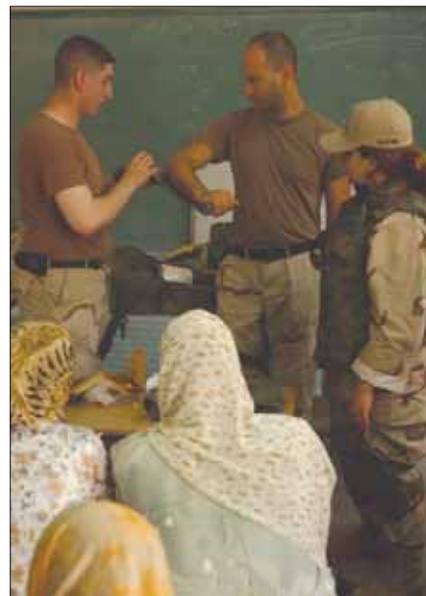
McMullen helped train the medics for the Iraqi Army and he said that also was very rewarding.

"I think it's beneficial to them that we are here and able to teach them the medical knowledge we have," he said. "A lot of things have changed over the years and we have newer and better techniques."

"It makes me feel really good that I can go out and help people ... help them possibly save one of the lives of the kids who go to this school or anyone they see who might need help," McMullen continued.

McMullen has spent his time in Iraq doing something he wants to do.

"This is the reason I joined the Army – so I can go out and help people," he said. "I love doing humanitarian stuff. (It makes no matter if I'm teaching or pulling security on a building so they can have a meeting. Just the feeling ... that you have gone out and done something to help feels good."



Staff Sgt. Raymond Piper
Pfc. Christopher McMullen, a medic with 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment and Peoria, Ariz., native, demonstrates how to splint a broken bone on Capt. Daniel Green, 4/64 Armor battalion surgeon, July 17 during first aid training for Iraqi school teachers in Baghdad.

Drug users affect fellow Soldiers, morale

Sgt. Andrew A. Miller
100th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Despite stiff consequences, criminal investigations involving illegal drugs have nearly doubled over the last year in the Task Force Baghdad area of operations.

As the number of cases involving drug use and distribution in theater reach levels comparable to those in the U.S., the parallel number of punitive actions has increased as well, said Chief Warrant Officer Kevin M. Roof, commander of 30th Military Police Detachment, Criminal Investigation Division.

Both drug use and its legal consequences work against the overall readiness of a combat force.

The problem faced by the 3rd Infantry Division, Roof said, is significant in scale. At least 104 Soldiers and civilians working with Task Force Baghdad have been charged with drug offenses since Roof took charge in early February. More cases are still pending.

"If 60 percent of my cases involve drugs, and I would say that's only a small percentage of users, it may be a bigger problem than we think," Roof said.

While criminal cases have involved a variety of substances ranging from prescription drugs to heroine, Roof said valium seems to be the most abused substance for U.S. servicemembers. This is, in part, due to the fact that the drug is cheap and readily available on the Iraqi market.

According to Roof, illegal steroids also account for a considerable share of criminal investigations, although such cases are mostly limited to civilian workers.

Regardless of which substance is being used, drug use presents a complex problem to a deployed military force.

One element of the problem is that some Soldiers are using drugs while on duty.

"Drug use is a safety risk," said Lt. Col. Gini Yates, 3rd Inf. Div. Surgeon. "Many illegally acquired substances impair users' coordination and concentration."

Yates said the problem affects unit morale. Soldiers want – and expect – the fellow Soldiers watching their backs to be clear headed and alert.

"Steroids can lead to undesirable behavioral and emotional responses such as anxiety, paranoia and hallucinations," Yates said. "A deployment is already emotionally straining without adding a drug problem."

According to Yates, certain substances pose a health risk, whether on or off the battlefield. Risks may be compounded by the intense heat found here in Iraq.

Stimulants can cause irregular heart rhythms that could lead to potentially fatal heart attacks.

Drugs designed to build muscle can damage the kidneys, she said. The risk of kidney damage increases when the user is dehydrated.

Yates also warned that steroids can cause liver damage and fat deposits in the arteries.

Roof said health risks apply any time someone uses unregulated drugs. This is true of black market drugs in America and perhaps even more so in Iraq. He added perspective by stating that these substances come from the streets of Baghdad, a place where some people have an interest in killing Americans.

"It's just stupid," said Roof, "Soldiers have no idea what they're buying."

To combat the ill effects of drug use on combat readiness, Task Force Baghdad has begun increasing the pressure on users and distributors of illegal substances. According to Roof, the urinalysis program was not in full effect here a year ago. The program's full implementation may contribute to the increased number of criminal cases.

Roof said most Soldiers are getting caught through the urinalysis program.

Commanders are required by regulation to inform CID of Soldiers who have tested positive for drugs. Those Soldiers, in turn, give up names of suppliers, he said. Roof has had investigations where up to 23 people were "processed" in a single case.

Health and welfare inspections set off a similar chain of events, Roof said. CID gets called and they show up with the dogs.

Once caught, Soldiers and civilians face harsh consequences, said Maj. James Gibson, Chief of Military Justice for the 3rd Inf. Div.

The first time Soldiers are found using drugs, they generally receive a field grade article 15. According to Gibson, that's usually the best case scenario. This form of non-judicial punishment can include reduction in rank, loss of pay, extra duty and restrictions.

Repeat offenders are likely to be tried under a summary or special court martial, he said.

Gibson added that, while every case is judged on its own merits, any servicemembers caught distributing drugs, regardless of their past, normally will be tried under a general court martial. The maximum punishment for distributing illegal drugs is between 10 and 15 years per count, depending on the substance.

Citing recent cases, Gibson spoke of a one-year sentence for a one time valium distribution charge. Another case resulted in a three-year incarceration.

Civilians who are found using or dealing illegal drugs face different consequences. A drug charge will usually get civilians barred from an installation, effectively terminating their employment, Gibson said. CID will then forward the investigation to the appropriate U.S. attorney who will decide what legal action will be taken.

Soldiers or civilians charged, or in some cases merely investigated on drug crimes, have something else to worry about. According to Roof, records of CID investigations become available to most law enforcement agencies. These records can become a big problem for anyone seeking employment or a security clearance even forty years after the investigation.

And of course, for Soldiers and civilians, felony charges are all but impossible to hide.

"A felony, and all that goes along with it, follows you for life," Gibson said.

Clearly, a Soldier who is in prison can't do much for his comrades.

However Soldiers are affected directly or indirectly, illegal drug use is a significant and growing problem for Task Force Baghdad.

"This is definitely something commanders need to stay on top of," Gibson advised, "something (noncommissioned officers) need to be looking for. We've always got to be sure our Soldiers are fit for duty."



ORDER, continued from page 2

nel assigned to 3rd Infantry Division (Rear) or personnel located outside the USCENCOM AOR.

1. STATEMENT OF MILITARY PURPOSE AND NECESSITY: Current operations and deployments place United States Armed Forces into areas where local laws and customs prohibit or restrict certain activities that are generally permissible in western societies. Restrictions upon these activities are essential to fostering US / host nation relations and combined operations of US and friendly forces. In addition, the high operational tempo combined with the hazardous duty faced by 3rd Infantry Division Soldiers and other US forces in the 3rd Infantry Division's AOR makes it necessary to restrict certain activities in order to maintain good order and discipline and ensure optimal readiness.

2. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES: In accordance with and in addition to USCENCOM GO-1A, the following activities are prohibited:

a. Purchase, possession, use or sale of privately owned firearms, ammunition, explosives, or the introduction of these items into the 3rd Infantry Division's AOR.

b. Entrance into a Mosque, or other site of Islamic religious significance by non-Moslems unless directed to do so by military authorities, required by military necessity, or as part of an official tour conducted with the approval of military authorities and the host nation.

c. Introduction, possession, sale, transfer, manufacture or consumption of any alcoholic beverage within the 3rd Infantry Division's AOR. This restriction also prohibits the introduction, possession, sale, transfer, manufacture or consumption of any alcoholic beverage by military personnel or civilians serving with, employed by, or accompanying the Armed Forces of the United States, while assigned to or under the operational control of the Commander, 3rd Infantry Division and present for duty

in Kuwait or Iraq.

d. Introduction, purchase, possession, use, sale, transfer, manufacture, or consumption of any controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia. Prescription drugs must be accompanied by the original prescription label of the prescribing medical facility or authority.

e. Introduction, possession, transfer, sale, creation or display of any pornographic or sexually explicit photograph, videotapes, movie, drawing, book, magazine, or similar representations. The prohibitions contained in this subparagraph shall not apply to AFRTS broadcasts and commercial videotapes distributed and/or displayed through AAFES or MWR outlets located within the USCENCOM AOR. This prohibition shall also not apply within the areas exclusively under the jurisdiction of the United States, such as aboard United States vessels and aircraft.

f. Gambling of any kind, including sports pools, lotteries and raffles, unless permitted by host nation law and applicable service or component regulations.

g. Removing, possessing, selling, defacing, or destroying archeological artifacts or national treasures.

h. Selling, bartering, or exchanging any currency other than at the official host nation exchange rate.

i. Adopting as pets or mascots, caring for, or feeding any type of domestic or wild animal.

j. Proselytizing of any religion, faith or practice.

k. Taking or retaining individual souvenirs or trophies, except as noted below:

(1) Private or public property may be seized during exercises or operations only on order of the Commander, 3rd Infantry Division, or his delegated representative, when based on military necessity and in accordance with the rules of engagement. Such property will be collected, processed, secured and stored for later return to the lawful owner.

(2) Public property seized by U.S. Armed Forces is the property of the United States.

(3) No weapon, munitions, or military article of equipment obtained or acquired by any means other than official issue may be retained for personal use or shipped out of the AOR for personal retention or control unless authorized by the Commander, 3rd Infantry Division.

(a) This prohibition does not preclude the lawful acquisition of souvenirs that can be legally imported into the United States. The following items have been approved as authorized souvenirs: helmets and head coverings; bayonets; uniforms and uniform items such as insignia and patches; canteens, compasses, rucksacks, pouches, and load bearing equipment; flags; military training manuals, books, and pamphlets; posters, placards, and photographs; or other items that clearly pose no safety or health risk, and are not otherwise prohibited by law or regulation. All acquired items are subject to the war souvenir retention process and must be approved by the appropriate reviewing authority.

1. Taking or retaining any found or seized currency for personal use. Such currency will be identified, collected, recorded, secured, and stored until it can be delivered to the appropriate authority.

m. Sexual contact with foreign and local nationals.

3. PUNITIVE ORDER: Paragraph 2 of this General Order is punitive. Persons subject to the UCMJ may be punished for violations of this General Order. Civilians serving with, employed by, or accompanying the Armed Forces of the United States in the 3rd Infantry Division AOR may face criminal prosecution or adverse administrative action for violation of this General Order.

4. INDIVIDUAL DUTY: All persons, military and civilian, subject to this General Order are charged with the individual duty to become familiar

with and respect the laws, regulations, and customs of their host nation insofar as they do not interfere with the execution of their official duties. Acts of disrespect or violations of host nation laws, regulations, and customs may be punished under applicable criminal statutes and administrative regulations.

5. UNIT COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITY: Commanders and civilian supervisors are charged with ensuring that all personnel are briefed on the prohibitions and requirements of this General Order. Commanders and supervisors are expected to exercise discretion and good judgment in enforcing this General Order. Component Commanders may further restrict their forces as they deem necessary.

6. CONFISCATION OF OFFENDING ARTICLES: Items determined to violate this General Order may be considered contraband and may be confiscated by command or law enforcement authorities if found under the control of 3rd Infantry Division Soldiers or within the 3rd Infantry Division's AOR. Before destruction of contraband, Commanders or law enforcement personnel will coordinate with their servicing judge advocate.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE: This General Order is effective immediately. Military customs and other pre-clearance officials will enforce this General Order in their inspections of personnel and equipment prior to departure to the 3rd Infantry Division's AOR and upon return to CONUS.

8. EXPIRATION: This General Order will expire when rescinded by the Commander, 3rd Infantry Division or higher authority. In the event this order conflicts with any higher authority, the offending language will be stricken. However, remaining portions of the order will continue in effect.

William G. Webster Jr.
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

New Sadr City water treatment plant opens

Maj. Russell Goemaere
2nd BCT PAO

SADR CITY, Iraq – The first of 27 new compact water treatment units officially opened in Sadr City July 19.

"The compact water units bring needed water to the residents while the expanded water system for Sadr City continues to develop," said Lt. Col. Gary Luck, commander of 3rd Battalion 15th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Each water unit produces 15,000 liters of clean potable water a day.

"A total of 405,000 liters per day will be produced once all the units are installed and operational," said Luck, from Salina, Kan.

A compact water unit is a small water treatment facility that uses well water or city water as a source of supply. The resulting water is fully treated and ready for drinking.

The program was coordinated with the Ministry of Education and Water, the Amanat and the local city government. Sheik Jabar Nashour Jasim, who is a member of the Sadr City District Advisory Council, took part in the opening ceremony and drank water from the tap along with U.S. Army officials and local residents.

Jabar then took the opportunity to thank the Army. "I want to thank the Coalition Forces for helping to

bring this project to completion," he said through a translator. "The people of Sadr City will benefit from having clean water readily available to them."

Most of the compact water units will be located in schools, according to the 2nd BCT Essential Services Team. Mainly because children are the ones who suffer the most from waterborne disease, they said. To make things easier for local residents in the community, water spouts are available outside the school walls as well.

Members of the community flocked to the opening and many were quick to enjoy a cup of water with their Army friends.

"After 35 years of neglect, it is good to see projects coming to fruition here," Luck said.

The Amanat has designs to rehabilitate the drinking water network for all of Sadr City, sector by sector.

Additional water programs benefiting Sadr City include the recently expanded Shark

Dijlah Water Treatment Plant, which is now providing 190 million more liters of water per day to Baghdad residents.

A new main water line is being constructed to connect the Shark Dijlah to the northern Sadr City water network. Also, a new Sadr City Water Treatment Plant is being built. It will provide approximately 190 million liters per day, directly to northern Sadr City, 2BCT EST said.

The water was checked and verified safe by a U.S. Army preventive health team.

"A total of 405,000 liters will be produced once all the units are installed and operational."

Lt. Col. Gary Luck
commander 3rd Bn., 15th Infantry



Courtesy Photo

Iraqi boys appreciate a cup of fresh water from the newly-opened Compact Water Unit in Sadr City July 19.



Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Sgts. Michael Martos (left) and Boris Todd, both of Headquarters and Headquarters Support Company, 3rd Infantry Division, perform maintenance on a humvee. Martos is a Weston, Mass., native while Todd's hometown is Greensboro, Ala.



Staff Sgt. Raymond Piper

Soldiers compete to determine which teams can pull an up-armored humvee 50 meters the fastest during Independence Day celebrations at Camp Prosperity July 1.

Spc. Chris Foster
 Soldiers of 256th Brigade Combat Team raise their hands and promise to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic" July 20 during a ceremony in the Tiger Chapel. Maj. Gen. Bennett Landreneau, adjutant general of the Louisiana Army National Guard, presided over the ceremony.



Sgt. Andrew Miller

Pvt. Joseph M. Tucker, of Yorktown, Ind., looks in on the rest of his humvee crew from his position in the turret July 14. Tucker is a carpentry and masonry specialist with A Company, 92nd Engineer Battalion. "I love this stuff," he said, "I do it for my wife, Shanna, and for our baby."

SHOW ME THE MONEY: Finance knowledge

Elimination of the Thrift Savings Plan open seasons

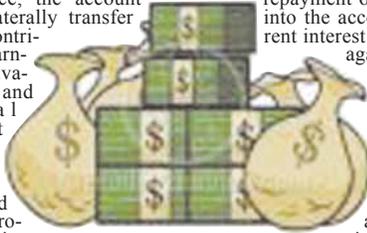
Effective July 1, all servicemembers will be have unlimited access to their Thrift Savings Plan accounts and the variety of services previously provided only twice a year during opening seasons. Soldiers with active accounts now have the opportunity to increase their contributions up to 10 percent of their basic pay and 100 percent of any incentive pay at anytime during the year. The Federal Retirement Thrift Board announced the increase of the basic pay contribution to 100 percent starting in 2006.

As part of the added services, members now have the choice of assigning a financial manager to ensure their investments reflect their best interests, and that their portfolios behave in proportion to changes in market conditions.

Similar to the corporative 401K and its federal equivalent, the TSP is

designed to provide a retirement income. Nominal contributions are made by the Soldier throughout their working years. Upon completion of military service, the account holders can laterally transfer all retained contributions plus earnings to its equivalent 401K and Individual Retirement Account respectively.

A valuable feature offered by the TSP program is the option to borrow money against the account, regardless of the account holder's status. The account must have a minimum balance of \$1,000, which is the amount necessary to be used as collateral in the approval of the loan application. The processing is simple and may be done online with easy steps to follow. The interest generated by repayment of the loan goes back into the account fund. The current interest rate applied to loans against your account is presently at 4.5 percent. The processing fee of all loan applications is \$50. Contributions may vary depending on personal goals. The money amount must be submitted in a fixed whole dollar amount format. The minimum amount of the contribution may start as low as \$1 per pay period or a percentage of your bi-weekly gross basic pay. The fixed dollar amount remains



the same, unless the account holder changes the amount through "my Pay" at <http://www.dod.mil/dfas>.

You may invest your contributions in any of the five following TSP investments funds:

- G-fund, Government Securities;
- F-fund, Fixed Income Index;
- C-fund, Common Stock Index;
- S-fund, Small Capitalization Stock Index; and
- I-fund, International Stock Index.

The Thrift Savings Plan is the government's way of providing its employees with the benefits of pretax investments. Whether serving in the armed forces or employed as a federal civilian, everyone is eligible for this program.

For more information regarding TSP, go to your local finance office or visit the Web site at <http://www.tsp.gov/>.

Marne Medical Mentor ... a prescription for good health from your Docs in the Rock

Simple exercises can alleviate back pain

Four out of five adults will experience significant low back pain sometime during their life. You are most at risk for back pain if:

- Your job requires prolonged sitting
- Your job requires prolonged bending or leaning
- You regularly lift heavy objects
- You have weak abdominal muscles
- You have poor posture

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons has developed the following tips to help you reduce your risk of back pain. When you are lifting and moving heavy objects, the guidelines are the same.

Plan ahead and don't be in

a hurry.

Spread your feet shoulder-width apart to give yourself a solid base of support.

Bend your knees. Tighten your stomach muscles to brace your back.

Position the object close to your body before lifting.

Squat to reach low objects. Never lift an object by keeping your knees straight while bending over to reach.

Avoid twisting your body. Instead, point your toes in the direction you want to move and pivot in that direction.

Do not try to lift by yourself something that is too heavy or an awkward shape. Get help.

Additional measures to prevent back pain include:

maintain good posture sitting and standing, support the spine by pulling in abdominal muscles, and change positions frequently with healthy stretches as shown below.

1. Elbow Extension Stretch

This is also a good resting position to stretch your back in extension. Prop up on your elbows or a pillow letting your back relax and sag. Try to keep your hips resting on the floor.

2. Press Ups

Start on stomach. With your hands up at your shoulders, press up slowly, relaxing your back and keeping your

hips on the floor.

3. Standing Extension

This stretch can be done two ways. Do one of these stretches for every 30-45 minutes of sitting.

Desk Stretch - with the arms extended, lean onto a desk or heavy table, relaxing your back, supporting your upper body and moving your hips toward the desk.

Standing Stretch - place your hands in the small of your back and gently lean backwards.

4. Hanging Stretch

Using an overhead bar or door jam, hang for 20 to 30 seconds. Alternate Chair Hangs: in

a arm chair, push up, suspending your body for 20 to 30 seconds.

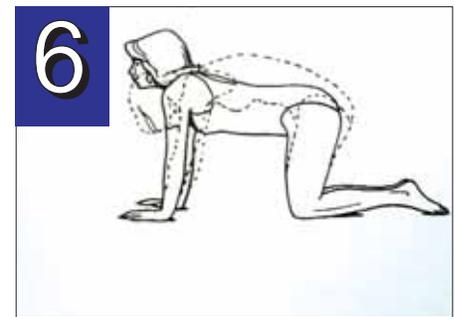
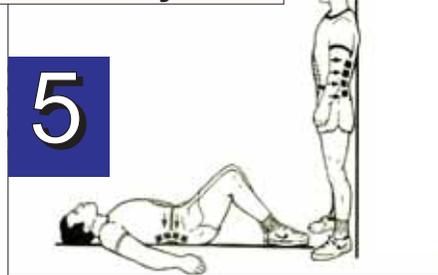
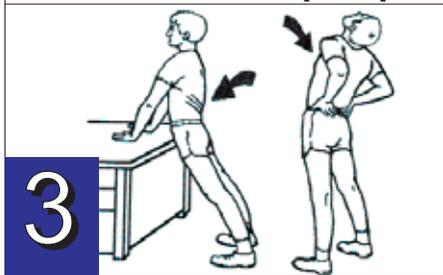
5. Pelvic Tilt

Standing against a wall or lying down with the hips and knees bent, tighten the stomach muscles, pushing your back against the surface. When standing for prolonged periods do a mini-pelvic tilt to decrease back stress.

6. Back Arching Stretches

Position yourself on your hands and knees with your back in a neutral pelvic tilt, (don't sag). Tighten your stomach muscles and arch your back up.

A few of the "steps up" to a healthy back



Soldiers! Often fires have started due to negligent practices by Soldiers. Be aware, practice fire safety.

DESERT JUSTICE

Is it time to write that new will?

Maj Joe Marshall
OSJA

It may be time to update your will, or write your first will if you have never had one before. Any number of circumstances could lead Task Force Baghdad servicemembers to change their will during their Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment. Your unit Judge Advocates are prepared to assist you with most of your estate planning.

Every servicemember should be sure that his or her will designates the right persons to receive the servicemember's assets upon death. Hopefully, no one will need to take your will to probate court for another fifty years or more, but you should be currently prepared for every possibility. Many servicemembers are experiencing changes in their families and life back home. If you have just gotten married, had a child born or adopted into the family, had a death in the family, or are considering divorce, then you may need to change your will.

If you want to change who you designated to be the guardian of your children, who the executor or personal representative who takes your will through probate, or who receives any of your property, then you should also consider changing your will.

You do not need your old will in order to execute a new one. Wills do not expire. The latest dated will is the one that is valid. Whoever keeps your important papers should safely store the new one and destroy the old will. You can discuss your situation with a Judge Advocate and decide whether a new will is what you need.

You do not have to be divorced before you decide to change your will and disinherit a spouse you plan to divorce, although most states will

give the spouse a "forced share" of marital assets. Even if you only want to change beneficiaries among children, parents, or siblings, you should consider changing your will.

One set of assets that a will does not determine is life insurance benefits. SGLI and other life insurance contracts designate their beneficiaries within the contract. If you want to make changes to SGLI, contact your S-1 personnel section to change your beneficiaries. For other life insurance policies, contact your insurance agent.

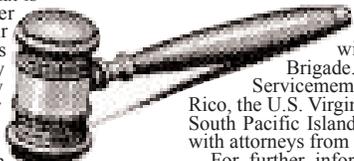
Children under the age of eighteen cannot receive inheritance from your will, nor benefits from your life insurance or Individual Retirement Account (IRA). In each of the documents, you should designate a trustee who will receive the proceeds to benefit minor children.

If you have close to or more than one million dollars in assets, federal and state estate taxes may begin to take up to 50% of your assets. Make sure the attorney preparing your will knows about the total value of all your assets. If you have received insurance proceeds, an inheritance, or have managed to accumulate significant savings, then some estate tax planning may be necessary to ensure that your beneficiaries receive as much of your property as possible.

Louisiana and Puerto Rico laws are significantly different regarding wills. Members of the Louisiana National Guard should consult their attorneys within the 256th Brigade.

Servicemembers from Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the South Pacific Islands should consult with attorneys from their home units.

For further information on legal services, contact your Brigade Judge Advocates or Task Force Baghdad Client Services. Major Joe Marshall, 318-847-2388 DSN, 0790-192-4630 IRAQNA, 242-4568 VOIP, joe.marshall@id3.army.mil.



Chaplain's Corner

Thou Shalt Not...! can be confusing

Chaplain Donald Zapsic
612 Eng. Bn.

Soldiers often ask me, "Chaplain, one of the Ten Commandments says, 'Thou shalt not kill,' is it wrong then to kill another person?" This question is key for two important reasons.

First, it tells us a lot about who we are. Our people want to do the right thing as many search for a biblical perspective on this life-and-death issue. Secondly, the question reveals a high regard for humanity and an aversion to killing.

Retired Lt. Col. David Grossman, in his book "On Killing", captured this very sentiment in an interview with an Israeli lieutenant who said, "Killing is the worst thing that one man can do to another man ... it's the last thing that should happen anywhere."

The Scripture that contains the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" is found in Exodus 20:13. Taken in isolation, these four words forbid all forms of killing without exception. This verse, however, is only one link in a chain of biblical teachings about the taking of human life.

Moses, the lawgiver, authorized the use of deadly force just two chapters later in Exodus 22:2-3.

He stated that a property owner who catches a thief breaking in at night is not responsible for his death. This action falls under the umbrella of "self-defense." If the thief however, is caught breaking in during broad daylight, he can only be held liable for damages.

If you have wondered if the Bible pro-

vides guidance on the "Rules of Engagement", you have just found your answer!

Wise King Solomon provided another link in the chain in his tribute to the ebb and flow of life. He penned the words in Ecclesiastes 3:3 that there is, "A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up."

The last reference regarding the chain deals with the government's God-given role in promoting the public good. The

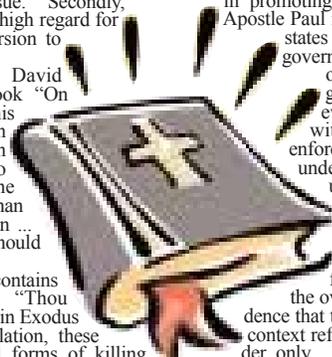
Apostle Paul in Romans 13:3-4 clearly states that those who exercise governing authority have been ordained to "promote good and restrain evil." If evil must be restrained with force, those who enforce the law are authorized under certain conditions to use the sword to "execute judgment" upon the lawless.

When I'm asked by Soldiers if Exodus 20:13 forbids killing, I point to the overwhelming biblical evidence that teaches that killing in this context refers to "murder" and murder only. The Bible in fact never condones murder or the deliberate act of taking innocent life under any circumstances.

This is vitally important because while our Soldiers are sometimes required to kill, they should never have to bear a false sense of guilt and shame over one often misunderstood verse in the Bible.

Soldiers need and deserve our support while they execute their often dangerous missions. That's what chaplains do and why we stand ready every hour of every day.

One team, one fight!



In Memory of ...

- Spc. Ronnie D. Williams, 3/3 ACR*
- Pfc. Timothy J. Hines, 89th MP Bde.*
- Sgt. Arthur McGill 1/9 FA*
- Staff Sgt. Jorge L. Pena-Romero 1/11 ACR*
- Spc. Jared D. Hartley, 125 FSB*
- Spc. Benyahmin B. Yahudah, 1/64 Armor*
- Sgt. Timothy J. Sutton, 3/3 ACR*
- Pvt. Anthony M. Mazzarella, 1/13 Armor*



Still have a question or comments? See your unit Staff Judge Advocate for further guidance.

Religious service and prayer schedule for Camp Liberty

Division Chapel

Mon. - Fri.
12 p.m. Catholic

Saturday
10 a.m. Seventh Day Adventist

Sunday
9 a.m. Contemporary Protestant
10:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
1 p.m. Lutheran
3 p.m. Gospel Protestant
5 p.m. Church of Christ (noninstrumental)
8 p.m. Collective Protestant

Engineer Chapel

Wednesday
7 p.m. Bible Study

Friday
9 p.m. Prayer & Praise

Saturday
10 a.m. Reunion & Suicide Brief

Sunday
8:45 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
10 a.m. Traditional Protestant
12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Latter Day Saints
7 p.m. Traditional Protestant

Tiger Chapel

Wednesday
7:30 p.m. Vicca Circle - briefing tent

Wed & Sat
10:30 a.m. Reunion & Suicide Brief

Saturday
7 p.m. Catholic Mass

Sunday
9 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Mass
1 p.m. Gospel Protestant
3 p.m. Traditional Protestant
7 p.m. Non Denominational Christian
9:30 p.m. Evening Christian Service

Taji's Ironman competition makes Soldiers "feel the burn"

Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick
DSB PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – With sweat upon their brows, and the strain of the immense load evident on their faces, Soldiers in Taji tested their might in a power-lift competition at the Morale Welfare and Recreation Fitness Center at Camp Taji July 10.

The squat lifting contest, sponsored the 87th Corps Support Battalion, Division Support Brigadeby featured 19 competitors, including four females.

Although the turnout was lower than expected, the lifters and spectators had a great time, said Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Pegues, 87th CSB command sergeant major.

The best female lifter was Sgt. Laura N. Royster, from 226th Quartermaster Company. Her best squat was 195 pounds.

"I just do it for fun," said Royster, from Red Bank, N.J.

Royster, who works at 87th CSB's Consolidated Supply Support Activity, said she's participated in one competition previously in Qatar.

Capt. Craig P. Boston, company commander for B Company, 125th Forward Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, was the best male lifter, reaching the 475 pound mark.

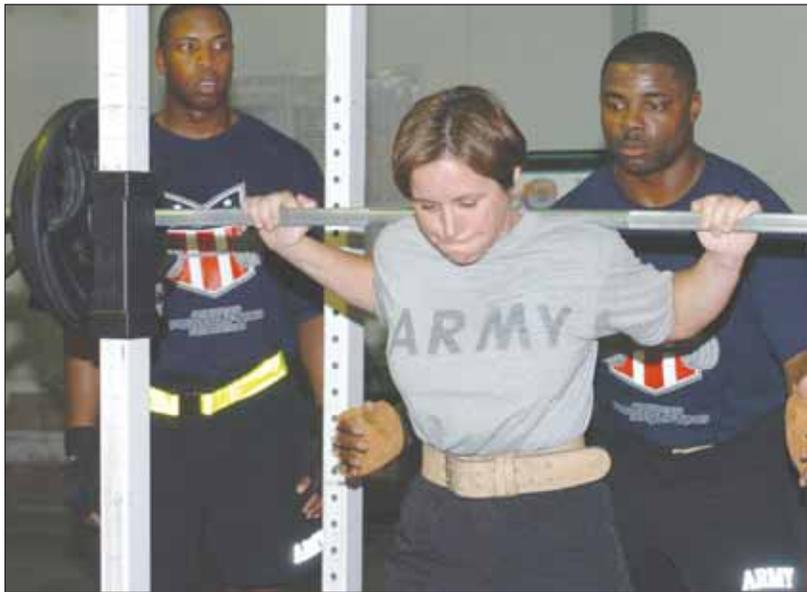
"This was my first time competing," said the Saco, Maine native. "I have been lifting recreationally for several years now."

Pegues, from Thomasville, N.C., was a power lifter from 1984-1989 at the local, national and international levels. He said this contest was intended to get Soldiers involved in a power lifting event besides bench pressing.

"We wanted to do a dead lift contest as well, but will not be able to," said Pegues, a former member of the All Army Power Lifting Team. "Our bench press contest was held in April."

We are planning a final Camp Taji Iron Man and Woman Championship to give lifters a chance to break the records set during the April competition."

Pegues said the next lifting competition is scheduled for October 2 and it promises to be larger than the 66 participants that competed this past spring.



Sgt. Victor Soto

Sgt. Laura N. Royster, a member of 226th Quartermaster Company, prepares to go into her squat at the Iron Man and Woman competition July 10. Royster, from Red Bank, N.J., was the best female lifter hefting 195 pounds for the victory.

"Not on my side!"



Spc. Derek Del Rosario

San Diego, Calif., native Sgt. Todd Walker, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, sends a spike past the block of Spc. Brandon Glass, of 3rd Detachment, 3rd Signal Company, and Cocoa Beach, Fla., native. The Soldiers participated in a Morale, Welfare and Recreation sponsored volleyball tournament July 23 at Camp Liberty. Walker's team, "Team Foreplay," defeated Glass' team, "The Bumpers," in the best of three sets (15-1), (5-15), (15-5) to advance to the second round. MWR sponsors league play Tuesday and Thursday nights. A new league begins August 23. Contact 3rd Infantry Division MWR to sign up.

The Chronicles of Stack



Have something you'd like to contribute to the bi-weekly comic strip? Contact ricardo.branch@id3.army.mil.

SHOOTING FROM THE THUMBS: THE GAMER'S REVIEW

'Onimusha 3: Demon Siege'

Two stories, one game, equals good time

Spc. Ricardo Branch
3rd Inf. Div. PAO

Ask any true gamer who plays action adventure videogames what a good series on the Playstation 2 is and they should mention Capcom's "Onimusha" series among the top five of their best picks.

It should come to no surprise then that "Onimusha 3" serves as a good example of what all video game series should strive to perform: keep what works, improve what's good and add depth to the storyline while keeping to the flow of the series.

In this latest incarnation of demon-thrashing delight, Samonosuke (the hero of the original "Onimusha") once again must pick up his sword in his old quest to take out the evil Nobunaga who's been a thorn in Japan's hide for far too long.

In the last game, Nobunaga became the main baddie for the heroes that arise to defend humanity against the demons.

After a vicious gut-churning battle, which this writer can attest to, Nobunaga was defeated only to arise seven years later-stronger than before.

Thus begins the final chapter. In the first few minutes of playing, players will find themselves involved in a bigger epic than the last games of this series.

The game revolves mainly around the demons of ancient Japan jumping to modern day to take over the world. Along for the ride are two new heroes and Samonosuke.

At the beginning, "Onimusha 3" has three main characters that a gamer will control: Samonosuke, Jaques, and the lovely Michelle.

Each comes with a different fighting style, but all have the same goal - to defeat the current threat of the demons.

Samonosuke offers close-quarter combat with his sword and should be the easiest for most players that have played

the previous Onimusha games.

I breezed through the portions of the game with him because I was familiar with the game play already. I was ecstatic to see that the traditional "kick the opponent and stab him on the ground" is still a way to trounce those unfortunate enough to get in my way.

Now there's Jaques, the whip-wielding French commando that's been sucked into the battle alongside Samonosuke in feudal Japan.

He's probably my least favorite with that lousy whip he uses.

I just really find myself button mashing when playing as Jaques - "no-kick stab the enemy on the ground" move for this guy.

Unless you're someone who likes hack and slash games with whips (like Castlevania!), this one will probably be slightly annoying to play as.

Michelle, on the other hand,

should appeal to the female and male gamer alike. When controlling her, players have access to her arsenal of commando weapons - automatic guns anyone?

The downside though is that she's playable for far less of the game than either Samonosuke, or Jaques.

So there you have it! This game has sword, whip, and gun fighting all meshed together for a solid action/adventure that's sure to please most die hard fans.

The boss battles are also a nice challenge to make the gamer elite fume in anger and work himself in a frenzy as he progresses through this game.

With that in mind, go online and buy this game!

Well what are you waiting for?

Maybe you have what it takes to stop Nobunaga and end his vicious demon siege forever... or until the next one comes out.

Cool monsters:



Intriguing storyline:



Samarai carnage:



Graphics:



The Bottom Line

B

Are you having trouble inspiring your Soldiers to do great things? Are the words just not in your mind to make the Soldiers under you feel in awe every time you speak? Look no further than...

The Thirteen Rules for Staying Alive in Combat

By David Sherman, Dan Cragg

One:

Incoming fire always has the right-of-way.

Two:

Keep it simple, stupid.

Three:

Keeping it simple is the hardest thing in the world.

Four:

Never stand next to anyone braver than you are.

Five:

If things are going too well, it's an ambush.

Six:

The easiest way is mined.

Seven:

The one thing you never run out of is the enemy.

Eight:

Infrared works both ways.

Nine:

Professionals are always predictable.

Ten:

We always wind up fighting amateurs.

Eleven:

When the enemy's in range, so are you.

Twelve:

When in doubt, shoot until your magazine is empty.

Thirteen:

Remember the other twelve.

Hey Soldier! Want to submit something for Entertainment?
Contact Spc. Branch at
ricardo.branch@id3.army.mil



In the Movies



"World's Greatest Comic Magazine" is now World's most boring movie

Spc. Adam Musil
2nd BCT PAO

Before Dr. Bruce Banner was ever hit by gamma rays and turned into the Hulk and before Peter Parker was ever bitten by a radioactive spider, "The Fantastic Four" set a new standard for comic books.

Created by legendary comic scribe Stan Lee and equally legendary comic artist Jack Kirby, the characters of Mr. Fantastic, the Invisible Girl (later dubbed Invisible Woman), the Human Torch, and the ever-loving blue-eyed Thing, battled monsters from the outer reaches of space to the center of the Earth, all while facing their own inner demons.

These were heroes kids could root for as well as relate to.

Part soap opera and all action, the Fantastic Four quickly became a top selling comic book.

I don't mention this to wax comic-nerd on anyone, but to illustrate what made "The Fantastic Four" so popular and also what made it work. After watching their big-screen debut, it is obvious the people involved in this project didn't do their homework.

Gone are the fun over-the-top action sequences from the comics. Instead, we get to watch four people sitting around talking for an hour and a half with little to no action.

C'mon people, I thought this was supposed to be, uh...fantastic?!

The blame for this disaster of a movie falls directly on 20th Century Fox, director Tim Story and screenwriters Michael France and Mark Frost.

Instead of making a fun summer popcorn movie they tried to make the movie similar to X-Men and somewhat realistic. A touch of realism works fine with X-Men, but these are completely different characters.

Take, for example, Dr. Doom portrayed by Julian McMahon. In the comic book he is a troubled mad scientist who lives in a giant castle and has a legion of robots to do his bidding. In this movie, he's a guy who gets lead poisoning and suddenly develops the ability to shoot electricity

out of his hands.

With the huge profits comic book films have been turning and a property as bankable as "The Fantastic Four," the money was there to make an action adventure movie as white-hot as the Human Torch. There was just a lack of imagination.

Okay, so forget the comic book. After all, a movie and a comic book, or graphic novel for you pretentious nerds, should be judged on its own merits. By that rationale the movie still fails.

The scenes are simply thrown together and make no sense.

For the first thirty minutes I had no idea what was going on. How did they get to outer space? One minute they were talking about going to check out a cosmic storm and the next they are orbiting Earth. Before they leave, Chicklis as Ben Grimm, wants to pilot the ship and the next moment he's putting on a space suit and moon walking.

This is followed by the inevitable cosmic storm and then, you guessed it - twenty minutes of everyone getting their powers.

Is anyone else completely bored by what seems to have become the super-hero movie standard?

You would think that this not being the first comic book movie, someone by now would have found a better way to introduce heroes and villains getting their powers.

So every dark cloud must have a silver-lining, and in this case it's Jessica Alba and Michael Chicklis. Alba because, well - she's really attractive. And Chicklis because you gotta root for the Commish!! Who would have thought that the chubby guy with a Charlie Brown haircut and a sappy ABC series would someday become the hard hitting Thing? Way to go Chicklis!

As you have by now noticed I have yet to let you in on the story. Trust me, there isn't much of a story and what little there is isn't worth mentioning.

If you want to watch what "The Fantastic Four" should have been, watch "The Incredibles" and save your money for something else, like Jessica Alba in "Honey."