

The Marne Express

"Mission, Soldiers, Teamwork"

Volume 2, Issue 5

Serving the Soldiers of Task Force Baghdad

April 24, 2005

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*Marne
Express*



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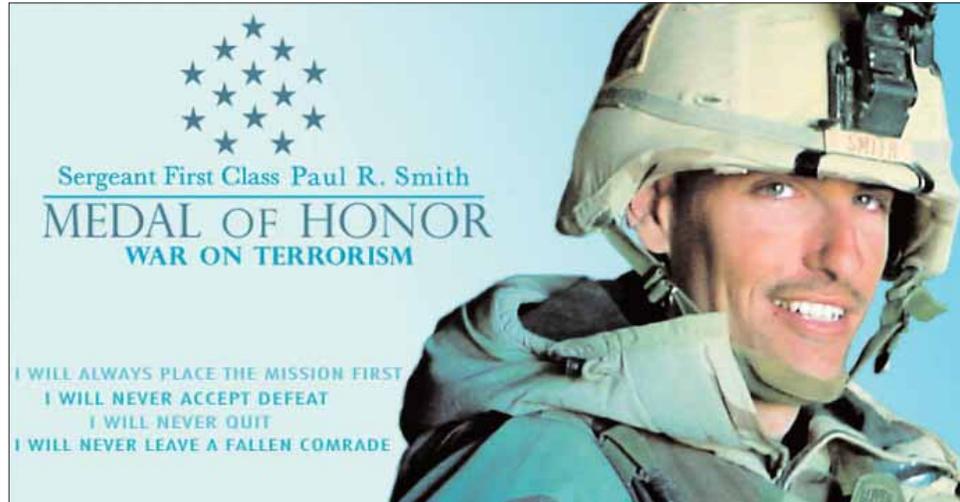
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Nation honors 3rd Inf. Div. Soldier

Army News Service
Special to The Marne Express

WASHINGTON, D.C. — An American Soldier's family received the highest military recognition, the first Medal of Honor for Operation Iraqi Freedom, from President George W. Bush in the East Room of the White House April 4.

Bush presented the Medal of Honor to David Smith, the 11-year-old son of Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith, who was killed April 4, 2003, exactly two years

ago, in an action outside the then-Saddam Hussein International Airport.

Smith manned the .50-caliber machine gun on top of an armored personnel carrier in order to defend a courtyard while his men from the 11th Engineer Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, withdrew and evacuated wounded. Late in the action, he died after being struck by enemy fire.

The president quoted a letter Smith wrote to his parents, but never mailed, saying he was willing to "give all that I am" so that his men would return home.

"On this day two years ago, Sergeant Smith gave his all for his men. Five days later, Baghdad fell, and the Iraqi people were liberated," Bush said. "And today, we bestow upon Sergeant Smith the first Medal of Honor in the war on terror. He's also the first to be awarded this new Medal of Honor flag, authorized by the United States Congress. We count ourselves blessed to have soldiers like Sergeant Smith, who put their lives on the line to advance the cause of free-

See HONOR, page 13

Rumsfeld makes special visit to Liberty

Sgt. Andrew Miller,
Staff Sgt. Ken Walker
100th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld attended a town hall meeting with Task Force Baghdad Soldiers April 12, where he presented four Bronze Stars for Valor and eight Purple Hearts.

After the awards, Rumsfeld helped reenlist 100 Soldiers, then fielded a few questions from the troops.

The spacious 3rd Infantry Division dining facility, temporarily transformed into a meeting venue, was bustling with Task Force Baghdad Soldiers and civilian contractors, all eager to see Rumsfeld and listen to his words of encouragement.

Rumsfeld and Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Task

Force Baghdad commanding general, presented many outstanding Soldiers with their awards as the citations were read aloud.

Four Bronze Star Medals with the Valor device were awarded for meritorious achievement during combat operations against an opposing force. The award denotes heroism and exemplary conduct in ground combat against the armed enemies of the United States. All four Bronze Stars awarded were to Soldiers of B Company, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division.

Eight Purple Hearts were awarded to individuals for wounds they received as a result of enemy actions. Soldiers from several different units stood at attention as Rumsfeld and Webster pinned their medals and

thanked them for their service.

Spc. Togiimoana S. Niusulu, of American Samoa, is a carpentry and masonry specialist from the 365th

Engineer Battalion and one of the Soldiers who was awarded the Purple Heart.

"I heard that Donald

See VISIT, page 13



Staff Sgt. Ken Walker

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld congratulates Staff Sgt. James Kirkpatrick, 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, after awarding him the Bronze Star Medal for Valor during a visit with Task Force Baghdad Soldiers at Camp Liberty April 12.

1st AD Soldiers remember heroic fallen friend

Sgt. Kevin Bromley
3/1 AD PAO

MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq — The solemn sound of "Taps" and rifle volleys echoed through the cavernous building as Soldiers of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division bid farewell to Sgt. William Dean Richardson April 8.

Richardson, posthumously promoted to sergeant, was killed April 3 while

conducting dismounted combat operations along the CiCi Bar Canal, in the North Babil area of Iraq.

He was the point man of a squad tasked to gain intelligence about insurgents in the area of West Sayed Abdullah near the village of Mulla Fayad.

Richardson's patrol was ambushed by terrorists and received heavy fire from automatic weapons and rocket-pro-

pelled grenades.

"His squad members will tell you that Dean saw and sensed the attack before it happened," said Lt. Col. Lee Quintas, commander of 2nd Battalion, 70th Armored Regiment.

Richardson laid down suppressive fire with his M-4 carbine and M-203 grenade launcher to allow his fellow Soldiers time to seek covered firing

See SOLDIER, page 13

Army Sergeant Major thanks fallen Soldier

Sgt. Maj. Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

In this special edition of my leaders book notes I wanted to take a moment to reflect and remember the great sacrifice of the first Soldier to be awarded the Medal of Honor in this conflict, Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith.

On 5 April, a day after Smith's son David accepted the Medal of Honor by President Bush on behalf of his father; I



had the great honor of joining his wife Birgit, his daughter Jessica and son David along with other family and friends at a special ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. It was exactly two years and a day since Smith gave his life for his country.

Arlington cemetery is visited each year by more than four million people who come to pay tribute to the heroes who have fought to keep America free. A headstone placed in SFC Smith's honor will forever remind each of them that freedom is not free and that great Soldiers like him have died in the defense of that freedom.

In my remarks to those gathered I said the stone will give Soldiers past and present, and those who aspire to wear the uniform of a Soldier, the oppor-

tunity to reflect on Paul's actions two years ago; actions that saved the lives of 100 of his fellow Soldiers.

It is because of his dedication that Paul solidified the very core of our Army. On that day, 100 American Soldiers witnessed and learned leadership of extraordinary proportions; leadership that changed and influenced their lives forever.

Those 100 men will in turn lead hundreds of Soldiers who will benefit from the leadership gained from serving with Smith. That process will continue to be shared across the entire Army from one unit to another.

Paul joins 260,000 of America's sons and daughters in the living tribute we call Arlington National Cemetery.

Paul was honored with the highest award our nation can bestow a hero. He has become a part of history to his country. For as long as our flag stands, those two hundred acres of sacred ground will cradle our heroes and the memory of Paul's commitment.

On that day, Smith's Soldiers stood as living testaments to his courage, sacrifice, and dedication. On that day more than a million Soldiers serving America's Army paid tribute to a hero.

He will always be with us to quietly inspire all those who bare witness to that special place. Paul will always be, an American Soldier.

And yet even as we honored this brave American, 261,000 others are deployed around the world in over 120 countries. Many of them are serving in harm's way. They are "your" Soldiers and they are doing a magnificent job.

The reality is that many

Soldiers are performing heroically today.

Our heroes are men and women, infantrymen and truck drivers, large and small, and they come from all across our great country and from around the world.

As you know, this is the first time in our nation's history that we have sustained a long-duration fight with an all-volunteer force. Only with the American people's support will young men and women continue to raise their right hand and swear to uphold the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

One last thing I'd like to share you with about this topic; I recently learned, national studies reflect this generation of young Americans joining our Army today are called Millennials, or the Millenium Generation. This generation is more closely tied to those Americans we call the Greatest Generation. For those of us who have been around for awhile, it might be hard to swallow our pride and accept that these young men and women are smarter and more patriotic than we were (Baby Boomers and Generation X) when we were young. They are proud to serve, are team oriented, willing to sacrifice and contribute to the mission at hand, and ready to give all in the name of freedom. They have grown up in a world under siege by terrorist attacks over the years. If we let one good story slip by without telling, we have done these young men and women an injustice.

Thank you all for what you are doing, and what you will continue to do for our Army. Hoahah.

The Word on the Street

Which two NBA teams do you expect in the finals and who will win?



"I like the Heat vs. the Suns. The Heat are just having too good a season though, so they will win it in six."

Capt. Roy Nixon
3/3 Avn.

"I'm a big Kings fan, so I'm thinking Kings vs. the Heat. Sacramento is due so they will take it in seven games."

Spc. Amy Davenport
HHC Avn. Bde.



"It will be the Spurs vs. the Heat, because they have the two best men in the game, Shaq and Duncan. I'm going to go on a limb though and say Miami wins it in seven."

Staff Sgt. Chavlier Slaughter
HHC, DSB

"Phoenix is good this year and I like them in the west, but I think the Celtics will beat them."

2nd Lt. Nicole Smay
603rd ASB



"The Pistons are the defending champs and they have awesome 'D.' In the end the Pistons will take it in six."

Pfc. Bruce Wise
603rd ASB

Unsung heroes

Command Sgt. Major William M. Grant
Task Force Baghdad command sergeant major

The path to victory is often paved by Soldiers who work behind the scenes. There's no question the 3rd Infantry Division has numerous Soldiers who do just that.

Like the Dogface Soldiers in Communications who ensure critical information is passed on throughout the Marne Division by keeping our computers,



telephones and many other communication systems running smoothly. So, to the Commo Soldiers who keep the lines of information and communication open throughout the Marne Division everyday, I say "Thank You." Thank You for the hard work you do each day to support the Marne team and keep up the good work."

Continue to support and Defend!

Rock of the Marne!

Marne 7 out



Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner
Telecommunications operator Pfc. Kevin Pivotto, left, and network administrator Staff Sgt. Anissa Bolden, both from 1st Detachment, 3rd Signal Company, make sure that the telephones and computer network systems are always functioning.

The Marne Express

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Your Horoscope:

Spc. Ricardo Branch

The 3rd Infantry Division doesn't have an astrologer, so I (and other insightful minds) have taken the liberty to share with you our take on your fate.

Taurus

Today you'll insist on calling yourself "Emperor." Beware, there will be some grumbling from your peasants.

Scorpio

You finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. However, it's the Marne Express and you're standing right in its path.

Gemini

Congratulations, your ship finally came in. Unfortunately, it's the Titanic -- have a nice cruise!

Sagittarius

Having failed at everything else, you'll focus on the one thing you're great at: failure.

Cancer

Today you'll be faced with many decisions. No matter what you decide you'll be wrong, because there's someone above you who's always right.

Capricorn

You'll have a Marne-tastic day. However, tomorrow has yet to be seen.

Leo

You will begin a bitter and drawn out battle with the voice in your head. You don't stand a chance.

Aquarius

Today you will irritate many people. In fact you will begin to irritate yourself.

Virgo

You're destined for bigger things, too bad it's your waistline from all the chowhall's desserts.

Pisces

You will find yourself at rock bottom. Fear not, tomorrow you will start digging!

Libra

Beware of falling objects this week, because let's face it -- they're not aware of you.

Aries

If you were back at home your love life would be flourishing, unfortunately for you, you're deployed so it's not.

Guards help keep Camp Taji safe

Spc. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — A Soldier uses binoculars to survey the heavy traffic on a Baghdad street while his fellow platoon member listens closely for instructions on the radio.

These troops, from the 125th Forward Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, aren't on a patrol. They are on guard duty — making sure the boundaries of Camp Taji are secure.

Soldiers from the battalion complete assigned guard shifts, manning guard towers or entry control points. Some of their main responsibilities are scanning their area for suspicious activity and keeping the sergeant-of-the-guard and officer-in-charge notified about what is going on in their sector.

"I'm pulling guard duty and keeping a good watch," said Pvt. Noel Lewis, a warehouse clerk for A Company, 125th FSB, who was assigned to a guard tower near one of the exterior walls on post. "I'm making sure nothing bad is going to happen on my watch."

His partner in the tower, Pfc. Michael Root, an ammunition specialist, also from A Co., 125th FSB, shares his commitment to keeping things under control during their shift.

"I'm keeping an eye on things inside the base and outside the base," he said.

"We keep the people inside the post safe."

A few towers down, another 125th FSB troop, Pfc. Sandy Suiter, underscores the importance of a long, but vital guard shift.

"It is a very important duty," he said. "If no one checks the perimeter, there is no telling when or where there is a breach in the compound."

Suiter is an automated logistical specialist for B Company, 125th FSB. His specialty in the Army doesn't involve scanning the horizon with binoculars, giving situation reports on the radio, or setting up and loading an M-249 machine gun.

However, in this organization, everyone is a rifleman first.

This is true of most of the

like that because you never know what can happen. You have to stay alert."

"Normally, I'm issuing out ammo to other units," Root said.

Sgt. John Harman, a member of B Co., contrasted his normal duties as a generator mechanic with the tasks involved in running the entry control point he was assigned to guard.

"On a normal day in the shop, I'd be turning wrenches, fixing generators and keeping the power up," he said. "Out here, I deal with security, check identification and deal with the locals."

The checkpoints are also manned by Iraqi soldiers, who help provide security at the checkpoints.

"(The Iraqis) are attentive," Harman said. "They do what they need to do."

Harman said that working with the Iraqis has given him a different perspective on Iraq.

"I'm seeing Iraq through their eyes," Harman said.

In turn, the Iraqi Soldiers are also learning from their American counter-

parts.

"They're seeing how we run things," said Spc. Daniel G. Jackson, an air conditioner mechanic for B Co., who works with Harman and the Iraqis to staff the checkpoint.

"The Iraqis are getting a taste of an American military operation," he said.

Working with the Iraqis and his fellow Soldiers, Harman is confident he is keeping the post secure.

"I'm making sure the right people are going to the right places," he said. "On my shift, no one is going to get through that isn't supposed to."

That standard of competence requires Soldiers to put their previous training to use.

Preparations for tasks like guarding a perimeter began when these troops first entered the Army.

"You have to be alert and always look professional," said Jackson.

Alertness and professionalism are two things stressed to all Soldiers in basic training.

"It's just like the drill sergeants told me in basic," Lewis said. "Stay alert and stay alive."

"You just go back to all that training," Root said.

Guard shifts can be challenging.

Root added that the fundamental training during basic prepared him to work long hours.

Repeated shifts enable the Soldiers to accumulate a lot of experience which helps them protect the post even better.

"Every time I do this I learn more things to be aware of," Root said.

Whether the 125th FSB Soldiers are high above in a tower, or on the edge of post at an entry point, that awareness will keep everyone at Camp Taji much safer.

"If no one checks the perimeter, there is no telling when and where there is a breach in the compound."

Pfc. Sandy Suiter
A Co., 125th FSB



Sgt. John Harman, a member of B Company, 125th Forward Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, checks in a truck at a traffic entry point while on guard duty at Camp Taji, Iraq.

Did you know

The Medal of Honor has been awarded to 3,400 of our nation's bravest Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen since its creation in 1861.

New medals for Iraq, Afghanistan service

Iraqi Campaign Medal



The new Iraqi campaign medal is the first new medal established following the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary/Service Medals. To qualify for the Iraqi Campaign Medal, a servicemember must serve a total of 30 consecutive days or 60 non-consecutive days in country.

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Special to The Marne Express

WASHINGTON, April 7, 2005 – Two new campaign medals announced today recognize servicemembers for their contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Defense Department announced the Afghanistan Campaign Medal and Iraq Campaign Medal for military members who directly support Operation Enduring Freedom between Oct. 24, 2001, and a date to be determined in the future or Operation Iraqi Freedom between March 19, 2003, and some future date.

The new campaign medals were established by presidential order for servicemembers who have been assigned, attached or mobilized to units operating in these areas, officials said.

Until now, servicemembers deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq during the designated timeframes were awarded the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.

"By awarding separate medals, we will recognize the specific contribution that our servicemen and women have made in Afghanistan and Iraq," said Bill Carr, deputy undersecretary of defense for military personnel policy. "It's appropriate that we present them with an award that truly honors their heroic service in these operations."

Servicemembers with the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal remain qualified for it, but officials said they may apply for the appropriate new campaign medal as well.

Military personnel may receive both of the new campaign medals if they meet the requirement for both awards. However, officials said the qualifying period of service for

one award can't be used to justify eligibility for the other. Just one award of each of the new medals is authorized, as no service stars are prescribed.

No servicemember is entitled to wear all three medals for the same act, achievement or period of service.

The area of eligibility for the Afghanistan Campaign Medal includes all the country's land and air spaces. The Iraq Campaign Medal applies for service in Iraq, its waters out to 12 nautical miles, and the airspace over Iraq and its 12-mile water area.

To qualify for the awards, servicemembers must have served in the appropriate region for 30 consecutive days or 60 non-consecutive days, officials said.

Servicemembers also qualify for the medals if they have been engaged in combat during an armed engagement, regardless of the time spent in the area of eligibility, or were wounded or injured and required medical evacuation from the area of eligibility while participating in an operation or on official duties.

Regularly assigned aircrew members flying sorties into, out of, within, or over the area of eligibility in direct support of military operations also qualify, with each day of operations counting as one day of eligibility.

On the uniform, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal will be positioned below the Kosovo Campaign Medal and above the Iraq Campaign Medal. The Iraq Campaign Medal will be positioned below the Afghanistan Campaign Medal and above the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.

Each military department will serve as the awarding authority for the new campaign medals and issue regulations for processing, awarding and wearing them, officials said.

Soldiers recognized for rescuing Egyptian hostages

Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin
2/10 Inf. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – One Soldier received a Bronze Star and eight Soldiers received the Army Commendation Medal April 5 for rescuing two Egyptian hostages from terrorists in Baghdad Feb. 7.

Maj. Gen. Lloyd Austin III, 10th Mountain Division commander, presided over the ceremony and congratulated the Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment for a job well done.

"They are rewarded for doing what they are supposed to do," Austin said. "In doing so, they saved lives. I'm grateful for the way you helped this division and the Army."

Four Egyptians working for the mobile cell phone company Iraqna were kidnapped Feb. 6. Less than 24 hours later, Soldiers from B Battery, 2/15 FA saved two of the hostages and detained two terrorists after they pulled over a suspicious vehicle while on a routine patrol in their area of operations.

First Lt. David Lucas, B Btry. platoon leader, 2/15 FA, noticed a vehicle sagging low to the ground. Believing this to be a possible vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, Lucas ordered his convoy to stop the vehicle.

"I told my driver to cut them off so we can search them," said the Knoxville, Tenn., native. "Before we even stopped, they stopped. Two guys jumped out and bolted in opposite directions."

The convoy gave chase to the terrorists. One managed to escape while the other was detained with assistance from an Iraqi civilian.

"An Iraqi ran out and yelled at me in the turret and showed us where the road was," said Spc. Jeremy Arneaman, a gunner from Erie, Penn.

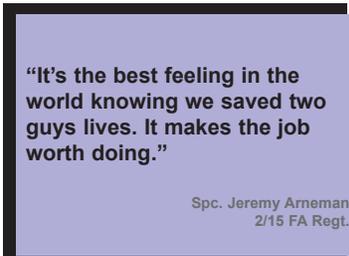
The terrorist ran around the corner and the Soldiers dismounted and chased after him. Spc. Stephen A. Rivera, a convoy driver from Miami, Fla. was close enough to him and raised his rifle.

"He was in the middle of the road and I yelled 'Stop!'" Rivera said. "He turned around and saw how close I was to him and stopped. I went up to him and he got on his knees."

While one group of Soldiers pursued

the kidnapers, Lucas and the blindfolded and handcuffed.

others detained the one who remained in the vehicle. Sgt. 1st Class Michael Carlan, a platoon leader from Dahlonaga, Ga., had the detainee open all of the doors and finally the trunk. Carlan approached the trunk expecting a



Spc. Jeremy Arneaman
2/15 FA Regt.

came up and kissed my hands," he said.

"It's the best feeling in the world knowing we saved two guys' lives," Arneaman said. "It makes the job worth doing."

The hostages were eventually released to the Egyptian Embassy. The other two Egyptian workers were rescued later in the day, Lucas said.

Lucas received the Bronze Star for his part in the rescue.

Carlan, Washington, Arneaman and Rivera received the Army Commendation Medal for their contributions.

Other ARCOM recipients include: Staff Sgt. Miguel Guzman of El Paso, Texas; Pfc. Jose Attilano, Prosser, Wash.; Pfc. Billy Bailey, Brookland, Texas; and Pfc. Jose Santos, Cidra, Puerto Rico.



Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin

Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Borja, 10th Mtn. Div. command sergeant major, congratulates Sgt. 1st Class Michael Carlan and other Soldiers from 2/15 FA at their award ceremony for rescuing two Egyptian hostages from terrorists Feb. 7.

Desert Rogues hit streets of Mamum

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – Soldiers from A Company, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor, conducted a routine presence patrol and checked up on public works in Mamum, a northeastern section of Baghdad, March 23.

Mamum is a part of Kamiliya, an area which has been the focus of much-needed coalition sewage projects and humanitarian assistance.

“We’re here to show our presence, which can disrupt enemy activity, and to make sure the trash is getting picked up and the sewage lift station is operational,” said 1st Lt. Walter Pridden, A Co., 1/64 platoon leader. “When we walk around the neighborhood, it gives us a chance to speak with residents in person, so we can find out from them what the problems in town are.”

After speaking with the operator of Mamum’s sewage lift station, Pridden found the station to be functioning well.

Mamum, a predominantly Shia area, is considered friendly toward coalition forces. A neighborhood advisory council serves as the official liaison between 1/64 and residents.

Pridden said the residents he spoke with feel the NAC represents them well and addresses their concerns.

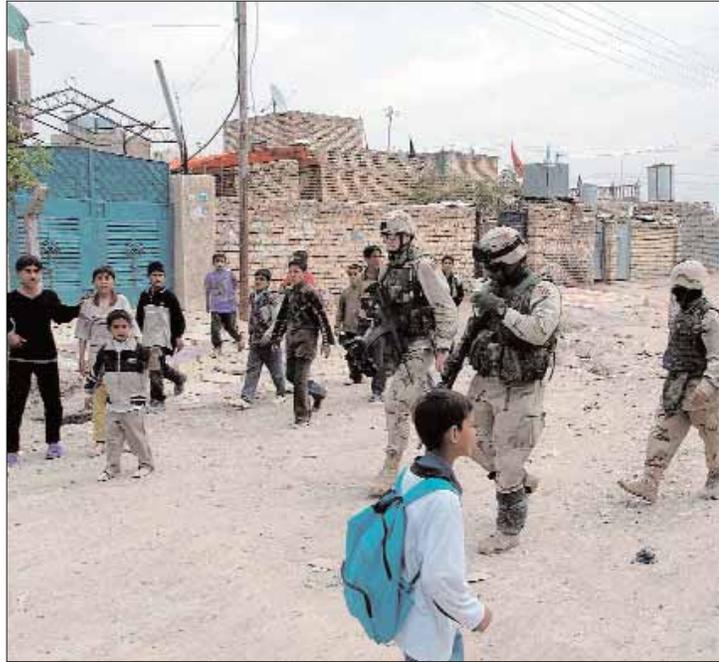
As the Soldiers walked down narrow streets, a group of children steadily grew around them. They asked for water, pens, candy, sunglasses – anything the Soldiers would give them. Some of the children spoke enough English to communicate fairly well with the troops who would engage them in conversation.

An interpreter helped bridge the language barrier between Pridden and local residents, who seemed hesitant, but cooperative.

“I’ve been to lots of different places ... the kids here love us, but the adults are apprehensive,” said Staff Sgt. Kevin Duquette, A Co., squad leader. “It’s important we come here and break the ice – show people we’re here to help.”

According to Pridden, patrols like this will continue to strengthen relations between coalition forces and residents of Baghdad. Duquette said he sees the security situation in Kamiliya improving as residents express disgust over nearby insurgent attacks.

“We’re infantrymen, we’re trained to fight, so it’s easy to go from peacekeeper to warfighter in an instant,” Duquette said. “It’s harder to go from warfighter to peacekeeper, but 99.9 percent of the people here are friendly to us, so it gets easier as we go.”



Soldiers from A Co., 1/64 Armor, followed by a group of children, patrol the streets of Mamum, Iraq. *Spc. Ben Brody*

Dedicated Taji Soldiers re-enlist by the dozen



Gen. Dan K. McNeill, FORSCOM commander, with Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., TF Baghdad commander, gives the oath of enlistment to 177 Soldiers during a ceremony at the Camp Taji airfield April 3. *Photos by Spc. Brian Henretta*

Spc. Brian Henretta
3rd Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — One hundred seventy-seven Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division’s Aviation Brigade re-enlisted in the Army April 3 at the Camp Taji Airfield.

Gen. Dan K. McNeill, Forces Command commander, gave the oath of enlistment. He was accompanied by Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Task Force Baghdad commander.

The mass re-enlistment was the largest ever for the division and the largest of any Army unit with Soldiers serving in the Iraqi theatre.

The previous record was held by the 101st Airborne Division, which re-enlisted 158 Soldiers July 4, 2003.

The 177 Soldiers have pledged themselves to a total of 990 years of additional service to the Army and were paid a total of nearly \$1.8 million in bonus money. There were 121 re-enlistees who received stabilization and education options in their contracts to stay with the 3rd Inf. Div.

The key to organizing so many Soldiers to re-enlist was finding out their needs and desires, then working hard to make sure those could be fulfilled, said Master Sgt. James R. Jay, brigade reserve component senior career counselor.

“Most of the Soldiers who re-enlisted today didn’t do it for money or anything like that,” said Barry S. Norris, brigade senior active-duty career counselor.

“They wanted to volunteer to continue serving their country, and it meant a lot to them to do it here in the warzone with Gen. McNeill giving the oath,” he said. “Many of them have told me it gives them a great feeling of camaraderie.”

During the ceremony, the aviation brigade was also awarded the prestigious Presidential Unit Citation for its service in Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

McNeill and Webster promoted Chief Warrant Officer 3 Sezandra Pinckney, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion.

Pinckney was accompanied by her husband Sgt. Maj. Allen Pinckney, and son Pfc. Allen Pinckney, Jr. All three members of the Pinckney family serve in the 3rd Inf. Div.



The 177 Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division’s Aviation Brigade pledged themselves to a total of 990 years of additional service to the Army and their country.

2/70th Armor helps mold Iraqi Army

By: Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq— Though they have only been working with the Iraqi Army for two months, Soldiers of A Co., 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Regiment of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armor Division, are making significant strides to build up the military force in Iraq.

Along with providing the basic necessities required for soldiering, the 2/70th has trained Iraqi Army Soldiers from both the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 4th Brigade, 6th Division on combat infantry tactics and maneuver movements.

Over the past several months, the training has resulted in the IA gaining loyalty from the local Iraqi community.

Capt. David Carey, from Kokomo, Ind., commander of A Co., 2/70th shared a story of an attempt by insurgents to launch mortars, an attempt that was stopped by Iraqi civilians.

"They (the insurgents) went to put out the mortar tubes, and the local populace actually pulled out their AK-47s and fired on the mortar team," said Carey.

Carey said he attributes the actions of the civilians to the Iraqi Army and outlying American patrols.

"That's a success story," he added, "you know you're

doing things right when the locals start doing things like that."

Carey, who was in Iraq a year ago for the ground war, explained that a lot has changed since he was last here, especially the focus, mentality, and capabilities of the Iraqi Army.

"Both of our battalions are doing really well, we see a lot of improvement from a year ago," Cary said. "They're able to stand up, and the officers and Soldiers are better."

Carey's men have been conducting hands-on training with the IA troops while incorporating and overseeing medical and individual level training, as well as conducting joint missions with the battalions.

The biggest struggle, according to Carey, appears to be with the lack of equipment. The goal is to get the IA completely self-sufficient on materials, such as uniforms, office equipment, and basic tools required for effective soldiering. Currently, a lot of the funding is still on the American side and is in the process of being transitioned over to the Iraqi government, though it may take a while to iron out all of the wrinkles.

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher E. Booth, a platoon sergeant for 3rd platoon, A Co., 2/70th, from Ft. Riley, Kan. is in charge of training the 1st Infantry Battalion. He claims

that much of the equipment issues have been, or are being, addressed. What he feels they need to concentrate on is developing leadership.

"Right now we are trying to convey to them how the non commissioned officers are supposed to perform in their jobs. For example, the senior enlisted leadership is performing the duties of his subordinates, but the issue is that the subordinates are fresh privates," Booth said.

In the Army, the non commissioned officer is perceived as the backbone of the enlisted ranks, and with a battalion of brand new Soldiers, Booth sees promise primarily in one company. He feels that these Soldiers have the most potential for leadership, and they are the ones who seem to have a firmer grasp on the big picture.

Booth served as a drill sergeant for three years, and he noted that taking a civilian off the street and molding him into a Soldier is far easier than trying to groom a good NCO.

"I can take 36 guys and make them privates in 16 weeks, but you can't make an NCO; it takes three, four, or even five years of experience of being a Soldier, to become one."

The first step to becoming an NCO is learning the basics of how to be a Soldier, and the Iraqi Soldiers of this bat-



Photos by Sgt. Thomas Benoit

An Iraqi Army Soldier hangs his country's flag from the shield on top of his military vehicle. Two battalions of the IA, the 507th Infantry Battalion, and the 1st Presidential Battalion, are currently being trained by Soldiers and leadership of the U.S. Army's 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Regiment, of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armor Division.

alion appear to be on their way. It has been a slow process, considering that none of the troops went through any form of basic training.

However, something seemingly as small as properly wearing the uniform is crucial to the disciplined life of a Soldier, according to Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Barnes, a platoon sergeant for A Co., 2/70th, from Ft. Riley, Kan. His platoon has been tasked with working with the 2nd Bn. He explained that through learning these small tasks, the IA is gaining its independence.

"When we first got here, there were Iraqi Soldiers walking around in flip-flops instead of boots, or even desert camouflage pants with no shirts," he said.

The senior leadership, though, has recently been enforcing a strict uniform code and requiring that everyone adhere to it. Now all Soldiers, from officers down to the lowest enlisted, are showing uniformity.

"It's small, but it's still one step closer to the U.S. forces getting out of here, and that's always a good thing," Barnes said.

The successes of the Iraqi Army are many, beginning with the good working relationship between them and the American Army, according to Barnes.

"Most of the (Iraqi) dismounted infantry guys do a lot of patrols and we go with them, generally it's a squad of Americans and a squad of Iraqis," he said.

He claims that the Iraqi Soldiers love it and it shows in their morale and that the

two countries not only work well together, but they also seem to enjoy it.

"It's great, and my Soldiers like teaching the Iraqis what Soldier life is like," Barnes said.

Along with the elections, the recent pilgrimage of thousands of Shi'i Muslims to Karbala was a major success story for the Iraqi Army. Not only did the IA provide the main security for the event, but they also intercepted attacks that could have potentially been catastrophic.

The IA set up checkpoints throughout the route to search vehicles, which resulted in a vehicle born improvised device detonating earlier than planned. Because the IA was searching cars, the line was held up and when the bomb went off, it had not yet reached the large group of civilians that it was targeting, and only the perpetrator was killed.

If you ask Booth, the biggest triumph is the growing loyalty of the Iraqi community to their own army.

"We had to close the routes down and people got frustrated with us," he said, "when we offered to have the IA come in and escort them, they became relaxed and seemed grateful."

Carey said that the elections and the pilgrimage were turning points in the way that the Iraqi community views the country's security forces, and he feels that it's only going to get stronger.

"The events were huge for the local psyche," Carey said. "We're seeing more and more that the local populace is coming forward and standing up on their own."



A platoon of the Iraqi Army marches in cadence and full uniform. Leadership of the 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Regiment of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armor Division, are teaching the IA basic Soldiering, such as the proper wear of the uniform, and marching.

Useful Iraqi Arabic Phrases

English	Arabic	English	Arabic
Good Morning	saBAH alKHAIR	Praise God	alHAMD' allah
Good Morning (reply)	saBAH alNOOR	Welcome	AHlen wa SAHlen
How are you	SHLo nek	Fine thank you	Zain SHIUKran

Medic receives Army medal for valor

Spc. Brian Schroeder
2/10 Inf. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Spc. Shane Courville, a 210th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division combat medic was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with valor device March 8 for his courageous efforts in providing medical aid to his fellow Soldiers and civilians while engaged by enemy fire.

On the morning of Nov. 9, 2004, Courville prepared for the day's mission by loading his combat lifesaver pack into his humvee and inspecting his equipment before heading to the hospitals in western Baghdad to inspect ongoing improvement projects. Once they made the rounds to the hospitals, the patrol members drove toward Abu Ghraib to hand out blankets to a local school before the cold of winter hit.

Capt. Jennifer Knowlden, 2nd BCT, patrol leader said while the patrol was coming down the overpass into the city of Abu Ghraib, she noticed something seemed odd.

"The streets were empty and nobody was around," she said. "That's when the first improvised explosive device went off."

"I couldn't see anything, it was like I was wearing nylons over my eyes," she recalled. "The windows looked like they were all sandblasted."

Then Lt. Col. Michael Infanti, 2nd BCT deputy commanding officer dismounted the vehicle and began directing fire toward the enemy. The rest of the patrol followed their leader.

"We got out and noticed rocket-propelled grenade gunners against a wall and began shooting in their direction," Knowlden said. "Then I noticed the deputy commanding officer go down."

After watching the lieutenant colonel fall to the ground, Knowlden immediately called for a medic over her radio. She looked over her shoulder and saw Courville running through the smoke toward Infanti.

"It was just like out of a movie," she remembered. "Bullets were flying everywhere."

"When I got out I couldn't see because of the smoke," Courville said. "I got to Lt. Col. Infanti as quick as I could and started treating him."

Courville examined Infanti and noticed he had lacerations to the back of his head and was disoriented from a concussion he received from the



Spc. Brian Schroeder
Col. Mark A. Milley, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division commander, awards Spc. Shane Courville, 210th Forward Support Battalion combat medic, the Army Commendation Medal with valor device March 8 for providing medical aid to his fellow Soldiers while under hostile fire.

blast.

While he was applying bandages to Infanti's head, three RPGs were fired at the convoy. One exploded under a vehicle. Another hit the tires of a vehicle and one hit the back of a vehicle, but did not detonate. It lodged between the blankets that the patrol was on their way to deliver.

Despite the insurgent fire directed at his position, Courville continued to treat his commander's wounds. Knowlden, who was also wounded by the IED, helped Courville load Infanti into the damaged vehicle where the medic continued to administer first aid while the convoy departed the area.

Moments later, a second IED detonated underneath Knowlden's humvee, sending the back hatch of their truck flying end-over-end into the air. The Soldiers in the patrol dismounted once again and performed a security perimeter around the vehicles.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Carollo, 2nd BCT, Headquarters and Headquarters Company security patrol sergeant, was part of the dismounted team. He said they noticed a group of wounded civilians who had been injured in the cross-fire from the attack.

Courville immediately began treating them too.

"Courville began lining up the wounded in a triage and was non-stop treating them," Carollo said. "He went through the supplies in his combat lifesaver bag and had to grab another one for more supplies."

While Courville was treating the wounded civilians, a platoon of Bradley Fighting Vehicles came in to reinforce the area. Once the civilians were treated, Carollo and his team began loading the wounded into the Bradleys to take them to a hospital for further treatment. Courville stayed with the wounded until they arrived at the hospital.

"This is not the first, second, third or even fourth time Spc. Courville has performed like this under fire," Carollo said. "Six members of his platoon have received Purple Hearts for wounds he treated while under fire."

"The Soldiers who perform under pressure like Spc. Courville are the ones who demonstrate their true inner heroism," he said.

Carollo said he considers every deployed Soldier a hero because of the sacrifices they make. He said the true heroes are the Soldiers who carry out their duties, no matter how dangerous the situation may be.

Courville modestly said he does not consider himself a hero, that he was doing his job just like any Soldier should do.

"The happiest thing of all is that my guys are still alive," he said. "That is probably the best award I could have received."



Working shoulder to shoulder

1st Lt. Bradley Banks
Soldiers assigned to the 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion supporting 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division teamed up with U.S. Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit to participate in a medical and dental assistance program at the Adawanyah School in Baghdad, March 30. Nearly 50 patients were evaluated and treated. Two children required tooth extractions. Sports equipment was also donated to the school.

Father, son reunite in Kuwait

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
3rd ACR PAO

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Normally, when parents say goodbye to their children departing for military service, the first chance to see their sons and daughters in uniform usually takes place at basic training graduations or when their child comes home on leave.

Surprisingly as fate would have it, Sgt. 1st Class Stanley Gillens had to travel across the globe from Eutawville, S.C. to Camp Buehring located at Udairi, Kuwait to see his son, Pfc. Kelton Gillens. The reunion took place March 28, seven months after Kelton left for Fort Knox, Ky. to become a tanker.

The elder Gillens, assigned to the 412th Replacement Company, deployed to Kuwait in December 2004, four months prior to his son's arrival in March with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

"Before he left I told him that not long after completing his training, he'd probably be going to Iraq," Gillens said. "He said he understood that, but it's something he wanted to do."

The elder Gillens, a veteran of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, hoped he would also see his middle son, Stanley Jr., while in Kuwait. He talked to both sons after finding out he was deploying and discussed the possibility of all three meeting each other in Kuwait.

"It would have been a nice family reunion, but it didn't happen," Gillens said.

The opportunity to see his son Kelton as a Soldier for the first time meant a great deal for the senior non commissioned officer. The day prior to seeing his 'baby boy,' Gillens reflected on Easter Sundays past with his family in South Carolina and contemplated about what advice he'd give his son during their reunion.

"I just want to make sure he remembers all the things and values he was taught growing

up," Gillens said. "As long as he does that he'll be fine."

Upon entering his tent and noticing his father standing at his bunk, the younger Gillens revealed a huge smile that only a "child" can give a parent.

"I couldn't even talk, I was very excited," the younger Gillens said. "I can't even think straight right now."

Gillens, assigned to Eagle Troop, 2nd Squadron, 3rd ACR, mentioned that his father advised him to be a perfect Soldier, do what he's told to do, be safe and look out for his battle buddies. "I'm doing all those things," he said.

While embracing his son, Gillens reminded him to stay focused and, "to remember first and foremost we're still at war."

The reunion was made possible through the efforts of Capt. Stanley Robinson, 377th Theater Support Command, who served with the 3rd ACR during Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and 1st Sgt. Hernando Pena, E Troop, 2nd Squadron, 3rd ACR. As a lieutenant, Robinson served in the same unit as Pena.

Pena made it a priority to ensure the reunion would take place after talking to Robinson.

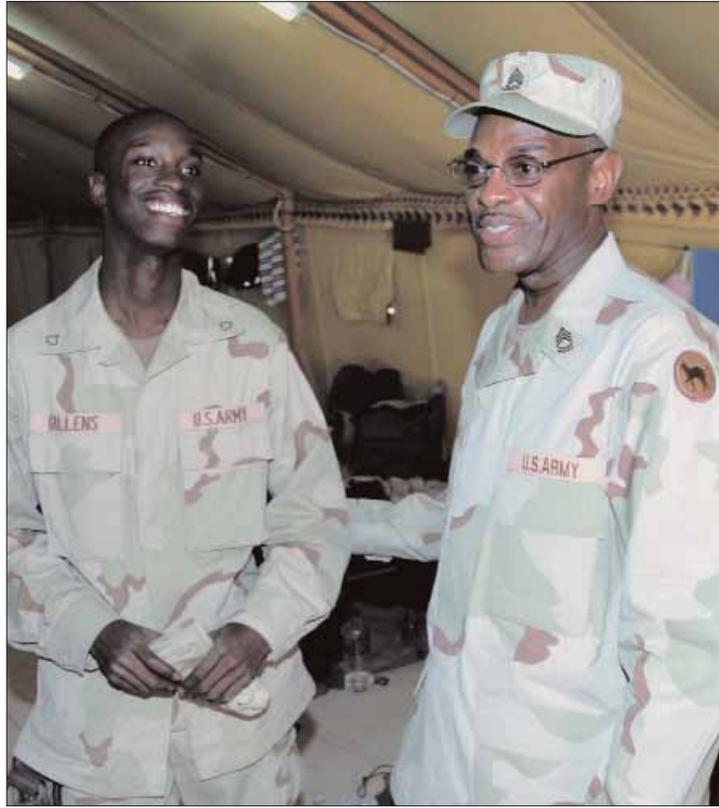
"I have a son in the Navy, so I can understand what it would be like to have your father in the same theater, something tangible where you can reach out and touch him, that's awesome," Pena said. "It's a great morale booster for the Soldier."

Pena added the elder Gillens can relay back to his wife and family members back home that the "little man is doing fine."

"And that's one less thing at home for his family to worry about," Pena said. "When you see those combinations like that, it's awesome. That's special. Without a question the chain of command here would make that happen."

"It gives that Soldier a sense that (his) Troop is looking out for (him)," Pena said.

Pena added that if something awful happened, it would be



Sgt. 1st Class Stanley Gillens, right, enjoys time with his son Pfc. Kelton Gillens, in Kelton's tent at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The elder Gillens, assigned to the 412th Replacement Company, deployed to Kuwait in December 2004 four months prior to his son's arrival in late March with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

regrettable if they didn't get to see one another.

Gillens said he was extremely glad his chain of command arranged the meeting between him and his father.

"This means a lot to me and it lets me know my leadership really cares about the Soldiers in my unit," Gillens said. "It makes being over here easier to

deal with now that I've seen my father. I'm alright now, I'm alright."

The elder Gillens' presence also impacted some of his son's fellow troopers. Members of his platoon shook hands and exchanged pleasantries and kudos about Gillens to his father. Also, the Soldiers shared the experience as if it was their

own relative visiting the tent.

"I saw the smile on his face when he saw his dad and I think it's a good morale boost not only for him, but for all of us," said Pvt. Jose Guerrero, also of E Troop. "In our platoon, if one Soldier is feeling down, then everyone is down. If one is happy, then all are happy. We're all happy right now."

Challengers keep vital supplies rolling along

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

CAMP RUSTIMIYA, Iraq – Throughout history, armies have won and lost battles based on how well their supply chains functioned.

Today, Soldiers of 26th Forward Support Battalion, based at Camp Rustimiya, push essential supplies out to Spartan Soldiers all over east-

ern Baghdad with speed and efficiency.

The unit did just that when conveying a logistics package to Soldiers at Butler Range March 24.

In addition to 26th's fuel tanker, the convoy included 18-wheelers from Kellogg, Brown and Root carrying food, mail and a forklift.

"We go out whenever Soldiers need supplies – there's no set sched-

ule," said Sgt. Angela Wharton, A Company, 26th FSB, petroleum supply non commissioned officer. "We're always on the move," Wharton said.

Butler Range is a somewhat remote installation in the desert east of Baghdad, and the 40-mile drive makes preparation especially crucial, according to Sgt. 1st Class Courtney Henry of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 26th FSB, security platoon.

Henry conducted a detailed briefing before departing, and made sure everyone knew the plan for dealing with vehicle breakdowns, accidents, insurgent attacks and other scenarios.

"It's a lot of responsibility going out with the KBR drivers because they don't have the training we do, so our eyes have to be wide open," Henry said. "You've got to always be looking at your surroundings and making sure everyone's on the same sheet of music when you're traveling along the convoy route."

Once at Butler, Wharton and Spc. Markeith Sams, also of A Co., refilled one of Butler's fuel tanks from the tanker they had driven. Sams said he regularly makes trips to the range.

Soldiers from 26th's security platoon characterize the unit as being close-knit. They depend on a wide array of skills for success.

"There's a great deal of camaraderie in the unit – it's a tight, cohe-

sive family," said Staff Sgt. David "Bones" Logan, HHC, 26th FSB team chief. "It's a high-stress environment, so you've got to know when it's okay to joke around and when it's time to put your game face on. You always have to expect the unexpected here."

Logan said the days are flying by, and that he gets a sense of satisfaction from working in Iraq.

"We're so busy, always driving somewhere, that the days go by pretty fast," he said. "The best feeling is when you see some little Iraqi kid smile and wave at you. It really humbles you, because there's so much we take for granted that they don't have."

After helping guide the KBR rigs into Butler's dusty parking lot, Pfc. Nathan Hadd, an HHC, 26th FSB, driver, said his company is a strong mix of talents.

"Everyone brings something different to the table in HHC," Hadd said. "We've got great mechanics, medics, drivers, fuelers – it's a solid team."

"Driving the big trucks through the traffic in Baghdad is a huge responsibility," he added. "You've got to be respectful of civilians while keeping yourself safe – otherwise you might make a new enemy."

Given the 26th's teamwork and competence, the thousands of Spartan Soldiers who depend on them for critical supplies should have nothing to worry about.



Pfc. Nathan Hadd, HHC, 26th FSB, driver, lines up Kellogg, Brown and Root trucks to be unloaded at Butler Range March 24. The trucks carried food, water and mail.

3rd ACR uncases its colors in Iraq



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

From left to right, 3rd Armored Cavalry Troopers, Staff Sgt. Morgan Byington, Staff Sgt. Matthew Hodges and Sgt. 1st Class Jose Colon, stand in formation donning their traditional Stetsons for the ceremony at Camp Striker, Iraq April 13.

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
3rd ACR PAO

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – Nearly one year after ending its tour of duty during Operation Iraqi Freedom I, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment unfurled its colors on Iraqi soil once again April 13.

Donning their traditional Stetson hats and spurs, more than 200 Troopers of the Army's first-ever cavalry regiment stood in line as Col.

H.R. McMaster, regiment commander, explained the unit's mission in support of OIF 3.

McMaster paraphrased a quote from the 28th commander of the regiment, Gen. George S. Patton, to symbolize the importance of the regiment's role in fighting the war on terrorism.

"Many years from now when your grandchildren ask you what did you do or where were you during the global war on terrorism, you'll be able to tell them you were not at home watching it on televi-

sion or placing a yellow ribbon on your bumper," McMaster said. "You can tell them you were here on the ground fighting the war on terror."

The Regiment of Mounted Riflemen was organized by Congress May 19, 1846 and brought into existence a new organization in the American Army: a regiment of riflemen mounted and equipped with Model 1841 percussion rifles to provide longer range and more firepower than the smoothbore weapons of the infantry and dragoons.



3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment troopers salute the Regiment's colors during the uncasing ceremony. The Regiment returned to Iraq nearly one year later after serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom 1.

Flight medic recognized with Purple Heart

Spc. Brian P. Henretta
Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – A Soldier whose primary mission is to aid the wounded was himself awarded with the Purple Heart April 8 at the Taji Airfield for injuries he received while saving lives.

Sgt. George W. Hildebrandt, a flight medic from 50th Medical Company (air ambulance), 101st Airborne Division, was given the medal by Brigadier Gen. Elder Granger, commanding general of the 44th Medical Command, XVIII Airborne Corps.

Hildebrandt, a native of Hesperia, Calif., was given the award for wounds sustained during a mission where he was responding to a medical evacuation request after Soldiers were hit by an improvised explosive device in downtown Baghdad Feb. 21.

His MEDEVAC crew arrived on the scene and began evacuating and treating the injured. While carrying a Soldier he placed on a stretcher, a second IED exploded in his area, knocking Hildebrandt down. He picked himself up from the ground and, although disoriented, continued to the helicopter, which was also damaged in the blast. It was then when he noticed his own wounds, which included shrapnel in his legs, back, spine and neck.

Despite his own injuries, Hildebrandt continued treating the other casualties during the flight to the hospital.

"I didn't do anything that any of our other medics wouldn't have done," Hildebrandt said. "I'm just happy to be doing a job I love. The worst part of this all was that I had to

stay away from work for a month."

While Hildebrandt remains humble about his actions that day, others have nothing but praise for his bravery.

"I'm extremely proud of Sgt. Hildebrandt. He took a risk that others only think about, and despite injuries, continued to do what he was trained to do," Granger said.

The Purple Heart award was created by George Washington in 1782 for "any singularly meritorious action," and it's first three recipients were all sergeants.

Granger said that Hildebrandt's actions on Feb. 21 carried on that tradition. "Hildebrandt is an example of a proud patriot and is a great non commissioned officer just like the first three men who were awarded this medal," Granger said.

Flight Platoon Leader Capt. Heath D. Holt, who was the Black Hawk pilot Hildebrandt crewed with that day, also praised his actions not just from that day, but every day.

"No one embodies the work ethic of Medical Company more than Sgt. Hildebrandt. He is a great medic, and nobody has made more sacrifices for our unit during the years I've known him," Holt said. "He's the first person I'd pick to be on my crew, and not just because of this Purple Heart. I would have said that a year ago, the day he was injured or still today."

Just as medics are trained to do with their injured Soldiers, Hildebrandt, who has a wife and five children, was certain to relay calming reassurances from the hospital that he would be just fine and back in the business of helping others once again.

"I'm extremely proud of Sgt. Hildebrandt. He took a risk that others only think about, and despite injuries, continued to do what he was trained to do."

Brig. Gen. Elder Granger
Commanding General
44th Medical Command, XVIII Airborne Corps



Spc. Brian Henretta

Sgt. George W. Hildebrandt, a flight medic with the 50th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), 101st Airborne Division, receives a Purple Heart from Brigadier Gen. Elder Granger, commanding general of the 44th Medical Command, XVIII Airborne Corps. Hildebrandt earned the award from wounds received while providing medical treatment to Soldiers injured during an IED explosion in Baghdad.

Handling Haifa Street

Iraqi battalion battles insurgents

Spc. Matthew McLaughlin
2/10 Inf. PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HAWK, Iraq —“So this is the dangerous Haifa Street,” Capt. Mike Campbell said in a sarcastic tone as he patrolled the quiet Baghdad road on March 27. Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade and American advisors like Campbell from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division strolled down the infamous street with cautious confidence.

“Since 2/1 IA came here, they saturated the area with patrols,” the Celina, Tenn. Native, later said. “They are totally denying the enemy an area to operate.”

This serene Easter Sunday is a far cry from February, when Haifa St. was a hotbed of insurgent activities known as “Death Street” and “Purple Heart Boulevard” to media outlets. Saddam Hussein once used housing along Haifa St. for Saudi and Palestinian refugees as well as Baathist loyal to Hussein.

Many Hussein loyalists used the area for operations, paying poor Iraqis to attack Coalition Forces, said a platoon sergeant with 2/1 IA.

“People on Haifa St. are peaceful, but people come from other places and they don’t care about what the people want,” he said.

Suicide attacks, most notably one that killed 50 Iraqis last September, and mortar fire directed at the Green Zone from Haifa St. prompted Coalition Forces to take action. The 1st Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade was sent in to handle the insurgency. The insurgency still persisted, however, and 2-1 IA joined the fight.

“It was hell,” said Col. Mohammad Faik Rauf al-Samarai, 2-1 IA’s commander. “No one could open their shops, no one could leave their house, no one could go to school. Many people were killed. When my (Soldiers) got to Haifa St., we took care of the problem.”



A Soldier from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade pulls security after an improvised explosive device detonated during a patrol. One civilian was killed in the attack.

Photos by Spc. Matthew McLaughlin

Combating the insurgency meant several weeks of intense fighting between the 2-1 IA and anti-Iraqi forces. Lt. Col. Mark Kneram, 2nd BCT officer in charge of IA support and training, said 2-1 IA Soldiers met the insurgents head on.

“The first three weeks we had multiple attacks,” the New Castle, Penn. native said. “We had mortars, IEDs, people throwing hand grenades from buildings ... We had every expectation that we were in for a hard fight.”

Eventually 2-1 IA Soldiers successfully hampered the insurgency. Many insurgents were detained, fled the area or willingly stopped fighting. The successful operations established the 2-1 IA as a legitimate military unit to Haifa St. residents, Kneram said.

American and Iraqi Soldiers alike credit much of the success on Haifa St. to 2-1 IA Soldiers constant dismounting and walking the streets. Previous units drove through the street without

dismounting often, which distanced them from peaceful Haifa St. residents, an IA non commissioned officer said.

“We’re different. We chase them when they fire at us,” he said. “We conduct dismounting and mounted patrols even after midnight.”

“We were able to put a lot of boots on the ground,” Kneram said. “They showed the enemy that these guys mean business. They helped to turn the tide. We’re having a great synergy on Haifa St.”

The Iraqi Soldiers continued to gain respect by maintaining a constant threat to insurgents and constant support to Haifa St. residents, said a plans officer with 2-1 IA.

“When we came to Haifa St., we gave strong treatment to bad people and caring treatment to the good people,” he said.

“They didn’t treat everyone like terrorists,” Kneram said. “They showed military force, but also a willingness to work with the people.”

The military support, combined with civil affairs mis-

sions and negotiations with local sheiks, led to local support of 2-1 IA efforts. Tips from Haifa St. residents led to capturing several insurgents, some on Iraqi Ministry of Defense and Army most wanted lists, Kneram said. One Iraqi Soldier said 2-1 IA receives five to 10 tips daily.

“They saw my battalion walk Haifa St.,” one IA officer said. “They saw us, with the help of the U.S., fix power problems. ... When people saw this good treatment, they told us where the bad guys were.”

Although 2nd BCT advisors take great pride in their contributions to 2-1 IA’s accomplishments, Kneram said the Iraqi battalion is holding their own on their

new area of operations.

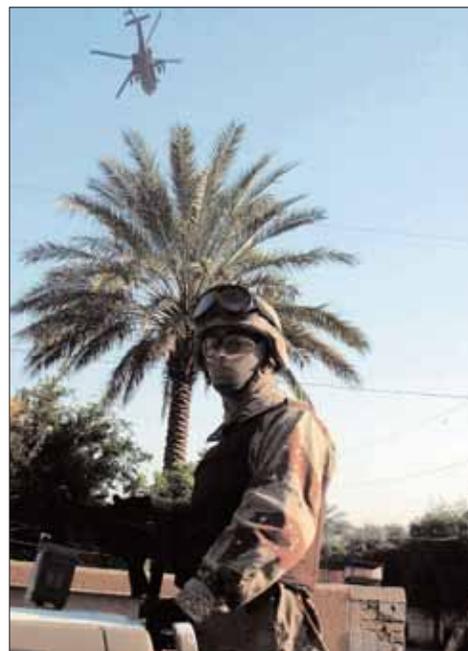
“At first we went out on almost every platoon patrol,” he said. “We no longer cover down on all patrols. They operate on their own. This unit is standing on its own two feet.”

The area once known as the most dangerous street in Baghdad is in relative peace. Soldiers from 2-1 IA are said they are optimistic but prepared to bring the fight to the enemy, said a Soldier from 2-1. For now, Soldiers and citizens can breathe a sigh of relief.

“Now they can go shopping because they see the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces there,” the Soldier said. “We destroyed the terrorists and we will continue to destroy them.”



An Iraqi Army Soldier pulls security during a patrol around Baghdad. Soldiers from 2-1 IA are responsible for Haifa St., an infamous road in Baghdad that has remained relatively silent for more than a month.



A Soldier from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade pulls security from a turret while fellow IA soldiers conduct cordon searches in Baghdad.

'Shavnabada' Bn. provides Baghdad security

Capt. Stephen L. Gifford
4th BCT

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division has welcomed a new infantry battalion to its ranks. And, just like most of the units in the Fort Stewart-based division, the Soldiers of this battalion are from Georgia.

However, most of these Soldiers don't speak English.

The 13th Infantry Battalion, from the country of Georgia, a former Soviet Republic located on the Black Sea between Turkey and Russia, joins the 4th BCT in the war against terrorism.

The 550-Soldier battalion will be responsible for security at two of the most important sites in Baghdad – the al-Rasheed Hotel and the Iraqi Convention Center, the home to the newly-elected Iraqi National Assembly. The battalion will also provide security for United Nations convoys in Baghdad.

"We look forward to helping the people of Iraq launch their own democracy," said Capt. George Shengalia, the 13th Battalion commander. He pointed out that Georgia is a new democracy, and said he understands the need for security during this transition.

The 13th is called the "Shavnabada" battalion, named for a type of cloak worn by medieval warriors. The most famous shavnabada was worn by the patron saint of Georgia, Saint George. The battalion's crest includes the word "Shavnabada" in Georgian, the battalion's symbol, the Griffin, and the number 13.

The Shavnabada battalion was established with the independence of Georgia from the

Soviet Union in 1991. It saw combat a year later, conducting an amphibious assault from the Black Sea in northwest Georgia. In 2003, the battalion received advanced training and equipment from the U.S. Marine Corps.

More than 90 percent of the Soldiers currently serving in Iraq are veterans of fighting a guerrilla insurgency in the South Ossetia region of the country in October 2004.

Col. Edward Cardon, commander of the 4th BCT, looks forward to working with the Georgian soldiers joining the Vanguard Brigade's mission.

"The Shavnabada battalion has a vital role to play in the security of Baghdad and Iraq, and I am confident in their abilities," he said. "The 13th Infantry makes a welcome addition to the Vanguard team."

He also said he's especially pleased that Shengalia has chosen to allow its Soldiers to wear the 3rd Inf. Div. patch as the unit's combat patch for this deployment.

Georgian soldiers wear their unit patch on their left shoulder, as well as combat patches and a subdued Georgian flag. They wear American-style desert combat uniforms with flak vests and load-carrying combat equipment. On their kevlar, all Soldiers wear a seven-pointed star, a common Georgian symbol.

Most of the soldiers in the 13th Bn. speak both Georgian and Russian. Most also understand a few words of English and can read English letters and numbers. All important checkpoints and Georgian missions include interpreters.

Other coalition countries supporting the Multi-National Division-Baghdad include Estonia and Macedonia.



Pfc. Dan Batda
Two Georgian Soldiers from the 13th Infantry Battalion (Shavnabada) stand guard outside the al-Rasheed Hotel. The 550-soldier battalion deployed to Iraq in March and has the important security mission of the al-Rasheed Hotel and the Iraqi Convention Center.

256 BCT driven to save Soldiers Confidence course on track for drivers' safety

Spc. Chris Foster
256th BCT PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - The 256th Brigade Combat Team broke ground with the help of two D7 dozers and a Volvo front loader for the first ever Driver's Confidence Course in North Liberty, Iraq, on April 4.

256th BCT has lost three Soldiers as a result of vehicle accidents on dangerous terrain conditions since being deployed. Most roads in and around Baghdad are narrow, raised roads, bordered by canals or ditches that can have five to 10 feet of mud and water. Those conditions make the roads just as dangerous as terrorist activities.

The 256th BCT Commander, Brig. Gen. John Basilica Jr., said he felt the best way to prevent these types of accidents was to provide a realistic and challenging driving confidence course on which Soldiers will be able to train. To that end, the operations command sergeant major and the unit's master drivers, worked with the brigade safety officer to develop the first enduring driver's training course on Camp Liberty.

The training course, which consists of both classroom instruction and practical exercises, allows drivers the opportunity to test the limitations of their equipment and skills in a controlled environment.

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Boutte from Lafayette, La., with Headquarters Company, 256th BCT, and the non commissioned officer in charge of the project, said the course will provide driving scenarios as close to real-world challenges as possible.

The driver's training course is designed to provide Tiger Brigade Soldiers with a challenging, realistic training experience that closely mirrors the environment in which we fight, said Maj. Kenneth Copple, the 256th's safety officer.

"The BCT Master Drivers designed this driver's training course to combine classroom instruction and practical, hands-on training by replicating raised canal roads, serpentine barricades and narrow lanes drivers must negotiate," said Copple. "The course is a great tool to prepare newly arriving replacements as well as providing sustainment training, both day and night for our experienced drivers."

This Driver's Confidence Course will be beneficial to experienced and inexperienced drivers alike. Though the focus of the course is to improve a Soldier's driving skills, the secondary effect is the prevention of accidents caused by careless mistakes made in combat.

"The sooner we get the course, the sooner we can have Soldiers honing their driving skills before they get out the wire," Boutte said.

Use of the course, designed for day training and night training with night-vision goggles, may be scheduled by a unit's master driver. In addition to being licensed on military tactical vehicles, one other prerequisite to training is attending a safety briefing prior to driving on the course, Boutte noted.



Photos by Spc. Chris Foster
Above: Staff Sgt. Terry Readoux, from Lafayette, La., with Headquarters 1088th Engineer Battalion, of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, makes sure that the dozers keep grade during the first phase of the construction.

Left: Sgt. 1st Class Donald Boutte from Lafayette, La with Headquarters Co. 256th BCT, makes sure that the dozers keep grade during the first phase of the construction.

Air Assault battalion makes 3rd Inf. Div. history

Spc. Brian Henretta
3rd Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The 3rd Infantry Division has fought in theaters all over the globe, engaging enemies with infantry, armor, artillery, aviation and just about every other possible type of asset during its history. However, until recently the Rock of the Marne Division has never had air assault capabilities.

That changed May 15, 2004 when the 101st Infantry Division's 9th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, equipped with their Blackhawks, became the 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Assault Helicopter Regiment and was assigned to the 3rd Inf. Div.

The move to integrate an air assault battalion with the aviation brigade has been a challenge. For the Soldiers who made it happen, the end result has been a tremendous success, as was demonstrated recently when the battalion conducted the first air assault operation in division history.

The battalion left Fort Campbell, Ky. to train with 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers at Fort Stewart, Hunter Army Airfield and Fort Benning, Ga. The training taught Soldiers from various backgrounds such as armor, cavalry and infantry; many of whom had never set foot in a helicopter, how to conduct an air assault, said Maj. Joe Matthew, 4/3 AHB executive officer.

It wasn't always an easy process; even learning the basics of entering and exiting the Black Hawk took days and nights of practice.

"You could see a look of both apprehension and excitement on their faces as they were going through cold-load drills," said Spc. Ronnie Wilson, a crew chief with A Company, 4/3 AHB. "But it was fun to see their excitement after their first ride."

Matthew said that while Soldiers were adjusting to learning new assault methods, their leaders took classes including planning and command and control of air assault operations.

Before deploying to Iraq in January, the division proved them-

selves capable of executing air assault missions during two rotations through the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.

A Co., 4/3 AHB conducted the division's first air assault three days after the brigade's transition of authority. They inserted nearly 40 Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division who conducted foot patrols to seek and destroy improvised explosive devices.

These missions have continued since, allowing Soldiers to successfully identify IEDs and preventing them from being placed by terrorists, Matthew said.

These successful missions demonstrated the unique capability that 4/3 brings to the division.

One of the battalion's next air assaults was a joint nighttime attack with Marines from 2nd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment. Despite poor weather, the Marines were inserted into their target area with precision timing. There they detained more than 50 suspected anti-Iraqi forces.

"The success of this mission allowed coalition forces to establish a presence in what was a hostile area," Matthew said.

The largest air assault mission to date occurred last month, when 4/3 AHB delivered nearly 350 Soldiers, a group made up of two Cavalry troops of 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment and two companies of the 3rd Battalion, 325th Parachute Infantry Regiment from the 82nd Airborne Division, to a hostile South Baghdad neighborhood to restore coalition control, Matthew said.

Supporting them were armor and attack helicopter assets, along with Iraqi Army Soldiers.

The careful planning and flawless execution of this mission made it a resounding success as the first battalion-sized air assault in 3rd Inf. Div. history.

While this may be a normal event for some Soldiers of 4/3 AHB, planners of the mission were proud of how well everything went considering the complexities involved in executing a mission of such magnitude for the very first time.

"It never dawned on us that we would be doing something for the first time. We were doing what we were trained to do, and each serial was within 30 sec-

onds of their objective times," said Chief Warrant Officer Jeff Gregg, battalion standardization officer. "The crew chiefs performed magnificently in assisting both Soldiers and pilots. It was a superb effort by everyone in the battalion."

"When critical operations are happening, it's easy to spot veteran Soldiers," said 1st Sgt. Jeff

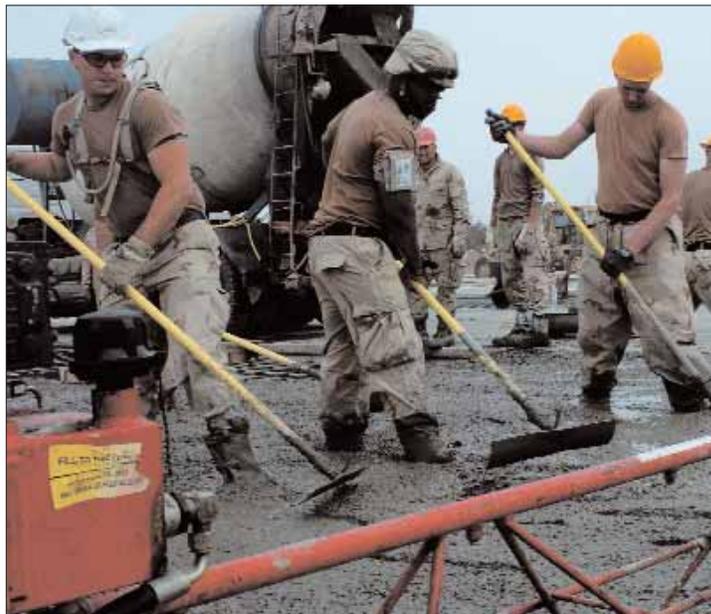
Thompson, C Company, 4/3 AHB first sergeant. "They conducted themselves as professionals and veterans. I am very proud of their many accomplishments."

The 4/3 AHB has proven it can take on new challenges. The addition of its air assault capabilities will be an invaluable tool for mission success in the Baghdad region.



Spc. Brian Henretta
A Blackhawk helicopter from Black Heart Element, B Company, 4/3 AHB, departs a forward operating base near Baghdad on its way to an air assault mission.

Airfield expansion underway at Camp Taji



Spc. Derek Del Rosario
From left to right, Air Force Staff Sgt. Andy J. Hikes, 201st Expeditionary Red Horse Squadron, Senior Airman Thomas N. Davidson and Staff Sgt. Robert A. Skomrock, both of 200th ERHS, lay concrete as part of the expansion of Camp Taji airfield.

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
3rd Avn. Bde. PAO

The Camp Taji airfield is lined with Chinooks, Blackhawks and Apaches, and soon there will be even more area for these aircraft due to an on-going project designed to expand the airfield.

The project, which began Feb. 9, is designed to expand the airfield by approximately 600,000 square feet and is slated to finish early this month. Nine Air Force engineering units were brought in to help work on the project.

"The airfield needs to be extended because our brigade is so much larger in terms of number of aircrafts than the previous unit here," said Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley, Aviation Brigade. "Successive aviation brigades that come in to occupy Taji Airfield will be the same size as ours."

The project will create more space for aircraft to park, and according to Air Force Master Sgt. Patrick M. Wahlers of the 200th Expeditionary Red Horse Squadron and NCOIC of the expansion project, the added space will allow for more hangars to be emplaced.

Once complete, the airfield will be capable of handling approximately 120 aircraft, but

a project of this caliber doesn't come without a lot of work and planning.

"We are cutting 40,000 linear feet of rebar (metal rods) a day," said Wahlers. "We have to be precise down to the tenth-inch in making the ground, or else helicopters will be landing in valleys of water."

The airmen are working diligently to finish the project. They are working close to 13 hours a day with approximately 95 airmen working on any given day, said Wahlers.

"It can be extremely exhausting," Wahlers said. "We went a solid month before we got our first break. We rotate our people in order to give everyone a break now and then."

Despite strenuous hours of work, the airmen remain in high spirits in order to finish the project.

"There is very high morale within the units," said Wahlers. "Retention of highly qualified troops is contingent to and reflected in the individuals output and recognition on a daily basis." An airman's effort reflects his job, and they are putting out a great effort to complete the project, he added.

Their efforts will be of great benefit to the aviation brigade and the Army, and in the future for the Iraqi Armed Forces.

HONOR, continued from page 1

dom and protect the American people.” Bush said Smith’s story was that of “a boy transformed into a man and a leader.” “His friends and family will tell you that he joined the Army in 1989, after finishing high



Staff Sgt. Reebea Critser
President George W. Bush presented Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith's family the Medal of Honor for Smith's actions in Iraq.

school. When he joined the Army, he was a typical young American. He liked sports, he liked fast cars, and he liked to stay out late with his friends — pursuits that occasionally earned him what the Army calls ‘extra duty.’ — Scrubbing floors.”

The president said Smith underwent two life-changing experiences.

Bush said the first experience was meeting his wife Birgit while he was stationed in Germany. “Second great change in Paul’s life would come when he shipped off to Saudi Arabia to fight in the first Gulf War. There the young combat engineer learned that his training had a purpose and could save lives on the battlefield. Paul returned from that war determined that other Soldiers would benefit from the lessons he had learned.”

“Paul earned his sergeant’s stripes and became known as a stickler for detail. Sergeant Smith’s seriousness wasn’t always appreciated by the greener troops under his direction,” Bush said. “Those greener troops oftentimes found themselves to do tasks over and over again, until they got it right. Specialist Michael Seaman, who is with us today, says, ‘He was hard in training because he knew we had to be hard in battle.’ Specialist Seaman will also tell you that he and others are alive today because of Sergeant Smith’s discipline”

Bush described the action in which Smith died while manning a .50-caliber machinegun defending his troops in a compound near the Baghdad Airport.

“Sergeant Smith’s leadership saved the men in the courtyard, and he prevented an enemy attack on the aid station just up the road,” the president said. “Sergeant Smith continued to fire until he took a fatal round to the head. His actions in that courtyard saved the lives of more than 100 American soldiers.”

“Like every one of the men and women in uniform who have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Sergeant Paul Smith was a volunteer. We thank his family for the father, husband and son and brother who can never be replaced,” the president said.

“We recall with appreciation the fellow soldiers whose lives he saved, and the many more he inspired,” Bush said. “And we express our gratitude for a new generation of Americans, every bit as selfless and dedicated to liberty as any that has gone on before — a dedication exemplified by the sacrifice and valor of Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith.”

The president also thanked the living Medal of Honor recipients who attended the ceremony: John Baker, Barney Barnum, Bernie Fisher, Al Rascon and Brian Thacker.

SOLDIER, continued from page 1

positions. “I am convinced that the fire he provided saved the lives of his squad and saved the Soldiers he loved as brothers,” said Quintas.

The volume of enemy fire caused Richardson and two other members of the squad to seek a covered firing position in the CiCi Bar Canal. The steep banks of the concrete canal caused them to lose their footing and slide into the water. As the battle ensued, the three Soldiers were swept away by the strong current. Sgt. Cory Scott, the squad leader, noticed the Soldiers struggling to stay afloat. He used belts and a radio antenna to retrieve two of his comrades from the murky waters.

Richardson continued to protect his Soldiers by laying suppressive fire, as the squad’s attempts to extract the other two Soldiers were successful. Richardson’s rescue was not.

The squad consolidated after the battle and a search for Richardson was immediately conducted by Scott and his troops. Richardson could not be found.

At 7:36 p.m., an Air Force dive team found Richardson with an empty magazine and no rounds left in the chamber. To his dying breath, it appeared that he fought to keep himself and his Soldiers alive.

His pounding of the enemy with his M-203 and M-4 on that day helped to save the lives of all the guys he was out with,” said Sgt. Howard Midgely.

At the memorial service Richardson was remembered as a man who lived the way of the warrior.

“Dean was never a man of many words... but these words he lived by: duty, honor, loyalty, and professionalism,” Quintas said.

Staff Sgt. Daniel Vallenavedo, of A Co, 1/41st Inf., thought back to his first encounter with Richardson.

“The first time that I saw him he was a private, but I knew that he’d be a leader someday,” Vallenavedo said.

He also recalled how comfortable Richardson was with a weapon. Vallenavedo said that he handled it so well that it seemed like they were made for each other.

“On the day that Richardson gave his life for his country, he did it with brass at his feet, protecting his fellow Soldiers,” Vallenavedo said.

Richardson is sorely missed by the Soldiers of Task Force 2-70. He will be remembered for his physical and mental toughness as well as his sense

of humor.

“We not only lost a great Soldier, but an unforgettable friend,” Vallenavedo said.

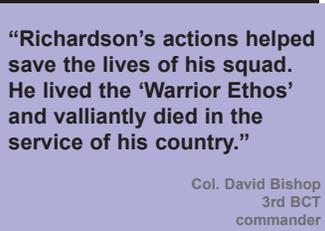
“Richardson’s actions helped save the lives of his squad,” said Col. David Bishop, commander of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. “He lived the ‘Warrior Ethos’ and valiantly died in the service of his country.”

Quintas vowed that Task Force 2-70 would carry on Richardson’s fight, saying, “We will move toward the sound of the guns as we always have.”

How the Soldiers and command team felt about the fallen warrior was best summed up by Quintas when he said, “My thoughts of him always come with a deep feeling of pride for having him as a member of our team.”

Midgely vowed to keep his friend’s memory alive. He told Richardson to relax now that he is among the fallen heroes of the past.

“Walk the streets of heaven, you have done your time in hell,” said Midgely.



“Richardson’s actions helped save the lives of his squad. He lived the ‘Warrior Ethos’ and valiantly died in the service of his country.”

Col. David Bishop
3rd BCT
commander

VISIT, continued from page 1

Rumsfeld was going to be (here), but everyone laughed when we said it,” Niusula said. “I thought it was a joke, but then he walked in.”

Niusula’s unique experience is one he’ll never forget and will undoubtedly talk about for years to come.

“It makes you feel important,” he said. “I got to meet the Secretary of Defense, I got to shake his hand.”

The Soldiers were not the only ones who received deserving awards and items of importance.

Spc. Anthony Dowden of 2nd Brigade Combat Team presented Rumsfeld with the protection plate from his body armor that absorbed a sniper’s bullet.

After the awards ceremony, Rumsfeld helped Webster administer the oath of reenlistment to 100 Soldiers.

“Dogface” Soldiers from 3rd Inf. Div. raised their right hands and swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

Reenlisting in a time of war can be a defining moment in a Soldier’s career.

For many, it signifies their willingness to sacrifice and their dedication to their comrades and to their country. For others who were somewhat undecided, the recent increase for reenlistment

bonuses was just too much to pass up.

The defense secretary was also introduced to several members of the Iraqi Security Forces who fight alongside U.S. troops against anti-Iraqi forces.

Rumsfeld stated in his remarks that Iraqi forces must develop the capabilities and confidence to provide the Iraqi people the security they deserve and build a democratic and representative system. He emphasized that Coalition Forces will continue working with the Iraqi forces, helping to train and equip them.

After the ceremonies, Rumsfeld fielded questions and addressed concerns from his international audience of civilians and military personnel.

One Soldier questioned whether Iraq was going to turn into another extended conflict.

Rumsfeld reiterated that as soon as the Iraqi Security Forces were fully capable, the United States would start reducing its number of military troops.

Rumsfeld also said that as the political, economic and security capabilities continue to improve in Iraq, the responsibilities of the U.S. and the Coalition would decline.

Another Soldier asked Rumsfeld about an exit strat-

egy for U.S. troops. Rumsfeld replied, “There is not an exit strategy out of Iraq, there is a victory strategy.”

While honoring the Soldiers for their outstanding deeds, the Secretary of Defense reinforced the importance of the mission ahead.

“You are engaged every day in a country that is of

central importance to this region,” Rumsfeld said. “The role you are playing is a critically important role in the global war on terror.”

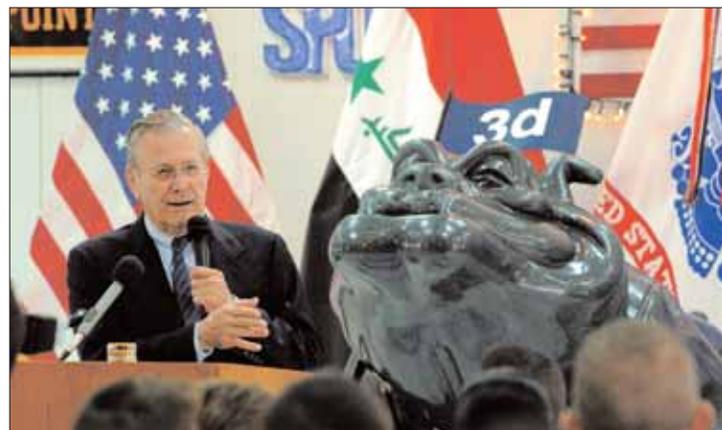
Rumsfeld continued to say that the challenges of the Global War on Terrorism are somewhat different from those of previous wars.

While Soldiers must succeed in combat, victory also depends on the success of

construction projects and Civil Military operations.

The defense secretary’s parting words, delivered sternly, received cheers and applause.

“If you see that the great sweep of human history is for freedom, you can know in your heart and every part of your being that we and you are on the side of freedom, and God bless you for it,” Rumsfeld said.



Staff Sgt. Ken Walker
With the 3rd Infantry Division’s mascot, “Rocky the Bulldog,” proudly displayed in the background, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld answers questions from Task Force Baghdad Soldiers at the Rock of the Marne Sports Oasis dining facility April 12.

3rd ACR scout awarded for spotting IED

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
3rd ACR PAO

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq — The role of the cavalry scout is to be the commander's eyes and ears on the battlefield and in the case of Iraq — the highways and roads.

Performing his wartime mission in an unfamiliar environment, Pvt. Martin Gaymon, cavalry scout, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, used his eyes to spot an improvised explosive device April 9, while traveling along Route Tampa in Baghdad.

Gaymon, sitting in the gunner's seat of his Humvee, spotted the IED after three previous vehicles in his convoy drove past the device.

"I screamed to my driver, 'whoa, whoa, whoa. I think I see an IED, I think I see an IED,'" Gaymon said.

Gaymon's intuition was correct as there was a green box with red wires placed off the road scantily concealed under sand bags. The convoy proceeded to block off the area to prevent other vehicles

from entering the road.

After the 3rd ACR convoy was relieved by another unit, the IED was later detonated remotely. There was no damage to any vehicles or personnel.

For his quick decision making and possibly saving lives, Gaymon was awarded an impact Army Commendation Medal by Col. H.R. McMaster, commander, 3rd ACR. McMaster praised the 19-year-old Brooklyn, New York native for his attention to detail and his performance as a cavalry scout.

"I don't think what I did was heroic," Gaymon said. "I was just doing what I've been trained to do. You know, I was just doing my job."

Gaymon specifically attributed his ability to spot the IED to the continuous training he receives daily and the trust delegated to the troopers from the non-commissioned officers.

"If you don't speak up when you see something, you just killed somebody," said Staff Sgt. Jeffery Marjerrison, section sergeant, Personal

Security Detachment. "There is nothing you can say about what he'd done except it was good soldiering. It was an outstanding effort and he wasn't afraid to speak up."

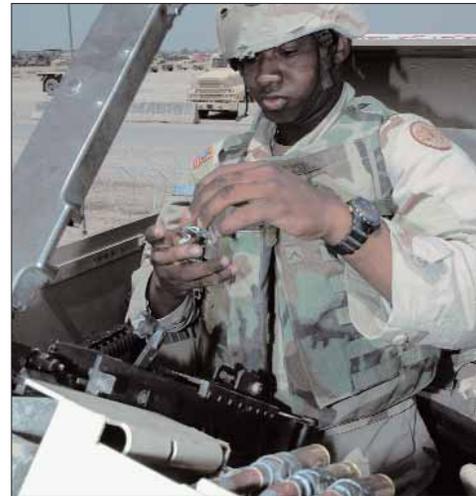
Marjerrison was the vehicle commander of Gaymon's vehicle. He mentioned scouts are trained to recognize combat vehicles as a threat, but the IEDs pose a total different threat the scouts have to be ready to combat.

"It just goes to show the training and his actions have paid off so far," Marjerrison added. "Gunnery aren't just scanning for people, (but) also for IEDs."

He said Gaymon's role as a gunner is one normally performed by a more senior trooper.

"He's filling a sergeant's position and he's only a private," Marjerrison said. "He's doing the job of someone a few ranks ahead of him."

Slapping Gaymon on the shoulder prior to the award ceremony, his platoon sergeant Staff Sgt. Matthew Hodges proudly exclaimed, "You might have saved somebody's life today."



Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Pvt. Martin Gaymon, cavalry scout, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, performs a preventive maintenance check on his 50-caliber machine gun prior to a convoy mission. The 19-year-old Brooklyn, N.Y. native saw an improvised explosive device on Route Tampa during a convoy before it could cause damage.

Army, Marines working together for Iraqi freedom

Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq—A rare venture between the Army and Marines Corps gave anti-coalition forces a reason to complain. Soldiers of the 256th Brigade Combat Team and Marines of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), worked together to bring down the Iraqi insurgency.

"Unless an insurgent is willing to be a suicide bomber, they don't want to come here, the military presence is too high, and it's growing," said Col. Ronnie D. Johnson, 256th

Brigade Combat Team.

Johnson from New Orleans, La., is the deputy brigade commander for the 256th, and claimed the experience of working with the Marines was a textbook case of how a joint force operation should run.

"The Marines came in here straight off of a ship, they integrated their staff in our operations center and we've been a team since day one," he said. "There would have been no difference if we were working with an Army unit, and it usually doesn't happen that way. If we would run joint operations again this would be a model for it."

Lt. Col. David Furness, from Columbus, Ohio, is commander of 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC). His unit was brought in to clear an area that lacked forces for quite some time. They conducted operations in a rural area that was made of small villages and no urbanization. It was a perfect place for insurgents to hide weapons and ammunition. From the word go, the Marines set out rid the area of as many anti-coalition forces as they could.

"We conducted several search and attack missions, searched homes, culverts, and

canals," Furness said. "If it looked like a good hiding place, we searched it."

As a result of their persistence, the 15th MEU uncovered a number of weapon caches, including sites for rocket-propelled grenades, improvised explosive devices, and mortar rounds. A dismounted patrol discovered two IEDs made of aviation ordinance. A 500 pound Russian aviation bomb daisy chained to a 155 Howitzer round was discovered before it detonated.

Furness gave much of the credit of the successful missions to the Iraqi people themselves. When the Marines arrived in the Mahmudiyah area, the local populace was overwhelmingly cooperative and showed signs they were happy the 15th MEU was there.

"These insurgents are taking advantage of the lawlessness in the area and they're preying on these people," Furness said.

The locals were so grateful for the Marines that they told them where to find weapon caches and anti-coalition forces. Furness' Marines discovered a huge explosives cache that was used to make IEDs, because of a local woman's assistance. She, along with the rest of the community, seemed tired of the insurgency, according to Furness.

"The insurgents take their money, their cars, their furniture, everything they can from the innocent people in the area, and the residents are getting sick of it," Furness said.

He claimed that having a constant presence in the area is key.

"When you're episodically in and out, it's hard for the Iraqis to get to know you, but when you stick around for a little while, they'll start to trust you and eventually they'll tell you where to find these guys," he said.

Based largely on intelligence given to them from the locals, the Marines detained approximately 43 insurgents, many of them high-value targets. They went after three terrorist cells and in the end, disrupted them. Some of the leadership was captured by the Marines, including a few high financiers.

Johnson believed that the combination of local intelligence and the good working relationship between the two military services are what made for a very successful operation.

"The Marines are able to sustain themselves in a field environment for a significant amount of time before they start running into problems," Johnson said, "we were able to provide them with logistical support, such as ammunition and 84 up-armored vehicles."

The 256th BCT provided the Marines with the intelligence they needed to find the insurgents, but Johnson claimed that the significant contribution was the information provided by the local people. It was a sign that the Iraqis were approaching their breaking point and willing to do what they could to get rid of the insurgents who were terrorizing them.

"They're beginning to trust the American and Iraqi militaries, and once they do, they'll tell us which doors to knock on," Johnson said.



Sgt. Thomas Benoit

Marines of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) patrol the streets around Mahmudiyah, Iraq. Their mission was to clear the area of weapons caches, improvised explosive devices, and anything that could be used against coalition forces.

**Do YOU know any Soldiers who stand out among their peers?
Do you or any of your battle buddies have a special skill, hobby or
story to share?**

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We want to tell the 3rd Infantry Division all about you!

e-mail brenda.benner@id3.army.mil

Iraqi commander brings hope to Iraq

Spc. Matthew McLaughlin
2/10 Inf. PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HAWK, Iraq - When Coalition Forces rebuilt the Iraqi Army, they needed someone who would walk down the most dangerous street in Baghdad without fear; someone who would ignore religious differences for the greater good; someone who told Saddam Hussein where to go. They needed a leader and found an outspoken warrior.

Col. Mohammad Faik Rauf al-Samarai, 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade commander, is a stark contrast to the image of a ruthless Iraqi Army commander. Known to all as "Colonel Mohammad," his graying hair and wrinkles around his eyes and mouth from years of laughter mask a hardened warrior's heart. He experienced both national and personal struggles yet manages to laugh in the face of strife.

Mohammad served as an air defense officer in Hussein's regime. He boasted that he excelled beyond officers that outranked him and was a valued asset to the Army. He received 14 medals from Saddam, awards he now gives as gifts to American allies. As proud as he is of his accomplishments, he spoke with equal pride of his imprisonment after an alleged argument with Hussein, the tyrant known for executing dissenters.

"I told Saddam I don't care about him, I care about God," Mohammad recalled of the comment that sent him away for eight months and 11 days, a number Mohammad kept track of by marking every day on the wall of his cell in between beatings from the prison guards.

"Every day they beat me," he said as if reading the memories from a book, apparently devoid of hatred.

Eventually Hussein released Mohammad and reinstated him as an officer. Mohammad no longer wished to serve and said he told Hussein had gone mad and could not perform his duties.

"I told Saddam I need to quit. I told him that I've gone crazy and I can't work. He said if I can't work I'll go back to jail. I said 'okay, I'll go back to work,'" Mohammad said and laughed.

After Coalition Forces defeated Hussein's Army, Mohammad joined the Iraqi National Guard. He joined as a captain for operations and in less than a year worked his way to colonel. After several unsuccessful battalion commander

Mohammad became commander of the 303rd ING, now known as the 2-1 IA. Under Mohammad's leadership, the 2-1 IA flourished, said Staff Sgt. Kiplangat D. Marisin, an IA advisor from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

"He is the type of leader they needed to get things done," the South Bend, Ind. native said. "He's compassionate to the Iraqi people, but if you're bad..."

A major contribution to Mohammad's success was his personal selections of 2-1 IA leadership. Mohammad, a Sunni Muslim, is in charge of an overwhelmingly Shia battalion. He ignored religious and political affiliations and selected officers and non-commissioned officers for promotion based on performance, said Capt. Christopher G. Johnson, a 2-1 IA advisor from Kent, Ohio.

"He operates no differently with Sunnis, Shias and Christians," he said. "They are all soldiers first."

Mohammad and his 2-1 IA soldiers faced a major challenge in February when they assumed responsibility over part of Haifa St., a notoriously dangerous road in Baghdad. Violent hostilities towards Coalition Forces earned the street the title "Death

Street" to media outlets. "It was hell," Mohammad said. "No one could open shops, no one could leave their house, no one could go to school. Many people were killed."

Mohammad combated the insurgents by saturating the streets with dismounted soldiers and working with the community to uncover insurgent operations.

After several weeks of intense fighting, 2-1 IA significantly reduced insurgent activities, a feat no previous unit could accomplish.

"When my 303rd go to Haifa St., they take care of the problem," Mohammad boasted. "They captured many terrorists and worked very hard. They cleaned the roads, cleaned up the trash and helped people."

Mohammad led the pack of motivated soldiers on the front line. He gained great respect from U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers by leading from the front and willingly putting himself in danger's way. Mohammad made his presence felt to Haifa St. residents, introducing himself to everyone he could, said Capt. Mike Campbell, an IA advisor from Celina, Tenn.

"Mohammad will walk the streets and talk to people," he said. "Someone will waive at him and he will go and talk to them. Twenty feet later he's talking to someone else."

His willingness to face danger as well as his loyalty to his troops is matched by the soldier's loyalty to Mohammad and their fearlessness in battle. His soldiers don't run from a fight and their courage is a reflection of their leader, said Lt. Col. Mark Kneram, officer in charge of 2nd BCT advisors.

"They respond to the fact he leads from the front," the New Castle,

Penn. native said. "He cares about his soldiers and they know that."

Mohammad's success and high profile has come at a price, however. He is under constant threat from insurgent attacks. Mohammad claims he escaped 42 assassination attempts. He joked that if cats have nine lives, he must have at least 43.

His family is also subjected to attacks. His cousin was reportedly kidnapped by insurgents and Mohammad had to restrain himself from retaliation. Even his mother was attacked and threatened. His wife and children must take tremendous precautions to ensure their safety.

"It is hard for them," he said. "We continue with our lives. It is worth it if it gives my son a future, En sha Allah," or God willing.

Despite the attacks and threats, Mohammad continues to make strides with 2-1 IA so his family and nation will someday be safe. His frank candor of Iraq's future is uncertain, at times pessimistic, comparing it to a train riding through a tunnel with no end in sight. He may sound cynical, but Iraqis and Americans alike said his presence is a ray of hope that may some day guide Iraq through the tunnel.



Spc. Matthew McLaughlin
Col. Mohammad Faik Rauf al-Samarai, 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade commander is in charge of a section of Haifa St., formerly an insurgent hot spot in Baghdad.

"When my 303rd go to Haifa St., they take care of the problem. They (have) captured many terrorists and worked very hard."
Col. Mohammad Faik Rauf al-Samarai
2/1 IA commander

Preventive medicine Soldiers squash mosquito threat

Spc. Brian Schroeder
2/10 Inf. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - "There are thousands of them!" exclaimed 2nd Lt. Dawn Hill, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division environmental officer, as she fished out thousands of squirming mosquito larvae from a pool of water. "This is really disgusting."

At Camp Gator, home of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 15th Field

Artillery Regiment, Hill conducted a follow-up base camp assessment of the compound. While she was inspecting the outer area of the Gator's operations center she noticed the mosquito larvae in a pool of water.

Hill, a native of Bath, N.Y., is part of the 2nd BCT "Commandos" preventive medicine team, who work closely with the brigade preventive medicine officer to help combat diseases and non-battle injuries for the

brigade. They observe and document the possible occupational and health threats the brigade encounters through health surveillance, medical threat analysis, assessing the air and water quality, field hygiene and sanitation where every Soldier in the brigade operates.

"Most people don't even know we exist until there is a problem," said Pfc. Suri Morales-Jones, 210th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd BCT preventive medicine specialist and a Laurel, Md., native. "When people don't hear about us, it means we are doing our job."

Once Cpt. James Birk, A Battery, 2-15 FAR executive officer and officer in-charge of FOB Gator received word of the mosquito infestation he gathered a group of Soldiers and began fixing the problem. He noticed a leaky pipe, which was feeding water to the existing pool. He and his Soldiers jumped on the opportunity to mend the pipe and fill in the puddle with dirt.

Hill and Morales-Jones then sprayed insecticide around the outside of the operations center to limit the Soldiers' exposure to the bugs and to prevent the spread of Leishmaniasis, a parasitic disease transmitted through the bite of sand flies.

Hill said the majority of the Soldiers are receptive to the suggestions or countermeasures she recommends. "Most of our work is done to prevent Soldiers from missing days of work because of something they were exposed to that could have been

prevented," she said. "The Soldiers understand we are here to help them live safely and healthy."

Another of the team's stops was at a base camp near Saddam Tower, a 674-foot space needle that served as a restaurant during the Saddam Hussein regime. Hill examined several aspects of the camp, such as the work-out area, kitchen area and living quarters that Soldiers from B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment call home.

Though a few minor problems were noticed on her first visit, Hill said the A Battery Soldiers have made improvements on all of the problems she pointed out on her first visit.

"When Soldiers are in the field they do not have time to think about things like having adequate living space or using hand sanitizer before they eat," Hill said. "Our job is about educating the Soldiers so they understand why we recommend certain countermeasures."

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Carlin, B Battery, 2-15 FAR platoon sergeant said he appreciates the work the preventive medicine team does for the welfare of his Soldiers. He said being in a different environment had made him realize how careful the Soldiers must be to maintain a healthy living environment.

"This is a dangerous place and they are helping us out a lot," Carlin said. "There is so much going on out here we are not used to back in the States. The changes they are making are always good because they are here to improve our quality of life."



Spc. Brian Schroeder
2nd Lt. Dawn Hill, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division environmental officer and a native of Bath, N.Y., displays mosquito larvae she fished out of a pool of water at a forward operating base in western Baghdad.

Iraqi, American Soldiers form friendships

Spc. Matthew McLaughlin
2/10 Inf. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Baghdad - If an Iraqi battalion and American Soldiers met on a street in Baghdad less than three years ago, blood would have soaked the streets. War cries were replaced with a jubilant reunion, however, when Iraqi soldiers bumped into their American trainers on separate patrols and embraced each other like longtime friends one February evening.

Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division military transition team and 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade shared battles, meals, tragedies and triumphs together. As the 2nd BCT Soldiers near the end of their tour, they reflected on their time spent with their friends from what they consider the best battalion in the Iraqi Army.

Before they became friends, however, both sides needed to gain each other's trust.

Staff Sgt. Stephen Barker, an IA trainer from Mesa, Az., said he was apprehensive towards his new trainees at first. He didn't know if they were trustworthy or reliable in battle. But he said he was slowly and continually impressed with their hospitality and integrity.

"My opinions were mixed on them when I first came here," Barker, an engineer from the 58th Combat Engineer Company, Fort Irwin, Calif., said. "But now I'll stand next to them and fight any day."

The Iraqi Soldier also had to learn to trust and rely upon a new group of American Soldiers to train them. The 2-1 IA Soldiers already established close bonds with their prior trainers from the 1st Cavalry Division. Like a new kid in the neighborhood, the Iraqis were reluctant to make new

friends, said Staff Sgt. Joseph T. Myer an IA trainer from Jackson, Mo.

"When we started working together, they were apprehensive," he said. "But over time we called each other 'akhuyas,'" meaning brothers in Arabic.

Both sides got a crash course in trust and friendship after their first firefight together. The Iraqis saw the Americans were highly proficient in battle and the Americans were impressed with the Iraqis' willingness to stand by them and fight, said

Staff Sgt. Kiplangat D. Marisin, an IA trainer from South Bend, Ind.

"We've been in so many fire-fights with them," he said. "You have to be able to trust the guy next to you. ... The company I'm with will do just about anything for me."

Marisin said the Iraqi Soldiers also began to open up when they realized the trainers were sincere in their efforts to assist the Iraqi Army.

"They saw we really cared about them," he said.

"I think a lot of our friendship came when they realized we're here to help," Barker added.

The awkward phase finally ended and Soldiers from both sides became familiar with each other, calling each other by name or simply "akhuya." Their alliance that was once built on obligation now had established a special camaraderie. Their communica-

tions were supported by translators and the few Iraqi Soldiers who spoke English. Both sides exchanged stories, jokes and meals, Marisin said.

"I showed them family pictures, they showed me theirs," he said. "We hang out in the barracks with them and get to know them. We had some real deep conversations about how they felt about us, our culture, our families and things they've been through under Saddam Hussein."

The Soldiers also experienced Iraqi generosity in the form of gift-giving. The 2-1 IA Soldiers were always willing to give what little they had to their allies.

One Soldier particularly close to Marisin's heart gave him a gift for his wife when Marisin went on leave.

"This guy never asked me for anything," he said. "When I went on leave, he gave me jewelry for my wife."

Marisin was grateful for his friend's heartfelt present and wanted to return the favor. When he returned, Marisin gave the Iraqi Soldier a number of gifts, including a leather jacket.

"He just about cried he was so happy," he recalled.

The Iraqi Soldiers generosity knew no bounds, so much so that some Soldiers avoided situations that could lead to a new gift, Meyer said.

"They will show up with stuff to give to my family," he said. "I never say 'that's nice, what is that?'"

because they'll give it to me."

Concern for their friends also made it harder when Iraqi Soldiers died, however. The 2nd BCT Soldiers felt their comrades' pain and gained a greater respect for their struggles, Barker said.

"These guys go through more sacrifices than U.S. Soldiers," he said. "We're here for a year, but they have to go home at night."

One Iraqi's death in particular hit Soldiers from both sides particularly hard, Barker said. A greatly respected Iraqi lieutenant that quickly befriended the Americans was captured by insurgents and decapitated. Barker somberly recalled the last conversation he had with his friend.

"The night before he died, he was going home and he said good night," he said. "I told him to be careful walking the streets after dark."

The Iraqi and American Soldiers were devastated by their loss. The trainers attended the lieutenant's memorial, complete with traditional rifle fire honoring the deceased, alongside their 2-1 IA counterparts.

"They had one of the biggest funerals for him," Barker said. "You would have thought World War III broke out with how many rounds they shot off for him."

Soldiers from 2nd BCT are nearing the end of their deployment and while they are looking forward to going home, they all said they don't look forward to leaving their comrades. Unfortunately very few Iraqi Soldiers have email accounts, or home addresses for that matter, so communications will likely end in Iraq.

For now, however, the American Soldiers said they will value their friendship for a lifetime.

"I'm gonna miss these guys," Marisin said. "I feel like we accomplished something with the Iraqi Army."



Staff Sgt. Kiplangat D. Marisin
IA trainer

'Baghdad tips hotline:' a valuable tool against insurgent activity

Spc. Ricardo Branch
3rd Inf. Div. PAO

Leads that are from an information hotline prove one thing to the insurgents fighting coalition forces in Iraq — the people have broken their silence and are no longer tolerant of the violence endangering their neighborhoods.

The Baghdad tips hotline, a phone number to report insurgent activity, is one of the ways available to Iraqi locals to help stop insurgent activity.

Many people see insurgent activity going on in their areas and don't know what to do, said Sgt. Maj. Jerry Craig, 3rd Inf. Div. provost marshal office. The hotline was created to help people call in reports.

As part of a campaign to crack down on insurgent activity, the Baghdad tips hotline generates close

to 400 calls a day that result in: rescuing kidnapped people, catching makers of improvised explosive devices and identifying and destroying vehicle borne improvised explosive devices before their intended purpose.

"We had one call from an Iraqi woman that was ransomed back to her family," Craig said.

At the time of her kidnapping, she was able to identify things around her, which led to her showing the location of her kidnapers, he said.

Not just limited to a phone hotline, the Baghdad tips hotline is also available on the internet at www.baghdadtipshotline@yahoo.com.

It's advertised through the media, on billboards, and key chains to help get the message out there, Craig said.

Local nationals and people in Iraq are encouraged to use the hotline to help

end the insurgent violence going on.

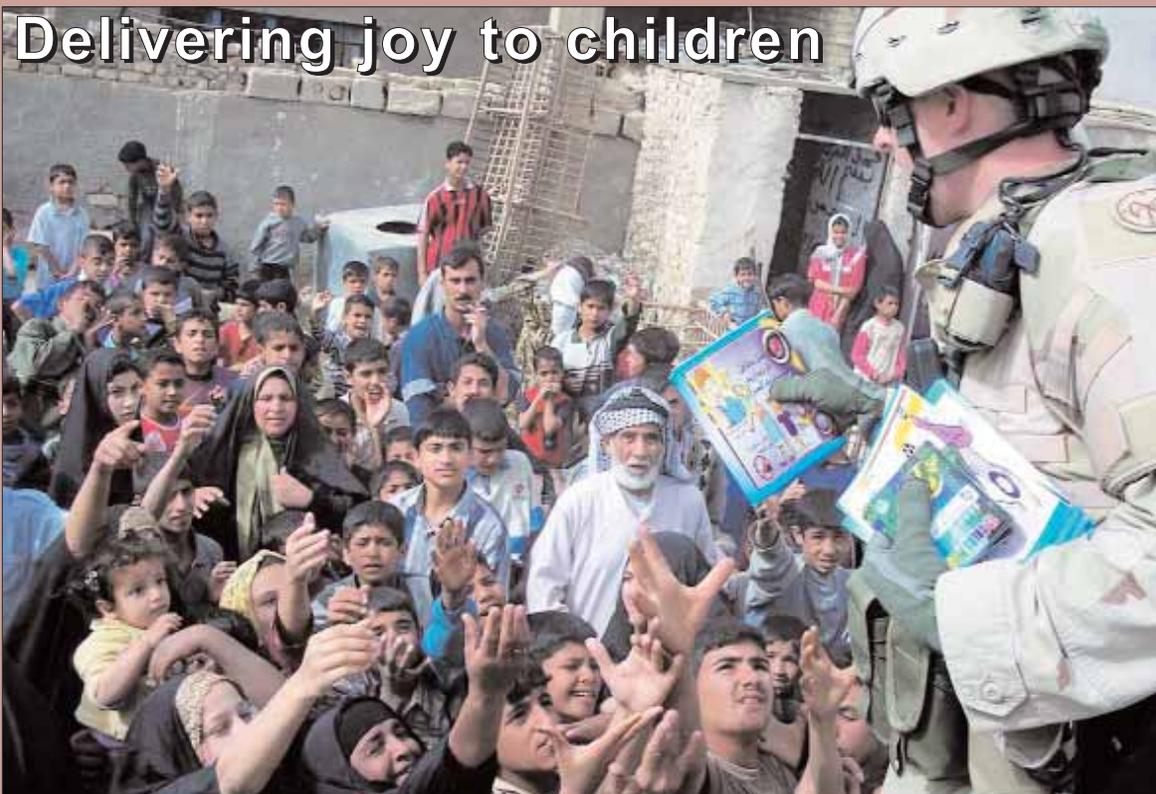
When people use the Baghdad tips hotline, they help provide valuable intelligence that can stop insurgent

activity, said Maj. Andrew Sullivan, 3rd Inf. Div. PMO. This gives them a voice in ending the violence and helping their country.



Courtesy photo
Thanks to the efforts of security forces from the Iraqi Army, thousands of Shi'a followers of the radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr filled Firdos Square where U.S. troops toppled a statue of Saddam Hussein two years ago. The march, which began in Sadr City, was a peaceful one. The crowd, estimated at 15,000, at times chanted, "God Bless the Iraqi Army and Police. The will protect the Iraqi future."

Delivering joy to children



Spc. Erin Robicheaux

2nd Lt. Shaun Joyce from Albany, N.Y. of E Troop, 101st Cavalry attached to 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, hands out activity books to a large gathering of local residents. The books were donated through www.childrenofbaghdad.com, by people from the United States. Soldiers from E Trp/101 and 1st Battalion, 141st Field Artillery, of the 256th BCT distributed the items to the overzealous crowd.

Iraqi Army, U.S. Soldiers take terrorists off streets

Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft
3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB FALCON, Iraq – Iraqi Army Soldiers teamed up with elements of 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division for Operation Vanguard Tempest, an early-morning raid on the Baghdad neighborhood of al-Dora April 11.

Their mission?

Hunt down nearly 90 known terrorist ringleaders – anti-Iraqi forces whose charges include donating money and supplies for the building of improvised explosive devices – and bring them back to Forward Operating Base Falcon to be detained and questioned.

The raid stood out as the first to name such a high number of targets as its goal.

“We’re going in to get these high-priority targets, and we’re trying to hit everyone at once,” said Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Garrett, a platoon sergeant with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment. “If we get them, it’ll be like finding the Holy Grail.”

“These guys are trying to kill Americans, Iraqi Soldiers and Iraqi Police,” added Pfc. Richard Kasserman, a C Co., 3/7 tank loader from Aiken, S.C. “It’s best to get ‘em off the streets as soon as possible.”

“As soon as possible” was 3 a.m. Monday, when the Soldiers began to move among the dimly-lit and nearly silent rows of houses, taking care to stop only at those homes identified in the intelligence they had been given.

Upon entering the residences, they searched for evidence of the hunted person, and if there was none, questioned the occupants to glean any available information.

“So-and-so just moved away from here,” some would say, or, “I don’t know where so-and-so could be.”

Even though some teams weren’t able to locate their assigned targets, nearly half of the suspected terrorists accompanied the Soldiers back to Falcon by sunrise.

Returning empty-handed, Garrett, from Talladega, Ala., said he would have been happy with the capture of

even one of the infamous criminals.

“Even if we just save one person from an IED, I’ll feel it was a success,” he said. “We’ll be taking a lot of money out of a lot of terrorists’ hands.”

The operation’s success far exceeded that, though. At last count, the U.S. and IA Soldiers had apprehended 67 of the suspected terrorists making it one of the largest such operations conducted by Task Force Baghdad since taking over from the 1st Cavalry Division in February.

“There are now criminals who are off the street for the time being,” said Capt. Raymond Hill, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment battalion information operations officer. “It went well ... (the Soldiers) have been trained to do this and I know they executed the missions well.”

IA elements who accompanied the Vanguard Soldiers played a crucial role in the operation, according to 1st Lt. Bryan Bonnema, the platoon leader of 3rd Platoon, C Co., 3/7.

“They are a great asset,” the Clifton, Va., native said. “They know the area

and they know the culture. They are our intelligence on the ground and they are definitely important ... I enjoy working with them.”

“The IA’s integrity and values have changed since the last time we were over here,” said 1st Sgt. Darren Woodland, the C Co., 3/7 first sergeant from Fayetteville, N.C. “It used to be, they saw something they wanted and took it. Now, they see there’s a right way to do things, and that you have to treat people the way you want to be treated.”

Of the hundreds of U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers who took part in the raid, none were hurt during the mission – a goal shared by everyone.

“Ultimately, we want to bring all our guys home and accomplish the mission,” Woodland said.

Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Tucker, third platoon, C Co., 3/7’s platoon sergeant, agreed.

“If I got all my guys with me, safe and sound, that’s the biggest reward,” Tucker said. “If we get the bad guys, that’s good, too.”

Missing the mom in your life?

Now you can tell her how much you care.

Beginning April 6, Stars and Stripes – the only daily publication serving the U.S. military – will be accepting FREE Mother’s Day messages online!

Whether “Mom” is deployed, back home waiting for her Soldier’s return, or in the next room helping the kids with their homework, she still deserves some special words of appreciation on Mother’s Day, and this year you can give her those words with the click of a mouse.

Send your message to www.stripes.com any time from April 6 to 27 at 5 p.m. (EST), and show that special woman how much she means to you!

Iraqi Soldiers prepare for medical emergencies in battle

Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

CAMP JUSTICE, Iraq – Soldiers of the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade received training on basic first aid and personal field hygiene April 12, preparing them to handle medical emergencies in a war zone.

“The purpose is to increase education of the Iraqi Army medical sections and to clarify the existing knowledge,” said Lt. Col. Fuoud, 1st IA Bde. surgeon.

He said the Iraqi medical personnel are well-educated, but most have only hospital experience rather than formal training. His vision is for them to be medically proficient on the battlefield. He hopes to improve the training program with the help of the U.S. Army.

“We are in need of a sophisticated program, one that will educate the Soldiers in all positions,” Fuoud said.

Battalions were tasked to send five medics to the training. After they pass all of the requirements, they will go back to train their own Soldiers.

Fuoud said that until now the medical education was primitive.

“Each Soldier should know how to use a battlefield dressing, how to conduct personal hygiene in the field, and how to maintain medical operations in that type of environment,” he said.

Fuoud also said there needed to be a wider range of instruction topics and more staff members.

“The more medical personnel you have, the better,” Fuoud said.

He said Soldiers need to be prepared for anything by learning the fundamentals of first aid. In this program they are taught the necessary skills to effectively stabilize an injured Soldier for medical evacuation.

Master Sgt. Tony Williams, from New Orleans, La., who is with the 3rd Infantry Division surgeon’s office, said the Soldiers followed the ways of Saddam’s regime in the past, but now

are learning more advanced ways to treat wounds and illnesses.

“There has been a vast improvement since this training began,” Williams said. “Their skills have increased due to the training and they are willing to soak up all the information that we can throw out to them.”

The medical training involved many hours of classroom instruction given by Williams and Fuoud.

After the Iraqi Soldiers passed their oral exams, Williams gave them a hands-on test to evaluate how well they would perform under pressure. The Soldiers were required to perform CPR on a mannequin as well as apply field dressings to a bleeding wound.

All Soldiers passed with flying colors and received certificates of achievement. They agreed that the classes would benefit Soldiers in future combat situations.

Surprisingly, a brother joined his sister into the ranks of the Iraqi Army, even though it was not his intention at the beginning of the day.

Together, they attended a recruiting drive. The brother was there only as a spectator to cheer on his sister, who is a 2nd Lt.

However, once he saw how the medical operations ran, he was hooked.

“I feel confident that if I had to use my medical training I could perform my duties as an effective combat medic,” said the lieutenant.

Her brother said he is grateful for the additional training.

“It has increased my skills of first aid and made life in combat easier,” he said.

Fuoud said the training was one more step toward independence and he felt that it will only get better.

“We’re making progress and I think with time it will grow,” said Fuoud. “It’s slow right now, but the goal is to have medical support for the entire Iraqi Army.”



Spc. Erin Robicheaux
A 2nd Lt. in the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade takes the hands-on portion of her first-aid exam April 12. Soldiers of the brigade participated in a course to polish their medical skills, in order to make them more effective medics on the battlefield.

Concerned Taji worker ensures that captured Maupin is not forgotten

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
3rd Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – “We will not rest until we come to closure and recover your son.”

These words of encouragement were given by Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff, to Keith and Carolyn Maupin, the parents of newly promoted Sgt. Matt Maupin, the only Soldier listed as captured in Iraq.

Maupin, an Army Reserve Soldier from the 724th Transportation Company was captured April 9, 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2.

Among the thousands of Soldiers and contractors at Camp Taji, one woman’s commitment to keep Maupin in

everyone’s thoughts stands out.

To commemorate the one-year anniversary of Maupin’s capture, this dedicated woman had several flags flown in Maupin’s honor.

Meet Gloria P. Vickers, a coordinator with Morale, Welfare, and Recreation.

She worked with 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (General Support), to have flags flown over Baghdad exactly one year after Maupin’s capture. On board was the symbolic black and white MIA-POW flag as well as a few Ohio state flags (Maupin’s home state) signed by Camp Taji Soldiers. These flags will be given to the Maupin family and his unit.

“Having the flags flown over

Iraq on April 9th is admirable because these flags were flown over the same place where he first went missing,” Vickers said. “I am very appreciative, and I’m sure the Maupin family appreciates what the Army is doing.”

Vickers displayed the flags on a table at the MWR building so that Soldiers could sign them and give words of encouragement to Maupin’s parents.

On the walls she posted articles and pictures of Maupin for Soldiers to view. Vickers also wears a pin with Maupin’s picture on it so she can inform people about his situation.

“I want to keep his name alive and let people know about him,” she said. “People will sometimes ask me, ‘who is that



Courtesy photo
Left to Right: 2nd Bn. 3rd Avn. Regt. members Pfc. Sonny Westerman, 1st Lt. Josh Powers and Lt. Col. Rob Bannon hold the POW MIA flag and the Ohio state flag signed by Soldiers in a show of solidarity to Soldier Sgt. Matt Maupin at Taji April 9.

on your pin?” It’s good to spread the word about Soldiers who we are still looking for.”

Vickers’ interest in supporting MIA troops began in high school during the Vietnam War.

When Maupin was captured, Vickers followed the case intensely.

“I have a son Matt’s age,” Vickers said. “I knew in my heart I wanted to help people remember Matt. I started by writing letters and cards to support groups. Eventually I started sending things to his mother.”

Through e-mails and phone calls Vickers formed a relationship with Maupin’s parents. Even during her leave, she found time to meet the Maupin family in Ohio.

“I don’t mind doing this out-

side of my job because it is something I am personally committed to do,” she said. She also went to the Pentagon to see an exhibit for POWs named “I will leave no man behind,” which featured Maupin as part of the memorial exhibit.

Vickers, whose daughter, Emily, is in the Air Force, will continue to support the troops from her position. She started working at Camp Taji last September, but she would have easily volunteered to be there.

“I made a commitment and I knew I wanted to do everything I could for Matt and his family,” Vickers said. “I just want people to know that Matt’s fellow Soldiers have not forgotten him and won’t leave him behind.”



Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Gloria P. Vickers, MWR Coordinator at Camp Taji, shows support for Sgt. Matt Maupin by setting up a wall devoted to him and unofficially naming the building “Matt’s Place.” Vickers initiated getting flags flown over Iraq on April 9 in commemoration for the one-year anniversary of Maupin’s capture.

Leave no Soldier 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 the 724th Transportation Company who was captured April 9, 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom 1.

Sgt. Maupin – we are still looking for you and we will find you. You have not been forgotten.

Spc. Maupin was promoted to sergeant on April 1.



Medics bring aid to Haifa Street

Pfc. Dan Balda
4th BCT PAO

Haifa Street has had a lot of nicknames. Grenade Alley and Purple Heart Row among those that can actually show up in print.

Soldiers and medics assigned to 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division sought to change that when they set up a Medical Civilian Action Program April 2.

Sgt. 1st Class James Braet, a motor platoon sergeant with headquarters and headquarters company, 4th Battalion, 64th Armored had come into contact with a lot of the residents during patrols in the area.

"They had a lot of standing water that was stagnant," the Moline, Ill., native said. We went into some of the homes and there was six inches of water on the ground. A lot of the kids had skin diseases on their face. Capt. Raymond Brovant, 4th BCT brigade surgeon, had the idea for a MEDCAP and I told him I knew of an area that could really use the help."

The medics brought everything from the stuff for basic coughs, colds, congestion to wound management. Typically the amount of supplies would be enough to run a troop medical clinic for two or three weeks. The medics treated approximately 60 patients in the two hours they were set up, Brovant said.

"We treated everything from people who brought us their MRI's for terminal cancer, traumatic brain injuries, sores, colds runny noses, counseling on basic nutrition and dental care," Brovant, a native of Livermore, Calif., said. "It ran the whole gamut of things you see in the states but usually people are so poor they are unable to get the treatment they need."

Brovant believes this is one of the main reasons why he came to Iraq.

"Combat is one thing, but the people understand that if we provide them with some humanity, we can show them that we care for them. Even in a place as poor as this, that's been infamous for the violence, we are out of here trying to help them and hopefully they see this as we are trying to better them as a society trying to reestablish them as a collective group."

1st Sgt. Bobby Breeden, 4th BCT Headquarters and Headquarters Company first sergeant came to the MEDCAP to help provide security but ended up watching the doctors help the people. The Midwest City, Okla., native thought there were other positives to draw from this experience than the medical aspect.

"This kind of stuff here hopefully slows down some of the combat that we are seeing," Breeden said. "Hopefully the people become more trusting of us and be more likely to work with us."

The Iraqi civilians who were present not only saw the American Soldiers helping, they also saw the Iraqi Army taking part in bringing relief to those who needed it.

"I think this is great because it helps the IA establish repore with their own people because there are mixed emotions with the IA and their own people," Braet said. "They are starting to win the people over as well. The people we talk to own the streets say that the IA is great, they make them feel safe. Two months ago they weren't even able to open up their shops, now all the shops are open."

All the people involved agreed that the children who live in the area were one of the main reasons they were out there.

"I love seeing the kids leave here with a smile, being able to help them is what this is all about," Breeden



Pfc. Dan Balda

CAMP PROSPERITY, Iraq -- 1st Sgt. Bobby Breeden, 4th BCT HHC first sergeant, greets a young Iraqi girl. He said helping the children is what the MEDCAP is all about. He said he loves seeing the kids smile.

said. "Being a father, this means a lot to me. You always see your kids in each of the little kids out here, that's one of the reasons why I think a lot of us want to help."

During Braet's unit many patrols on and around Haifa Street, he has seen the attitudes of the residents become more positive and more productive.

"I fill my pocket with candy everyday to hand out to the kids, sometimes we hand out stuffed animals," Braet said. "Just from handing out book bags the other day we got a huge tip on a weapons cache in the area. The guy said that because we had been handing out things for the

kids he decided to tell us where the weapons were. This is the kind of stuff that's going to win the war."

Brovant had one patient in particular that really stuck in his mind.

"There was a little girl, about two years old, with big blue eyes. She was very scared, but the more I spent time with her, the more comfortable she got with me," Brovant said. "I taught her how to give a high-five, to slip me some skin. I was very happy with that. Even across cultural and language barriers, there can still be that common ground that exists with healthcare. It was a very rewarding trip out here."

The Local Beat: Task Force Liberty News Briefs

Coalition Forces tour school, check on repairs

BUHRIZ, Iraq -- A Task Force 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery Regiment, civil affairs team visited the Buhriz All Girls Primary School April 13 in Diyala Province. The visit was to check on progress of repairs being made to the school. The headmaster led the team on a tour of the school showing off the remodeling, which includes a new paint job, electrical wiring, a new roof and windows.

IA and Coalition Forces work to limit attacks

MUKHISA, Iraq -- A joint raid on the towns of Mukhisa and Abu Kamah led to the detention of many suspected terrorists April 12 in Diyala Province. The raid involved the 205th Iraqi Army Battalion setting up checkpoints in the area, while Soldiers from 1st Battalion 30th Infantry Regiment, conducted air assault operations. Joint raids are demonstrating the teamwork between the Iraqi and Coalition Soldiers.

Suspects arrested while setting up an IED

BAQUBAH, Iraq -- Two suspected terrorists were detained while trying to set up an improvised explosive device on a road

used by Coalition Forces in Diyala Province. One of the suspects tested positive for explosives on his hand, and both men possessed Al Qaeda propaganda. The arrests were made by Soldiers of the 204th Battalion, Iraqi Army, and Task Force Liberty's 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment.

Iraqi Army Battalion successful in staff and company training

SAMARRA, Iraq -- The Iraqi Army demonstrated its growth during staff and company training April 11 at a Coalition Forces base near Samarra. The primary staff of the 202nd Battalion, Iraqi Army, underwent an introduction and implementation to troop leading procedures, while the Headquarters, Headquarters Company, along with 3rd Company, conducted individual movement techniques. Training events like this are held to improve readiness of the Iraqi Army.

Realistic training improves Iraqi Army

AD DULUIYAH, Iraq -- Using a recently built training facility, Company A, 203rd Battalion, Iraqi Army, conducted room-clearing training. The Soldiers used mock houses, which were built by 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, engineers, to provide realism for the training April 12 in Salah Ad Din Province. The Iraqi Army contin-

ues to show great determination in training.

27 detained following raid in Katoon

KATOON, Iraq -- Twenty-seven people were detained following a raid by the 32nd Brigade, Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police Services in Katoon and Mufrek April 14 in Diyala Province. More than half of the detainees tested positive for explosives following a wipe test. In addition to the suspects, the raid netted more than 60 AK-47s, three machine guns, a mortar sight, one rocket-propelled grenade and various electronic equipment. This was the third raid involving the 32nd Brigade and the police.

Iraqi Media Network dedicated to informing the public

KIRKUK, IRAQ -- The Iraqi Media Network is doing its share to inform the population in and around Kirkuk with a daily live interview program. A city council member and an Emergency Services Unit representative talked about the selection of a governor and other key leadership positions that will have a positive effect on security in the region.

School hosts art show

DIYAR BAKR, IRAQ -- Students

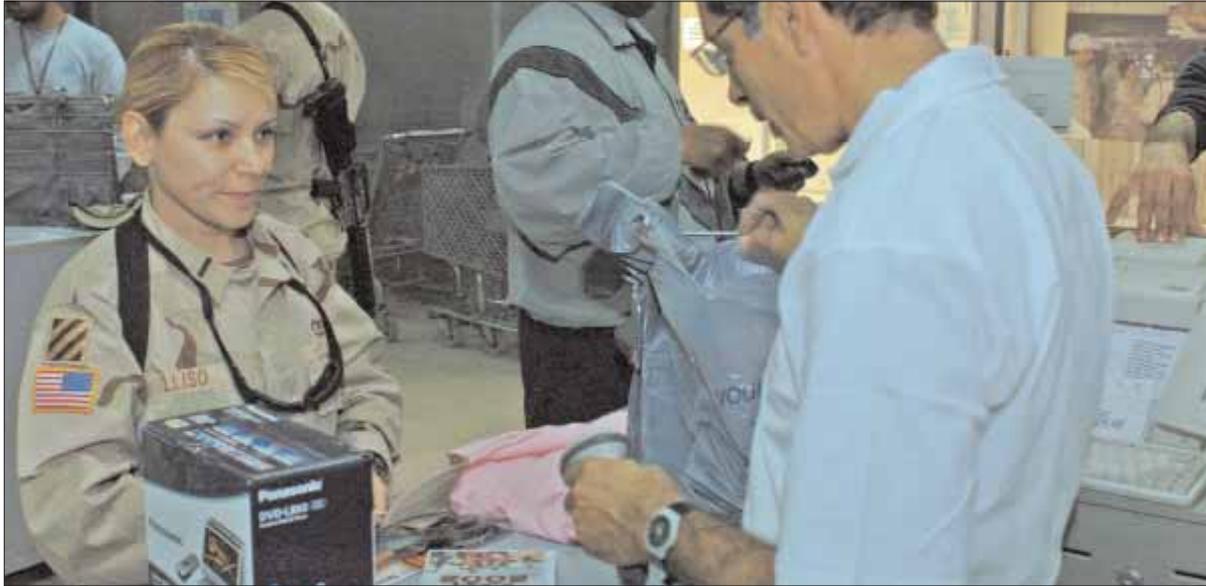
and local artists displayed their creative abilities April 13 at the Diyar Bakr Art Show in Sulaymaniyah Province. The artwork on display followed themes about the former regime, as well as looking to the future. A dance recital in full ceremonial dress also took place at the school.

Construction projects ongoing at schools in Jadidah

JADIDAH, Iraq -- The schools in Jadidah in Diyala Province fall short compared to some of the newer schools being built in Iraq, but that is about to change. The commander of Task Force Liberty's A Company, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, recently toured the school and verified that it requires classroom and recreational improvements, as well as bathroom facilities. The assessment report was presented to TF Liberty civil affairs personnel. Bidding on the Jadidah School System reconstruction project is ongoing.

Soldiers visit orphans and distribute needed items

KIRKUK, IRAQ -- 116th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers visited the Tesin Orphanage in Kirkuk to distribute clothes, toys, school supplies and candy to the children. The orphanage operates with limited resources so donations are greatly appreciated by the staff.



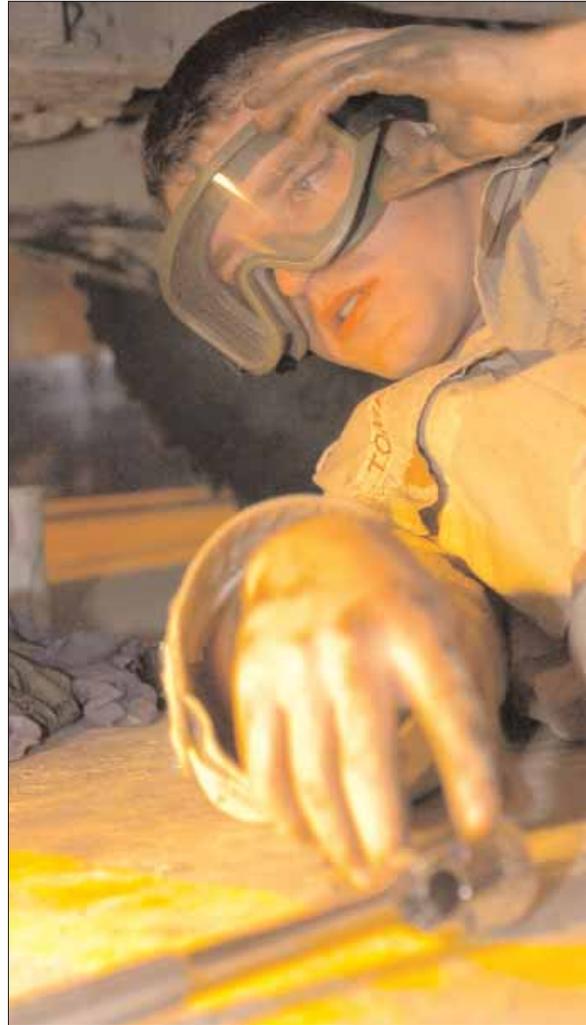
1st Lt. Flo Liiso, a pharmacist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Division Support Battalion, purchases a few "goodies" the Camp Taji post exchange. Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick (above) and Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner (right)

Above: Sgt. 1st Class David J. Priese, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, has his flat-top spruced up at the Camp Taji barber-shop.

Right: Pfc. Latoya Thompson, a supply clerk from Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, helps keep track of millions of dollars worth of equipment



Spc. Matthew Wester
Spc. Tyrell J. Tompkins, a light-wheeled vehicle mechanic with 64th Military Police Company, 720th Military Police Battalion, repairs a humvee at a Camp Taji maintenance facility.

**Do you have a creative idea for something new in the Marne Express?
 Do you have a funny or awesome photo you want to show people?
 If so contact our editor: brenda.benner@id3.army.mil
 Submissions are always welcome and valued!**

\$HOW ME THE MONEY: Finance knowledge

Finance warriors available to help Soldiers

Sgt. 1st Class Charles Fowler
3rd SSB Finance Section

The 3rd Infantry Division is extremely fortunate to have finance teams embedded within the S1 sections of the Brigade Combat Teams and brigades. The 3rd Finance Company has taken twelve of its finest finance specialists and attached them to other units in order to provide Soldiers within all levels of the division the personalized finance support they deserve.

BCT finance teams consist of two finance Soldiers, one

military pay non-commissioned officer and one military pay specialist who are all school trained and highly motivated.

It is a tremendous advantage for deployed Soldiers to have these finance teams conveniently co-located within their BCT and brigades.

The role of the BCT and brigade finance teams has become increasingly vital to Soldiers since the entire division is dispersed throughout the area of responsibility and operating 24/7.

Why go to the main finance office when you can take your pay inquiries and

have your pay actions processed right there in your area?

Our finance teams can perform most of the same services that are available at the main office with the exception of disbursing funds.

If you have a pay inquiry, need a Leave and Earnings Statement, want to submit an allotment form or require any type of customer service, just go to your BCT or brigade finance team.

Also, if you were recently married and need to update your Basic Allowance for

Housing or want to enroll in the Thrift Savings Plan, it's as simple as paying your finance team a visit.



Remember, in order to cash a check or receive Casual Pay, you still must go to the main finance office.

During the month of April, the finance teams are receiving additional training that will enable them to print their BCT and brigade LESS and Unit Finance Commanders Reports from their S1 sections.

The days of waiting on the division distribution system

are over – battalion and company level commanders can easily contact their finance teams for these vital documents.

The 3rd Inf. Div. BCT and brigade S1s have done an excellent job of supporting our finance teams and we appreciate their efforts. With this joint cooperation there are no limits to what we can accomplish for our Soldiers.

The 3rd Finance Co. continues to pursue innovative ways to improve our finance support to you, our Soldiers!

If you have any suggestions or recommendations on how we may improve our services, please let us know.

Soldiers' incident reports are vital for foreign claims processing

Capt. Christopher Glascott
OS/A

The Foreign Claims program is one of the many tools that Task Force Baghdad is using to promote positive relations with Iraqi nationals. A law passed by Congress, known as the Foreign Claims Act, permits an Iraqi who feels that he has been unjustly harmed by U.S. Forces to file a claim and request compensation for injury or property damage. This article is intended to give you an overview of the process and explain your role.

An Iraqi who wishes to submit a claim can go to the Iraqi Assistance Center at the Baghdad Convention Center, Forward Operating Bases St. Michaels and Hawk, or one of the General Information Centers located throughout the Baghdad area.

He is given a claims form to fill out

and told what type of proof he will need in support of his claim. Common types of proof include hospital records, receipts, photographs or sworn statements. Once the claimant has gathered enough information, he submits the claim for investigation and review. The claim then makes its way to the nearest brigade legal office where the Judge Advocate and paralegals work together to investigate the claim and determine if it should be approved.

Some claims, such as those arising out of a combat operation or submitted by people supporting the insurgency are automatically denied. For other types of claims, the legal team attempts to verify the information submitted by the claimant.

All Soldiers, no matter their rank or unit, play a critical role in the verification process. When the legal team looks

at a claim, it will try and match the incident described in the claim with a Significant Activity or SPOT report.

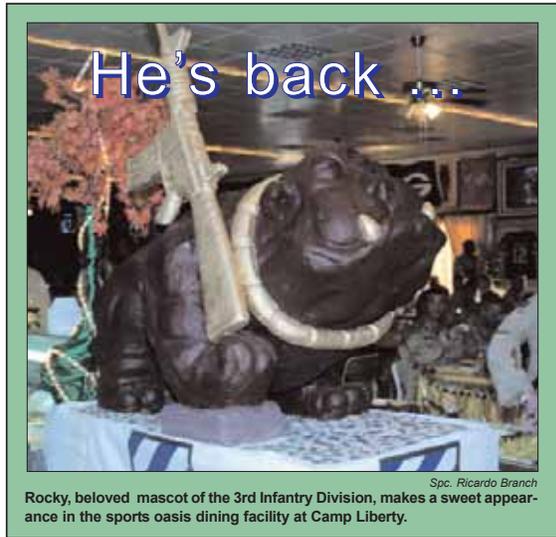
As a result, it is important that you take the time to complete incident reports and notify the legal office of potential claims. Legal teams will also look at where the incident occurred and determine which unit operates in that area. This is when the claims card is so useful. The card, if properly filled out, allows the legal team to quickly identify which unit was involved in order to get Soldiers' descriptions of the event. If you are contacted by someone in the legal office regarding a claim investigation, do not hesitate to provide all the information you can.

The investigation is limited to determining whether or not the claim should be approved; it is not concerned with punishing the Soldier.

In review, the foreign claims program is used to compensate Iraqis who are injured, outside of combat, by our negligent or wrongful acts. It is a part of the "hearts and minds" campaign that involves each and every Soldier. Your contributions to the process can go a long way toward convincing the Iraqi people that we are here to support their transition to a democratic society.

On a slightly different topic, and while I still have your attention, I would like to remind commanders that a personnel inventory form is available in the claims folder on the tactical web. Having your units complete this form will be very helpful to a Soldier who might need to file a personnel claim in the future.

For more information contact the claims office at VOIP 242-4568 or DSN 318-847-2190 or email at christopher.glascott@id3.army.mil.



Rocky, beloved mascot of the 3rd Infantry Division, makes a sweet appearance in the sports oasis dining facility at Camp Liberty.

Division Chapel Services Camp Liberty

<p>Friday 7 p.m. Jewish Service</p> <p>Saturday 10 p.m.: Seventh Day Adventist</p> <p>Sunday 9 a.m.: Contemporary</p>	<p>Protestant 10:30 a.m.: Roman Catholic Mass</p> <p>1 p.m.: Lutheran</p> <p>3 p.m.: Gospel Protestant</p> <p>5 p.m.: Christian Non-instrumental</p> <p>8 p.m.: Collective Protestant</p>
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In Memory of our fallen Soldiers...

<p>Cpl. William D. Richardson, 1/41 Inf.</p> <p>Sgt. Javier J. Garcia, 1/64 Armor</p>	<p>Spc. Glenn J. Watkins, 1/184 Inf.</p> <p>Spc. Manny Lopez III, 3/7 Inf.</p>
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Although you are our fallen, you'll never be forgotten. We will continue the fight...

DESERT JUSTICE

Don't let legal issues ruin your vacation

Capt. Uma Nagaraj
OSJA

Your Environmental Moral Leave should be a time to relax and enjoy yourself. You want to return to your mission safely and with less stress than before.

The Marne Legal Assistance Office has a few tips to assist you in reaching that goal:

(1) Driving must be done legally. Many people will want to drive their vehicles when they return. Remember that your car must be insured and registered and you must possess a valid driver's license. If you have let any of these lapse while you were deployed, you will want to take steps to correct this before you get behind the wheel. If you do not and you are pulled over you can be cited for a misdemeanor.

(2) Stay out of criminal trouble. **DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE.** The Service Member's Civil Relief Act does not protect you from prosecution from ANY criminal matter. However, being charged with a crime does not automatically make you non-deployable. Whether it be a minor traffic violation or something more serious, you are required to take care of the matter or a warrant will be issued for your arrest.

(3) Most court cases cannot be resolved in two weeks. The Service Member's Civil Relief Act does protect you from par-

ticipation in civil matters such as debt collection and divorce by allowing you to request a stay of proceedings. In order to take advantage of this protection, you should have your commander write a letter to the court requesting the stay of proceedings.

(4) EML is not the time to get a divorce. In Georgia and most states, the person filing for the divorce must make a personal appearance in court. Generally, courts do not accept a power of attorney for this purpose. If you and your spouse agree to terms, your spouse can file for the divorce without the need for you to make an appearance. The spouse must obtain your permission to do this.

(5) During EML you might be able to finalize your citizenship. If you plan to do this you should have only the last two steps of the process remaining: the interview and the taking of the oath of citizenship. You are responsible for making sure that your packet is up to date. You can check this on-line at the USCIS website. The Legal Assistance Office can contact USCIS on your behalf to determine whether they can complete these final two tasks while you are on leave. We need several weeks of lead time in order to do this.

These are just a few tips to make your EML go smoothly. If you have any legal issues while you are home, please contact Legal Assistance at Ft. Stewart at () 767-8809.



Marne Tax Center Hours

Monday through Saturday

9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Camp Liberty
Legal Services Center
Building C25

Chaplain's Corner

Religion from a younger generation

The following was written by 8-year-old Danny Dutton of Chula Vista, Calif., for his third grade homework assignment of explaining God.

Editor's note: The following is published in its original, unedited version to preserve its unique form.

God, by an 8 year old
One of God's main jobs is making people. He makes them to replace the ones that die, so there will be enough people to take care of things on earth. He doesn't make grownups, just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make, that way he doesn't have to take up his valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that to mothers and fathers.

God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, since some people, like preachers and things, pray at times beside bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to the radio or TV because of this. Because he hears everything, there must be a terrible lot of noise in his ears, unless he has thought of a way to turn it off.

God sees everything and hears everything and is everywhere which keeps Him pretty busy. So you shouldn't go wasting his time by going over your mom and dad's head asking for something they said you couldn't have.

Atheists are people who don't believe in God. I don't think there are any in Chula Vista. At least there aren't any who come to our church.

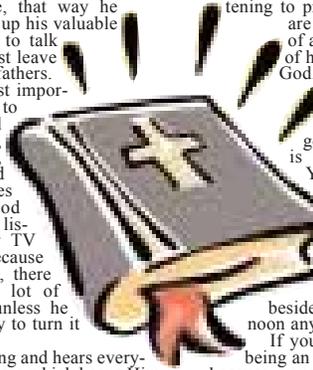
Jesus is God's Son. He used to do all the

hard work like walking on water and performing miracles and trying to teach the people who didn't want to learn about God. They finally got tired of him preaching to them and they crucified Him. But He was good and kind, like his father, and he told His Father that they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said O.K.

His dad (God) appreciated everything that he had done and all his Hard work on earth so he told him he didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in heaven. So he did And now he helps His Dad out by listening to prayers and seeing things which are important for God to take care of and which ones he can take care of himself without having to bother God. Like a secretary, only more important. You can pray anytime you want and they are sure to help you because they got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time.

You should always go to church on Sunday because it makes God happy, and if there's anybody you want to make happy, it's God. Don't skip church or do something you think will be more fun like going to the beach. This is wrong. And besides the sun doesn't come out until noon anyway.

If you don't believe in God, besides being an atheist, you will be very lonely, because your parents can't go everywhere with you, like to camp, but God can. It is good to know He's around you when you're scared, in the dark or when you can't swim and you get thrown into real deep water by big kids. But...you shouldn't just always think of what God can do for you. I figure God put me here and he can take me back anytime he pleases. And...that's why I believe in God.



Rhythm of the Marne

With the 3rd Infantry Division firmly in authority of Task Force Baghdad, the 3rd Inf. Div. band, the "Rhythm of the Marne", is operational and available to provide musical and ceremonial support throughout the division's footprint, including all assigned and attached units.

The band is capable of providing several diverse musical ensembles to include ceremonial band, stage band, latin band, jazz combo, rock combo, R&B combo, trombone quartet, brass quintet, solo piano and ceremonial bugler. The unit also encompasses the Division Color Guard.

Contact Information

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

Combat application tourniquet: a valuable tool for saving lives

Master Sgt. Tony Williams
Division Surgeon's office

Health care on the battlefield is an ever changing occupation. Medical personnel, as well as Soldiers, now have better equipment than ever and have been trained to use it in their battle to help save lives.

One of the simple but amazing

new additions to our efforts in preserving lives is the Combat Application Tourniquet (CAT).

The CAT is a life saving device used to stop massive bleeding of the extremities.

The best part about the CAT is it's very simple to use and applies in just seconds.

When you are faced with a casual-

ty with bleeding that can not be controlled by elevation, trauma dressing or pressure dressing the CAT maybe the answer to saving their life. All Soldiers should have a CAT on them at all times. Here are the quick and easy steps to use the CAT.

Step 1. Insert the wounded arm or leg through the big loop

Step 2. Pull the big Velcro band tight.

Step 3. Twist the rod until the read bleeding has stopped

Step 4. Lock the rod in the clip and use the little Velcro strip to secure the rod before movement. Bleeding is now controlled.

And finally, document the tourniquet with time and location then evacuate the casualty as soon as possible.

The seven steps to put on a tourniquet



NFL player, trooper reunited through USO

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
3rd ACR PAO

The last time Clemente Torres embraced Larry Izzo in uniform, he was wearing the blue and white colors of Rice University as members of the Owls football team following their historic victory over the University of Texas in 1994.

Fast forward 11 years and Torres embraced his old teammate once again, this time wearing Army tan as a trooper assigned to 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment while deployed to Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

"I was so excited," Torres said. "I used to go against him in every practice and put him on his back."

Izzo, now a linebacker with the three-time Super Bowl-winning New England Patriots, visited the camp along with Atlanta Falcons running back Warrick Dunn as part of the USO and NFL Salute the Troops Tour (Persian Gulf region), March 31.

During the autograph session Torres surprised Izzo and they both rekindled their memories from the gridiron in Houston. Torres played tight end for Rice after playing high school ball at Houston MacArthur, while Izzo starred at McCullough.

"He still looks good," Izzo said of his former teammate.

"We were pretty tough against each other back in the day at Rice. It's amazing to see him out here and I'm proud of him."

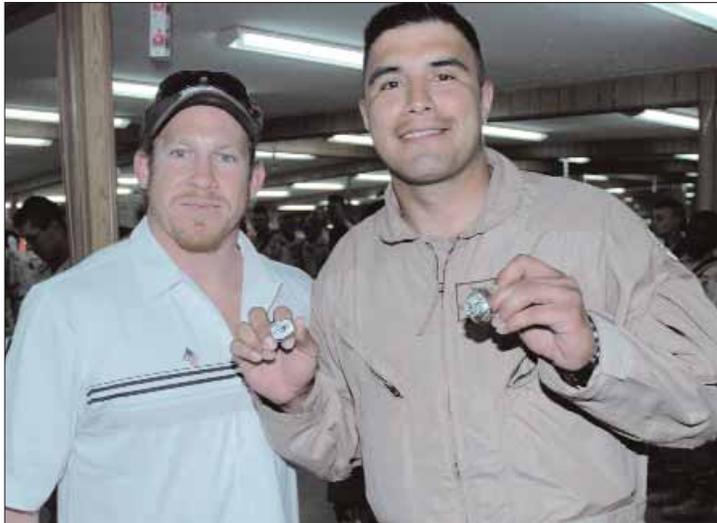
"We used to talk trash to each other on whose high school was better," Torres said. "It's been 10 years since we've last saw each other. I can't believe that I'd run into him all the way over here in Kuwait. This is such a small world."

Torres, who joined the Army in 2003 as an Apache Longbow Helicopter Armament and Electrical Avionic Systems Repairer, mentioned he kept track of Izzo's professional career and he cheers for him every time he plays.

"This event makes me feel very proud," Torres said. "It lets us Soldiers know that people in America are still supporting us and they know we're out here. Those guys (Izzo and Dunn) make big bucks and could have been training for the next season, but instead they're here."

The USO and NFL Salute the Troops Tour allows current football stars an opportunity to head to the Persian Gulf to provide a morale boost to troops stationed in the region and to 'meet and greet' troops and participate in the opening of The Pat Tillman USO Center in Afghanistan.

The NFL donated \$250,000 to the USO for the construction of the new center, located at Bagram Air Base near Kabul, to be named in honor of Pat



Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Spc. Clemente Torres, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, holds up the Super Bowl rings of his former college football teammate, Larry Izzo, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Izzo, now a linebacker for the New England Patriots, was touring the Persian Gulf region when the two reunited.

Tillman. A former player with the Arizona Cardinals and an Army Ranger, Tillman was killed during combat operations in Afghanistan in 2004.

This is both players second stint visiting servicemembers overseas. While at the 2002 Pro Bowl (his second of three), Izzo

visited 8,500 crew members aboard the USS Carl Vinson at Pearl Harbor. The ship left the next day to participate in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Dunn joined NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue and other NFL players on a four-day trip to visit troops in

Germany in May 2004.

"It means a lot to me to personally come here and say 'thank you' to men and women serving in uniform," Dunn said. "We are proud of you and we support you. And we are extremely grateful for the sacrifices that you make every day."



1st Sgt. Anna M. Wagner
Officers and enlisted members from the 92nd Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), gathered at the Al Faw Palace, Camp Victory to administer the Oath of Re-enlistment to 25 of their Soldiers. The goal is to re-enlist 92 Soldiers within 92 days. The idea originated with Lt. Col. Keith A. Landry, commander, 92nd ECB (H), based out of Fort Stewart, Georgia. "When you have 25 (Soldiers) re-enlist in a combat zone, when they choose to stay in the uniform, just think about what that means," Landry said.

Cartoon Corner



The Marne Express is looking for artists for a bi-weekly comic strip! Contact ricardo.branch@id3.army.mil.

