

The Marne Express

"Mission, Soldiers, Teamwork"

Volume 2, Issue 8

Serving the Soldiers of Task Force Baghdad

June 5, 2005

In this week's edition of *The Marne Express*



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Spc. Matthew McLaughlin

Pfc. Adam Key, 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, patrols the streets of the Monsour neighborhood of Baghdad.

2/10 Mtn. says goodbye to Mansour

Spc. Maria Mengrone
100th MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq - With heavy hearts and feelings of self-accomplishment, a battalion of Soldiers depart one of the most bustling zones in Baghdad

to assume a new area of responsibility.

For the past six months, 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division Soldiers have called the mostly middle to upper-class Mansour area home.

Appropriately nestled in the heart of Baghdad the region is comprised of architecturally elaborate homes and a plethora of shopping venues from local vendors to prime outlets.

"The area is friendly, there are a lot of educated people,

retired military and retired business men that live here," said Pennsylvania native, Capt. Shawn J. Shutts, B Battery Commander with the 2/15 FA.

"People here are supportive of
See MANSOUR, page 13

Toby Keith supports Soldiers in Iraq with songs

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

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - As a sea of desert camouflage pressed against the newly-assembled Camp Liberty stage, Toby Keith greeted his fans, saying, "Isn't it great to be in Baghdad?"

Amid cheers, he corrected himself: "No, it isn't!"

The wildly popular and just as wildly

patriotic country singer visited Liberty as part of a United Services Organization tour to perform for Task Force Baghdad Soldiers May 17 and was enthusiastically welcomed by more than 1,000 Soldiers.

Known for such pro-military hits as "American Soldier" and "Courtesy Of The Red, White and Blue," Keith has made it a point to travel to some of the most unappealing areas of the Middle

East to show his appreciation to men and women in uniform.

"I (said) when I came over here, we were either gonna go up to the remote places or we weren't gonna go at all," he said.

Although Liberty isn't as remote as some of TF Baghdad's forward operating bases, it wasn't Keith's first stop,

See KEITH, page 12

Next step in Iraqi independence

Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

BAQUBA, Iraq - The Diyala Province took one more step toward self reliance when the Provincial Government Center, and a large portion of the Civil Military Operations Compound, both in downtown Baquba, were turned over to the Diyala Government.

Responsibility of the Provincial Government Center, nicknamed the "Blue Dome," where the

provincial council operates, was given to Diyala, May 1, in a peaceful transition.

On May 5, Diyala Governor Ra'ad Hameed Juwad and Deputy Governor Auwf Rahumi Majeed moved their offices out of the Blue Dome and into the Binayat Al-Muhafadha Al-Qadima building. The Binayat building had long been home to the Governor's office, but was almost completely destroyed during Operation Iraqi

Freedom.

In the courtyard of the building, where a formal ceremony was held, Governor Ra'ad kissed and hoisted the Iraqi flag before cutting the blue ribbon attached to the door that led into his new office building.

In a speech, Col. Steven Salazar, commander of Task Force Liberty's 3rd Brigade Combat Team, congratulated Diyala's citizens, government officials,



Spc. Natalie Loucks

Governor Ra'ad Rasheed Hameed of the Diyala Province kisses the flag of Iraq before hoisting it up the flag pole at the Civil Military Operations Center May 5, in downtown Baquba Iraq.

See NEXT, page 13

m7 sends

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

While many Soldiers understand the basic definition of leadership, it's important to review this topic from time to time.

The art of leadership revolves around gaining the willing obedience of those we lead to successfully accomplish missions.

With good leadership, we find that opportunities for teambuilding increase and Soldiers develop a greater sense of worth by taking ownership in the successes of their organizations. This is a good thing!!!!

However, on other occasions I ponder the direction our Army is heading as we train and fight to overwhelm our adversary by balancing ingenuity and maintaining standards.

We must always maintain operational and moral standards, even if the enemy doesn't.

I would tell you that even insurgents expect to be treated fairly if captured – even though they commit barbaric acts when dealing with their countrymen or other captives.

What makes us different?

I would submit to you that the difference is found in our consistent application of military standards. STANDARDS represent the foundation of stability for not just our Armed Forces, but life in general.

When you find acts of indiscipline that leave chaos in their aftermath you'll likewise find complacency, dereliction to duty, and rebellion.

STANDARDS further serve to provide a

common picture for TEAMMATES to rally around.

Here's something for everyone, leaders and Soldiers alike, to think about: What serves as your rally point? Is it based on established Army principles or driven by what someone else is doing or how you feel on any given day?

Therefore, the next time you make a conscious decision to ignore known standards by blocking your headgear, wearing headphones outside during PT, having your name embroidered on your headgear in either English or Arabic, allowing smoking in and around combat vehicles, or throwing your cigarette butts on the ground, one question should probably come to mind: What standard am I modeling for those who will lead in the future?

There isn't a magical formula for inspiring Soldiers to practice discipline. They must take pride in their behavior to simply Do The Right Thing At All Times.

The first and most important habit you can develop is to check yourself against known standards every day. This will facilitate a greater sense of esprit de corps that will impact your subordinates, peers and superiors alike. The Army, and ultimately your life will benefit by you doing the right thing.

A little known quote puts it all into perspective: "One thing that I have found in this generation is that a person can change their life by changing their attitude".

"Rock of the Marne"

The Origin of Rocky the Bulldog

Rocky the bulldog, 3rd Inf. Div.'s beloved mascot, was created after Maj. Gen. Albert O. Connor and Walt Disney exchanged several letters. The final design for Rocky, the "bulldog face Soldier" was presented to the division in 1965. The design was created for a dollar, and "personified" the dog face Soldier as fierce yet gentle, and heroic but humble.



SAFETY GRAM

On 14 May 2005, a soldier died while parking an M88 recovery vehicle in the Sterile Yard at the SPOD. The muzzle break of a 155mm howitzer struck the front of the M88 with such force that the barrel ripped free of its hold down clamps and struck the M88 driver in the head.

- The M88 driver died of massive head trauma.
- GROUND GUIDES are indispensable. Never move a vehicle in close quarters or cantonment areas without them. Many situations, such as backing or moving oversized vehicles, require two ground guides.
- CREW COMMUNICATIONS is vital. A driver can see only so much. Crew members must make the driver and vehicle commander aware of any impending danger.
- Always maintain your SITUATIONAL AWARENESS. If you're not sure what's in front, behind or next to your vehicle, STOP and look. Never take for granted who or what is around you.
- SPEED KILLS. Always operate your vehicle within safe limits. Adjust speed to terrain and visibility.
- Fight FATIGUE every way possible. Proper crew rest is essential. Switch drivers as often as necessary.
- CROSS-TRAIN AND LICENSE your vehicle operators. Training is the most effective tool available to leaders in preventing accidents.
- Always MAINTAIN your equipment to standards. Every vehicle has a -10 with explicit before, during, after, daily, weekly, and monthly checks. Do it by the book. Take extra time when moving damaged equipment.



Courtesy Photo
 A howitzer tank with a 155mm muzzle break. In a recent fatal accident, the muzzle break on the howitzer was strong enough to penetrate a M88 recovery vehicle killing the driver.

The Word on the Street

"My Soldiers. We will all be splitting up after the deployment."



Cpt. Jennifer Knowlden
 2nd Bn., 10 Mtn.

"Free Food."



Spc. Brian McGovern
 4th Bn., 31st Inf.

With 2/10th Mtn. leaving, departing Soldiers we asked:
What will you miss about your deployment here?

"The people we work with."



Cpt. Thomas Walker
 58th Eng. Company

"I'll miss missing home."



Spc. Brandon Radford
 110th MI Bn.

"There is really nothing I'm going to miss about Iraq."



Sgt. Thomas Hecht
 10th Signal Bn.

The Marne Express

Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs Office

Commanding General: Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.
Public Affairs Officer: Lt. Col. Clifford J. Kent
Public Affairs Supervisor: Master Sgt. Greg Kaufman

The Marne Express Staff

Editor: Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner
Associate Editor: Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

Layout and Design: Spc. Ricardo Branch, Spc. Jennifer D. Fitts

Staff Writers: Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick, Sgt. 1st Class David Abrams, Staff Sgt. Ken Walker, Staff Sgt. Raymond Piper, Sgt. Thomas Benoit, Sgt. Andrew Miller, Sgt. Kevin Bromley, Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft, Spc. Ricardo Branch, Spc. Natalie Loucks, Spc. Ben Brody, Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr., Spc. Jennifer Fitts, Spc. Derek Del Rosario, Spc. Christopher Foster, Spc. Brian Henretta, Spc. Maria Mengrone, Spc. Erin Robicheaux, Spc. Matthew McLaughlin, Spc. Brian Schroeder, Spc. Matthew Wester, Pfc. Daniel Balda, Pfc. Mike Pryor.

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Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner

Staff Sgt. Susan Primm, with 1st Det., 3rd Signal Co., STB, prepares official mail at the Camp Liberty post office May 28.



Unsung heroes

Command Sgt. Major William M. Grant
TF Baghdad command sergeant major

The art of communicating is one of the most critical aspects of our society. One very important element of this process is mail. Our society has progressed in leaps and bounds to our current system of mail delivery. Mail likewise, serves as a security blanket for Soldiers during operational deployments. Even though e-mails and phone calls are commonplace, there is still a special place in a deployed Soldier's heart for precious snail mail.

Our unsung heroes are represented by hard working Soldiers from the Soldier Support Battalion, 341st Postal Company, 155th Adjutant General Postal, and the numerous unit mail clerks and mail orderlies within the 3rd Infantry Division. They labor tirelessly to ensure their comrades receive precious thoughts

and mementos from their loved ones.

The sustainment of this system is challenging.

However, leaders are firmly committed and determined in their resolve to provide our service members with the best possible mail service in this theatre. The fruits of their labor have resulted in an increased mail flow, irregardless of the ever present danger on main supply routes throughout the Baghdad area of operation.

Our military services understand the importance of providing service members with two critical life support elements: food and mail.

Today's "Shout Out" goes to all of our Teammates who play a key role in this process. Your efforts are deeply appreciated. Thanks for your commitment, dedication, attention to detail, and just for doing the small things that commonly go unnoticed.

You are our "Champions."



Left: Spc. Esau Miranda, a human resources specialists with HHOC, STB, unloads the parcels and letters from the mail truck in preparation for afternoon mail call.

Above: Spc. Carina Rodriguez, administration clerk with HHOC, STB, loads her humvee with mail for her troops. Rodriguez fulfills her daily duties as her unit's mail orderly.

Commentary

Maybe we can come back on vacation

As an Army journalist, I think I have the best job in the Army. I travel around to different locations every week and get the chance to experience every job there is in the Army. I believe we journalists get the most experience because we are involved in so many missions.

Unfortunately there are setbacks to our job. Every time I show up at a new location, I am met with distrust. Most of the Soldiers immediately start joking about how they have to keep their mouths shut and watch what they say because the press is here.



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

It's really a shame that our Soldiers feel that way. I know as a journalist my job is to show the world the great things that are happening over here.

I want the world to know that the majority of the Iraqi people are glad to have some stability in their lives and are sick of watching things they can't have on television. They want their country to be like any other civilized nation.

I try to explain this to my fellow Soldiers, and after a few minutes I get the trust I need to accomplish my mission. I am sure there is much that goes on that I don't have a chance to cover. I need the Soldiers to know that their daily efforts are not in vain, and the cool missions they are performing are being recorded. I believe that what I record becomes history.

Years from now I hope someone will be doing a story on the history of one of our battalions and will pull up one of the pictures I took on the internet. These guys' efforts will never be in vain if they are still being sought after years from now.

We are doing great things. If you talk to most any Iraqi, they are happy to see us. They enjoy the security we provide. If you look at the numbers, the ones dying in the insurgent attacks are not so much Soldiers as innocent civilians.

The Iraqi security forces are stepping up to take responsibility in defending the innocent against such attackers. People are now giving information that leads to insurgents. They are sick of the violence against them. I am there to make sure these stories and many others go down in history.

No matter where I am, I make friends. These guys in my area of operation know my face, know my heart and trust me to tell the world the truth. I am not out to show the bad side of things. I believe that a bad side can be found anywhere. I guess I am that way because I get paid the same no matter what I write. I will not become famous

for doing what I do.

That is okay, because I provide a service to the United States Army. Soldiers are happy to see themselves in our publications and the family members back home get excited to see their loved ones doing their job. I don't want the folks to be worried about their Soldiers. There are enough problems in their lives without having to worry about how we are doing.

Folks, we are completing the mission of getting the Iraqis back on their feet. The people here appreciate what we are doing. They are becoming proud and brave. With the way things are going, maybe we can all pull out of here and come back in a few years to see this beautiful country on vacation. Maybe then I can take some pictures just for fun.

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr. is an Armor journalist with the 3rd Inf. Div. 1st BCT PAO.

'We're ready for more': IA expands area of operation

Spc. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

BAGHDAD – 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division extended its area of responsibility this week, taking over security for a larger part of northwest and north central Baghdad.

"This was a transfer of

authority of two large districts in the capitol city of Baghdad from the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division to the Iraqi Army," said Col. David Bishop, commander of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division.

"We have looked forward to expanding our operation and our work", said Lt. Col. Karben Qussay, commander of the 1st

Bn., based in the Adamiya section of Baghdad. "We have the full ability to expand our area of operations."

The battalion's sector now includes about one fourth of Baghdad, according to Qussay.

"There are seven zones in the area of Adamiya, and when I came here in January, we con-

trolled five of those seven zones," said Lt. Col. Jim Blackburn, commander of the 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, which is responsible for the training the 1st Bn. "Now, the 1st Bn. controls all seven."

"The bar has been raised now," said Lt. Col. Mark Kerry, of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, Louisiana National Guard and commander of a military transition team working with the 6th Iraqi Army Division. "They have proven they can handle it."

The 1st Bn. will now patrol areas like the Al' Shab section of Baghdad on their own, Kerry said. He added that the additional area secured by the battalion is about three square miles, but is a densely populated urban zone of about 500,000 people. "It is substantial," he said.

The turnover of security operations occurred based on the performance of the Iraqi troops policing their own neighborhoods.

Blackburn said the 1st Bn. has shown, "an excellent display of leadership and technical capabilities."

Qussay stated the expansion came with a lot of hard work and was possible because of the successes his battalion has had against the insurgents.

One of the recent successes of Qussay's troops was the seizure of nearly 100 sticks of plastic explosive C-4, false identification cards and vests and belts that could have been used for suicide attacks during a night raid in north central Baghdad May 8.

Four terror suspects were detained in the raid, and 1st Bn. Soldiers found a possible "hit list" of names the suspected insurgents were targeting.

The names of Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police members and other officials were reportedly among those on the list.

Blackburn explained the 1st Bn. has routinely captured similar caches and followed up with additional raids to seize higher-level members of the insurgency. Qussay's Soldiers also proved themselves during the Ashura holy days; limiting insurgent attacks against pilgrims marching to mosques in Baghdad.

The transition occurring in northwest Baghdad will continue, as Iraqi security forces assume greater control of the security of their own country.

"One day, Baghdad will be controlled totally by the Iraqi security forces," Kerry said.

Qussay is ready for that day to come. "We are ready to be responsible for more," he said.



Sgt. Kevin Bromley

Col. Joseph Disalvo (left) commander of 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div. and Lt. Col. Karben Qussay commander of 1st Bn., 2nd Bde., 6th Iraqi Army Div. attend a transfer of authority meeting in Ahdamiya. Their new area of operations was formerly patrolled by U.S. Forces and now belongs solely to Iraqi Security Forces.

Army Chief of Staff pins Purple Heart on Vanguard Soldier

4th BCT PAO

Media Release

BAGHDAD - The Purple Heart was awarded to Pfc. Donald M. Urbany, a fire support specialist assigned to B Company, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3ID, and native of Troy, Mich., for wounds received as a result of enemy actions while serving in Iraq.

Soldiers from Pfc. Urbany's company were on a patrol in central Baghdad May 10. They were traveling to provide support to an Iraqi kindergarten school graduation located in the Karradah district. A vehicle-borne improvised explosive device hit their patrol, wounding three Soldiers and one interpreter. Pfc. Urbany received shrapnel wounds to his right arm, neck, and right eye. The attack caused him to lose his right eye.

The Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Peter Schoomaker personally presented Pfc. Donald Urbany the Purple Heart Award during a brief ceremony at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

The medal that would become the Purple Heart was first awarded to Soldiers during the Revolutionary War. The medal, as it's known today, was passed by a bill from Congress in February 1942, authorizing it for all servicemembers who receive wounds while serving in combat operations for their country.



Courtesy Photo

Pfc. Donald Urbany, B Co., 4th Bn., 64th Armor Regt., and Troy, Mi., native, receives the Purple Heart from Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, chief of staff of the Army, May 12 at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

No Soldier left behind

Sgt. Matthew Maupin

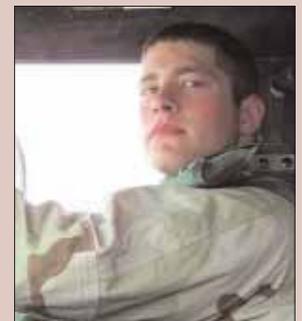
"I will not leave a fallen comrade"

These well known words from the Warrior Ethos ring true for Sgt. Matt Maupin.

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

Sgt. Maupin – we are still looking for you and we will find you.

You have not been forgotten.



All day, every day: Commanche unit on the prowl

Spc. Ricardo Branch
3rd Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP TIGERLAND, Iraq — Prowling the many streets of Baghdad, the M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks of C Co., 1st Battalion, 156th Armor, 256th Brigade Combat Team, have accomplished one mission in its new area of operations — to intimidate and stop the anti-coalition forces harassing Soldiers.

“When you’re making a ‘Thunder Run’ and you hear the sound of a 60-ton vehicle coming your way, nothing can stop it,” said 1st Lt. Stephen Luebbert, executive officer, C Co., 1/156th. “They (insurgents) don’t have much success stopping it.”

“It has a fierce history to them dating all the way back to Desert Storm, and they haven’t had much success against one. You just need too much to stop a tank,” said the Bossier City, La., native.

Having recently moved from the Abu Ghraib area, what many Soldiers refer to as a fierce section to operate in, the unit is now responsible for Ghazallia.

“Our new area of operations has a lot more civilians,” said Sgt. Daniel Prime, C Co., 1/156th, tank section ser-

geant.

“It’s in a more urban part of Baghdad, the people care much (more) about the appearance and the way people act here,” said the Shreveport, La., native said. “They see us out and realize we’re here to ensure they have a better life, so they’re willing to work with us.”

He added, “Unlike Abu Ghraib, people can work with us, without (much) fear of their life being in danger.”

That factor makes the Soldiers’ task a little easier to manage with the assistance of the locals aiding them.

“In Abu Ghraib, we’ve had people walk all the way to a checkpoint to tell us about insurgents and even a kid ran into the street one day to warn us about an IED (improvised explosive device) in our path,” Prime said. “Your life was more in danger over there.”

However, danger is still out there. Anytime they leave the safe confines of their forward operating base things can quickly turn the wrong way. Even a routine mission can easily become a brush with death, as in the unit’s recent encounter of a drive-by shooting on April 28.

“We were fired on during a route clearance operation,” Luebbert said. “I was in the tank commander hatch and I

could only duck and think about the Soldiers outside of the tanks.”

“The actual encounter was really quick, but for those 30 seconds while the men were outside it felt like forever,” he said. “That’s a long time to worry.”

During their time in Iraq, the Soldiers have dealt with anything the insurgents can throw at them. The constant attacks from the insurgents in the past have not deterred the Soldiers working the Ghazallia beat.

“They’ve hit us with everything in their arsenal, from VBIEDs (vehicle borne improvised explosive devices) to rocket propelled grenades and various other small arms fire. It hasn’t stopped us yet though. We will keep coming after them,” Prime said.

That dedication fuels them and keeps 1/156th rolling out on constant combat operations.

“We’ve got to maintain a constant presence 24 hours a day, seven days a week,” Luebbert said. “The day we’re not out there, a convoy could be hit, so we’re there to keep the routes open.”

The armor unit has responded to numerous engagements in its old AO of Abu Ghraib. Its current area of operations has thus far remained silent, but the



Sgt. Daniel Prime

Dismounted armor troops from 1st Bn., 156th Armor get ready to enter a building during a patrol in their sector. Although tanks play a crucial role in route clearing operations, dismounted troops follow up on leads, and help capture or subdue insurgents, keeping weapons and dangerous men off the streets.

Soldiers are always ready.

“We act as a heavy force when stuff goes down,” said Prime. “If a convoy gets hit in our AO, we’ll be there within five minutes to help our buddies out.”

Seeing an Abrams come in when a Soldier needs its assistance brings a comfort to him and helps diffuse any hostile situation, he added.

Despite the constant dangers

they face, the Soldiers are always ready and know what they do is helping shape the country of Iraq for the better.

“We’re helping improve the quality of life here,” said Spc. Tyrone Merritt from Shreveport, La., of C Co., 1/156th. “By having a presence in Baghdad, we’re keeping insurgents off the streets and giving the people back a sense of security in their country.”

Hard working mechanics keep Apaches flying high

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

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — Everyone knows Rosie the Riveter. You might not recognize the name, but you have most likely seen the picture. Rosie the Riveter is most famous for her WWII poster—a female in blue overalls, rolling up her sleeve, flexing her bicep and exclaiming, “We can do it!”

Rosie symbolized how women didn’t mind getting dirty to help the war efforts. This message holds strong today, especially for two female mechanics in D Co. 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance).

On the surface, Spc. Melissa D.

Crawford and Spc. Damaris Young look poles apart—Crawford stands 6-foot-1 and loosely wears a size large-long DCU top. Young is 4-foot-10 and wears a DCU top size extra-small/extra-short. What they do share however, is that they are both hard working mechanics doing their job in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Both Crawford and Young had different motives for being a helicopter mechanic. Young’s choice to join was mostly driven by patriotism, while Crawford was inspired by her son.

“I have great pride for my country; I wanted to get deployed,” Young said. “Working on helicopters is a great thrill for me. I am very interested in how hel-

icopters work, and working on them also makes me feel important,” she added.

“I wanted to be a mechanic for my son,” said Crawford. “We were driving by Fort Hood one day, and my son was so excited to see a helicopter fly by. He wanted to see one up close, so I decided that I wanted to be a mechanic so that his wish would one day come true.”

Young surprises most people when she tells them she maintains Apaches. Her fellow workers sometimes tease her for being uncharacteristic of what most people see as a typical mechanic.

“No one believes me when I say I’m a mechanic. Some of my buddies tease me when I can’t reach high places and need a stepstool,” Young said. “But I’m a tomboy. I’ve been working with my dad on cars and motorcycles since I was a child.”

Before joining the Army, Crawford wasn’t really exposed to mechanics. She graduated with a bachelors degree in computer science and held mostly office jobs. The extent of her mechanical experience was helping her father work on the car, but it was a far stretch from working an Apaches. For Crawford, she gained a lot of confidence as a mechanic during OIF 1.

“When I got my first certificate of achievement, that’s when I felt like a real mechanic,” said Crawford. “During the first deployment here in Iraq, the chain of command really noticed the hard work we (the unit) put in and they let us know how proud they were.”

Females are rare in the mechanics field, so working in an environment made up of mostly males was daunting at first for Crawford, but she now has a strong bond with her fellow coworkers.

“They were scared of offending me at first, so they would often watch what they would say around me,” said Crawford. “You have to have a sense of humor as a female in this line of work. We joke and laugh together now. They are like my brothers. To

them I’m not just ‘some female,’ I’m Crawford.”

The mechanics of D Co. must work together in order to handle their huge workload. The battalion is flying six times as much as they did in the rear, so team cohesion is needed to help maintain the Apaches. Crawford and Young practice a strong work ethic when working in D Co.

“In a way I have to prove myself as a mechanic,” said Young. “I continue to work hard and hold my own weight, I don’t mind getting dirty. I will do whatever it takes to get the job done.”

Crawford understands that being a female mechanic can come with labels. When someone challenges her abilities, Crawford lets her actions take care of the pigeon-holing.

“You let them talk their trash and then you correct them with action,” said Crawford. “I’ve gotten used to the trash-talk from people who think I can’t do the job or handle it. I just show them up by working better and faster.”

The entire company has been working better and faster, as the battalion puts in more than 2000 flight hours a month, a feat that couldn’t be done without the efforts of the dedicated mechanics of D Co.

“We play a huge role in the Apaches, they couldn’t fully function without maintenance,” said Crawford. “And without Apaches, it would all fall on the infantrymen. Apaches are needed to help on convoys, prevent ambushes and react to fire.”

Young also recognizes the importance of mechanics to the Aviation Bde., and the dedication it takes to support the mission.

“As a mechanic, working hard and staying motivated is essential for mission completion,” Young said. “The lives of those two (Apache) pilots are in our hands, as well as the Soldiers they save when they support infantrymen on the ground.”



Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Spc. Melissa Crawford (left) and Spc. Damaris Young work on an Apache rotorhead.

Iraqi Army Soldiers find explosives, suicide vests

Spc. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

BAGHDAD – Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Division, Iraqi Army found nearly 100 sticks of the plastic explosive C-4, false identification cards and vests and belts that would have been used for suicide attacks during a night raid in north central Baghdad May 8.

Four terror suspects were detained in the raid near the town of Al Waziriah, including a man suspected of designing and manufacturing improvised explosive devices, said Lt. Col. Karben Qussay, commander of the 1st Battalion, based in the Adamiya section of Baghdad.

The four suspects are in Iraqi custody for questioning.

“We have the four men, and they will face Iraqi justice,”

Qussay said.

1st Battalion Soldiers also found a possible “hit list” of names the suspected insurgents were targeting. The names of Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police members and other

Cavalry Regiment, “(but that) the men caught were upper tier management who were hiding this particular cache. It was a great catch for the Iraqi Army.”

Blackburn, whose Soldiers

“We have the four men, and they will face Iraqi justice.”

Lt. Col. Karben Qussay
commander, 1st Bn., Iraqi Army

officials were reportedly among those on the list. The capture of the documents and suspects gives the Iraqi Army valuable intelligence to continue putting the pressure on insurgents.

“The most significant part is not that the ordnance is off the street,” said Lt. Col. Jim Blackburn, commander of the 1st Squadron, 11th Armored

captured similar caches and has followed up with additional raids to seize higher-level members of the insurgency.

“They (1st Battalion) received information from detainees and they acted quickly on it,” said Lt. Col Mark Kerry of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, Louisiana National Guard and commander of a military transition team assigned to the 6th Iraqi Army Division.

“I would say it is a big find,” Kerry said. “It’s an important step.”

The weapons cache find helps get people off the street who would try to kill Iraqi soldiers, police and officials, he added.

The raid was a part of ongoing security missions conducted by the 1st Bn., which has recently added more territory to its area of responsibility.

“We looked forward to expanding our operations,” Qussay said. “We are ready to be responsible for more.”



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Bromley

Almost one-hundred sticks of plastic explosive and several suicide bomber vests were seized in a raid of a bomber builder’s lair in Baghdad by Iraqi Soldiers.



Forged documents seized in the May 8 raid. The Iraqi Army’s 1st Brigade demonstrated its ability to expand security operations in their region. Their new area of operations was formerly patrolled by U.S. Forces and now belongs solely to Iraqi Security Forces.

New Iraqi Army Battalion ready to fight



Photos by Spc. Matthew Wester

Left: An Iraqi Army banner is displayed during a basic training graduation ceremony at the Iraqi Army Basic Training Academy in Taji, Iraq May 12.
Above: Soldiers of 5th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division stand in formation during a graduation ceremony at the Iraqi Army Training Academy in Taji, Iraq. The soldiers completed a two-week training program which included basic soldiering skills, marksmanship, and urban warfare techniques. They also learned how to interact with the Iraqi citizens they will be protecting and strategies to fight insurgents, said Maj. Mouafak Khayou, Iraqi commander of the Academy.

'5-25' campaign increases IED awareness

MNC-I Public Affairs
Media Release

Improvised explosive devices are the number one killers of America's sons and daughters serving in Iraq, and the Joint IED Defeat Task Force at Camp Victory is kicking off an information campaign May 25 in an effort to increase IED awareness and save lives.

The "5-and-25" campaign, as it is called, is designed to increase IED awareness and reduce the effectiveness of the mountain of makeshift bombs being produced by insurgents. Officials say the deceptive devices account for more than half of the coalition deaths that have occurred since the start of the Iraq war in March 2003.

Efforts to date have reduced the IED casualty rate by more than 45 percent during the period of April 2004 through February 2005 – but that is not seen as enough.

"IEDs are our number one killers here," said Eric Eglund, who works at the Iraq headquarters of Joint IED Defeat Task Force at Camp Victory. The task force is responsible for developing innovative ways to rid the country of IEDs.

The deadly devices are considered a highly effective means of killing people because they can quickly be set up anywhere and be set to blow at any time. They have been disguised as virtually everything from tree trunks and dead animals to bicycles and pregnant women. Royal Australian Air Force Group Capt. David Stockdale, deputy chair of the IED Working Group at Multi-National Corps-Iraq, said there is no limit to what insurgents will use for IEDs.

Stockdale, who serves as the equivalent of a colonel in the American Air Force, has been actively working the

issue of IEDs and their effects since arriving in Iraq a few months ago.

"The IED is one of the most dangerous threats to coalition forces," Stockdale said. "To mitigate their effects, we wanted to put together an information campaign that would make the IED reaction drill a normal part of daily activities for the coalition forces."

Eglund said several different counter-IED organizations were already delivering good messages and possible solutions out there, but with no real emphasis or impact to the troops who needed it the most. "It wasn't as good as it could be. Some channels just naturally don't flow as well as others," he said.

The working group, deputy-chaired by Stockdale, represents a cross-section of coalition forces formed as a result of this issue.

The group's solution for getting vital information to the forces required three objectives: First, ensure information gets to those troops who need it most; second, develop an effective counter-IED organization that can take the fight to the enemy; third, produce pinpointed products from one organization which can be approved and delivered in a timely fashion.

"IEDs can be any time, anywhere, any shape; the trends change," Stockdale said. "The aim is to get the message to the field. It's dangerous out there."

To push information to the troops anywhere and any time trends change, the working group assembled a small team of designers to brainstorm effective ways to get the word out. The first idea also seemed the most obvious one to start the campaign — military publications.

Task force members agreed they needed some common thread to tie all the messages together – like a logo.

"The [designers] suggested we needed to have [a logo] that everybody recognizes," said Lt. Col. Theodore Martin, field team leader, Joint IED Defeat Task Force-Iraq. "5-and-25" became that logo. "The most important thing coalition forces can accomplish is situational awareness when they're outside the wire; it is the most basic [tactic] that you have to master."

"This seemed appropriate because 5-and-25 means awareness," said Master Sgt. William Johnson, one of three designers. "5-and-25 means checking the area around you for a threat. Every time you stop outside a secure area, you always should check. Not checking could get you killed."

More specifically, 5-and-25 requires that troops look for anything out of the ordinary within a five-meter radius of their vehicles, according to counter-IED policies. If halted long enough, forces should then exit their vehicles and conduct a 25-meter sweep around their position. Halting for as little as four minutes can prove costly.

"Evidence shows that [many] Soldiers, who are at a short halt [for as

little as] four to five minutes, are getting hit by IEDs near their vehicles," Martin said.

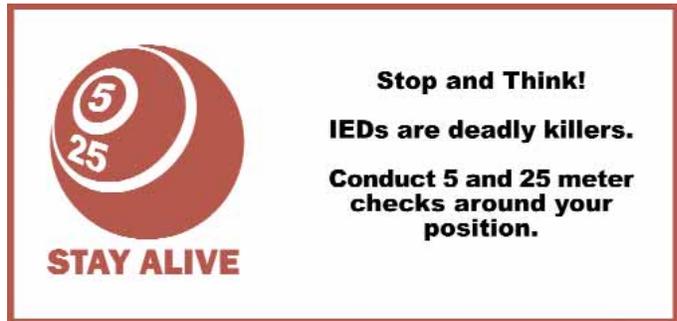
Besides the recognizable 5-and-25 logo getting printed in military publications, the campaign will also produce messages to other outlets that could potentially reach as far away as the Department of Defense and Afghanistan.

"This time it's [newspaper ads], next time it will be commercials on TV and radio," Martin said. "After that, we're looking at expanding it. The sky is the limit."

Included in the laundry list of ideas are bumper stickers, flash screens on Web sites, stress balls and even Frisbees, according to Martin.

Whatever the means, Stockdale said the message must stay focused with one purpose: to save lives.

"There's no predicting exactly where, when or how you're going to meet an IED when you're driving around," Stockdale said. "Practicing those basic methods and regularly using them significantly enhances your chances of survival."



603rd ASB ensures equipment keeps working

Spc. Brian Henretta
3rd Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The 3rd Infantry Division's Aviation Brigade is equipped with some of the most advanced high-tech electronic equipment available – complex gadgets critical to missions ensuring the brigade's continued dominance in the skies over Baghdad.

Maintaining state-of-the-art technologies such as radios, communications security equipment, chemical agent monitors, mine detectors, radiation meters and night vision equipment requires very specialized training.

It is the mission of dedicated Soldiers from the Communications and Equipment Shop, B Company, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, to ensure that all gear receives necessary repairs and maintenance.

These highly skilled Soldiers perform an extremely important service for the brigade.

Since the beginning of the deployment they have completed hundreds of repairs and adjustments on all types of equipment to keep the brigade communicating, said Sgt. Douglas Powers, a radio and communication security repairman with B Co., 603rd ASB.

According to Powers, the team has saved the Army an estimated \$1.5 million with the repairs they have done in the past month alone.

Two of the most important items the team maintains are night vision and COMSEC equipment.

"Without night vision and COMSEC, none of the pilots could do what they do," Powers said. "They need us to quickly get those items back to get them in their birds. It's the same for the brigade's ground vehicles as well."

When a piece of equipment has a malfunction, a unit's own commo shop will troubleshoot the problem, and if they can't fix it, the item is then submitted to the C and E shop for the 603rd's expertise.

Equipment repair specialists go through intense hands-on classroom training to learn how to fix anything that comes their way, and continue to cross train on the various equipment, said Powers.

Their ability to fix equipment depends on getting the necessary parts, and the Soldiers in the C and E shop give credit to their leadership for finding them what they need to do their mission, said Staff Sgt. Terence Wiggs, quality assurance and quality checks non-commissioned officer in charge for the C and E shop, Bravo Co. 603rd ASB.

Bravo Co. continues to do their job effectively, ensuring that communication continues to flow, allowing the mission to be completed.

Useful Arabic Phrases

English	Arabic	English	Arabic
What is that?	Hi shunu?	How long?	Min ashqad?
How old?	Shqad Umrak?	Stand still!	La tatararak!
What is wrong?	Hi shaku? Shbeek?	Come here!	Ta'ala hna!
Where does it hurt?	Wain touj'lak?	Be quiet, please.	Daqiqa uskut santa raja'an.

Learning to save lives ...

Medic testing sharpens skills

Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick
3rd Inf Div. DSB PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Nearly 60 combat medics representing all the medical units had their life-saving skills challenged during the Semi-Annual Combat Medic Validation Testing (SACMS-VT) May 8-10 here. In 3ID, SACMS-VT is also referred to as the “Medic Table 8”.

The Army requires that every medic validate their skills every six months, said Capt. David Hamilton, a physician’s assistant with the 550th Area Support Medical Company of 3ID’s Division Support Brigade.

“It provides opportunities for commanders to ensure their medics are trained,” said Hamilton, who hails from Blackwater, N.Y.

The testing checked our proficiency on our medical skills, said Sgt. Roberta H. Minor, a medic with 547th Area Support Medical Company, 261st Area Support medical battalion, Fort Lewis, Wash.

Minor, a Tacoma Park, Md. Native, said she was tested on life saving techniques like cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, rapid trauma assessment, and treating a casualty in a nuclear, biological and chemical contaminated environment.

“We don’t get to do this all the time,” said Pfc. Darrell W. Gibson, also a medic with the 547th. “It keeps us up to date.”

Many combat medics stay in the troop medical clinics on the forward operating bases and don’t get to use these skills, said Minor, who was a certified nursing assistant before joining the Army.

Minor said the training helped the medics to get all their facts straight just in case they were attached to a unit operating outside the base. It keeps them from stumbling over what to do.

One way to keep the emergency treatment smooth is to be organized, said 1st Lt. Ronald A. Leach, also a physician’s assistant with the 550th.

The Hardinsburg, Ky., native said the testing gives the medics a chance to see how they should set up their aid bag and what items to pack every time they go on a mission.

“They don’t get a “no go” if they’re missing something,” said Leach, who was the officer in charge of the training.

Leach said the instructors used the missing item as a training point during the test.

Before the testing, the health care Soldiers had an opportunity to sharpen their medical tools.

Minor said the medics came out every Thursday evening for six weeks to prepare for the testing.

Validating their medical training skills is labor intensive and takes a lot of time, said Hamilton, who was one of the evaluators for the testing. They have to work around the daily medical missions here.

“We can’t take all of our medics at once and do the testing and training,” said Hamilton, who was attached to the 550th from his unit at Fort Drum, N.Y.

Hamilton said they have to split up the training and testing over a period of time so the health care providers can accomplish ongoing missions that include medical and mass casualty support for the entire



Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

Sgt. Roberta H. Minor, a medic with 547th Area Support Medical Company, extracts a training mannequin from a humvee while Capt. David Hamilton, 550th Area Support Medical Company, observes during an Army required Semi-Annual Combat Medic Validation Test.

FOB, as well as all the primary care things they do like running sick call every morning and afternoon.

Minor said she had seen some trauma cases during her daily duties, but the casualty’s treatment had already been started by the combat medic at the scene.

“I’d say most of the medics have been involved in some sort of trauma treatment situation or medical treatment situation where they have been the sole provider and have had to make life and death decisions for patients,” said Hamilton.

Making correct decisions is so important to Minor that she and her partner Gibson tested twice.

Minor said they had come out the day before and went through each task to make sure they would be prepared for the Gibson, who is from Elkhart, Ind., was confident they would do well.

“I just got out of (advanced individual training) about six

months ago,” said Gibson. “It’s all pretty fresh.”

Gibson felt it was going well.

The training was very valuable to them and its being

proven out by the testing, said Hamilton.

Everyone who went through the testing did a wonderful job putting their skills together.



Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

Sgt. Jennifer L. Viera, a medic with Headquarters Platoon, 550th Area Support Medical Company describes her next treatment move to her test facilitator.

99 reenlistments in 92 days

Spc. Ricardo Branch
Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Task Force Baghdad commander, reenlists seven Soldiers from the 92nd Engineer Battalion during the unit’s “92 Soldiers in 92 days” reenlistment program. The 92nd Engineer achieved 99 Soldiers in 92 days. After hearing other units like the 256th Brigade Combat Team, and the 101st Airborne Division make reenlistments of 256 and 101 Soldiers, 92nd Engineer followed suit with 99 “reups.”

Clean water for Baghdad

SGT Karolina Lojewska
443rd CA Bn. PAO

BAGHDAD - Earlier this year, 2nd Lt. Bradford Labine, an environmental science officer, identified a surprisingly overlooked area in the drinking water sector for Baghdad. There were no functioning water testing laboratories.

"Water distribution systems and other high visibility construction projects were gaining most attention leaving the testing labs behind in rehabilitation", Labine said.

Labine, a native of Tiverton, R.I., has been a chiropractor for the past seven years. Now, he's a member the HHC 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion, working in the Division Surgeon section of the 3rd Infantry Division. He draws upon past experiences as an environmental chemist when he is working as a member of the Public Health Team in Iraq.

One of his most important jobs is to help local people get clean drinking water into their households and working environments.

Labine arrived in Baghdad in September, and has assessed water treatment plants throughout 3ID area. He has sampled and tested drinking water in schools, Iraqi Police stations and residential areas, as well as discussed water quality and home-based treatment with the locals.

After field testing of basic physical and microbial properties of the water, he submits the samples for further testing to Navy and Army analytical labs.

Labine has addressed several areas of concern within the labs including, writing a Quality Assurance Management Plan, developing standard operating procedures, offering advice on record keeping and laboratory techniques, determining equipment and supply needs and data review.

Now Labine is making recommendations to the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment for adoption of new microbiology methods, which will impact the National Standards for Drinking Water.



Photos by Sgt. Karolina Lojewska

Above: 2nd Lt. Bradford Labine, environmental science officer with HHC, 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division Public Health Team, inspects the drinking water from a faucet at the Qadissya Water Treatment Plant.

Left: Labine performs field water testing at the Qadissya Water Treatment Plant.

Aviation reaches safety, mission milestones 50 at a time

Derek Del Rosario
3rd Avn. Bde PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - Soldiers at the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (General Support) are being recognized for their efforts - in increments of 50.

Since arriving to Camp Taji, the command group of 2-3 GSAB recognizes battalion Soldiers with the 'Baghdad 50,' an award that recognizes mission support and safety practices that are completed in 50 consecutive units. This includes either 50 hours of consecutive combat flight hours, 50 days worth of mission completion, or 50 days of accident free and successful aircraft maintenance.

Earlier this month, approximately 30 Soldiers were awarded the Baghdad 50 during a presentation in the 2-3 GSAB Hangar.

Lt. Col. Robert Bannon, 2-3 GSAB commander, presented the Baghdad 50 certificates and special recognition to battalion Soldiers in recognition of their safety practices and mission completion.

"We have great Soldiers, aviators and mechanics in this battalion. The Baghdad 50 is designed to show our appreciation and acknowledge excellence in safety on land and air," Bannon said. "Since being here we have put in 3000 flight hours and transported 20,000 Soldiers and 1.5 million pounds of cargo—that's a lot of business. It couldn't have been done with-

out good maintenance and safety practice."

The Soldiers of 2-3 GSAB have been working hard for this first half of deployment, putting in around 1300 hours of night flights and 1300 hours of day time flying.

In addition, Blackhawk maintainers of the battalion have completed around twenty 100-hour inspections and eight 250-hour inspections. These are all very admirable accomplishments, but the most important thing to Chief Warrant Officer 4 George M. Arthurs, battalion safety officer, is that these milestones were accomplished in a safe manner.

"The Baghdad 50 represents how unit assets have been working in a very efficient manner with safety always in mind," Arthurs said. "The NCOs are doing an outstanding job. Standards are being met and safety is always being followed. It means a lot to these Soldiers to be recognized for their effort in such a demanding and harsh environment."

The Soldiers continue to work hard and recognition for their efforts have a positive affect on their morale, said Spc. Jose L. Trujillo, Blackhawk mechanic in C Co. 2-3 GSAB one recipient of the Baghdad 50.

"This award just shows us that we are doing our jobs well and we are being recognized for it," Trujillo said. Safety is paramount when it comes to being a helicopter mechanic, he

added. Baghdad 50 recipient Spc. Jeremy A. Connors, Chinook mechanic in C Co. 2-3 GSAB, cannot agree more that safety is the most important aspect to keep in mind for a mechanic.

"The job always needs to be done with safety in mind. We are looking out for our buddies out there," Connors said. "One loose bolt could mean the difference, so we are always

working hard to make it safe for the pilots."

Bannon challenged the battalion Soldiers to continue their hard work throughout the rest of their deployment.

"In this business, you are only as good as your last mission," Bannon said. "As long as the Soldiers continue to do their jobs and mission safely, they will continued to be recognized."



Spc. Derek Del Rosario

(left to right) Specialists Jeremy A. Connors, Jose L. Trujillo, and Sakpraneth Khim, all of C Co. 2-3 GSAB, stand in line to receive the "Baghdad 50" certificate from Lt. Col. Robert Bannon, battalion commander, to recognize their safe execution of aircraft maintenance.

Reaching out:

Troops help clinic, deliver school supplies

Spc. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

TAJI, Iraq – Hundreds of excited children gathered near a clinic as Soldiers passed out school supplies, book bags and toys.

Inside the clinic, another group of troops unloaded boxes of medical supplies as Army medical professionals consulted with their Iraqi counterparts.

Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, serving as part of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division; and other supporting

units conducted a humanitarian mission to the Husseinia section of northwest Baghdad near Camp Taji on May 7.

A large part of the mission was delivering medicine, vaccines, bandages, and vitamins to the Husseinia clinic.

“About two weeks ago we identified what the facility needed in regards to medical supplies and training,” said Capt. Marc Pelini, effects coordinator for the 1/11th ACR.

After dropping off the supplies, Army medical personnel were on hand to show the Husseinia clinic’s staff how to properly use the supplies, Pelini said.

Army personnel also offered guidance to Iraqi doctors and assessed whether their previous guidance had helped the efficiency of the clinic.

“We came back to assess whether they had taken our recommendations, and they had,” said Capt. Eva-Marie Austin, the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division’s medical planner from Catonsville, Md. “They’ve stocked certain things in the pharmacy and they’ve made improvements here.”

The focus of the medical part of the mission was support, with Iraqi medical practitioners taking responsibility for providing the healthcare to their own people, and Army personnel helping them get the supplies and organization they need.

“We’re doing things behind the scenes, and we’re letting

the Iraqis treat their people in the way they believe is the best way to treat them,” Pelini said.

“I’ve met a lot of tremendously capable colleagues on the Iraqi side,” said Dr. (Col.) John Lammie, of 550th Area Support Medical Company, 3rd Infantry Division and senior physician on Camp Taji. “My hope is that we can get them the infrastructure and be able to provide them with the tools to do the job they know how to do.”

As the Army doctors met with the clinic’s workers, neighborhood kids shrugged off the afternoon heat and crowded around a humvee, eventually forming a line to receive backpacks, notebooks, pencils, soccer balls and toys.

“Everybody needs school supplies,” said Spc. Kris A. Zientara, of B company 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion and a Utica, N.Y., native. “It was a little hectic, but it turned out alright. We try our best to organize and go from there.”

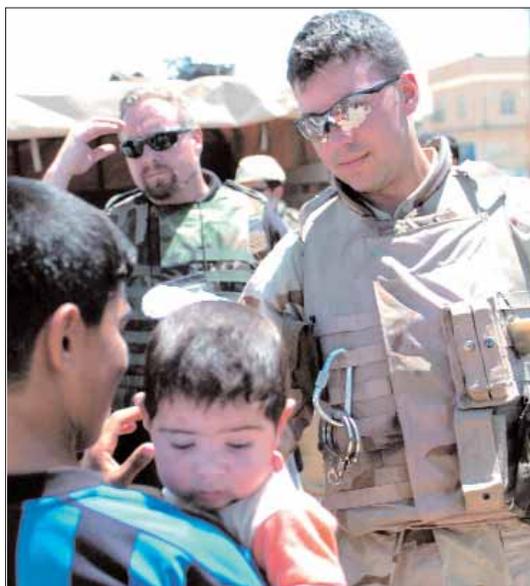
“They know we’re working for them, and they’re very appreciative,” he said.

The crowd continued to grow as the Soldiers made sure every child got something.

“The turnout was good,” said Sgt. Michael J. Glenn, from Lacey, N.J., also a member of B Company. “Once we open the trunk, they come from everywhere.”

“The reception we’ve gotten here, no matter what the operation is, has been good,” he said.

Glenn said the wider civil affairs mission in Husseinia



Photos by Spc. Matthew Wester

Spc. Kris A. Zientara, of B Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion, hands out toys to children in Husseinia on May 7. “They know we’re working for them and they’re really appreciative,” the Utica, N.Y. native said.

includes distributing needed supplies, but also will also focus on improving sewage systems and infrastructure for the area.

“We’re here to help them get back on their feet,” he said.

The children smiled gratefully after receiving the items from the civil affairs Soldiers.

The adults in the community

were positive about the visit as well.

Lammie described the people he dealt with during the mission as polite and receptive.

Austin agreed. “This is a very positive area.

The people have received us well, have been very respectful” she said. “Overall, it’s been a good experience.”



Dr. (Col.) John Lammie, of 550th Area Support Medical Company, 3rd Infantry Division and senior physician on Camp Taji, examines an Iraqi woman’s eyes during a mission to Husseinia.

Civil Affairs Soldiers out on the streets...



Spc. Ricardo Branch

Sgt. 1st Class Alex Mejia, 256th Brigade Combat Team, distributes Iraq flags to people along the streets of Baghdad Iraq, May 14. 256th BCT Civil Affairs were out among the locals in various meetings and inspection in an ongoing mission to assess the renovation efforts and how to better help the Iraqi people

Iraqi battalion graduates, prepares for future

Spc. Matthew McLaughlin
2/10 Inf. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Baghdad- Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade celebrated completion of basic training in a graduation ceremony May 12.

Col. Mark A. Milley and Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, attended the ceremony and applauded the Iraqi Soldiers for their progress.

Trainers from 2nd BCT have been working with the new battalion for several weeks, training them in everything from basic combat movements and marksmanship to searching houses.

The Soldiers learned much and will soon begin combat operations, said Cpt. David Smith, a 2nd BCT trainer from West Brookfield, Mass.

"The Soldiers in formation today fill us all with hopes of a free and democratic Iraq," Smith said. "It is truly an honor to serve with the brave Soldiers of the Iraqi Army."

The Soldiers graduated from a three week training course, but their training with 2nd BCT Soldiers will not end there, said Sgt. Tory Peoples, a trainer from Mobile, Ala. The trainers will patrol with the 3-3 IA Soldiers and continue to train and support them in their efforts towards autonomy.

"We're not just going to throw them out there," Peoples said. "We'll be with them."

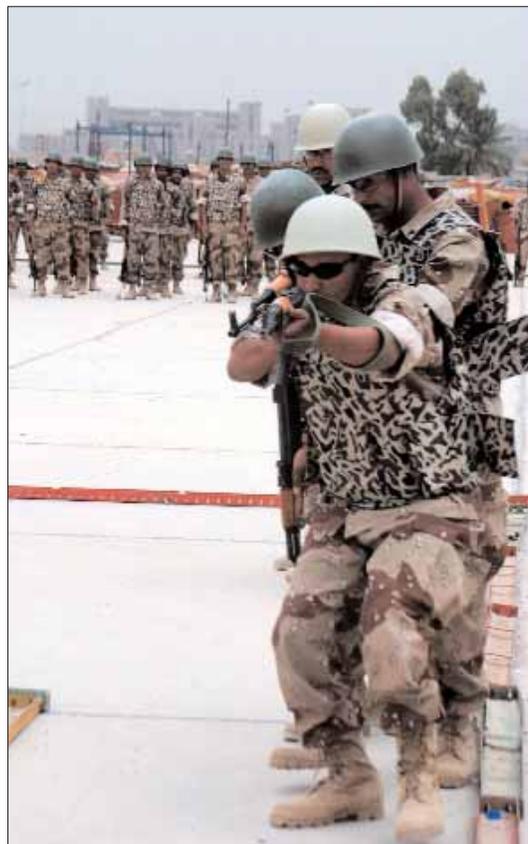
Peoples and other trainers from 2nd BCT had previous experience with Iraqi units, having trained Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade. Their new unit has a long way to go, but they are

eager to learn, Peoples said.

The Iraqi Soldiers demonstrated their skills at the ceremony by conducting a mock cordon search of a house. The squad conducting the search was hand picked to represent the battalion and was rewarded with a day off, Peoples said. Other Soldiers who excelled during the training were also received awards.

The 2nd BCT leadership were also rewarded and thanked for their support. Smith was grateful for his gift and said he looks forward to seeing the future of the new battalion and Iraqi itself.

"Iraq has the opportunity to be a great nation," Smith said to the Iraqi Soldiers in formation. "A nation of peace, freedom and prosperity. Today you joined a noble calling. You answered the call of your nation."



Spc. Matthew McLaughlin

Above: Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade demonstrate cordon search skills at their graduation ceremony. The best squad was selected for the demonstration and received a day off for their efforts

Left: Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade demonstrate their skills during their graduation ceremony. Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division trained the Soldiers for three weeks and will continue to aid them.

Aviation Brigade provides field sanitation training

Spc. Brian Henretta
3rd Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - Throughout history far more casualties have occurred from disease and non-battle injury (DNBI) than combat related injuries.

Training and educating Soldiers are the key to preventing diseases such as severe diarrhea, leishmaniasis, malaria and other preventable diseases.

American forces established preventive medicine teams during World War II as a response to malaria control and this later expanded into vector animal and insect control and preventive medicine. However, the Iraqi Army has never received training on combating preventable sickness until now.

The Aviation Brigade environmental science officer, along with Soldiers from the Division Support Brigade, 988th Medical Detachment and Air Force Vector Control Team held a three-day field sanitation course here recently for members of the Iraqi Army.

Capt. Lalini Pillay, Avn. Bde. environmental science Officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Avn. Bde., led the course, which taught 19 senior non-commissioned officers from the Iraqi Army, mostly sergeant majors and first sergeants, how to prevent diseases and non-battle injuries, and why doing so is critical for them to accomplish their mission.

Topics that were included in the course were personal hygiene, heat and cold injury prevention, insect and animal control, food sanitation, medical threats and waste disposal, Pillay said. Many of these topics are now part of the Iraqi Army Basic Training program.

The Iraqi Soldiers began the course with many basic preventive measures,

said Air Force Staff Sgt. Rafael Serrano, an environmental specialist with the 200/201st Red Horse Unit, who was also an instructor.

"Some of the things we taught them were to wash your hands before and after each meal or when you use the latrine to control illnesses such as diarrhea. Diarrhea can severely decrease a unit's combat effectiveness."

"The Iraqi Army leaders learned that anything unsanitary can create more problems," Serrano said. This is a concept known to field sanitation specialists as "the circle of filth."

"An example of the circle of filth is trash left in an area. The trash will attract flies, then mice, rats, snakes, cats and dogs. Sand flies carry diseases like leishmaniasis, and rats and

mice carry fleas that can even bring plague. The mice will also attract hungry snakes. Cats and dogs are attracted to these other animals and can carry rabies. It is all a cycle of uncleanness perpetuating more uncleanness, but it can all be avoided just by keeping the area clean," Serrano said.

"Training the leadership is vital. Now it's up to them to enforce these standards to the troops. Enforcing preventive medicine measures and sanitation habits contributes to a healthier, more effective force," Pillay said.

Pillay said the class went very well and the Iraqis were enthusiastic about learning the material.

"Despite the language barrier, with practice working with our interpreter, it became no problem," Serrano said.

"It went very well and we plan on holding this class every few months to train and certify as many of the soldiers as possible," Pillay said. "I am optimistic they will use the information wisely, and believe we have made a difference."

"Enforcing preventive medicine measures and sanitation habits contributes to a healthier, more effective force."

Capt. Lalini Pillay
environmental science officer
Avn. Bde.



KEITH, continued from page 1

either.

"Experiencing some of the dangerous things you get to brush, going up north to Mosul, places like that, it's a rush for me because I'm not actively in it every day."

"This isn't much different (from previous visits)," he continued. "It's just a bunch of happy Soldiers, you know, ready to have a little entertainment, a little R & R for the day, a little change of pace, so if I can provide that, that's why I came over here. It was just out of love, you know?"

Keith showed his love at Liberty with not only an on-stage performance, but also a visit with Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., TF Baghdad commanding general; a plethora of photo opportunities with Soldiers; and several autograph-signing sessions, both planned and impromptu, much to the delight of his fans.

"I'm glad he appreciates what we're doing over here, and he shows it," said Pfc. David Morgan, a 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment Soldier from Bowling Green, Ky.

Plenty of Soldiers shared Morgan's sentiment.

"I didn't expect this," said Spc. Jennifer Barr, a 152nd Maintenance Company Soldier from Port Orchard, Wash. "We're lucky to have someone take the time to come out here and entertain like this."

For Sgt. Bryan Wyrich, 123rd Field Artillery Battery, the show meant a little more:

"It's my birthday today," said the Flora, Ill., native. "Not too many people can say they got to see Toby Keith in Iraq on their birthday."

Staff Sgt. Dan Sowers, a Columbus, Ohio, native and member of 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion, said the show did a great job of making up for a Toby Keith concert he'd had tickets for back in the U.S., but was unable to attend because of his unit's deployment.

"(Keith) is great, he's so straight-forward, he doesn't take any (bull)," Sowers said. "He sings about what he feels and he doesn't care if he (angers) people."

But there was no anger apparent in the throng assembled in the 3rd Infantry Division Headquarters' parking lot — had it been present, it wouldn't have been heard over the applause.

"This is great, it breaks up the monotony," said Staff Sgt. Gary Comstock, 152nd Maint. Co., from Des Moines, Iowa. "It's great for Soldiers' morale. Just (that he would) come over here for us, that's awesome."

The son of an Army veteran, Keith said he wanted to do whatever he could to support deployed Soldiers.

"A lot of people are preaching (back home), but if you're gonna talk the talk, you gotta walk the walk," he said. "The only tribute I could give was a song."

The song he was referring to is "American Soldier," an anthem so popular among his Liberty followers that just about everybody in the crowd sang along.

"I'm proud to be a Soldier; I get choked up when I hear (that song)," said Pfc. Melanie Burt, of Palmer, Mass., from Division Support Brigade's Brigade Troops Battalion. "It's awesome that he comes over here and risks his life to entertain us."

As he introduced the song, Keith mentioned his father. "My dad was in the Army, so when I do these USO tours — I appreciate all of the armed forces — but in my dad's honor I try to really come into the corps of the Army, in honor of the old one-eyed bastard who really taught me to respect a veteran."

His words were met with a roar of approval from his audience, who sat, stood and perched on any available surface as they clapped and cheered.

"Everybody wants these (terrorist) animals run out of here," Keith assured Soldiers. "You guys are just the cowboys to do it, and I salute you."

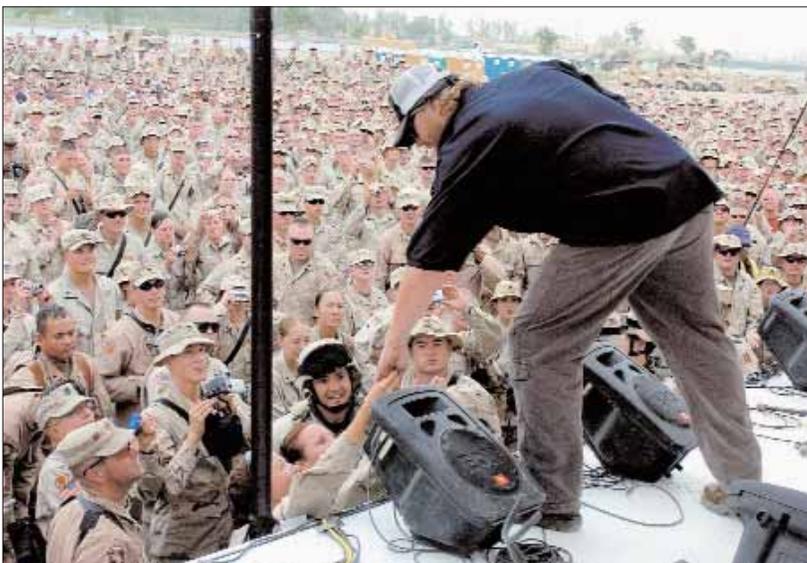


Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner, Spc. Emily Wilsoncroft
Above left: A Soldier expresses his patriotism during Toby Keith's performance at Camp Liberty May 17.

Above: Country star Toby Keith rocks out during his performance at the 3rd Infantry Division Headquarters.

Right: Keith autographs posters for fans in the Division Main building before his performance.

Below: Keith leans into the crowd to accept a coin offered to him after his performance at Camp Liberty.



VTC brings graduation to parents in Iraq

Patrick Donahue
Special to the Marne Express

Two years ago, Staff Sgt. Orlando Lee Jr. didn't get to see his son, Willet Smith's, high school graduation. The 3rd Infantry Division and the Liberty County School System are making sure Lee - and dozens of other soldiers serving in Iraq - won't miss out on the ceremonies this time around.

Two 30-foot screens were set up at Olive Field for the Liberty County High School and Bradwell Institute graduations. A video teleconferencing hookup allowed Soldiers serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 to watch the graduation. The Soldiers were shown on one of the large screens so the graduates and the families in attendance could see them.

Lee's family was happy he got to see his son, Zacre Smith, who recently joined the Army, graduate from Bradwell.

When asked days before the big event, Smith was enthusiastic. "He said he's going to try to watch it," Smith said. "I know he's real proud of me. He'll be happy getting to see it."

Over the weekend, families

of deployed Soldiers with graduating students had the chance to talk to them via VTC. In a small building that is ordinarily a locker room for the Liberty County High School's football team, they gathered and waited their turn to enter a tiny room with two TV monitors and a small camera.

One monitor displayed them. The other showed their loved one in Iraq. Each family had thirty minutes in the VTC room.

"It's awesome," said Donna Lee, Zacre's mother.

Zacre's father has been deployed five times and this is his second deployment to Iraq.

Two years ago, communication between the home front and the front lines was spotty at best. It was virtually non-existent during the weeks of combat before the 3rd Inf. Div. captured Baghdad. Even during the most recent VTC, there were glitches - a sandstorm interrupted the feed during the Lee's time together. In spite of that, Soldiers and families were able to talk to each other far more frequently than before.

"We talk at least once a week," Donna Lee said.

VTCs also present an

opportunity for Spc. Sandra Hamrick, Headquarters Support Company, 92nd Engineer Battalion to see her daughter, Lindsay, who is almost 3 years old. Like Lee, this is also Hamrick's second deployment to Iraq.

The first time Hamrick left, Lindsay was only 4 months old. By the time she returned, her daughter was 11 months.

Hamrick's younger sister, Katherine Kunda, graduates from Bradwell this weekend.

The VTC was Kunda's first chance to see her sister since she deployed Jan. 31.

"I'm always working when she calls, so we never have time to talk," Kunda said.

While the families were at Olive Field, the Soldiers were at three different forward operating bases in Iraq. Coordination was scheduled for times the Soldiers were available. For the Soldiers who couldn't make it to the VTC hookup site, the school system is making videos of the graduation ceremonies to send to Iraq.

"We opened it up to all graduating seniors," said Capt. Joseph Christadore of the division's communications rear detachment. "(And to) anyone whose parent is deployed to Iraq, to any

Soldier who wanted to participate."

The 3rd Inf. Div. has become skilled at video teleconferencing, especially from Iraq. Division commanders and planners talked often with their 1st Cavalry Division colleagues. In fact, 1st Cav. served as the inspiration for the project.

Cav. Soldiers had done the same thing with their families back at Fort Hood, Texas during their deployment to Iraq last year.

So, at the urging of 3rd Inf. Div. commander, Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Fort Stewart followed suit.

"It's nice to see," Christadore said. "From the response from the people who did it... it was a good morale booster."

Sgt. 1st Class Terence Green, also with the 3rd Inf. Div. rear detachment, concurred.

"I've been there in that position," he said. "The enhancement to morale, words can't describe it. It can carry a Soldier for a few extra months. You can't beat it, seeing it in real time. And even from this end, to watch the parents and the kids, it speaks volumes to watch the reactions."



Courtesy Photo

With his wife and son on one monitor, Staff Sgt. Orlando Lee, Jr., on the monitor on the right, talks to his family from a forward operating base in Iraq during the graduation video teleconference.

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and Iraqi Security Forces, on their movement to freedom.

"We are honored to walk with you hand in hand on this road to peace and prosperity," Salazar said. "But soon, you will not need our hand and you will walk alone. We will be proud to watch you continue down that road as your honorable friends."

"We are giving the rightful government house back to the Iraqi people," said Maj. Michael Charlebois, 3rd Brigade's Civil, Military Officer.

Maj. Ed House, Operations Officer for the 3rd BCT, said this transfer is a step in proving the inde-

pendence of the Diyala Province and Iraq.

"They are willing to fight the insurgency on their own," he said. "They are getting better everyday and this gives them the opportunity to prove themselves."

Although coalition forces have stepped back, House said US combat power is still close enough to provide quick reaction if additional force is required.

The majority of Iraqi police and the Iraqi Soliders have stopped wearing black masks over their faces concealing their identity, House said.

"This shows the insurgents that the people (of Iraq) are tired of the insurgency and they are now capable of defending themselves," he said.

The ISF have been training and conducting missions alongside coalition forces and House believes they are progressing everyday.

"Our guys take pride in their counterpart units," House said. "They take pride in how they perform in combat operations."

"We are on the way to freedom," Salazar said. "everyday we take another step towards peace and prosperity."

MANSOUR, continued from page 1



Spc. Matthew McLaughlin

Staff Sgt. James Smotherman's and 1st Lt. Daniel Ciccarelli, both from 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, patrol the streets around an unfinished mosque in the Monsur district of Baghdad.

what we are doing and every time we stop to talk to them they are very receptive toward us."

Soldiers have developed a profound draw to the area partly because the surroundings are lively and the area is relatively tranquil. Although the neighborhood is not a hot spot for insurgency activity, Soldiers remain observant.

"The area is a low stress environment, not responsibility wise because we still need to be alert but it has

been more of a permanent duty station for some, it has been good for the Soldiers," said Staff Sgt. Barry P. Stewart, A Battery gunnery sergeant, 2/15 FA.

The zone includes the Mansour, Yarmouk, Qadisiya, and Hateen neighborhoods among others and Soldiers have made positive strides to bring the community together.

"We worked closely with the NAC, the neighborhood area council. It's a group of people that work for

the community sort of like the (U.S.) city government but it's only for their section," Stewart said.

The neighborhood area council deals with issues that affect the community. It addresses concerns that local residents may have and continuously works toward the overall improvement of the area. Since the inception of the Iraqi government some Soldiers have seen a change in the area.

"Since the elections the locals have been friendlier and more open in pointing out the bad guys. The elections were a good thing, it really opened their eyes," said Sgt. 1st Class Jerry D. Bass, B Battery platoon sergeant, 2/15 FA.

Through civil affairs teams Soldiers handed out backpacks and supplies to schools of the local communities.

"We gave out book bags that had a picture of someone throwing trash to discourage littering. We also gave them flags so that they can display them," Bass said.

The Mansour zone was handed over to Louisiana National Guard Soldiers of 256 Brigade Combat Team. In the meantime, 2/15 FA Soldiers assumed their newly assigned areas of responsibility in other sections of Baghdad.

Despite some reservations in leaving the area Soldiers agree that the community has taken a step forward.

"Helping out the people and helping the locals stop the threats has been rewarding," said Spc. Roy Ingram, B Battery driver, 2/15 FA. "I'll miss the kids we hung out with most of all."

"Most people in Iraq are just like anybody else in the world. Most just want the basics they want food, water, jobs, electricity they want to have a comfortable life for their family," Shutts said.

Infrastructure continues to improve in Al-Rasheed district

Maj. Alayne Conway
4th BCT PAO

RADWANIYA, Iraq - After spending a few months in Iraq, Soldiers soon forget the ease of being able to travel within the United States over more than two million miles of paved roads and streets. It is a little known fact that the first constructed roads date from about 4,000 B.C and were built in Ur, or modern-day Iraq.

Iraq today has plenty of roadways but for small neighborhoods like Radwaniya, a paved road goes a long way in improving transportation and the economy.

Iraqi leaders from the Radwaniya Neighborhood Advisory Council along with Coalition forces completed a road project that spans more than four kilometers and cost about \$565,000.

Radwaniya is a neighborhood located in the district of Al Rasheed.

"The paving of the Hamourabi village road is great for the community," said Capt. Christian Neels, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment civil-military operations officer, and native of Muscatine, Iowa. "The com-

pletion of the road will offer a quicker means of allowing farmers and the local population to get to the market and in the long run, contribute to the economic progress of the area."

Neels added that unemployment in the surrounding towns of Musafar and the Hey Al Askari area is high. With few jobs available in the community, the roadway will allow the population to get into Baghdad where employment opportunities are greater.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division initially proposed the project to provide easier access for farmers and the local population to get to the market and to operate their vehicles after rains. Prior to the paving of the roadway, civilian traffic was severely restricted by the mud roads and the adjacent canal.

After the transition of authority between 1st Cav. Div. and 3rd Inf. Div. in Feb. 2005, 3/7 Inf. inherited the project and worked closely with Sheikh Ali Muttar, the Radwaniya NAC chairman, Neels said.

Sheikh Ali has overseen other infrastructure improve-

ment projects in the Radwaniya neighborhood.

A 3,000 meter waterline that runs alongside the Hamourabi Road was built and works in conjunction with two water towers in the area, said Sheikh Ali.

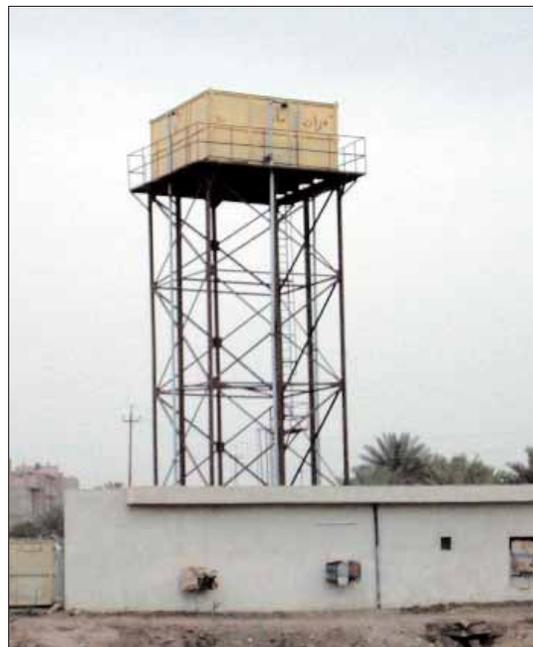
"The two water towers in Hey Al Askari and Al Musafar have the potential of providing drinking water for at least 7,000 people," he said.

He also said that before the water project can be accepted by the Municipality of Baghdad, the local contractor must make some modifications.

The NAC has also renovated a school for the area, led a campaign of removing trash and built two soccer fields.

Although the Radwaniya area now falls under the control of 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, the Soldiers of 3/7 Inf. keep in touch with the progress of Sheikh Ali and his community and there is still much work to be done in other areas.

"Continuing roadway and water improvements and establishing long-term employment of the local population in our sector will continue to be our emphasis," Neels said.



Maj. Alayne Conway

One of the two water towers in Radwaniya that will provide water for more than 7,000 residents. Hamourabi Road runs alongside the water tower and canal.

Hostage escapes insurgents, reaches safety of coalition forces

2/10 Inf. PAO
Media Release

An Iraqi hostage escaped from his captors and found his way to the protection of Coalition Forces May 19. The hostage was kidnapped the day prior by

insurgents apparently motivated by profit or gruesome intent.

"I asked the kidnapers what they were going to do with me," the hostage, who wished to remain nameless, said through a translator. "They said they have three choices: ask my family for

money, shoot me or slit my throat."

The insurgents took the hostage to a safehouse in Abu Ghrab and eventually left the hostage alone, he said. After an hour without hearing a noise, the hostage successfully loosened the ropes

to tie to his hands and legs and looked for an escape. The entrance was locked from the outside and the windows were inaccessible, so the hostage found his way to the roof and jumped to a neighboring building. He eventually found

his way to the ground where he saw Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division. He approached the vehicles and told them his story.

"He was really happy to see us," said Sgt. Todd Stoner, a 2-14 Infantry Soldier from Grafton, N.H. "Without an interpreter he basically told me these guys kidnapped him. We gave him some food and water."

The Soldiers then searched the house where the hostage was held captive and discovered two RPK machineguns, one 9 mm pistol, six AK 47s, one Russian hand grenade, an explosive detonator, four ski masks and a variety of medical

supplies including heavy narcotics. Staff Sgt. Daryl Van Why, a 2-14 Infantry Soldier from Unadilla, N.Y., said that the escaped hostage protected himself and helped secure the Iraqi community by coming to Coalition Forces.

"Had he tried running and not coming to us ... I believed he would be captured again," he said, adding that there are now fewer weapons on the street and one less safehouse for insurgents.

The hostage said he was grateful for the Soldiers' assistance.

"I appreciate the Americans' treatment," he said. "It was a big difference from the treatment from the terrorists."



Courtesy Photo

Staff Sgt. Daryl Van Why, a 2/14 Infantry Soldier from Unadilla, N.Y., searches a house that an Iraqi hostage escaped from. The Soldiers discovered a number of weapons and medical equipment.

"He was really happy to see us. Without an interpreter he basically told me these guys kidnapped him."

Sgt. Todd Stone
2/14 Inf.

Do you have a creative idea for something new in
The Marne Express?

Do you have a funny or exceptional photo
you want to share with others?

If so, contact brenda.benner@id3.army.mil
All submissions are welcome and valued!

Iraqi Army ready to take reins in Sadr City

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

CAMP HOPE, Iraq — History is being made at Camp Hope — currently

home of the U.S. Army's 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division — as 3rd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division prepares

to take charge of half of Sadr City in June. Only a creaky iron gate separates the two units' bases, and 3/15 takes every opportunity to mentor the growing

Iraqi unit and conduct joint operations.

"These troops will be taking over half of our sector, a large area in Sadr City," said Staff Sgt. Michael Allen, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3-15 Inf., mortarman. "We're helping to fine-tune their skills at this point — all of them are experienced patrolling the sector."

Allen, of Bryan, Texas, and

lion residents in an area about 10 square miles.

The sector, formerly called Saddam City, has erupted in violence several times since the liberation of Iraq in March 2003, making it critical that the IAB is up to the task, Allen said.

Inside the 3/2 IAB's tactical operations center, Pfc. Travis Carney, HHC, 3/15 Inf., mortarman, acts as a battle captain, tracking every



Soldiers from B Co., 3/15 Inf., and Iraqi Army troops patrol the streets of Sadr City, Iraq, May 16. *Spc. Ben Brody*

"We've been working with them for a month and a half...they've improved really quickly."

Staff Sgt. Michael Allen
HHC 3/15 Inf.

Iraqi patrol in Sadr City and keeping tabs on major incidents.

Carney and other junior Soldiers from the

other leaders from HHC's mortar platoon conduct daily classes at the Iraqi Army Battalion compound,

focusing on essential Soldier skills, such as map reading and battle drills.

"The Iraqi Army Battalion guys are like sponges when we teach our classes," Allen said. "We've been working closely with them for a month and a half, and in that time, they've improved really quickly."

Sadr City, the northeast section of Baghdad, is the most densely-populated area in Iraq, with about two mil-

mortar platoon work in shifts to cover the 3-2 IAB's TOC 24 hours a day.

"I'm here to help the IAB operate the TOC the right way, and to give them someone they can ask questions of anytime," Carney said. "There's a lot of violence in the city, at least two explosions or ambushes every day, but I haven't lost a single IAB Soldier since I started. It takes hard work and patience, but they've come a long way."

Iraqi Army brigade trains to handle emergencies

2LT Leslie Waddle
1/9 FA PAO

BAGHDAD — Terrorists detonate a car bomb at a local girl's school, killing 20 students and wounding many more.

The 2nd Iraqi Army Brigade, 6th Division, secures the area at the school, orchestrates a casualty evacuation and treatment plan, and finds the terrorists responsible.

This was one of many training scenarios the U.S. Army Military Training Teams provided the Tiger Brigade during a command post exercise May 9-11 at Baghdad International Airport.

The CPX was conducted by the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and was structured to test the Tiger Brigade staff on their ability to coordinate with higher and lower level commands during an emergency, said Lt. Col. Paul Humphreys, 2nd BCT executive officer. The MiTT team is composed of about 30 selected officers and NCOs as well as about a dozen interpreters.

The intent of the exercise was to test the 2nd IAB staff on running 24-hour operations said Humphreys. Prior to this, they had three TOC exercises to put their systems in place for tracking the battle, communicating information, and maintaining status of equipment, personnel and casualties.

This exercise focused on training the Iraqi Army to function as a tactical operations center. This included handling crisis situations, planning and executing operations, and disseminating information within the TOC as well as to subordinate units. Throughout the exercise, they had situations ranging from improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, anti-Iraqi forces gunfire and kidnappings, and convoy ambushes.

"I am really impressed with their reaction time during a crisis. When we first started, they needed guidance on what to do in a crisis," said Chief Warrant Officer Lorena Peck, 2nd BCT transportation officer and one of those in charge of running the CPX. "Now they take a situation, an IED attack for example, and develop the situation very quickly."

While the staff worked on TOC exercises, the Soldiers were going through rigorous training. Those who did not reside onsite, were picked up at the gate at 9 a.m. and escorted in. They conducted physical training at 10 a.m., cleaned up, and then ate.

After chow, they conducted an accountability formation where details, priorities of work, and the day's mission were announced. Next, they conducted round-robin training which include a series of classes and hands-on instruction. At the end of the day, they conducted an after-action review, followed by professional development for noncommissioned officers.

"The training has gone well, they still have areas to work on, but have shown a great deal of improvement, especially with participation and a willingness

to learn," said Staff Sgt. Fredrick Harris, MiTT, platoon trainer. "They take training seriously. The classes are similar to (U.S.) basic training classes, but we implement Iraqi traditions."

Harris, from Spartanburg, S.C., believes that the training will provide the Iraqi Soldiers with the confidence they need to execute missions on their own.

Tiger Brigade commander Brig. Gen. Aldainie Jawad has been in the Iraqi Army for many years. He graduated from the military college in 1966 where he later taught. Jawad feels that the Tiger Brigade will be ready to run operations in the city in "very few days."

"I am very thankful to America for helping to put the Iraqi Army together," he said. "You are giving us lots of help to build the Tiger Brigade. You are very good friends of Iraqis."



An Iraqi Soldier practices movement tactics during a command post exercise at Baghdad International Airport. *Courtesy photo*

Flight ops keeps attack helicopters on target

Spc. Brian Henretta
3rd Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, IRAQ — Sitting in front of maps, battle-tracking computers and a mountain of radios and other communication equipment, flight operations specialists ensure the Army's deadly attack helicopter, the AH-64 Apache, maintains its reputation.

The flight operations section for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Helicopter) is responsible for Apache battle tracking and coordination between the pilots and ground units.

It's an important mission because effective battle-tracking is the key

to sending aviation assets to the exact areas they're needed to support ground troops, said Capt. Cornelius L. Allen Jr., battle captain for 3/3 AHB.

"Our work deters anti-Iraqi forces and acts as a combat multiplier because it allows the ground forces to do their job more effectively," Allen said.

The pilots from 3/3 AHB work in conjunction with ground units such as 1st Battalion, 13th Armor Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 10th Mountain, said Spc. Roland J. Young, an aviation operations specialist with HHC, 3/3 AHB.

The Flight Operations Section's mission is vital to the success of Apache missions. Continuing to do their job ensures that the Apaches stay on track.

Spc. Derek Del Rosario

(left to right) Capt. Cornelius Allen Jr., Sgt. Mitchell B. Vallesteros, Spc. Jason W. Dodge and Spc. Roland J. Young (standing) monitor Apache missions in the flight operations section.



Bringing tropical flavor to the deserts of Iraq: Asian Pacific American heritage celebration

Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner
100th MPAD

In a colorful scene reminiscent of the Hawaiian Islands, nearly 200 attendees of the 3rd Infantry Division's Asian Pacific American Heritage Observance program were taken on a cultural journey.

Servicemembers sported vibrant blue leis upon their tan and brown uniforms while they witnessed a little of the Pacific Islander experience.

The May 21 program provided Camp Liberty personnel an opportunity to learn more about the history, culture and contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to the U.S. military and to the nation overall.

Nearly 300,000 Asian Pacific military veterans have served in the U.S. military. An informative visual program highlighted some of our nation's most courageous and dedicated service members who were awarded the Medal of Honor.

Asian Pacific Americans are one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. popula-

tion. Census results indicated more than 13.5 million in 2004.

Employees from Global Security and Skylink International shared their unique songs and dances from their native Fiji. They kicked off the cultural entertainment with a traditional Fijian hymn, "Jisu Sa Wekada Dina," translated as "What a friend we have in Jesus," followed by a war dance in improvised indigenous costumes.

James Sigarara, the chief of the war dancers, said that the rhythmic and enchanting dance, "Raude, Raude" dates back at least 1,000 years.

"Performing our dances gives me spirit," Sigarara said. "We have lots of dances."

"The Fijian dancers were outstanding," said Master Sgt. Ceasar Roberts, Jr., of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, XVIII Airborne Corps Artillery.

The program's cultural education theme then shifted to the Hawaiian Islands with the introduction of strumming ukuleles and a dazzling array of colorful dresses, wraps, and flower leis as performers took the stage.

Soldiers and Airmen of Asian Pacific Islander ancestry showcased their traditional Hula dancing skills in groups and also with solo performances.

For some Soldiers of Hawaiian descent, their preparation for the heritage event was the first time they had danced the traditional flowing dance of the islands since their childhood.

"I first learned to Hula during elementary school," said Spc. Monita Pang, 250th Military Intelligence



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Ken Walker

Members of Global Security and Skylink International treated the audience to a traditional war dance from their Fiji homeland. The dance, "Raude, Raude" is more than 1,000 years old.

Battalion, of Honolulu, Hawaii. "I haven't danced it since then. I'm glad I signed up to participate, I've had lots of fun."

Audience members who never grew up dancing the Hula soon found themselves with the chance — and challenge — of experiencing the traditional dance for themselves.

A group of "kanes" and "wahines," Hawaiian for men and women, braved their fears to become novice story tellers with their body movements to the time-honored "Hukilau" fishing feast dance.

The majority of the audience appeared truly captivated by the unique performances of both the skilled and beginner Hula performers.

"I really enjoyed the solo Hawaiian dancers too, I've only seen hula on TV," Roberts said. "I felt like I was in Hawaii, but I've never been there. This makes me want to

go. Sgt. 1st Class Tred Harris, the EO operations non-commissioned officer, said that it does his heart good to see so many people attend ethnic programs.

"These events give us a brief look at other people's lives and where they've come from," Harris said. "Understanding our fellow Soldiers' cultures gives us a greater respect for others."



Dental officer Maj. Dan Fong, 464th Medical Company, was one of many who enjoyed the ethnic festivities.



Air Force Tech. Sgt. Gail Aquino from the MNCI comptroller's office led Col. Jim Brooks, commander, 36th Engineer Combat Group, and others through the Hukilau dance.

The history and teachings of the Qur'an

Spc. Hossam Alsaadi

3rd Inf. Div. command staff interpreter

For many Muslims the Qur'an is the single greatest sign of God in the physical universe. In fact, individual verses of the Qur'an are called ayat (literally meaning signs). The text refers to itself as "guidance for the world" and "a clear sign for those who can understand." It provides instructions on how to live your life, and it also acts as a source of ethical guidance for the things that it does not provide clear instruction on.

It is a common Muslim belief that, as God's final revelation, the Qur'an contains the sum total of what God plans to reveal to humanity; therefore, behind the finite, literal message of the Qur'an is an infinite reservoir of divine wisdom.

In the Prophet Muhammad's opinion and that of the majority of pious believers, the Qur'anic revelations came from heaven, where they were preserved on a "well-guarded Tablet," a concealed supernatural book that existed in the presence of God.

Muhammad did not become acquainted with the whole of the Qur'an at once, but only with isolated sections of it. The Qur'an contains only a few obscure hints as to how it was communicated to Muhammad. In fact, it is from later Islamic writings (including Hadith) that we learn how Muhammad would occasionally go into trances when he received a revelation and would then recite it to those around him.

Muhammad believed that his prophetic mission (and the revelations of the earlier Hebrew prophets and the holy scripture of the Jews and Christians) were based on the original heavenly book, so that they coincided in part with what he himself taught. The Qur'an thus confirms what was revealed earlier: the laws that were given to Moses, the Gospel of Jesus, and other prophetic texts.

Style of the Qur'an

Although the stories contained in the Qur'an and the concept of revelation through a series of prophets are shared with the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, the style of the Qur'an is more in keeping with that of the pre-Islamic Arab religious tradition of seers and oracles.

The text is written neither in prose nor poetry, but consists of rhymed prose, which is easier to remember than normal prose but is not as restricted in style as poetry.

The text is arranged in 114 chapters called suras. These are unequal in length, some being several pages while others are only a few lines.

The chapters are not arranged in a way that reflects the order of revelation. In fact, they seem to be in roughly the

opposite of chronological order. They appear to be arranged by length, going from the longest to the shortest.

Suras are traditionally identified by their names rather than by their numbers. These names are normally distinctive or unusual words that appear somewhere in the early part of the sura, for example, the Cow, the Bee, the Fig, Day Break, and the Clatter.

The suras are further subdivided into verses called ayat. Twenty-nine of the chapters begin with seemingly disjointed letters that are referred to as the "mysterious letters," which may convey some secret religious meaning, or may just signify a filing system for organizing the Qur'an.

The Qur'an Becomes a Book

The Qur'an was not put together during Muhammad's lifetime but was preserved on whatever material was then available: bits of parchment, leaves, shoulder blades of camels, and in the memory of his followers.

After Muhammad's death, people decided to start collecting the works, but the process took several years.

Some say that the Qur'an was collected in its present form within two years of his death under the leadership of his friend and first caliph, Abu Bakr (d.634). Others contend that the Caliph Umar (d.644) was the first to compile the Qur'an.

Vast arguments have raged ever since, concerning issues of theology and early Arab history, over who gathered together the first edition, and what it consisted of.

Today, however, most agree that the established canon of the Qur'an, the written text Muslims use today, was completed between 650 and 656 C.E., during the reign of Umar's successor, the Caliph Uthman. His commission decided what was to be included and excluded; it also fixed the number and order of Suras.

That said, unofficial versions of the Qur'an were not entirely forgotten, and these were referred to in subsequent histories and commentaries on the Qur'an.

While the spread of the official text of the Qur'an under Uthman was a major step toward uniformity in versions of the scripture, its importance may easily be exaggerated.

For one thing, knowledge of the Qur'an among Muslims was based far more on memory than on writing.

For another, the early Arabic script of the Qur'an was a sort of shorthand: Only consonants were written, and the same letter shape could indicate more than one sound. This script was simply an aid to memorization; it presupposed that the reader had some familiarity with the text.

It was not until the reign of Abd al-malik (685-705 C.E.) that the modern

Arabic script was created, with its vowels and the use of one letter shape for one sound.

Qur'an in Islamic Tradition

Belief in the Qur'an's being God's literal word has had far-reaching implications: There has traditionally been some resistance to the Qur'an's translation from Arabic into other languages.

Although this resistance is now largely gone, traditional etiquette still requires that you refer to printed volumes of the Qur'an as masahif (singular: mushaf, literally meaning "binding" or "volume"), implying that the divine word is singular and cannot be perfectly contained in ink and paper.

The special status accorded to the Qur'an goes far beyond the semantics of what to call it.

To this day there is great prestige in memorizing the text, and one who knows it in its entirety is called hafiz (literally "guardian"), an honorific title that harkens back to a time when the Qur'an was transmitted orally and committing it to memory was to participate in guarding the text from loss or corruption.

Children across the Islamic world, whether they know any Arabic or not, take Qur'an lessons in which they learn the Arabic script and how to sound the words phonetically.

Pious Muslims often try to read a thirtieth of the book every night, so that they can finish the Qur'an every month. Those who cannot read simply run their fingers along its lines, believing that they derive merit through this simple act of devotion.

The Qur'an thus becomes simultaneously a source of prayer and a prayer in its own right, a guidebook for actions as well as a ritual object.

Devout Muslims treat volumes of the Qur'an with great reverence: They are not shelved with other books in the house but occupy a position of honor, and readers enter a state of ritual purity before touching them. It is common to have special bookstands to hold the text, and the most beautiful of these rank among the masterpieces of Islamic art.

The Qur'an itself has been both an object and source of artistic expression. Ornate copies of the Qur'an provide outstanding examples of the art of book-making.

Furthermore, calligraphy— which commonly uses its subject words or phrases from the Qur'an— has emerged as one of the most highly developed art forms in the Islamic world. Qur'anic calligraphy is used to decorate a wide range of objects, from buildings to ceramic and metal vessels, and even items of clothing.

The captivating sound of Qur'anic recitation is used to open most religious and official functions in the Islamic



world, and skilled Qur'anic reciters enjoy a high status in the society.

Given the importance accorded to the Qur'an, it should come as no surprise that the human conduit of the text, the prophet Muhammad, is similarly venerated.

The Qur'an refers to Muhammad as a blessing from God, a messenger, a warner, a guide, the bringer of good news, and good news in and of himself. Muslims commonly believe that Muhammad was a human being like any other who was chosen by God to be the last of his prophets and to be the instrument he used to reveal the Qur'an.

The Qur'an itself emphasizes the ordinariness of Muhammad, commanding him to say that he was a mortal man like everyone else and chastising him for losing confidence and feeling insecure.

Nonetheless, it stands to reason that Muhammad would have been of outstanding moral character to begin with if an omniscient and omnipotent God was planning to use him as a prophet.

Furthermore, once Muhammad took on the role of God's messenger and exemplar of humanity, God would hardly let him engage in any activity that would contradict the divine message.

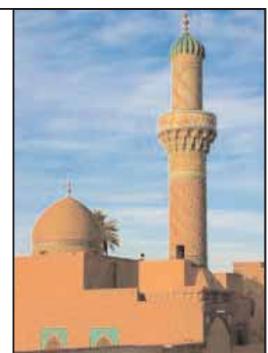
According to this, then, Muhammad was free from sin (and possibly even from the capacity to sin), and any frailties or errors he displayed were themselves consciously added to his character by God to fulfill a divine purpose.

Muhammad has therefore become the model of behavior for most Muslims who try and follow his example, or Sunna, and collected anecdotes of his life, called hadiths, represent a religious source second only to the Qur'an.

Cultural Awareness Courses
Third Infantry Division Civil Affairs Section (G-5) is now offering cultural awareness training courses to enhance Soldiers' understanding of the local culture, religion and history. Classes held on location, with a minimum of 15 people.

For more information, contact Sgt. 1st Class Brian Rauschuber, or Dr. Al Abedelazim, 3rd Inf. Div. Civil Affairs section.

VOIP- 242-4047
Iraqia call phone- 790-119-6105



History of the "Dog Face Soldier" song

Maj. Richard Bartoszuk
1BCT PAO

The U.S. Army is an organization fraught with traditions. Many things such as unit patches, crests and mottos that Soldiers take for granted actually came into being due to some historical event. One of those traditions is the 3rd Infantry Division song.

Many unit songs are simply civilian songs to which the lyrics have been changed. Other songs were specifically and deliberately written for that unit at someone's request, usually the commander.

Cpl. Bert Gold and Lt. Ken Hart, both of Long Beach, New York, co-wrote "Dogface Soldier" in 1942. They wrote the song for and

about Soldiers in general. The song came to the attention of then 3rd Infantry Division commander, Maj. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott, who was responsible for having "Dogface Soldier" adopted as the division's song.

"Dogface Soldier" reflected the current times and it alluded to the enemy of the times in the fourth verse: "I'm just a dogface soldier with a rifle on my shoulder and I eat a Kraut for breakfast everyday."

Like many things in the Army, the song has evolved. The original version was composed during World War II when the Army was an all-male organization. Female soldiers were "WACs" - members of the separate Women's Army Corps, which

was disbanded in 1978.

In the '80s, the following two lines of the lyrics were changed to render the song gender neutral. The third verse read: "On all the posters that I read it says the Army builds men, so they're tearing me down to build me over again." And the last verse ended with: "Your dogface soldier boy's o-kay."

The historically significant song was immensely popular and Soldiers sang it, marched to it and even danced to it.

It made its public debut in the 1955 Audie Murphy film "To Hell and Back."

The impressed public bought 300,000 copies of the popular recording, making "Dogface Soldier" the most publicized and well known song from World War II.

Rhythm of the Marne

Attention Soldiers, the 3rd Infantry Division Band is available for musical and ceremonial support. The Band is capable of a wide ensemble of music including, stage band, Latin band, jazz combo, rock combo and various other musical treats.

Contact Staff Sgt. Powell, Operations NCOIC at DSN (318) 847 2338.

I Wouldn't Give A Bean
To Be A Fancy Pants Marine
I'd Rather Be A
Dog Face Soldier Like I Am

I Wouldn't Trade My Old OD's
For All The Navy's Dungarees
For I'm The Walking Pride
Of Uncle Sam

On Army Posters That I Read
It Says "Be All That You Can"
So They're Tearing Me Down
To Build Me Over Again

I'm Just A Dog Face Soldier
With A Rifle On My Shoulder
And I Eat Raw Meat
For Breakfast E'V'RY Day

So Feed Me Ammunition
Keep Me In Third Division
Your Dog Face Soldier's A-Okay

Humorous yet serious guidance for mailing success

Before Soldiers erroneously decide they can mail home everything up to, and including themselves and every ounce of gear they've ever been issued, there are a few things they need to keep in mind.

Many troops who come to the post office to send off their personal mail are trying to reduce the amount of baggage they're carrying home by shipping books, DVDs, DVD players, laptops and clothing before they leave. All of these items are acceptable.

Mailing IA-50 gear through the personal mail system, however, is not.

Mailing military equipment home is best done through the official mail system. Soldiers should talk to the postal specialists from the official mail section for rules and procedures.

Many Soldiers choose to mail their personal items inside a footlocker, a good decision because it won't break or fall apart during transit.

When filling footlockers, keep in mind that footlockers (and boxes) must weigh less than 70 pounds.

Generally, footlockers and large boxes cost between \$30 and \$90 to mail based on weight, destination, mailing preferences and insurance.

Locks may be used on footlockers

but the combination must be clearly written on the outside of the footlocker, or the key must be taped to the outside of the footlocker.

Flat rate packages are also available, an 8x12 priority envelope for \$3.85, and a slightly larger priority mail box costs \$7.70. Both the envelope and the box can be sent anywhere in the United States.

The biggest problem experienced at the post office is when someone tries to mail items that have been deemed non-mailable by the U.S. Postal Service or CFLCC.

Some Soldiers think they can outsmart the postal system by taking great care to hide items prior to mailing. Tricks, like the oldie-but-goodie "false bottom in the footlocker" don't work.

If the postal inspectors don't find your secret items, the x-ray machines at the airports will.

Attempting to mail "non-mailable" items will result in UCMJ action. On most occasions you can be in and out of the post office in 15 minutes or less, but when large units are redeploying, long lines result in waits in excess of one hour.

The key to avoid frustration is to arrive early to beat the crowd and the oppressive afternoon heat.

To make your postal experience quicker and stress free, the following items cannot be mailed home:

Anything that blows up.
Anything that blew up.
Anything that caused, causes or helps anything else blow up. Anything that catches on fire, too. This includes shells, casings, ammunition, bombs, things that look like bombs, firecrackers, or firearms of any type. No lighter fluid or gas.
Replica handguns, with or without lighter fluid.
Antique firearms.
No more than eight batteries (any size) per box.
Switchblade or gravity knives. Any knife that launches a blade across the room to stick into your wall, or your roommate, or your roommate's wall.
Drugs. Nothing that gets you high, low, or anything in between can be shipped home.
Anything used to take drugs that get you high, or low, or anything in between.

Alcohol.
Bayonets.
Foods laced with alcohol, like those great chocolate-rum-balls your cousin managed to get to you last week.
Poisons.
Anything that will rot or get really nasty. If you wouldn't leave it on your counter for three weeks, don't ship it.
Pork or pork products.
Fruits or veggies, unless they're dried.

Anything that's breathing.
Anything that lives in water is included here.

Plants or plant products or anything that might carry a disease or fungus.

Radioactive materials.

Matches or cigarette lighters.

Toxic substances.

If it would eat through metal or plastic, don't ship it.

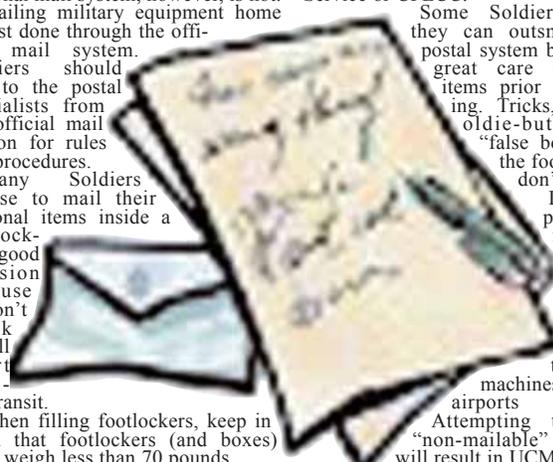
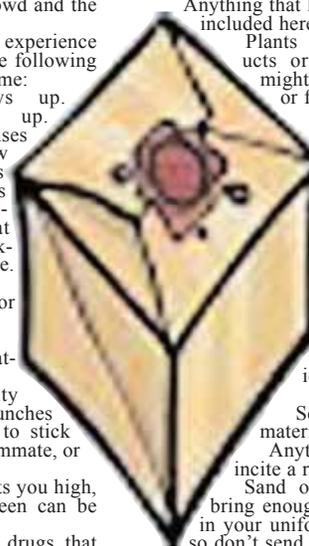
Anything out of a medical lab.

Dry ice.

Sexually explicit material. Porn.

Anything that would incite a riot or violence.

Sand or soil. You'll bring enough of that home in your uniforms and boots, so don't send any back ahead



Many Soldiers are seriously injured or killed in vehicle roll-over accidents because they failed to practice their vehicle roll-over drills. Leaders should not assume Soldiers are trained in roll-over drill procedures.

Stay alive! Practice your drills!

Serving together: Twins serve in Iraq with same brigade

Pfc. Dan Balda
4th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – It is not unusual for identical twins to play the same sports, go to the same college, or choose the same profession.

It is unusual, however, for those who choose the Army to be assigned to the same division, let alone the same brigade.

First Lieutenants Deeon and Reeon Brown, natives of Walterboro, S.C., are assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. Deeon is a platoon leader with A Company, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor. Reeon is assigned to A Co., 3rd Bn., 7th Infantry Regiment.

The twins say there are some differences, though they're hard to spot. Deeon says he is "more stout" than

his brother and Reeon says he is taller and has a gold tooth.

During their sophomore year of high school, they knew they wanted to join the Army. Initially they joined the Reserves, and enrolled in the Reserve Officers Training Corps at South Carolina State University. They chose the same major: computer science.

"The only time I get to use my major in the Army is when I type up a memorandum," said Deeon, the self-described "talker" of the two.

While in school, they played the standard twin jokes, going to each other's classes and taking each other's tests.

While in ROTC they chose the same branch, Infantry, but knew the realities of the military and readied themselves to be split up for the first time in their lives.

"We didn't even ask to be stationed at the same place, it just worked out that way," Deeon said. "We found out while we were at (Officers Basic Course). We said hey alright, we're going to Stewart, to 3rd ID. We both knew that 3rd ID is the most lethal mechanized unit that the Army has. I knew it was a high-speed unit, and I wanted to be there."

Their experience in Iraq has not changed their perception.

"It's everything and more than I thought it was," said Reeon. "You've got Soldiers who look to you when they don't know what to do on the ground. It can be the difference between life and death, that's a lot of responsibility. It's scary sometimes."

Their parents are a little wary of having their two sons so close to the action at the same time but they realize this is what their sons have chosen to do with their lives and support them all the way.

Both men plan on staying in the Army until "we get kicked out." They plan on attending as many schools as possible when they redeploy.

This is the longest the brothers have been apart in their lives. Even though the situation is very different for them, a lot of their experiences remain the same.

"It's kind of nice to be in separate units for once just because we don't get mixed up as much," Deeon said. "But I'll still be walking around and see one of his Soldiers and he will ask me something about their unit, and I have to tell them that I'm not who he thinks I am."

Throughout their lives they have competed in everything possible. They wanted to see who was the fastest, the strongest, who could get the better grades and who looked better. When asked who usually won, they answered at the same time, "I did."

The competitive spirit has not changed since they arrived in Baghdad.

"We try to top each other," they said. "Who has the worst sector, who's doing the most things. It keeps us going."

Both of their platoons spend ample time out on patrol.

"Every time I go out on patrol I ask the (Iraqi) people if the situation is getting any better and they always say yes, they are glad to be there," Deeon said.

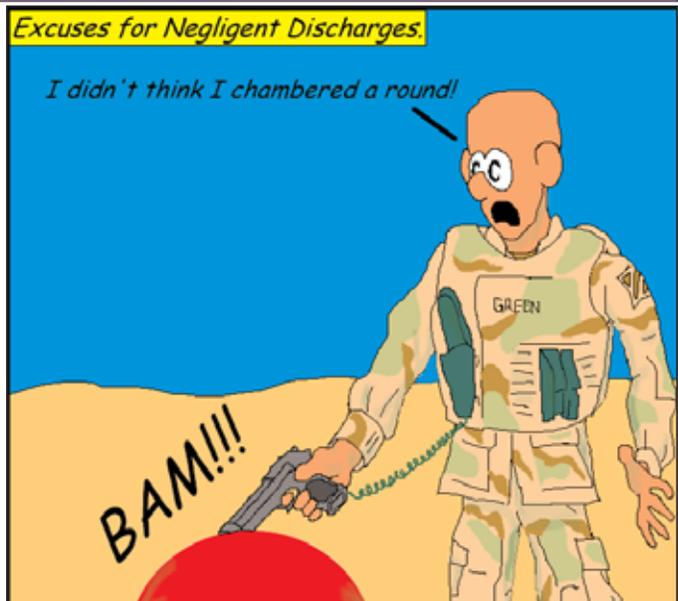
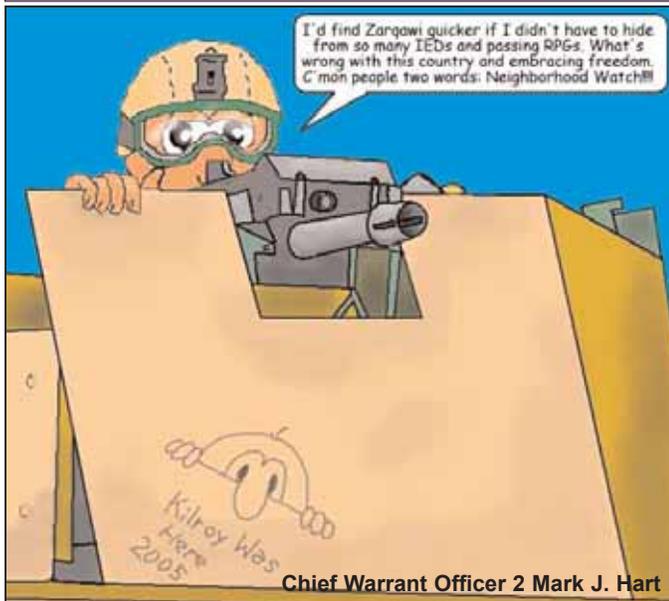
Reeon agreed with his brother but added one caveat. "We work a lot with the Iraqi Army, going through the neighborhoods," he said. "Those guys have been working hard, and the Iraqi people seem grateful to see their own Soldiers out on patrol with us."



Pfc. Dan Balda

First Lieutenants Deeon and Reeon Brown share a joke while talking about their experiences growing up as twins. Deeon is a platoon leader with A Company, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor. Reeon is assigned to A Co., 3rd Bn., 7th Infantry Regiment. This deployment is the longest the twins have been apart in their lives.

Cartoon Corner



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

S O L D I E R S



Spc. Matthew Wester

Cpl. Lyndsay M. Hergert, a civil affairs specialist for B Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion, interacts with children outside a school in Jaff e Mill, Iraq. Hergert's team was supporting a humanitarian mission to the school to donate supplies.



Sgt. Kevin Bromley

A young Iraqi girl presents Sgt. Chris Ford of 2nd Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion, 13th Armor Regiment assigned to 4th Battalion, 1st Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armor Division a single red rose while he watches a neighborhood street in Taji Iraq. Ford a resident of Glasford, Ill. is serving his 2nd tour of duty in Iraq.



Sgt. Kevin Bromley

Pvt. William Davenport of Alpha Battery, 4th Battalion, 1st Field Artillery Regiment monitors the radio and his Common Remotely Operated Weapons System (CROWS) while on patrol in Taji, Iraq May 16, 2005. This system allows the machine gunner to ride inside the vehicle instead of in the turret.

JOB

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

Skin Cancer: The different types and prevention

Master Sgt. Scott Morgan
STB Senior Medical NCO

There are three main types of skin cancers: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and malignant melanoma.

A surgical cure is often possible if skin cancers are diagnosed and treated early. Yearly full skin examinations by a physician and heightened patient awareness may help to detect skin cancer at the earliest possible stage. The key to early diagnosis is a familiarity with the clinical features of skin cancer.

Sun exposure is a major contributor to the development of all types of skin cancer. Sun avoidance and the use of sunscreens (SPF 15 or higher) may minimize the risk.

Basal cell carcinoma is the most common cancer in humans; it develops in more than a million people every year in the United States alone. About 80% of all skin cancers are basal cell carcinoma.

It appears as a shiny translucent or pearly lump, a sore that continuously heals and then re-

opens, pink slightly elevated growth, reddish irritated patches of the skin, or a waxy scar.

Squamous cell carcinoma is the second most common type of skin cancer. More than 100,000 new squamous cell carcinomas cases appear each year.

Most arise from sun-damaged skin and men are more commonly affected than women.

The risk of developing a squamous cell carcinoma increases with age.

Tumors commonly arise in areas of sun damage and are common on the head, neck and hands. They most often appear as a crusted or scaly area of the skin with a red inflamed base that resembles a growing tumor, a non-healing ulcer, or a crusted over patch of skin.

Malignant melanoma is the fastest growing type of cancer in the United States; incidence rates are increasing by 4-8% per year. The reason for this rise is not completely understood, but it appears to be related to increased sun exposure, espe-

cially to blistering sunburns in youth.

Melanoma accounts for approximately 3% of all cancers in the U.S. (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers) and for approximately 1% of all cancer deaths. It is the most common cause of death in women 30 to 39 years old, but there is no significant difference in the incidence of melanoma between men and women.

Melanoma cancer may occur on any skin surface, but the most common site in men is on the back, while in women, the most common location is a lower extremity.

The affected areas are brownish pigmented malignant skin tumors which can be very dangerous since they have a significant potential to spread if not treated.

They arise from either pre-existing moles or normal skin, particularly after repeated severe sunburns. These tumors usually have at least one area with a very dark brown or bluish black color.

Frequently there are varia-

tions of color in the skin, ranging from browns and blacks to tans, reds, and even whitish shades. The tumors are usually larger than the end of a pencil eraser, are asymmetrical and have irregular borders.

Any pigmented "mole" which changes in any way should be evaluated by a trained health care professional.

The risk of developing any type of skin cancer increases with age and sun exposure.

Sun protection can significantly decrease a person's risk of developing skin cancer.

Sun protection practices that include staying out of the sun between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., applying a broad spectrum (offers UVA and UVB protection) sunscreen of SPF15 or higher year round to all exposed skin, and wearing protective clothing may minimize the risk.

Wearing DCUs with the sleeves down, military headgear (boonie cap when possible) and UV protection sunglasses when outdoors are smart sun-minimizing choices.

Examples of skin tumors



Squamous Cell Carcinoma



Malignant Melanoma



Basal Cell Carcinoma

THE MARNE BLOTTER REPORT

1. On May 11, 2005 Sgt. Michael P. Williams pled guilty at a General Court Martial to two specifications of unpremeditated murder.

He was convicted of one specification of premeditated murder and one specification of unpremeditated murder by a military judge. On May 13, 2005, the military judge sentenced Sgt. Williams to reduction to E-1, confinement for life with eligibility for parole and a

Dishonorable Discharge.

Pvt. Williams is from Fort Riley, KS and he is 26.

He was charged with: two specifications of premeditated murder, one specification of obstruction of justice, one speci-

fication of conspiracy to commit premeditated murder.

2. On April 5, 2005 Spc. Brent W. May pled not guilty at a General Court Martial.

He was convicted of one specification of unpremeditated murder by a military panel. On May 9, 2005, the military panel sentenced Spc. May to reduction to E-1, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, confinement for 5 years and a Dishonorable Discharge.

Pvt. May's family in Salem, OH and he is 22. He was charged with one specification of premeditated murder.

3. On January 14, 2005 Staff Sgt. Cardenas J. Alban* pled guilty at a General Court Martial to one specification of unpremeditated murder.

He was convicted of unpremeditated murder by a military judge. The military judge sentenced Staff Sgt. Alban to reduction to E-1, confinement for one year and a

Dishonorable Discharge.

* The name on all trial documents says Cardenas J. Alban as copied from his enlisted records brief, though he lists his name as Jonathan J. Alban.

Pvt. Alban is from Los Angeles, CA and he is 29. He was charged with one specification of premeditated murder

4. On December 9, 2004 Staff Sgt. Johnny M. Horne pled guilty at a General Court Martial to one specification of unpremeditated murder. He was convicted of one specification of unpremeditated murder by a military judge. A military panel sentenced him to reduction to E-1, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, confinement for three years and a Dishonorable Discharge.

Pvt. Horne is from Elm City, NC and he is 31. He was charged with one specification of premeditated murder, one specification of solicitation of premeditated murder



Uphold the Warrior Ethos. Obey all regulations and general orders. Serve with honor.
"Rock of the Marne!"

DESERT JUSTICE

Caveat Emptor, Buyer Beware!

How to Protect Yourself from Consumer Fraud

Capt. Gary McNeal
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

Whenever you make a purchase you should pay close attention to the deal you are making. For deployed Soldiers the dangers of consumer fraud lurk everywhere, from the local markets to buying on line through the internet.

You need to know how to protect yourself from consumer fraud and what to do should you become a victim.

You may be tempted to make a purchase on line while in theater. Pitfalls here include not receiving exactly what you ordered, not receiving the item at all, and issues with payment.

Make sure that you understand and agree to the terms of the deal. It's best to use a method of payment like Paypal rather than sending a check or money order. Never send cash through the mail.

Don't make purchases from sites that you are unfamiliar with or from private individuals unless the site offers some form of guarantee.

Purchases that require you to wire money to someone's bank are particularly suspect. In many cases, they are scams. Once your money is gone, there is not much you can do to get it back.

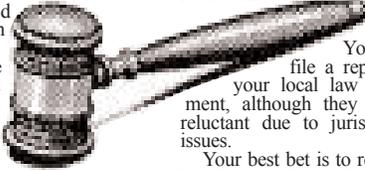
Know all of the terms you are agreeing to. Keep track of all communications-e-mail, names, and phone numbers.

Be careful making purchases from local vendors as well. Consumer protections that you enjoy in the United States will not protect you in theater with local vendors.

Beware of identity theft. Do not use a credit card to pay for items from local vendors. Use cash to pay for things on the local market. If you receive mail from home that has any advertisements for credit cards or similar items, tear them up prior to throwing them away.

Identity theft in the marketplace is just as big a risk in theater as it is in the U.S.

Finally, if you are a victim of consumer fraud there are several steps that you may take to resolve the



problem. You can file a report with your local law enforcement, although they may be reluctant due to jurisdictional issues.

Your best bet is to report the incident to the Federal Trade Commission. They have a site on line at www.FTC.gov. You may log in your complaint, and may receive assistance through that agency.

The website also contains a wealth of information on consumer protection issues. You may also see a legal assistance attorney. They may be able to assist with dealing with the creditor and with other issues such as credit ratings that become affected by the incident. Be a wise consumer by always using care in the purchases you make and get all the information before acting.

Caveat Emptor, buyer beware! Legal Assistance VOIP 242-4568.

Chaplain's Corner

Making your homecoming a joyous and positive event...

Chaplain (Cpt.) Richard West
2/15 Field Artillery Chaplain

Homecoming. It is a happy time of reunion between Soldiers and their loved ones. Husbands and wives reunited with one another, mothers and fathers reunited with their children. It is a moment that Soldiers look forward to the entire time they are deployed, as do the spouses and loved ones who are left behind.

Reunion for most Soldiers will be a wonderful experience. For some it can be a difficult period of readjustment and resolving problems that have developed during the deployment. For all Soldiers reunion is a delicate process that needs to be entered into with wisdom and sensitivity.

How can you make the most of your reunion? By following these three simple guidelines, you can have a wonderful reunion, and experience the joy of once again being with your loved ones.

The first key to reunion is: Be an honored guest in your home!

Your family wants to celebrate you and your return, allow them to treat you as such.

Be a guest. If you were invited to spend the weekend at a friend's house on a lake, you wouldn't expect to be told to go out and mow the lawn, take out the trash and earn your keep around their lake house.

You would expect to be treated like a guest. Moreover, the people who invited you wouldn't expect you to start issuing orders and changing things. After all, you're a guest.

This is the attitude you must have upon redeployment. Be a guest. Don't rush to change things. Don't disturb the family set up.

Things may need to change, allow some time to pass before you make any significant changes.

The second key to reunion is: Communicate your expectations ahead of time!

If you're married or single, this applies to you. Your spouse or your parents may have their own plans for you upon redeployment.

Your plans may not be the same. Your dreams of being reunited with spouse, children, or parents, may not be theirs. Bring up your desires and thoughts ahead of time and being willing to compromise.

Finally, the third key to reunion is: Take care of yourself!

The reality is that you have just come home from a long deployment from a very stressful environment.

You may find yourself developing stress symptoms upon your redeployment.

You may experience higher levels of frustration and irritability. Or you may find yourself having problems sleeping.

Depression, anger and other negative emotions are experienced by some Soldiers upon redeployment.

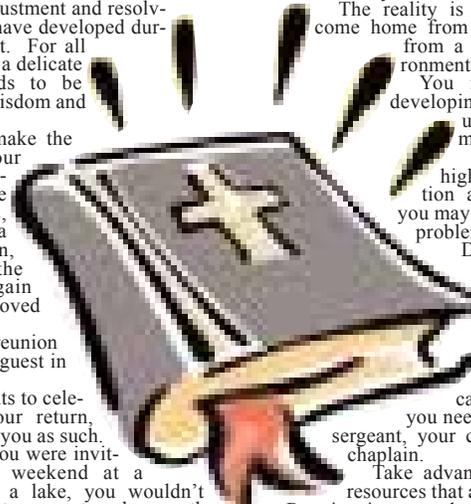
Whatever the case may be, take care of yourself. If you need help, see your first sergeant, your commander, or your chaplain.

Take advantage of the Army's resources that are there to help you.

Reunion is a wonderful time, but it is a delicate process. Apply these guidelines to your reunion and you will experience the joy of once again being with your loved ones.

Keep in mind the wisdom from the Book of James, Chapter 3, verses 17 and 18: But the wisdom from above is pure first of all; it is also peaceful, gentle, and friendly; it is full of compassion and produces a harvest of good deeds; it is free from prejudice and hypocrisy.

And goodness is the harvest that is produced from the seeds the peacemakers plant in peace.



Claims Office Hours

Monday through Saturday

9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Camp Liberty

Legal Services Center

Building C25

Division Chapel Services

Camp Liberty

Friday
7 p.m. Jewish Service

Saturday
10 a.m.: Seventh Day Adventist

Sunday
9 a.m.: Contemporary Protestant

10:30 a.m.: Roman Catholic Mass
1 p.m.: Lutheran

3 p.m.: Gospel Protestant

5 p.m.: Christian non-instrumental
8 p.m.: Collective Protestant

In Memory of ...

- Pfc. Kenneth E. Zeigler, 1/64 Armor
- Sgt. Andrew R. Jodon, 3/69 Armor
- Spc. Steven R. Givens, 1/15 Inf.
- Pfc. Travis W. Anderson, 2/7 Inf.
- Sgt. Charles C. Gillican III, 1/118 FA
- Pfc. Wesley R. Riggs, 2/7 Inf.
- Pfc. Wyatt D. Eisenhower, 2/70 Armor

- Sgt. Robin V. Fell, 1/156 Armor
- Spc. Bernard L. Sembly, 1/156 Armor
- Sgt. Kurt D. Schamberg, 2/14 Inf.
- Sgt. Kenneth J. Schall, 2/70 Armor
- Sgt. 1st Class Peter J. Hahn, 2/156 Inf.
- Sgt. Charles T. Wilkerson, 3rd ACR

Although you are gone you'll never be forgotten.



Let's get ready to rumble



Photos by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Chelsea "Lady Killer" Platter (right), 3/3 ARB, avoids the left hook of Lawann Stone "Cold," during the Taji Fight Night boxing event May 6.

Boxing enthusiasts duke it out at Taji Fight Night

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

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The air was thick with anticipation as music pumped through speakers placed around the ring. Spectators brought out their folding chairs and some sat on top of connex boxes or trucks just to get a better view. The athletes were anxious too—jumping up and down to psych themselves up.

This was the setting when hundreds of Soldiers from Camp Taji gathered together earlier this month to see the action – the blow-for-blow excitement of Camp Taji's Fight Night.

The boxing event paired service members around the camp by gender and weight classes for eight bouts. Each bout consisted of three 2-minute rounds. An event of such proportions doesn't come without a great deal of preparation, both in terms of the event and preparing the boxers.

Two sergeants in 603rd Aviation Support Battalion (ASB) got the bal-

rolling on the event, training boxers and setting up the Camp Taji Fight Night.

"During my last deployment, I would watch the boxing fight night at Camp Udari," said Sgt. David M. Joseph, Headquarters Supply Company (HSC) 603rd Food Service NCO. "When Command Sgt. Maj. Stidley (Aviation Brigade command sergeant major) said he could get us a ring, I knew I wanted to do something similar."

Stidley sought out Joseph, as well as fellow boxing fanatic Staff Sgt. Vernon Williams Jr., HSC 603rd ASB Support Operations Transportation NCOIC, to organize the fight nights since they both are former boxers and had prior experience organizing a boxing event.

"Sgt. Joseph and I wanted to create a program that everyone could enjoy," said Williams, who ran boxing events from 1994 through 1997 while stationed in Haiti. "We wanted to provide a stress relief for both the boxers and the audience. This event was an opportunity to get people out of their rooms, watch competition and bring people together."

Joseph and Williams were the main organizers of the event, but they attribute its success to many people who volunteered their help. The fight night was a non-MWR event, so they had to depend on the volunteerism of fellow Soldiers to make sure the event could occur.

"Safety was our biggest challenge," Joseph said. "We don't want anyone to get hurt, so we couldn't have done this fight night without the help of a medical team to make sure that safety was always in mind. They would check out the fighters before, during and after the match to make sure no one was seriously injured."

Along with medical team, Joseph and Williams depended on volunteers who handled lighting, audio and a disc jockey for the event. They also received sponsorship from AAFES, Burger King, Kodak, Exchange car sales, Sun and Moon trade company and Pizza Hut who helped with prizes and giveaways.

To help train potential boxers and even possibly get more competitors for



Sgt. David M. Joseph (right), Headquarters Supply Company 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, prepares Private 1st Class Carmen Montes for her bout.

future Fight Nights, Joseph and Williams provide boxing training to servicemembers around Camp Taji. Five days a week, Williams and Joseph coach trainees on cardio workouts specific to boxers, and give boxing trainees instruction on how to box.

"The training is open to everyone on post. It's a great opportunity for people who want to get in shape," Williams said. "Whatever your goal is—to lose weight, get in shape, learn how to box or to relieve some stress—we try to provide a program to help people achieve their goals."

Joseph feels that coaching and boxing instruction is his calling. He provided boxing instruction at Hunter Army Airfield prior to deployment. Joseph feels helping others is his greatest motivation.

"I get my energy from them (the trainees), it's what gets me up in the morning," Joseph said. "I show them all I know because I want everyone involved to take something out of it."

Williams felt anxious to see how the event would turn out, but in the end, both Williams and Joseph felt that the first Taji Fight Night was a success.

"I wanted it to all come together, so I

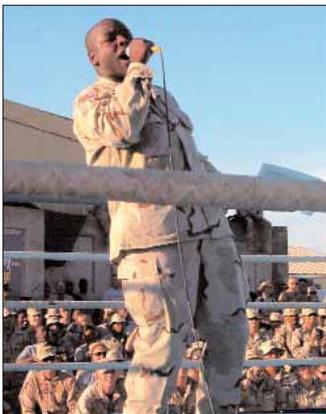
was nervous the night before," Williams said. "But overall it was a huge success, I am 100 percent satisfied. I've gotten a positive response from many people and overall people are really pleased with how it turned out. People come up to me all the time wondering when the next event will be."

Joseph felt the Fight Night was a success as well. He was especially pleased with the performance of the boxers he trained.

"I am proud of every one of those Soldiers I trained that stepped in that ring," Joseph said. "They fought like champions. I want them to go as far as they can. Seeing them in that ring was my biggest satisfaction."

Williams says that the Fight Night is ultimately for service members. To be able to give back to those working hard during the deployment is a great personal accomplishment for him.

"The Fight Night is all about the morale of the Soldiers; it's for everyone who is fulfilling their role to complete the mission," he said. "I feel I have achieved a personal milestone, helping organize this event for the Soldiers on this camp. Seeing all those people in the crowd was such a great feeling of accomplishment."



"Let's get ready to RUMBLE!!" shouts Staff Sgt. Vernon Williams, HSC 603rd ASB, as he introduces the first Camp Taji Fight Night.



In the Movies



George Lucas turns to the 'Dark Side,' rediscovers the Force

Spc. Adam Musil
2nd BCT PAO

In 1999 for over four hours, I sat in the hot Texas sun awaiting for what I thought was going to be the greatest movie event...ever. I wasn't alone. I was in a line filled with an assortment of grown men, children and teenagers who other than this event probably never left their house, all waiting to get tickets to "Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace."

In hindsight, the anticipation was more exciting than the movie. The audience, who grew up with smart-aleck Han Solo, large space battles and weird looking aliens, were now saddled with old men pontificating on intergalactic politics, wooden Jedis, and farting aliens.

Then three years later the second chapter of George Lucas' space odyssey, "Episode II: Attack of the Clones" was released and I thought it was worse.

Based on all of this, I had little hope for "Episode III: Revenge of the Sith." However, after the now-famous opening crawl, something happened in my brain and I felt like a kid again.

From opening space battle to the tragic beginning of Darth

Vader, Revenge moves at a rapid pace. It starts with an opening space battle as Anakin Skywalker and Obi-wan Kenobi, played by Hayden Christensen and Ewan McGregor respectively, are trying to rescue the kidnapped Chancellor Palpatine. Ian McDiarmid from the evil Count Dooku, played by former Dracula, Christopher Lee.

After a dogfight with "buzz droids" that act similar to the robots in the Matrix, the two Jedi's board the ship and needless to say, save the Chancellor.

After returning to a heroes welcome, Anakin is reintroduced to Padme, played by Natalie Portman who is pregnant with twins. The dialogue between Christensen and Portman is brief and not nearly as cringingly bad as in the previous films.

The film then dips back into the political dealings of Menace and Clones, but the scenes are brief and don't take away from the flow of the story.

Next, the film focuses on what I feel makes it work; Anakin's seduction to the Dark Side. After having visions of his wife's death, Anakin is intent on keeping his wife from dying.

At the same time the Jedi are asking Anakin to spy on Chancellor Palpatine while the Chancellor tells Anakin the Jedi

can't be trusted. This is a lot for a twenty something year old to handle.

Playing on Anakin's confusion, the Chancellor promises Anakin he can prevent his wife from dying. This situation climaxes when the Chancellor is revealed to be the Sith Lord the Jedi had been looking for for the past two movies.

After a brief tussle between some Jedi and the Chancellor, Anakin walks in to find Mace Windu, Samuel L. Jackson, about to strike down Palpatine. Anakin is visibly confused and reminds Windu that killing is not the Jedi way. This moment is pivotal and well done.

The fog of war has blurred the lines and the revered Jedi teacher who helped teach Anakin since he was ten years old never to kill is about to kill the Chancellor, the only man who had ever listened to Anakin. Anakin then makes a decision that most in his place probably would.

From this point the movie dovetails into Anakin being crowned Darth Vader and the systematic destruction of the Jedi in a montage reminiscent of the Godfather films.

This of course leads to the final conflict that Star Wars fans had been waiting over twenty years for.

What makes the final battle

of Obi-Wan and Anakin work is not the effects or the sword fight itself, but the build up.

Unlike Clones, here the Anakin and Obi-wan relationship has been established early in the film so by the end you feel bad for both of the Jedi Knights, especially when Obi-Wan blurts out that he loved Anakin and treated him like a brother all while Anakin is lying on the ground burning like a piece of charcoal.

The other highlight of the film is Ian McDiarmid, an English stage actor, who is definitely having fun playing up the villainous Lord of the Sith Darth Sidious.

Revenge of the Sith is not without its faults.

While the bad dialogue isn't as noticeable it still isn't very good. Also, there is an over-reliance on special effects and often times the film looks more like a video game than a blockbuster movie.

However, in the end "Revenge" delivers where the previous two prequels did not.

It's got just enough action, quasi-Shakespearean tragedy and Flash Gordon settings to make for a fun escapist movie and allow the kid in all of us, for the first time in twenty years, to travel back to a galaxy far, far away.

Top 10 Reasons to watch EPISODE III

Created by movie nut
Spc. Ricardo Branch

- 10) That annoying character Jar Jar Binks doesn't speak at all - much to everyone's delight.
- 9) Count Dooku finally gets what he deserves for beating up two Jedi in the last film.
- 8) Darth Sidious might actually do something besides order people around from his "holo-gram thingie."
- 7) Anakin (finally!) transforms from a whiney Jedi to become the evil Sith Lord Darth Vader.
- 6) Those sweet lightsaber duels... nuff said.
- 5) Obi-wan Kenobi actually gets a cool fight scene (the fight with Darth Maul was never that good).
- 4) It's better than watching the latest Harry Potter movie.
- 3) It's only been 30 years in the making!
- 2) You won't have to worry about seeing the movie with someone under the age of 12 because you are in Iraq.
- 1) Natalie Portman is wearing tight clothes in yet another 150 minute movie.

UNDERSTANDING THE ARMY RANK STRUCTURE

General:

Faster than a speeding bullet. More powerful than a locomotive. Leaps tall buildings in a single bound. Walks on water. Lunches with God, but must pick up tab.

Colonel:

Almost as fast as a speeding bullet. More powerful than a shunting engine on a steep incline. Leaps short buildings with a single bound. Walks on water if sea is calm. Talks to God.

Lieutenant Colonel:

Faster than an energetically thrown rock. Almost as powerful as a shunting engine on a steep incline. Leaps short buildings with a running start in favorable winds. Walks on water of indoor swimming pools if lifeguard is present. May be granted audience with God if special request is approved at least three working days in advance.

Major:

Can fire a speeding bullet with tolerable accuracy. Loses tug-of-war against anything mechanical. Makes impressively high marks when trying to leap tall buildings. Swims well. Is occasionally addressed by God, in passing.

Captain:

Can sometimes handle firearm without shooting self. Is run over by trains. Barely clears outhouse. Dog paddles. Mumbles to self.

1st Lieutenant:

Is dangerous to self and comrades if armed and unsupervised. Recognizes trains two out of three times. Runs into tall buildings. Can stay afloat if properly instructed in the use of life jacket and water wings. Talks to walls.

2nd Lieutenant:

Can be trusted with either gun or ammunition, but never

both.

Must have train ticket pinned to jacket and mittens tied to sleeves. Falls over doorsteps while trying to enter tall buildings. Plays in Mud puddles. Stutters.

Academy/OCS/ROTC Cadet:

Under no circumstances to be issued gun or ammunition, and must even be closely supervised when handling sharp pieces of paper - staples are right out. Says: "Look at choo choo!" Not allowed inside buildings of any size. Makes good boat anchor. Mere existence makes God shudder.

The Noncommissioned Officer:

Catches 120mm armor-piercing, fin-stabilized, discarding sabot, depleted uranium long rod penetrators in his teeth, and eats them. Kicks bullet trains off their tracks. Uproots tall buildings and walks under them. Freezes water with a single glance; parts it with trifling gesture... Is God.

Next Week in Entertainment:
1
How to make your Soldiers work harder in 10 easy steps.

2
Step 1: Get a whip...

3
Catch the June 19th issue to learn the rest of the ways.

Last week's answers

F	A	N		B	L	T		P	U	B
U	S	O		R	A	Y		P	O	S
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