



THE TAJI TIMES

Supporting the Rock in Southwest Asia



Vol. 1, Issue 5

Published for the Soldiers and Families in the Division Support Brigade

June 1, 2005



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- Pfc. Darrell W. Gibson, left, stabilizes the victim's neck while Sgt. Roberta H. Minor prepares to open the airway. The two medics with the 547th Area Support Medical Company were taking their Army required Semi-Annual Combat Medic Validation Test here. Refresher instruction prior to the three days of testing had been held twice weekly for 6 weeks.

Inside

Transporter awarded Purple Heart

Pg. 3



Viva Zavala!

Pg. 7



Reenlistments

Pg. 8



Medic testing sharpens skills

By Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Nearly 60 combat medics representing all the medical units here had their life-saving skills challenged during the Semi-Annual Combat Medic Validation Testing May 8-10 here.

The health care providers are required by the U.S. Army to validate their

skills every six month, said Capt. David Hamilton, a physician's assistant with the 550th Area Support Medical Company, Brigade Troops Battalion.

"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 (See Medic Pg. 5)

The Command Corner



Col. Brian R. Layer
Commander

Stories I Tell Friends

Back in the states, Memorial Day kicks off the summer season and begins a series of celebrations honoring our veterans—standing and fallen—and the significant contribution they've made to our American experience. It is followed by the Army's birthday and Flag Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day.

On each of these days in small towns and large cities; in city halls and town squares; in churches, mosques, and synagogues; and in parks and cemeteries thankful Americans gather for small ceremonies that honor the sacrifices of common citizens who chose to spend part of their lives as soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and to say thanks for the liberty and freedoms they enjoy.

These simple ceremonies are one of the few opportunities our fellow countrymen have to say thanks to people they've never met for their sacrifices. This year, and for all the years that follow, those celebrations will honor each of you.

I see the hard work you do. I hear about the significant life events you miss. I know the sacrifices you make. When you stand your post in the heat, or bravely drive through the dangerous streets, or treat the wounded, or comfort your friend, you do your duty in the name of over 295 million Americans who trust you with their future.

I'm proud of the way you do your duty and Americans everywhere are justifiably proud of the way you represent them here and around the world. So this year, on those holidays, when my mind's eye focuses on the heroes who have secured our freedom, I'll be seeing an image of you.

Thank you for your service and sacrifice. God bless you and God Bless America.



Command Sgt. Maj. Edward T. Brooks
Brigade Sergeant Major

They Deliver

Recently my travels took me to Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah where the 26th Forward Support Battalion provides support for the Spartan Brigade. After the tour of the units and speaking with Soldiers, I found that mail had a direct impact on the morale of Soldiers there. Mail and packages put smiles on Soldier's faces when they come back from conducting Combat Logistic Patrols, finish a shift of escort or guard duty, or just after a long, hard-days work. The military missions seemed all worthwhile when they received mail. I took the time to meet the soldiers of the 3rd Platoon, 729th Postal Company, which is attached to the 3rd Soldier Support Battalion. The company's 18 Soldiers provide support to Butler Range Complex, as well as FOBs Loyalty, Hope and Rustamiyah. When I first entered the post office, I met Spc. Cropeza at the processing station. He has the responsibility of providing Soldiers with postal services that include nearly everything except express mail. Priority mail takes 10-14 days to reach the states. Out going packages are always welcome provided they pass a close inspection performed by Cropeza. After your package or mail, passes inspection and has a proper label, the individual move to the finance counter where Spc. Anita Xayasanapannha weighs your packages and determines how much postage you need to pay. The packages are placed in mail bags according to the location of the nearest hub such as Miami or New York. Letters are placed in letter trays according to Army Post Office numbers, packed and mailed off by Sgt. Silvia Brava and Spc. Bijan Mazarji, who are responsible for distribution and processing. Before I left, I also met Staff Sgt. Jones, the postal supervisor. He proudly stated he supervised the best 18 Soldiers deployed in theater. Jones

(See Postal , Pg. 3)

Ask not what your teammates can do for you.

Ask what you can do for your teammates.

— Magic Johnson

The Taji Times is published bi-weekly in the interest of the service members and their families of the Division Support Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division (Mech.).

The Taji Times is an Army funded newsletter authorized for the members of the U. S. Army, under the provision of AR360-1.

The views in *The Taji Times* are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U. S. Government, Department of Defense or Department of the Army.

DSB Commander
Col. Brian R. Layer

DSB Executive Officer
Lt. Col. Nathaniel R. Glover

DSB Public Affairs Officer
Capt. Davie L. Wright

Editor/Staff Writer, *The Taji Times*
Sgt. 1st Class Peter J. Chadwick

Postal, continued from Pg. 2

said his postal Soldiers actually look forward to the daily container, as big as semi trailers, nearly filled to the top with mail and packages. They don't look for praise. It makes them happy just to take mail to FOBs they support. Jones said they have a feel good job. However, the Soldiers would make only one change. They would love to get into a bigger building capable of accommodating the large volume of mail and packages expected during upcoming holidays. I give my personal thanks to the Soldiers of the 3rd Platoon, 729th Postal Company, for a great job and caring attitudes. Keep up the good work.

Heart of the Rock!

Transporter awarded Purple Heart

By Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick
Division Support Brigade PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – A Soldier with the Division Support Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, was awarded the Military Order of the Purple Heart May 17 soon after he was injured in a bomb attack.

Sgt. Anthony Johnson, a wheeled vehicle operator with the 396th Transportation Company, 87th Corps Support Battalion, DSB, was wounded about two miles from Camp Taji's Castle Gate when his convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device, said Capt. Nadine A. Terese, commander of the 396th.

Johnson was the truck commander for a Palletized Loading System vehicle driven by Spc. Theodore Body. Johnson noticed something on the road ahead which "didn't look right," said 1st. Sgt. Felton L. Head, the 396th's first sergeant. Johnson took up his position in the ring mount on the truck's roof and manned the 50-caliber machine gun. When the IED exploded, Johnson was protected by the large metal shield that wraps around the gunner's position. He was hit by shrapnel in his right hand, which was ex-

posed, said Head. Johnson slipped down into the truck and noticed that in addition to his bleeding hand, he had pain in his back, said Head. Johnson told Body what was happening and Body called 1st Lt. John T. Bowmen on the radio to report the injury. Bowmen, the convoy commander, reported the incident to the gate so they would be ready for them when they arrived, said Head. Head said the commander's vehicle and Johnson's PLS went straight to the troop medical clinic operated by the 550th Area Support Medical Company. Lt. Col. Shawn M. Morrissey, DSB's deputy commander, said the command heard the report while in the Tactical Operation Center. Col. Brian R. Layer, the DSB commander, asked if the medics could hold Johnson for a moment before medically evacuating him to the 86th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad. Layer pinned the medal on Johnson at the ambulance bay.



Photo by Staff Sergeant Karla V. Tapia
Sgt. Anthony Johnson, center, 396th Transportation Company, is awarded the Purple Heart by Col. Brian R. Layer, DSB commander, as Spc. Theodore Body looks on. The medal was presented to Johnson by Layer prior to being evacuated.

VEHICLE SAFETY

- **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.



Baby Parade

Congratulations to the new parents in the Heart of the Rock!

If you have had a new arrival since coming to Camp Taji, contact Sgt. 1st Class Chadwick at: peter.chadwick@us.army.mil Don't forget the photo and vital statistics



Kyleigh Arianna-Olivia Marlowe
April 12 — 6 pounds, 12.5 ounces



Parker Thomas Smith
May 17— 6 pounds, 12 ounces



Madison Elaine Cook
March 8, 7 pounds, 5 ounces



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Andrea L. Cassells

Spc. Sudie Crawford, Command Information Center, Division Support Brigade, was selected as the first Soldier of the Week. She was recommended by her supervisor, Sgt. 1st Class Andrea L. Cassells. The Soldier of the Week is an initiative of the Brigade Troops Battalion to encourage leaders to recommend the excellence in task performance by their Soldiers while deployed here. To recommend your Soldier for this honor, contact your platoon sergeant.



Taji Medical Society meets — Lt. Col. Robert A. Puntel, a general medical officer with the 547th Area Support Medical Company, 261st Task Force, presents the medical challenges regarding a local nine-year-old child's heart defect to the Taji Medical Society, here. The pediatric cardiologist from Fort Lewis, Washington is part of the camps monthly meeting used as an opportunity for the U.S. and Iraqi military doctors, as well as a Camp Taji contract doctor, to share knowledge to improve their perspective community's health care.

Medic, continued from Pg. 1

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.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

Pfc. Darrell W. Gibson, left, and Sgt. Roberta H. Minor, right, work together to treat a nerve agent victim in Nuclear, Biological and Chemical environment scenario during their Army required Semi-Annual Combat Medic Validation Test here. The two medics with the 547th Area Support Medical Company took refresher instruction, held twice weekly for 6 weeks, prior to the three days of testing.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

Sgt. Michael L. Faux, a health care specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, performs CPR as part of his Army required Semi-Annual Combat Medic Validation Test here. The Springville, Utah, native took refresher instruction, held twice weekly for 6 weeks, prior to the three days of 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 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 test.

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.

Equal Opportunity Focus



by SFC Tanya Toussaint
Division Support Brigade
Equal Opportunity Advisor
Bldg 543/242-6106

**Equal Opportunity...
the Heart of Readiness!**

Asian Pacific Heritage Celebration is huge success

I want to thank all the participants in the Camp Taji Asian Pacific Heritage Celebration held on May 14. It was gratifying to see a packed house at the MWR Theater for our own Camp Taji Freedom Dancers, Imelda Young, an AAFES employee here who sang a traditional Phillipino song and our special guests, the Halau Hula O’Lava Dancers from neighboring Anaconda. A special thanks goes out to Maj. Leafaina Yahn, Support Operations Officer for the 603rd Aviation Support Battalion for sharing her thoughts as our guest speaker, to SFC Kathy Robinson, 46th CSG EOA, and SFC Telva Reid, 3 BDE, 1AD EOR for their assistance in making this program successful.

Upcoming Equal Opportunity observances

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| August 26 th | Women’s Equality Day |
| Sep 15–Oct 15 | Hispanic Heritage Month |
| November | Native American Heritage |



(Above) - Sgt. 1st Class Rudy Akina (left) plays the ukulele and Spc. Kuioalani Gapero plays guitar during the Asian Pacific Heritage Celebration here. Both Soldiers are members of Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 29th Brigade Combat Team, Hawaii National Guard, stationed at Anaconda. (Below)- Dancers and audience members groove to Hawaiian music during the celebration’s grand finale.



Division Support Brigade dress on Camp Taji

Yes

- Full Desert Camouflage uniform, no brown T-shirt and DCU Bottoms.
- The Army PT uniform, long or short sleeve shirt, with shower shoes or tennis shoes and socks

No

- Civilian clothes or mixed uniform
- Bathrobes or pajamas
- Army PT uniform with the shirt tail untucked.



Health Tips

*PREVENTIVE MEDICINE
'CONSERVING THE FORCE
FIGHTING STRENGTH'*

By Maj. Robert J. Newsom
Division Preventive Medicine Physician

Patrol Cap Head

We have all seen them in the DFAC, that chrome dome with a tan line around their skull.

If you have a tan line around your head, that means you are not pro-

tecting you face ears and neck from the sun. The boonie cap is the only head-gear that will protect all the aforementioned body parts from sunburn.

Worn properly the boonie cap is the perfect Army answer to the intense desert sun. Some Soldiers may still notice "tanning" at the base of the neck, if this happens to you go to your unit supply and get some sunscreen.

Units are responsible for providing their Soldiers with all the PPE (personal protective equipment) they need to keep themselves healthy in the field. PPE also includes lip balm with SPF, foot powder, ear plugs, DEET,

permethrin for uniform treatment and alcohol hand sanitizer.

For all those Soldiers out there pounding the pavement and patrolling the streets keeping the cities safe for the rest of us, you need to be using sunscreen as part of your mission prep.

The Kevlar helmet does a great job at stopping bullets and shrapnel, but it does fall a little short when it comes to keeping the sun off a Warrior's face and neck.

If you see a comrade with raccoon eyes, remind him this is not Aspen, he needs to put on sunscreen to protect his face from sun damage.



VIVA Zavala! Spc. Anthony J. Zavala, a stock control clerk with the Division Ammunition Office, Support Operations, DSB, won his first fight here May 15. Zavala, in the red head gear, trained as young teen at the Southside Community Center in his home town of Boston, Mass. , but this was his first official fight. Zavala is managed by Sgt. 1st Class Richard M. Glenn, an ammunition sergeant with DAO and a former boxer himself. The 5'6", 163 pound Zavala fights in the Super Middleweight class and goes by the ring name of Kujo, a name earned in his early years at the center for his initial mad dog style. His supervisor, Sgt. Richard E. Mantooth, wasn't sure if it was a good idea for Zavala to box at first. But he was reassured by the cautious steps taken by the Taji Boxing staff.

Photos by Spc. Derek Del Rosario



Taji Times Ask : What does Memorial Day mean to you?



Gunnery Sgt. Keith A. Davis
23rd Btn. 6th BDE

Memorial Day to me is a day to remember those who have fallen, particularly my father who served in WWII. Usually we take the time to go visit with him at the cemetery, to spend some time with him and also to remember all fallen soldiers.



Spc. James Sayer
Delta Company, 1st Battalion,
Aviation Brigade

Memorial Day is a family gathering with bar-b-cue and beer. We like to go to the beach and just enjoy some family time. We don't get to see each other that often, I'll get on the internet and e-mail family and try to make a telephone call or two.



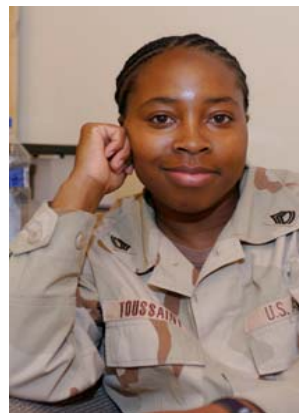
Spc. Christopher Bowman
HHC 125th FSB

Memorial Day is special for me because I reflect on the sacrifices my family has made. My family is full of veterans from my great grandfather in WW I, my grandfather, who was a sniper in WW II, and my father who served in Viet Nam. I'll honor them.



Spc. Christian Barnachea
594th Transportation Co.
101st Airborne

For me, Memorial Day is all about remembering all the soldiers who have given their lives before us. We are here now doing our part. We honor what they did by doing the best we can while we are here.



Sergeant 1st Class Tanya
Toussaint
Division Support Brigade
Equal Opportunity Advisor

This Memorial Day, I will take the time to reflect on what freedom means to me. I will let my family and fellow soldiers know how much they mean to me for their continued sacrifices.

Reenlistments

632nd Maintenance Company (DS)

- Staff Sgt. Gregory Hamilton
- Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Fort
- Spc. Jason Wamba
- Spc. Thomas Hinks
- Sgt. Richard Bonea
- Sgt. Robin Williams
- Sgt. James Collins
- Staff Sgt. Keith Bacon
- Staff Sgt. Glenn Bass
- Sgt. Tryone Hill
- Spc. Jesus Ninete
- Staff Sgt. Eric Rusher
- Spc. Edmund Byczkoski
- Sgt. Jarvis Payton
- Sgt. Lilly Dillion
- Sgt. Darrel Owens

92nd Chem Co

- Sgt. Dale S. Lahmeyer

HSC, 92nd Engineer Combat Battalion

- Staff Sgt. Cathy A. Cooper
- Sgt. Willie V. Coleman

A Co, 92nd Engineer Combat Battalion

- Spc. Witaifa S. Harrison
- Sgt. Emmanuel J. Constant
- Spc. Michael L. Bates

B Co, 92nd Engineer Combat Battalion

- Spc. Jack B. Swaby, III

C Co 365th Reserve unit

- Staff Sgt. Power

Send the Taji Times Home

From:

FREE
MAIL

To: