

# The Warrior

March 2005



انا هنا. ارسلني



## FOCUS ON THE PEOPLE

**3-15 Inf. spearhead the brigade's humanitarian mission with 'Operation Happy Feet'**

1-9 conducts TCPs

'Garry Owen' trains Iraqi army

In Memoriam

# Contents

*The Warrior March 2005 Volume 2, Number 2*

---

## Cover Story

10



### Focus on the people -

'Can do' soldiers and others from the Spartan Brigade Combat Team dive head first into humanitarian assistance missions, including Operation Happy Feet

On the cover: 1st Sgt. Donald Rangel, B Co., 3-15 Inf., directs a soldier where to put a bag filled with shoes during Operation Happy Feet Feb. 28. Photo by Spc. Ben Brody

---

## Features

4 **Down the drain** - Spartans and 1st BCT, 1st Cav., join the people of Kamiliya to mark the construction of the city's first sewer system

6



### This is Spartan Country -

1st BCT, 1st Cav., transfer authority of U.S. military operations in Eastern Baghdad to 2nd BCT

8

**3-7 Cav. shows the way** - 'Garry Owen' take troops from the new 305th Iraqi Army Bn. under their wing



14



### Battlekings set up TCPs -

1-9 FA patrol the streets of Southeast Baghdad, setting up traffic control points in a continuous effort to thwart insurgent activities

---

## Field Report

16 **3-15 Inf. trains Iraqis** - New Iraqi army's 306th Bn. learn from battle-tested troops

**3-7 Cav. situation report** - Strides being made in infrastructure improvements





---

**Monthly**

2	Spartan 6	18	It's your money Take Motrin, Drink Water
3	Shots from the field	19	From the chaplain JAG says...
17	Contributors	20	News



### Spartan Warriors,

We are in Iraq during a historic time. It is a time of change, which is not new to this brigade. In 2003, this Team played a key role in freeing the Iraqi people from the tyranny of Saddam's regime. Now we are here again, and our ultimate goal is to hand the country back to its people. It will take a lot of work, but I know we are on the right path to accomplish this goal.

In last month's Warrior, I mentioned that none of us are here to mark time until the deployment ends. It is not that kind of war. Success will not come by biding our time until we safely return to Fort Stewart. Our success will be measured by our deeds and how well we prepare the Iraqi people, their government and the Iraqi Army for self reliance. Our mission is not to win for the Iraqis, it is to guide the Iraqis to being able to win for themselves.

Yes, the task is daunting, but our efforts are already yielding positive results. Ongoing civil programs are rebuilding the sewers and providing for more electrical generation. Water treatment and trash disposal projects are also making great progress. If the Iraqi people are patient, these programs will continue to advance and they will all reap the rewards of progress.

Just as the civil works programs are moving forward, the Iraqi Army is training, organizing and building so they can provide security for the Iraqi people. Our role is to help the Iraqi Army become a more proficient force. We are providing military assistance teams to local Iraqi Army battalions, working hard to train them. These Iraqi units will require time to acquire equipment and tactical competency. Fortunately, we are already seeing motivated, dedicated, and courageous Iraqi Soldiers eager to contribute.

As we do this, we will build on the accomplishments of 1st BCT, 1st Cavalry Division. Our over-lap

program with 1st BCT, 1<sup>st</sup> Cav. Div., gave us a good vision for how operations in this sector are conducted. We have been set up with a superb foundation; our challenge will be to take it to a higher level. The Spartan goal is no need for a follow on Brigade once we are done.

In this fight for freedom, we are all prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice; we face this day in and day out, on and off the FOB. Most recently, we lost Spc. Danny Anderson, a Challenger who fought with Battlekings. He was a Spartan Warrior, but he was also a husband and a father. I ask you all to keep his family in your prayers. It is our solemn duty as Spartan Warriors to honor Spc. Anderson's legacy by performing our mission to the best of our ability.

Back home the family readiness groups are ready to assist any family member that is in need. The danger we face is real and the families live with that stress. I know many of your family members are involved in the FRG and I appreciate their service. If your family is not involved it does not mean that they're not welcome. The door to the FRG system is always open, and those who have not stepped through, should at least peek inside and see what the FRG has to offer. The more active spouses are in their FRG, the better access they have to official information.

The zone is ours now, no more right seat or left seat rides. I am proud to be part of the Spartan Warrior ranks as we dedicate our efforts to making a difference in Eastern Baghdad.

God bless you all.

Col. Joseph DiSalvo

Rock of the Marne  
Send Me!



### *The Warrior* The official magazine of the Spartan Brigade Combat Team and its Soldiers

*The Warrior* is a monthly magazine published in the interest of the servicemembers of the 3rd Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team. *The Warrior* is an Army-funded magazine authorized for members of the U.S. Army under the provision of AR 360-1.

Contents of *The Warrior* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense or Department of the Army.

2nd Bde. Commander  
Col. Joseph DiSalvo

2nd Bde. Command Sgt. Maj.  
Command Sgt. Maj. Gabriel Berhane

2nd Bde. PAO  
Maj. Russell Goemaere

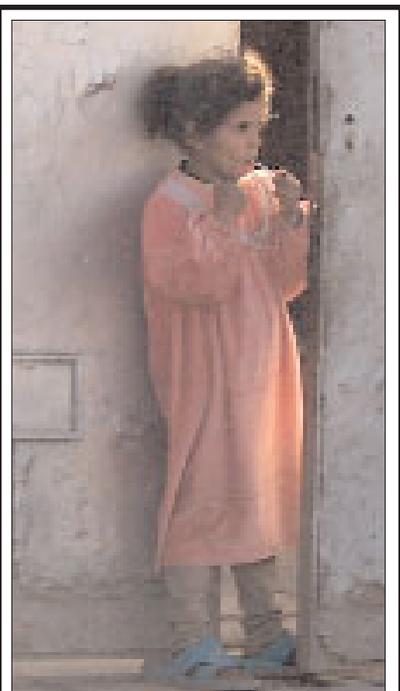
Editor, *The Warrior*  
Staff Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

Staff Writer  
Spc. Ben Brody

# ATTENTION!

“Shots from the field” is always looking for photos taken by Spartan Brigade Combat Team Soldiers serving in Iraq. If you have a good photo, and we have room, we’ll print it. Email your photos via AKO to: [craig.zentkovich@us.army.mil](mailto:craig.zentkovich@us.army.mil), Subject: Shots from the field. Be sure to include your rank, name, and unit as well as a caption for the photograph that includes the subject of the photograph with names and dates. I look forward to receiving your shots.

**Staff Sgt. Craig Zentkovich**  
Editor, *The Warrior*



Maj. Russ Goemaere

**A young girl in Sadr City enjoys a lollipop.**



Sgt. Maj. Carl Johnson

**Division TOA ceremony in Baghdad.**



Maj. Russ Goemaere

**A kid in Baghdad gives two thumbs up for U.S.**



Capt. Eric Gilge

**An elevated shot of Baghdad shows a mosque and a church side by side.**



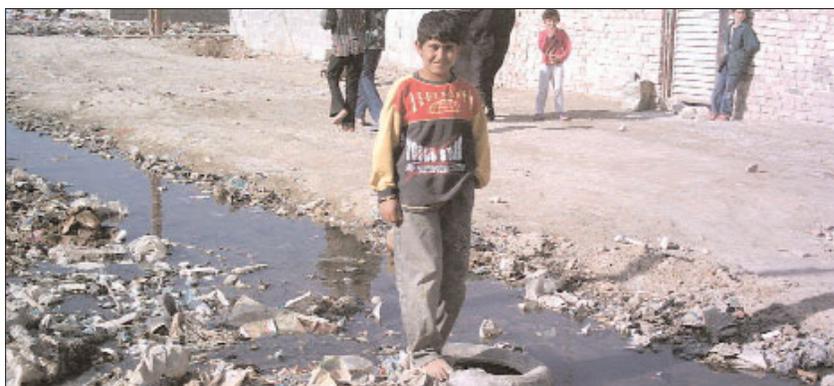
Sgt. Maj. Carl Johnson

**Cross sabers in Baghdad.**



Capt. Eric Gilge

**The Iraqi colors over Camp Hope.**



Capt. Cynthia Brownrigg

**A child in a Baghdad neighborhood walks down a sewage-laden street.**

# Groundbreaki in Kamiliya

Spartans and Ironhorse Bde., 1st Cav., join  
local Iraqis to kick off sewer system project

Story and photos by Spc. Ben Brody



**Col. Robert Abrams, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div., commander, speaks with Col. Joseph DiSalvo, 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., commander, during a groundbreaking ceremony for a sewage improvement project in Kamaliya.**

BAGHDAD – Residents of Kamiliya, in Northeastern Baghdad, broke ground on a new sewer system project, with the help of Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, and 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

The pipes being laid will link between 2,500 and 3,000 Kamiliya homes to running water and sewer lines.

Currently, the neighborhood's 17,000 homes dump their sewage into the street.

"The sewer main will eliminate a number of problems in the neighborhood, like garbage in the street and contaminated rain runoff," said Capt. Calvin Kroeger, task force engineer for 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry.

"Kamiliya has never had water or sewer lines. It's a huge step for them."

Kroeger, from Clovis, N.M., estimates the project will take about a year to complete.

Iraqi workers dressed in coveralls, carrying shovels, symbolically began digging the new system, as neighborhood children played among the Soldiers, asking for candy and chocolate.

"We're in the middle of a 'right-seat ride' with 1st Cavalry, learning the area and building our repore with the locals," said Lt. Col. Kevin Farrell, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor, commander. "This is a massive, \$32 million sewage improvement project that the village sorely needs."



# ng



The project is funded by the Iraqi government and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and will be completed by local workers, according to Lt. Col. Tim Meredith, 1-12 Cav, commander.

“We’ve got an Iraqi contractor handling the hiring and labor,” Meredith said.

“The ditches full of sewage will be cleaned, and Kamiliya will be a nicer place to live when the project gets rolling,” he concluded.

As the Army contingency left the village, Soldiers from 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion, a Rhode Island Army Reserve unit, threw key chains down to delighted children.



**Workers in Kamiliya dig into their sewage-strewn streets as part of the groundbreaking for a new sewer system Jan. 13. The project is being funded by the Iraqi government and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.**

# *This is Spartan Country*

## 2nd BCT takes over military operations in Eastern Baghdad from 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div.

Story and photos by Spc. Ben Brody

CAMP LOYALTY, Iraq – The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, took charge of Eastern Baghdad, the area previously secured by Ironhorse Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, this month after a transition period of about two weeks.

During the time the two units spent together, the Ironhorse Soldiers shared much of their knowledge and

experience, gained throughout their 13-month deployment, with the Spartans. Spartans participated in “right-seat rides” with Ironhorse, having noncommissioned officers and officers go on missions to observe and learn the area they are now responsible for.

“Without a doubt, the week of right-seat rides with 1st Cav. was the best training we’ve received so far,” said 1st Lt. Emory Hayes, A Battery, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, platoon leader. “We learned a lot about the different people here, and the differences between people in Mosul, Fallujah and Baghdad.

“The training at (the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La.) was good, but the right-seat rides were better,” added Hayes, who is from Ellijay, Ga.

Many of 1st Cav.’s vehicles will remain in Iraq for 3rd Inf. Div. to use. Spartans also received side and shoulder protectors for their body armor from Ironhorse Brigade.

“The 1st Cav. guys showed us a lot of things to watch out for that I hadn’t seen before,” said Sgt. Anthony Brown, also of A Btry., and a Pittsburgh, Pa., native. “I was here the first time, and I learned a lot, but new threats have emerged since 3rd ID left. (Improvised explosive

devices) are the big threat now, but they weren’t common during the invasion.”

Although the gates are also manned by experienced local nationals, Soldiers on gate guard learned from departing 1st Cav. guards.

“We got a lot of great knowledge during the right-seat ride,” said Sgt. 1st Class Chad Ullery, gatemaster at Camp Loyalty. “We met all the local nationals we work with now – they are extremely thorough in everything they do, and the swap (of units) went without any problems.

“Our guys were able to roll right in behind (1st Cav.) like it was nothing,” added the Falkville, Ala., native.

“Basically, we’re in charge of all of Baghdad east of the Tigris River, which is a challenging area – an impoverished area that was ignored by the Hussein regime,” said Col. Joseph DiSalvo, 2nd BCT, commander. “Building the people’s confidence that we want to help them is one of our chief missions here.”

DiSalvo said he is confident that Spartan BCT will continue to build on the successes of the Ironhorse BCT.

“People here are very encouraged by what happened with the elections – they’re riding a wave of momen-



**Col Joseph DiSalvo, 2nd BCT, commander, assesses an Iraqi engineering project.**

# ntry



tum,” DiSalvo said. “It gives them confidence that the Iraqi government is taking control and will act responsibly for their future.”

He said 2nd BCT will continue to work with Iraqi security forces to provide safe neighborhoods and roads, which will result in a stable, secure country.

“I see Iraqi people taking more control over dealing with the insurgency instead of solely relying on coalition forces,” DiSalvo said. “The

first time we were here, our primary focus was on defeating the enemy, now we’re just as focused on rebuilding the country and also helping defeat the insurgency.

“Our Soldiers are doing a great job,” he added. “It’s dangerous, but we have Soldiers acting responsibly, leaders doing what they need to be doing. Families back home should be very proud of the Spartan Brigade Combat Team warriors and how they’re executing their mission.”



(Top right) Spc. Joel De Leon, A Btry., 1-9 FA, fire direction coordinator, attaches the barrel of a .50 caliber machine gun before leaving on a patrol from Camp Loyalty, Iraq, Feb. 27.

(Above) Spc. Richard Chase, B Co., 3-15 Inf., medic, guards the entrance of the Marakah al-Taf elementary school in Sadr City, Iraq.

(Left) Command Sgt. Maj. Tony Smith, 1-9 FA, command sergeant major, puts the finishing touches on the unit crest outside the battalion headquarters.





Iraqi Army soldiers from 305th IAB wave as they prepare for a security patrol at Camp Volunteer, Iraq, Feb. 22.

# 'Garry Owen' trains new Iraqi army troops

Story and photos by Spc. Ben Brody

CAMP VOLUNTEER, Iraq – As the new Iraqi government continues to develop, the fledgling Iraqi Army is beginning to hold its own and take increasing responsibility for securing the country, with the support of U.S. troops.

Soldiers from 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, are helping to train the 305th Iraqi Army Battalion, on areas ranging from basic soldier skills to effective leadership.

The soldiers of the 305th are stationed at Camp Volunteer, in Baghdad, and are responsible for securing the peace in two sectors of the city.

"We're focusing on basic combat and patrolling skills for junior Iraqi soldiers, and helping develop (noncommissioned officers) and junior officers into good leaders," said Capt. James Turner, A Troop, 3-7 Cav., commander. "Iraqi soldiers are like any other Soldiers – they do very well under good leadership."

Previous coalition units have taught these IA troops how to first function as a platoon, then as a company. Now, 3-7 will oversee the 305th learning how to react as a battalion.

"I don't foresee any major obstacles, beyond the normal

hiccups when you integrate two different units," Turner, a North Branch, Mich., native, said. "The best thing at this stage is watching the Iraqi soldiers really internalize the training and the mindset that they are fighting for the good of their country."

Language barriers slow the training down, but 3-7 has interpreters and some Iraqi soldiers speak very good English. One such individual is 1st Lt. Yarub al-Taweed, 305th IAB, security platoon leader.

"Our unit has come a long way over the past year – and our responsibilities have increased accordingly," al-Taweed said. "When we formed the unit, we didn't have vehicles or armor, and now we've got (body) armor with plates, trucks and heavy weapons. We've had a lot of success on patrols because of our training, but mostly because we know the areas, we know the people and speak the language."

He said the success of the recent elections has raised public opinion of the IA considerably.

"Different people have different views of us, but before the elections, we were not very popular with Iraqis," al-Taweed



**Staff Sgt. Mark Scott, 3-7 Cav., inspects an Iraqi Army soldier's rifle (above) with the soldier's platoon sergeant and later instructs an Iraqi Army soldier (right) on how to properly inspect his vehicle at Camp Volunteer, Iraq, Feb. 22.**

said. "The elections gave us a chance to prove that we can protect people and want a secure Iraq. Now we are enjoying some more support. What they will think tomorrow, I don't know."

The young officer said he hopes to eventually see the cities secured by police, and the Iraqi Army defending the country's long, porous border.

"People can see we are working hard," he said. "If you are good and fair to the people, they will be good and fair to you." As a small assembly of IA troops prepared to leave Volunteer for a security patrol, Staff Sgt. Mark Scott, A Troop, 3-7 Cav., helped them check their weapons and vehicles.

Scott, along with the soldiers' platoon sergeant, inspected the pickup trucks' fluid levels and condition. The two made sure the drivers knew how to perform preventive maintenance checks and services to Army standard.

"Your mission is a patrol, but before you can accomplish that, your mission is to make sure everyone is ready," Smith told the NCO through an interpreter. "Make your soldiers do the right thing and eventually they'll do it on their own."

Scott, a sniper section NCO from Syracuse, N.Y., has spent time teaching IA leaders to utilize army rank structure to their advantage.

"What we saw was the officers trying to micromanage everything down to the individual soldiers," Scott said. "I told them, 'let your first sergeant manage the company's soldiers, let a platoon sergeant handle his platoon, let the squad leaders take care of their squads.' Now the commander sets company policy, and the first sergeant enforces it, which works much better.

"There are some promising leaders in the 305th that really believe in what they're doing," he added. "I've got a first sergeant, who goes by the nickname 'Wolf,' who keeps his troops in line like no other. You can just tell by looking at him – he's the man."

Scott and others from 3-7 will continue to work with the 305th throughout the year, and further refine the battalion's capabilities.

Hopeful for the future of Iraq, al-Taweed said he thinks the terrorists he fights will gradually disappear as people find jobs and can enjoy their freedoms.



**An Iraqi Army platoon sergeant conducts an in-ranks inspection of a soldier's AK-47 rifle before heading out on a security patrol Feb. 22.**

A young girl wearing a light-colored patterned hijab and a matching top looks up with a hopeful expression at a soldier in full camouflage gear. The soldier is holding a baby wrapped in a white blanket. The scene is set in a doorway or a narrow hallway with a textured wall.

# *'Can Do' help*

# *the people of* *Sadr City*

Story and photos by Spc. Ben Brody

BAGHDAD – A week after assuming responsibility of what was once a hotbed of insurgent activity, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry, completed two humanitarian aid missions in the section of Baghdad known as Sadr City.

## Operation Happy Feet

Operation Happy Feet brought smiles to children of Sadr City as Soldiers of B Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry, distributed sneakers at Marakah al-Taf elementary school Feb. 28.

Working in conjunction with Civil Affairs, Soldiers purchased 500 pairs of shoes from a local vendor to give out at the northeastern Baghdad school, according to Capt. Timothy Terese, B Co., 3-15 Inf., commander.

“We go around to lots of schools in the area, basically every day, to make sure they have the proper equipment to function,” said 1st Lt. Jason Rocks, B Co., fire support officer and effects coordinator. “Blackboards, pencils, paper – we check that they are able to function on a day-to-day basis.”

Rocks, of Puyallup, Wash., said the missions help foster support for coalition forces in an area once considered firmly under insurgent control.

“Right now, (Operation Happy Feet is) immediate gratification,” Rocks said. “But everything we do for them

helps them and their families realize that the Iraqi government and coalition forces care about the Iraqi people.”

In addition to the company of ‘Can Do’ infantrymen present, a squad of Iraqi Army soldiers helped provide security and translations during the visit.

The school is coeducational, meaning girls have class in the morning and boys in the afternoon.

“We’re trying to get the kids of Sadr City some new shoes, and hand out copies of *Baghdad Kids*,” said Spc. Brandon Wise, 307th PSYOP Company, Team 1033, a Missouri Reserve unit. “It’s a fun magazine for kids – it’s got stuff about dinosaurs, outer space, the Olympics – things kids like.

“It’s got some important safety and hygiene messages too, like ‘remember to brush your teeth’ and ‘don’t point toy guns at Soldiers.’”

Wise, of Greenville, Ill., and Staff Sgt. Travis C. Butler, also from the 307th, handed out bags of school supplies, coloring books and issues of *Baghdad Kids*.

“It’s really important for us to make a good impression on these kids before they grow up,” Butler, of St. Clair, Mo., said. “The kids are the future of Iraq, and fostering a better relationship now will make for better relationships later.”

The morning’s classes of girls lined up to get their shoe size measured, and receive the white and blue tennis shoes. The girls quietly giggled as Soldiers passed the shoes forward to Chaplain (Capt.) Steven Hommel, 3-15 Inf., chap-



lain, who handed them out. Several Soldiers remarked at how well-behaved the girls were.

“The American school kids back in the states don’t realize how lucky they are, when you look at someplace like Iraq,” said 1st Sgt. Donald Rangel, B Co., 3-15 Inf., first sergeant. “We passed out these shoes just so the kids here can get from home to school without hurting themselves.”

“It makes me feel good to do this for the kids here,” he continued. “I’ve got six kids of my own, three of them in elementary school.”

The Soldiers distributed about half of the 500 pairs of shoes to the girls, and gave the rest to the school’s boys later in the week.

“This is one of many missions we have – providing aid to Sadr City residents,” Terese said. “We come out here every day. We’re also working

right now to get a functional sewage system installed in the neighborhood, which will make for a much safer neighborhood for these kids to grow up in.”

### Spartan docs visit hospital

Spartan Brigade Combat Team surgeon, Capt. Robert Meadows, along with Soldiers from C Co., 3-15 Inf., visited an obstetrics hospital in Sadr City, Iraq, to assess its condition March 3.

The 255-bed Habibiya OB/GYN Hospital delivers approximately 60 babies a day, and has a very low infant mortality rate, according to hospital administrator Sahi Abaob al-Maliki.

The hospital, equipped with many necessary pieces of equipment, is working out some kinks.

“We have two anesthetic machines, but we can’t use them because the Ministry of Health hasn’t authorized us to,” al-Maliki said to Meadows during a conference.

“We are also waiting on training to use some of the machines,” he continued. “Still, the hospital functions better now than it did under Saddam.”



Coalition forces delivered the two anesthetic machines to the hospital in November, and while they have seen some use, they are currently in a storage room. This is one of the problems Meadows said he is hoping to fix.

“The hospital is clean and functional, and they have doctors in the specialty areas that they need,” Meadows,



(Left) Chaplain (Capt.) Steven Hommel, 3-15 Inf., chaplain, hands a pair of sneakers at Marakah al-Taf elementary school in Sadr City, Iraq, Feb. 28. (Above) Students sneakers being distributed by B Co., 3-15 Inf. Soldiers from the unit gave out



(Left) Capt. Robert "Doc" Meadows, 2nd BCT surgeon, speaks with doctors at Habibiya OB/GYN Hospital in Sadr City, Iraq, March 3. (Above) Staff Sgt. Travis C. Butler, 307th PSYOP Co., hands out copies of *Baghdad Kids*, a children's magazine, at Marakah al-Taf elementary school in Sadr City, Iraq Feb. 28.

from Brooklyn, N.Y., said. "We have some technology issues to iron out. I know I'm dating myself saying this, but a lot of the machines are about 20 years old."

The hospital has four OB/GYN clinics, a male impotency clinic and a small dental clinic. It has a staff of about 450 people, and charges 500 dinar per visit,

about 50 cents. It is located in south-east Sadr City, an area which until October was the scene of heavy fighting between coalition forces and local militia.

Soldiers from C Co. regularly visit the hospital to provide security and ensure its day-to-day operational needs are being met, according to Sgt. 1st Class Frederick Nickens, C Co., 2nd platoon sergeant.

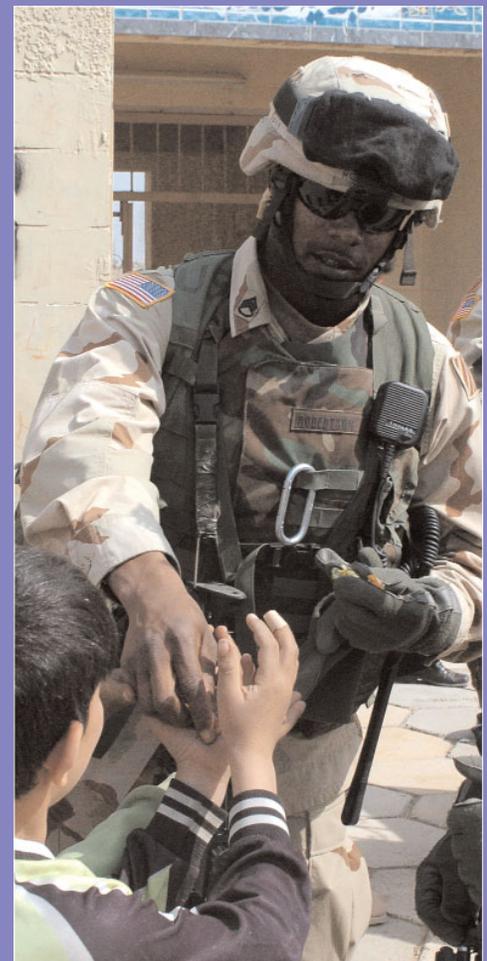
"We try to come by once a week, do security checks and help mentor the security forces here," Nickens, of Brooklyn, N.Y., said. "When we show the hospital's force protection staff a tip or make a correction, they pick it up fast. They're compassionate about what they're doing, about the people they're protecting."

He said his platoon has established a good repore with local Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army troops.

"It's kind of a stress reliever to come by the hospital and help out," Nickens said. "There's always good news going here, and my guys look forward to our visits."



akers and a coloring book to a student  
nts at the school wait in line for the new  
about 250 pairs of shoes.



Staff Sgt. Tracy Robertson, B Co., 3-15 Inf., hands out hard candy to kids outside the school.

As darkness falls...



# 1-9 FA establish TCPs

Story and photos by Spc. Ben Brody

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers from A Battery, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, set up traffic control points around the outskirts of Baghdad as part of an effort to stop the transit of illegal firearms and explosives Feb. 27.

The battery is split up into four teams that routinely conduct such missions, but the 27th was the first night that all four teams were out at once.

“Our primary mission tonight is to disrupt enemy activity and provide safer neighborhoods in the area,” said 1st Lt. Emory Hayes, A Btry. platoon leader. “This area is somewhat of a hotbed of enemy activity – it’s very important that we maintain a strong presence here.”

Each team traveled in humvees and Field Artillery Support Vehicles, which are large, tracked vehicles designed to follow Paladin howitzers into battle.

As the 1-9 vehicles blocked off one rural road, a line of cars slowed to a halt at the direction of troops on the ground. One by one, Soldiers searched vehicles, and with the help of an interpreter, interviewed the drivers.

After about an hour, the Soldiers moved to a different

location and set up another TCP. This one was much darker, on a desolate road. The Battlekings turned all their lights off except for a Soldier holding a flashlight to signal approaching vehicles.

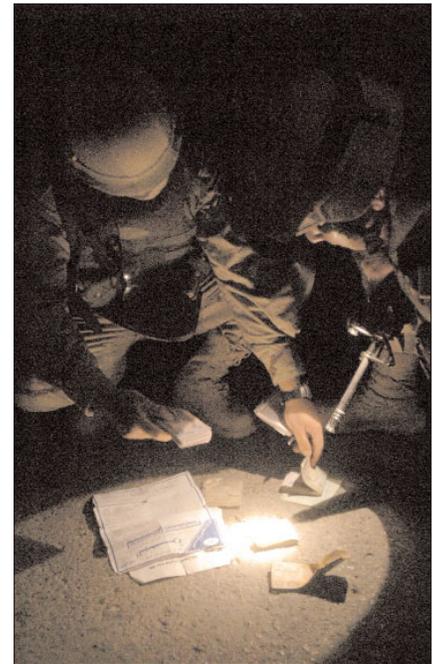
One vehicle was told to continue through the checkpoint, but stopped and told the interpreter he had information on insurgent activity in the area. Soldiers took a statement from the man and sent him on his way.

“We search cars, houses, people – we’re looking at everything when we’re out on patrol,” said Spc. Jonathan Mardis, A Btry., cannon crewmember. “A lot of times people give us information that we follow up on.”

As the artillerymen perform what are usually thought of as infantry or military police tasks, Mardis, from Atlanta, Ga., said his battery has undergone a lot of different training to prepare them for Iraq. Like most artillerymen in Iraq right now, Mardis said he misses his Paladin, but is quickly learning his new roles.

The sound of chirping frogs and dogs howling was broken by a speeding car racing toward the TCP.





**(Opposite page) Soldiers from A Btry., 1-9 FA, and an interpreter speak with motorists stopped at a traffic control point in Baghdad, Iraq Feb. 27. (Above) Sgt. Steve Devo mans a .50 caliber machine gun atop a Field Artillery Support Vehicle at a TCP. (Right) Soldiers inspect documents and money found on a man stopped at a TCP.**

Soldiers shouted, waved flashlights and finally fired a warning shot, at which point the driver slammed on his brakes and stopped. Five somewhat inebriated men emerged from the sedan, and appeared relieved to be alive after nearly running through the TCP. Soldiers questioned the men, removed and dumped some open beers, and told them to drive home carefully.

“It’s my main priority to keep my Soldiers safe, and communication is everything out here,” said Sgt. Anthony Brown, A Btry., gunner. “Keeping Soldiers safe means keeping them informed – if they’re not informed, they won’t know what’s going on or what to expect.”

Brown, a native of Pittsburgh, Pa., and a veteran of the invasion of Iraq, said he thinks Soldiers have to be even more vigilant now than in 2003.

After another hour or so, the troops started their vehicles, and again moved to set up another check-point, where they intended to enforce the curfew in effect in the area.

Only one vehicle was found breaking curfew, and after searching it, Soldiers sent the individuals on their way home.

“The locals’ response to our presence varies a lot from place to place,” Hayes, of Ellijay, Ga., said. “The poorer areas are mainly Shia, who are generally favorable to us. The more well-to-do areas, the Sunni areas, we usually get a much less friendly welcome.

“The most important thing on these missions is to present a hard target and never form routines,” he added. “That’s the key to keeping the enemy one step behind.”



**(Above) Spc. Jonathan Mardis, A Btry., 1-9 FA, cannon crewmember, inspects a minivan at a TCP set up by his team.**

**(Left) Devo gives instructions to his Soldiers from the gunner's hatch of a FASV. Battlekings spent more than four hours establishing random TCPs Feb. 27.**

# 3-15 works with Iraqi army

## 1st Lt. Eric Motzenbecker

3rd Bn., 15th Inf., Unit Public Affairs Rep.

Soon after arriving at Camp Hope, Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry, inherited responsibility from 1st Cavalry Division's 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, for the Sadr City section of Baghdad.

In the past eight months, the 306th Iraqi Army Battalion has trained with and learned from 2-5 Cav., in the sector, and will continue to do so with 3-15.

Over the past two weeks, 3-15 has worked continuously with the 306th to form a more professionally trained and cohesive force. According to an officer in 3-15, they are committed to the ultimate goal of preparing these Iraqi leaders and soldiers to replace all coalition forces.

Just east of Sadr City, the IAB compound is positioned adjacent to Hope. The close proximity of forces facilitates the ease of daily operations, future planning, and concurrent training between the US and Iraqi armies, according to Capt. Harry "Zann" Hornbuckle, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 3-15, commander.

He added that the Iraqi soldiers display eagerness and excitement to work with the US soldiers and strive to become a proficient and effective force within their borders.

Hornbuckle's responsibilities include planning and assisting the 306th in their training. He said his goal for this mission is to prepare and equip the unit for the immediate security and stability of the nation.

One of Hornbuckle's first training events for the 306th was a rocket propelled grenade range outside Camp Hope. The 306th sent 16 of their soldiers to the range to participate in the six-day training event. While at the range, the soldiers

had classes on correct usage of the RPG including weapons maintenance, rules of engagement and traffic control points.

Following their classes, the Iraqi soldiers conducted a live-fire exercise with RPGs, and did a practical exercise on setting up a TCP.

1st Lt. Adel Ali, 306th platoon leader, commands the small contingent of Iraqi soldiers. He explained that many of his soldiers are already trained on RPGs, and this will serve as sustenance for the men, and a chance for them to become more proficient at firing the powerful weapon.

"It is good training for these guys," Hornbuckle said. Soldiers from 10th Mountain Division are responsible for training the Iraqi soldiers while they are at the RPG range. One Soldier from 10th Mtn. explained, "The (U.S. and Iraqi soldiers) live in the same camp, eat in the same dining facility and share the same showers."

The intent, according to Hornbuckle, is that the living conditions and arrangements at the range will make for a better team and promote cohesion between Iraqi and American soldiers. Hornbuckle explains his "master plan" for the 306th as systematic. The 16 soldiers from the 306th will come back and train a platoon on what they have learned. The training they give their comrades, coupled with training from Hornbuckle and his team, will result in a combat-ready platoon. After that platoon is established, it will play an integral part in training the rest of the platoons.

Developing the 306th into a self-sufficient fighting force is part of the overall plan to have the Iraqi units eventually control the areas that Coalition forces presently occupy. Hornbuckle and his team of experts, along with the motivated Iraqi soldiers of the 306th, seem to be on the right path for success.

## 3-7 Cav. improve infrastructure daily

### 1st Lt. Barrett J. Hanks

3rd Sqd., 7th Cav.

The Khalid bin al Walid expressway is looking better due to a series of coalition and Iraqi public projects and aid packages. "These projects and programs that we are implementing are the spearhead of the effort to completely hand control of Iraq over to the true owners of this country – the Iraqi people" said an officer in B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry.

B Troop has inherited several construction and humanitarian aid projects from their predecessors, 2-8 Cav. These projects are designed to enhance the local infrastructure as well as the local economy by providing public services to the people and more jobs.

The construction projects include a taxi stand, truck stop, and courthouse parking lot along the expressway in Eastern Baghdad. The taxi stand and truck stop both are going to help relieve congestion on a busy route by

providing taxis and trucks a location to pull off the main thoroughfare.

As of now, these vehicles are forced to stop along the side of the road to conduct business – a direct violation of security policy in the area as well as a safety hazard to the local population.

"Keeping our guys safe is obviously our priority, but if we can do something nice for these people, it's something to be proud of," said Sgt. William McCollum.

The courthouse parking lot will also improve efficiency and boost the economy.

Citizens interested in participating in a democratic system of justice were forced to find parking among the adjacent neighborhood or along the street.

The new parking lot on the courthouse grounds is completely fenced in, and is accessible from the neighborhood in front of the courthouse.

All three of these projects will bolster an infrastructure that has already made great strides. In addition to

building infrastructure, these projects provide jobs for the local economy and introduce outside capital into the area market. Local contractors are hired to fulfill contracts funded by the U.S. and Iraqi government.

Many of these contracts stipulate that labor must be hired from the area that the project is designed to benefit, therefore distributing the jobs evenly. One local contractor expressed his dedication to the work "I am glad to be helping my country, Iraq, and working for the U.S."

In addition to construction projects, soldiers from B Troop, 3-7 Cav., are taking time to introduce themselves to local citizens and offer a helping hand where needed.

1st Lt. Carter Deekens and his platoon regularly take boxes of candy, soccer balls, and humanitarian aid bags out on patrols.

Along his route he scans not only for insurgent activity but also for opportunities to reach out to the people.

# OPSEC reminder

**Maj. John P. Mitchell**  
2nd Bde. Information Ops. Officer

The adversary is out there, they're listening to us and looking for a weakness.

Waiting until we give them enough information to action on and take us out, destroy a ready made or fixed project or take out critical infrastructure.

As an Army at war, we have to be aware of what we say, do and write. We must also be aware of what we do with the things we write, where we say the things we say and to whom we say them. Here in Iraq the world is watching, writing and taking pictures of our every move. We must protect ourselves, our buddies and our mission. One way to make that happen is practicing good Operational Security. OPSEC needs to be practiced both here in Iraq and at home by family members.

Family members at home need to be aware that terrorists and criminals have a reach that spans the globe. Family members need to do their best not to stand out in a crowd.

An example of that is having a yellow

ribbon on your tree at home or on your car. That coupled with a Fort Stewart Department of Defense wind-shield sticker may be an indicator to an adversary that the entire household is not at home, which opens them up to being a vulnerable target.

Here in Iraq we have other things that can give us away. Keep your maps and graphics, thumb drives, address books, check books and financial statements secure.

We need to shred or burn any document used to convey operational or personal information as our adversary is intelligent and will use what we give them.

They dig through trash. Our trash is picked up by contractors. Once the trash is picked up, we lose positive control on it and we could have given them a treasure. Only garbage goes in the trash. Even return addresses on mail or packages from home needs to be sanitized.

Remember, terrorists are world wide and we do not want them to reach out and touch us at home.

Check your pockets on your laundry items before turn in; especially for thumb drives, military ID cards and

driver's license.

Watch what you say in the dining facility, barber shop, MWR recreation room, on emails home, cell phones, phone centers, walkie-talkies and while walking on the FOBs. They are listening and waiting for us to make a mistake. Don't let the mistake be yours.

We're all in this together; check your buddy and keep your buddy in check.

## OPSEC Tips

- Keep all maps, graphics, thumb drives, address books, and paper with personal information secure.
- Burn any obsolete document that contains operational or personal information, including mail.
- Watch what you say and where you say it!

# Maintaining accountability of sensitive items

**1st Lt. Tommy Presley**  
1st Bn., 64th Armor

In all branches of the United States Armed Forces, accountability of personnel, unit property and equipment is vital to the unit's ability to function in garrison, in the field and when deployed.

Since the start of the War on Terror, ensuring all unit equipment is mission capable and ready to deploy has increased in importance.

With units throughout the military services deploying in large numbers in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, accountability of sensitive items, or items that an enemy force may have a particular interest in, can make or break a unit's ability to successfully complete their mission.

If accountability is not conducted in an efficient way and enemy were to obtain this equipment, it could mean the difference between life and death for a soldier.

Coalition forces have been credited as "owning the night" with the aide of numerous night vision devices. These devices are considered sensitive by the Army.

Many units conducting combat operations made use of the capabilities of this equipment while operating at night. Technology not available to enemy forces allowed the coalition to successfully defeat many adversaries with limited

casualties.

If proper accountability is not maintained on these particular sensitive items, one could fall into enemy hands, unlocking the technology of night vision and lessening the effect of operations during hours of darkness.

Accountability of sensitive items must start at the lowest level and work its way to the highest level of command. Soldiers must know the importance of keeping up with their assigned sensitive items.

First line leaders must conduct a hands-on serial number inventory and verification of every sensitive item in their squad.

The Company's chain of command and NCO support channel should work together to ensure that 100% accountability is maintained before and after instances, such as movements, where items could potentially be lost.

If the equipment is accounted for before each movement, it is easier to trace where it was lost, should that occur.

As the War on Terror continues to develop, it is increasingly important for us to guard closely the sensitive items we have in order for coalition forces to maintain the technological advantage.

Simple but disciplined procedures can and must be followed in order to ensure accountability of these items, thus keeping America ahead in the War on Terror.

Put some money away with the ...

# Savings Deposit Program

**Sgt. Christian Stephenson**  
2nd Brigade Finance NCOIC

A Department of Defense program has been instituted to help deployed troops tuck up to \$10,000 of their income away and earn a guaranteed 10 percent interest on their savings annually.

Troops can participate in the Savings Deposit Program if they are assigned outside the United States, receiving Hostile Fire and Imminent Danger Pay. Servicemembers must serve 30 consecutive days in that assignment before making deposits into the fund.

Their savings will earn a guaranteed 2.5 percent interest quarterly.

The last day to make a deposit into the fund is the date of departure from theater. However, interest will accrue up to 90 days after redeployment unless a withdrawal is requested, according to a defense finance and accounting service fact sheet.

Servicemembers can contribute more than \$10,000, but

interest will not accrue on any amount over the cap. If the account exceeds \$10,000, the service member may make quarterly withdrawals until his eligibility to make deposits terminates. Then he must withdraw the remaining funds in their entirety.

Withdrawing the money before redeploying is not authorized unless the servicemember needs to make an emergency withdrawal. Emergency requests must be for the health and welfare of the servicemember or his family, and must be substantiated by a written request from the servicemember's commander.

DFAS will post the SDP balance of active-component members to their leave and earnings statement.

The fund was started in Aug. 1990, for members who were serving in the Persian Gulf War, and Soldiers fighting in Operation Iraqi Freedom were added to those eligible for participation in 2003.

For more information, contact your respective battalion administrative office, or check out the DFAS website at [www.dfas.mil](http://www.dfas.mil).



## Something's in the air

Take Motrin/Drink Water

**Capt. Robert Meadows**  
2nd Brigade Surgeon

Welcome to Iraq. For those of you returning, welcome back. I have been asked to contribute some medical wisdom to this publication. I would like to start with the most common medical complaint seen in our aid stations the last 6 weeks.

Have you been experiencing coughing, sneezing, sinus congestion, sinus drainage, and sore throat?

More than 200 soldiers have been to sick call with similar complaints, and many more have suffered quietly. Is it a virus?, a bacteria?, the Iraqi Crud? Maybe, but the most likely cause is particulate matter.

PM is dirt and other particles in the air less than 10 microns (very small) that you can inhale. The military has set standards, military exposure guidelines, for what is allowed.

Recent tests conducted at FOB Hope in Oct. 2004 and Jan. 2005 exceeded those standards. MEG levels are based on air quality standards from both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and include safety factors above and beyond USEPA and OSHA requirements. The recommended MEG levels are those at which no adverse health effects would be expected over the course of one year of continuous daily exposure.

Essentially, the same air quality exists at FOBs Patriot and Rustamiyah. Just by looking at the air, high PM should not come as a huge surprise, though it is notable that the tested

levels exceed the MEG by up to 30 times the recommended levels.

Potential health effects from PM are expected to be mild, though a significant percentage of troops may experience coughing, eye and throat irritation, and congestion. These effects usually go away quickly after the local weather improves or you move from the exposure area.

Permanent health effects are uncommon. Studies of possible long term effects from PM have been conducted by many organizations, including the American Cancer Society and the Health Effects Institute.

In general, they suggest that exposure to even high levels of PM for one year or less does not pose a significant health risk in otherwise healthy adults. Bearing this in mind, PM has not been found as a contributing factor in any severe illness, including Gulf War Syndrome.

What can you do to protect yourself? Limiting outdoor activity during periods of high PM concentrations sounds good, but is difficult to do in an operational setting. The use of protective measures, including wearing eye protection and cravats, will help.

If you do experience any unusual or bothersome health symptoms that persist, it may be from exposure to PM. However, upper respiratory infections do occur and exposure to PM makes you more susceptible to upper respiratory infection, especially in smokers.

If you have questions or concerns stop at your aid station. Over-the-counter medication is available for relief of symptoms. If you have additional symptoms or do not improve, make sure you see your health care provider.



# Long-distance relationships

**Chaplain (Maj.) Pete Brzezinski**  
2nd Brigade Chaplain

One month is gone. It's hard to believe. On this end, the days are starting to blend together. At Fort Stewart, most families and friends are getting adjusted to their Soldier being deployed.

A big challenge for many is how to be a long distance dad or mom.

George Newman wrote a book called "101 Ways to be a Long Distance Super Dad or Mom." Here are some highlights:

The first step is to set up a program for communicating with your child. This can be done using several means available today – phone, email, etc. Schedule phone visits in advance to get the best times to talk. We have a decent amount of access to phones.

It's better for your child if you remember him or her by sending smaller gifts or tokens often rather than buying an expensive gift occasionally.

When you talk to your children on the phone, don't ask

questions that they will answer yes or no to. Instead, ask open-ended questions like: "What was your favorite thing you did at school today?"

In the coming newsletters I'll share more tips from "101 Ways to be a Long Distance Super Dad or Mom."

A definite challenge to our deployment is to maintain a healthy relationship from a distance. Spiritually speaking, distance is not a problem for God.

In fact, St. Paul says we can boldly enter his presence through what His son Christ did for us.

This is what the Easter season is all about for Christians.

Christ did away with the distance we had from God because of our imperfection and sin. God as a Father knows the pain of separation from family when Christ died on the cross in our place. So when we pray for our family or Soldier, God's ear is especially tuned to our plea.

On behalf of all the Spartans, I wish you a happy Easter and a strong, healthy, long distance relationship. God bless you!



*Avoid the worry and heartache of...*

## False casualty notification

**Capt. Margaret Kurz**  
2nd Brigade attorney

*Sarah was out running errands when the call came in to her home in Hinesville. The caller left a message on her answering machine, identifying himself as a member of an Army office at Fort Stewart, stating that her deployed husband, George, had been injured in a car accident. The caller instructed her to dial a phone number immediately for further information. Fortunately, Sarah was active in the battalion family readiness group and knew the correct casualty notification process. The FRG had also alerted her of the rash of false casualty notifications, so she ignored the phone call, instead reporting it to the battalion rear detachment chain of command. The call was indeed a false report, George had not been injured.*

The 2nd BCT operational tempo has been fast and furious in Baghdad. Some individuals back in Hinesville have taken advantage of the deployment to give out false notifications of soldiers being wounded or even killed in action. There are primarily two types of false notification operations.

The first is the one Sarah experienced, where a caller telephones the soldier's home and instructs the spouse to call a separate phone number for further information. When the spouse calls the number, the home phone is charged by the minute, similar to a 1-900 call. A second, and even more reprehensible method, is to visit the soldier's home in an Army uniform. The spouse is again asked for personal information about the soldier and given instructions to call a phone number. Knowing how the notification process works is critical.



Within Spartan BCT, only a battalion-level rear detachment command representative does a casualty notification. If a soldier is wounded in action, the notification may come by telephone. If the soldier is killed in action, an officer and a senior NCO will notify the spouse in person. The casualty notification officer will clearly identify himself, and show identification. The CNO will provide only a few details of the events and give the spouse the name of a separate casualty assistance officer, who will contact the family to assist with necessary paperwork and arrangements. Proper CNOs do not ask the spouse to provide any personal information, they do not remain in the home any longer than necessary to do the notification, and are trained not to physically comfort or touch the spouse except in emergencies. The lesson learned for soldiers and spouses is to know the casualty notification process. Keep the FRG informed of travel plans and be sure to leave a

cell phone or alternate phone number where you can be reached. Know the names of the key leaders in the FRG chain of command. Spouses should also be familiar with a proper Class A uniform, so they can tell if the uniform is missing critical pieces, such as name plates. If a visitor refuses to show identification, insist on having them show military ID, or do not let them into the home. Finally, never give out personal information about yourself or your soldier over the phone or in person. True CNOs will already have all the data required. The only questions asked will be to confirm that the spouse is indeed the spouse or next of kin of the soldier.

If a spouse does receive what he or she believes is a suspicious or false notification, call the rear detachment chain of command immediately so perpetrators can be apprehended.

JAG says...

### Senate Defeats Minimum Wage Increase

WASHINGTON - The Senate defeated dueling proposals Monday to raise the \$5.15-an-hour minimum wage — one backed by organized labor, the other salted with pro-business provisions — in a day of skirmishing that reflected Republican gains in last fall's elections.

"I believe that anyone who works 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year should not live in poverty in the richest country in the world," said Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., arguing for the Democratic proposal to increase the minimum wage by \$2.10 over the next 26 months.

Republicans countered with a smaller increase, \$1.10 in two steps over 18 months, they said would help workers without hampering the creation of jobs needed to help those with low skills. "Wages do not cause sales. Sales are needed to provide wages. Wages do not cause revenue. Revenue drives wages," said Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo.

The Democratic amendment was defeated, with 46 votes for and 49 against. The GOP alternative fell by a wider margin, 38 for and 61 against.

While the outcome was never in doubt, Democrats said in advance they hoped to use the issue to increase chances for passage of state minimum wage initiatives in 2006, as well as to highlight differences with Republicans who will be on the ballot next year.

Kennedy accused Republicans of advancing a "deeper poverty agenda" for the poor by including several provisions to cut long-standing wage and overtime protections for millions of Americans. He took particular aim at Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., a conservative who is atop the Democratic target list for 2006 and the lead supporter of the GOP minimum wage alternative.

"The senator from Pennsylvania has a record of opposing increases in the minimum wage," Kennedy said. "He has voted against it at least 17 times in the last 10 years."

Both plans fell well short of the 60 votes needed to advance, and signaled that prospects for raising the federal wage floor, unchanged since 1996, are remote during the current two-year Congress.

### Judge Won't Dismiss Abu Ghraib Charges

FORT HOOD, Texas - A military judge Monday refused to dismiss any of the charges against Spc. Sabrina Harman, an Army prison guard accused of humiliating Iraqis held at Abu Ghraib.

Harman — who appears giving a thumbs-up next to an Iraqi corpse in one of the most notorious photographs from the Baghdad prison — could become the second person to stand trial in the scandal when her court-martial begins May 12.

The 27-year-old reservist and former pizza shop manager from Lorton, Va., is accused of writing "rapeist" on the leg of one prisoner and forcing another to stand on a box with wires in his hands and telling him he would be electrocuted if he fell.

Harman is also accused of taking photographs of a group of naked detainees.

Her legal team tried to get the photograph-related counts dismissed, arguing that the prisoners were not harmed because they were wearing sandbags on their heads.

"If the alleged victim was not aware (of the photos), the alleged victims cannot have mental pain and suffering," said Capt. Patsy Takemura, an Army defense attorney.

Prosecutors countered that the acts were still maltreatment because, at the least, other people knew the photos were taken.

Col. James Pohl, the judge, kept the charges intact, saying a jury should decide whether taking the photos constituted a crime.

Harman could get up to 6 1/2 years in prison if convicted of conspiracy, maltreating detainees and dereliction of duty.

### Wisc. Hunter Wants Open Season for Cats

MADISON, Wis. - Hunter Mark Smith welcomes wild birds on to his property, but if he sees a cat, he thinks the "invasive" animal should be considered fair game.

The 48-year-old firefighter from La Crosse has proposed that hunters in Wisconsin make free-roaming domestic cats an "unprotected species" that could be shot at will by anyone with a small-game license.

His proposal will be placed before hunters on April 11 at the Wisconsin Conservation Congress spring hearings in each of the state's 72 counties.

"I get up in the morning and if there's new snow, there's cat tracks under my bird feeder ... I look at them as an invasive species, plain and simple," Smith said.

Smith's proposal has horrified cat lovers, but is seen by others as a way to stop cats from killing wild birds. University of Wisconsin-Madison wildlife ecology professor Stanley Temple, who trapped more than 100 cats and analyzed their stomach contents during a four-year study, has estimated that between 7.8 million and 219 million birds are killed by rural cats in Wisconsin each year.

"It's obviously a very controversial proposal," Temple said, but added, "I think there really is a basis for having a debate about it."

The Conservation Congress is a five-member elected body whose duty is to advise the Department of Natural Resources and the Legislature on natural resources issues.

DNR attorney Tim Andryk said the vote would simply be "an advisory recommendation" to state lawmakers.

"We (the DNR) don't have authority to regulate domestic animals. Legislation would have to be passed to accomplish this," Andryk said. "You might also have to amend laws relating to abuse of domestic animals."

But Temple said he thinks legislation is not needed. He said the department does have the authority to declare rural cats an unprotected species — because unclaimed cats can be considered nonnative wildlife species like house mice, Norway rats, pigeons and starlings.

"If they are not a pet, if somebody doesn't claim ownership, they become a nonnative wildlife species and not entitled to protection by the state," he said.

Cat enthusiasts Cheryl Balazs, Ted O'Donnell and Adam Bauknecht are trying to organize opposition to Smith's proposal. O'Donnell, a co-owner of MadCat Pet Supplies, recently set up a Web site, dontshootthecat.com, to inform people about it. O'Donnell said Smith's proposal "is a callous response" to the problem of cats preying on wild birds.

# Around the world

## US condemns Syrian 'half-measure'

The US has stepped up calls for a full Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, as the country's troops began to move away from the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

Syrian military trucks were spotted heading east towards Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and the Syrian border.

But a White House spokesman called it a "half-measure" and said all Syrian troops and intelligence officers should leave Lebanon immediately.

Monday's move was cheered by up to 70,000 demonstrators in Beirut.

The White House rebuke came hours after Lebanese President Emile Lahoud and Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad agreed that said Syrian troops would be pulled back from Beirut - but not out of Lebanon - by the end of March.

The pair did not name a date for a full withdrawal.

The joint announcement followed weeks of international pressure and protests in the Lebanese capital Beirut.

In Washington, White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the US stands "with the Lebanese people, and the Lebanese people, I think, are speaking very clearly".

He said the US wanted the "complete and immediate withdrawal of all military and intelligence forces from Lebanon".

He added: "UN Security Council Resolution 1559 [passed in 2004] was very clear - all foreign forces need to leave Lebanon."

France, Germany and Russia have also called for a Syrian withdrawal, as has its long-standing Arab ally, Saudi Arabia.

French President Jacques Chirac backed the US call for implementation of the United Nations resolution, his office said on Monday, adding that he had discussed the issue by telephone with US President George W Bush.

Syrian troops came to Lebanon as peacekeepers during the 1975-1990 civil war and have remained since, while Damascus has dominated Lebanese affairs.

But on Monday, in central Lebanon, Syrian troops were seen packing trucks with furniture and military equipment, and moving away from some of the mountain posts they have occupied since moving into Lebanon in 1976.

## China unveils controversial law

China has for the first time outlined a proposed law allowing it to use force against Taiwan should attempts at peaceful reunification fail.

Beijing sees Taiwan as a breakaway province, and has said it will attack if it moves towards independence. The new anti-secession law lays down the "one-country, two-systems" formula - as employed in Hong Kong - as the basic approach to the island.

This has already been rejected by the people of Taiwan.

Over the weekend, thousands of Taiwanese protested over the introduction of the anti-secession legislation. The controversial bill has been shrouded in secrecy for

months.

The first details were released to the parliament by one of the body's vice-chairmen, Wang Zhaoguo. But those seeking clarity will be disappointed, as the explanations on the legislation were both brief and vague.

The draft law allows China to use non-peaceful means against Taiwan as a last resort.

It says action will be used if Taiwan secedes from China or if all possibilities for peaceful reunification fail.

There is no doubt that the bill will be passed in the next week by the Chinese parliament, which is largely viewed as a rubber stamp.

## Soccer Stampede Injuries Kill 2 Children

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar - Two children died Monday from injuries during a stampede at an overcrowded soccer stadium.

Another 45 people were injured at Sunday's game between South Africa's Kaizer Chiefs and Madagascar's USJF Ravinala. When officials tried to close the doors, hundreds of fans waiting outside tried to force their way into the 20,000-capacity stadium.

Most of the injuries were not serious, staff at Antananarivo's Ravohongy hospital said. The ages of the children who died were not known.

The game continued despite the violence, with the South African team winning 1-0.

This was the latest instance in Africa of a deadly stampede at an overcrowded stadium.

In 2001, 123 people died in Accra, Ghana, after police fired tear gas into the stands in response to fans who threw bottles and chairs on the field. That same year, 43 people were killed and 155 injured in Johannesburg, South Africa, when fans tried to push their way into a stadium.

In 2004, four people were killed and eight others injured during a stampede at the end of a World Cup qualifying game in Lome, Togo.

## Kuwait speeds up debate on women's rights

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Kuwait's Cabinet on Monday hastened a parliamentary debate on an amendment it proposed to this conservative Gulf state's election law, which aims to give women the right to vote and stand as political candidates.

The decision came during a parliamentary session attended by hundreds of women activists who had earlier demonstrated outside the legislature demanding equal voting rights for women in Kuwait, a close U.S. ally that was until recently the sole democracy among Gulf Arab states.

Last month, the Cabinet asked for the parliament to speed up deliberation on the amendment, which it introduced last year. The request came after 10 legislators proposed the constitutional court rule on the 1962 election law that restricts political rights to women. Deputy prime minister, Mohammed Sharar, said the request to speed up debate needed no vote.

# *In memoriam*



*Spc. Danny Anderson*

*- Beloved father, husband, son and Soldier -*