

Keeping troops supplied, Page 9



Photo by Pfc. Ferdinand Thomas

Capt. Jennifer M. Rael, pediatrician, performs a breathing test on an Iraqi child at a medical civil assistance program held at Al Kessir Alawsat Primary School in Yusafiyah, Iraq. The 3rd Armored Cavalry Regimental physician was one among five volunteers for the MEDCAP. The program, put together by the 407th Civil Affairs Battalion, was held for Iraqi civilians who have trouble seeking medical care. See story on page 8.

## Leaders aim to improve mail delivery in Iraq

Story and photo by Sgt. Michael J. Carden  
Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

**CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — For many troops serving in Iraq, mail may be their closest and most sincere reminder of home. Whether it's a love letter from a high school sweetheart or a package filled with video games and movies, something as small as a letter or as simple as a package may have a positive, long-lasting affect on the morale of a Soldier.

That's why the Army Post Offices in the Operation Iraqi Freedom theater are striving to improve their mail system and

procedures to be more expedient and efficient.

The most recent step the APOs have made toward improving postal operations in Iraq was through an OIF Theater Mail Conference held at Al-Faw Palace on Camp Victory April 26 and 27.

More than 60 Soldiers representing APOs from base camps and forward operating bases across Iraq participated in the conference to discuss postal guidelines and procedures. They also shared ideas and information about how to get mail to Soldiers quicker.

"The objective of this conference is to open the lines of communication among all of the APOs and to identify any

problems," said Lt. Col. Marybel Johnson. "We want to know what the good things are too, so we can share that information among everyone."

Johnson is the commander of the 217th Personnel Services Battalion, North Carolina Army National Guard. Her unit is responsible for two joint military mail terminals in Iraq. Much of the mail that passes in and out of Iraq comes through her terminals in Baghdad or Balad.

One reason for delays is because there is too much information in the address on the letter or package. In many cases, it

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### Inside

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# Essentials continue improving in Baghdad

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Craig Zentkovich  
2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

**CAMP LIBERTY, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — A multitude of infrastructure improvement projects have been completed or are under way in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team sector of Baghdad, east of the Tigris River.

The new Iraqi Government, in coordination with Coalition forces, award contracts for projects to local Iraqi contractors. Local contractors in turn are required to hire local laborers from the neighborhoods from which the projects take place.

A number of sources fund the contracts, and include the Interim Iraqi Government Fund, Commanders Emergency Relief, U.S. Agency for International Development and seized funds from the former regime.

The Spartan BCT area of operations, which includes Sadr City, Zafaraniya, Tissa Nissan and Rusafa, was in need of infrastructure repairs well before the fall of the former regime, said Lt. Col. Jamie Gayton, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Brigade Troops Battalion commander.

“The progress now, today, is significant,” he said on May 3, after a UH-60 Black Hawk flyover assessment he made on project progress. “Especially in Sadr City; surface cleaning efforts and completed sewer projects are evident. I’ve also noticed the people who have clean streets are modifying their behavior to keep the streets that way — instead of throwing their trash out the door, they carry it to the dumpsters across the street.”

In Sadr City, \$6.8 million was spent on road paving, storm sewer cleaning, line repair, and pothole repair in 44 of the area’s 85 sectors. In total, 1.8 of the 2.5 million residents in the area are affected by the improvements. The six-month

project had an average labor force of 163 workers per day. A separate project in the area consisted of the repair and cleaning of the main Zebelin line; a sewage main that runs south from Sadr City to the Rustimiyah North Sewage Treatment Plant in southern Tissa Nissan. The \$5.5 million project, completed on April 14, affected all residents from the once volatile region, employing 192 locals per day.

“I’m very excited about the quality and pace of the work [in Sadr City],” Gayton said. “And the people understand that although they have to deal with increased traffic and rerouting now, it is going to better their lives in the long run.”

In an area of South Tissa Nissan — Al Ameen, a sewer and road project was recently completed at a cost of \$2.7 million. On average, 33 laborers per day installed the sewer network that replaced what was originally an open trench system. The network serves 70,000 people in the area.

A number of sewer projects south of Baghdad, in Zafaraniya, are under way. The projects, totaling \$25.8 million, will provide 130,000 residents of the town with functional sewage service. Work includes the installation of a sewer main that will extend from the town, east to the Rustimiyah Sewage Treatment Plant, as well as provide the seven villages in the town with a functional, potable, running water network. Three of the seven villages are complete. Barring any major escalation of violence in the area, Gayton said the remaining villages are expected to be completed by Sept. 1.

“After a slow start, the projects are coming along pretty well,” 1st Lt. Dan Moore, 2/3 BTB, water project manager, said. “Due to dated plans of the area, which didn’t include many of the homes that are now there, modifications needed to be made.”



Construction continues on the Zafaraniya main sewage line. When completed, the line will carry sewage from about 130,000 people to Rustimiyah North Sewage Treatment Plant.

See *ESSENTIALS*, Page 5

## U.S. Forces in Iraq adapt to reduce IED threat

By Gerry J. Gilmore  
American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** — U.S. forces in Iraq are adapting to lessen the threat posed by the enemy’s improvised explosive devices, senior military officers told House Armed Services Committee members here May 5.

To boost troop protection against IEDs, the U.S. military has “increased the number of armored vehicles deployed to the [Iraq] theater by a factor of over 100-fold in 18 months,” Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sorenson, the Army’s deputy for acquisition and systems management, noted at the Capitol Hill hearing.

“We have also increased delivery of body armor, IED countermeasure systems, and

changes of tactics and training,” Sorenson pointed out.

IEDs, also known as roadside bombs, have been the major cause of U.S. combat casualties in Iraq, according to Pentagon officials.

Brig. Gen. William Cato from Marine Corps Systems Command reported to the committee that “100 percent of our wheeled vehicles involved in combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan or the Horn of Africa are equipped” with some type of armor.

The Marines are also adding underbody armor and other reinforcements to Humvees, 5-ton cargo trucks and other supply vehicles. “We continue to meet emergent vehicle armor protection requirements to stay ahead of an adaptive enemy,” Cato said.

After Saddam Hussein was removed from power in March 2003, Iraq became “an

evolving theater” of operations, Cato explained, as die-hard Iraqi insurgents loyal to the old regime and Islamic militant fighters stepped up attacks against U.S. and coalition occupation troops, and pro-coalition Iraqi forces and citizens.

Insurgent IED threats once chiefly consisted of “60 mm, 81 mm mortar kinds of rounds,” Cato said. Nowadays, he pointed out, insurgents have upped the ante, using 122 to 155 mm artillery shells, 500-pound bombs and double-stacked mines to provide more explosive power for their IEDs.

“As we’ve added armor, they’ve added greater explosives,” Cato told the committee.

Insurgents in Iraq are “very adept, and very smart, very learning, very innovative,” said Army Brig. Gen. Joseph Votel, chief of DoD’s Joint IED Defeat Task Force. The task

force was created in October 2003 as an Army agency. It now has representatives from each of the U.S. armed services, plus British military advisers.

For some time now, the insurgents in Iraq have mostly used IEDs detonated by radio signals, Votel reported. Yet lately, the insurgents appear to be moving back to IEDs that are hard-wired to detonators, he noted, possibly because U.S. signal-jamming devices are having an effect.

“This is combat, and this is a thinking enemy up against us,” noted Marine Lt. Gen. James N. Mattis, commander of Marine Corps Combat Development Command at Quantico, Va., who also attended the hearing.

“We are outthinking them, and we will continue to outthink them,” Mattis asserted.

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PERSPECTIVES

# America honors WW II veterans on VE Day

By Eric Cramer  
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — America recognized the military men and women who won the second World War in a ceremony Sunday, commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Allied victory in Europe.

Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey welcomed former senator and World War II veteran Bob Dole and retired Gen. Frederick Kroesen, also a veteran of the conflict, and R. James Nicholson, secretary of veterans' affairs, as speakers at the VE Day event, held near the National World War II Memorial.

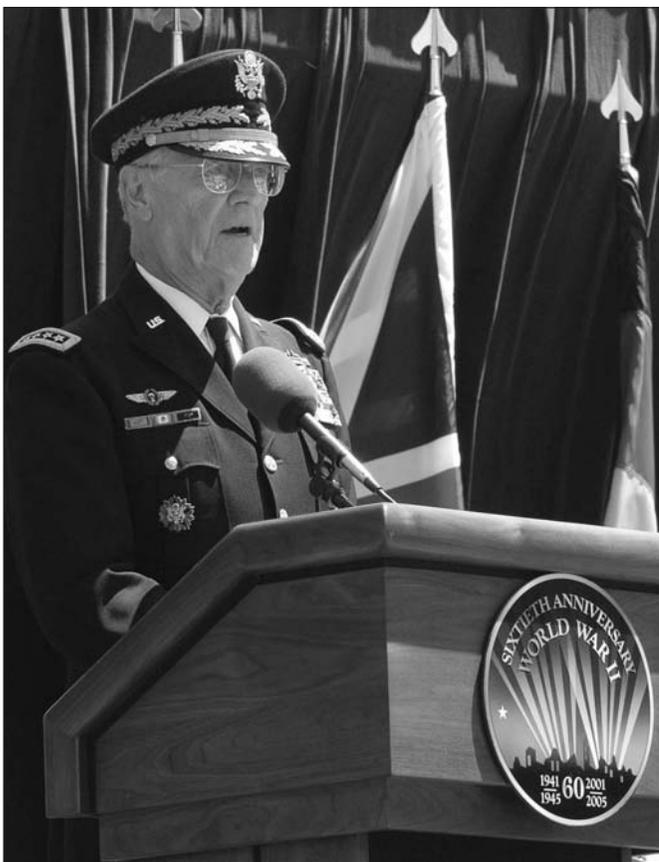
About 100 veterans of the conflict attended the event, along with many family members and other guests.

Harvey said 16 million Americans served in uniform during World War II.

"Over 400,000 made the ultimate sacrifice," he said. "They ensured victory over defeat, democracy over fascism and good over evil. So too will today's generation, the grandsons and grand-daughters of the greatest generation, win the Global War on Terrorism."

Harvey described Dole's service as a lieutenant with the 10th Mountain Division in Italy during World War II, where he received severe injuries; and the service of Kroesen, who earned the Combat Infantry Badge three times, for service in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

"I have visited with many of the brave young men and women serving today," Harvey said. "Like Maj. Tammy Duckworth, a Black Hawk pilot in the Illinois National Guard. Duckworth and her co-pilot received injuries while flying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They landed their helicopter and saved the lives of her crew. Despite hav-



Retired Gen. Frederick Kroesen, who received the Combat Infantry Badge for service in World War II, Korea and Vietnam, speaks at the 60th Anniversary ceremony of Victory in Europe Day. Kroesen said the National World War II Memorial remembers an entire country gone to war.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Carmen Burgess

World War II veterans salute during the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Allied victory in Europe in World War II. Nearly 100 veterans of the conflict attended the event.

ing lost both legs, she wants to remain on active duty. 'No Iraqi guy with an RPG is going to dictate how I live my life,' she told me."

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Gordon H. Mansfield said the GI Bill of Rights introduced at the end of World War II was a major "change agent" in American Society that made much of the success of 20th-century America possible.

He said the VA is today the nation's largest healthcare provider, and remains a home-buying and educational resource for veterans.

Dole asked all present to imagine the consequences of having lost in World War II.

"Think if we had not prevailed, where we would be today," he said. "What language would we be speaking? What sort of government would we have?"

He said he has little memory of the first VE Day.

"On May 8, 1945, I lay in a hospital bed in Italy, barely aware of my surroundings," Dole said. "I got hit, I still don't know what by, and I lost a kidney, the use of my right arm, most of the use of my left arm, and three years of my life."

He said a pioneering surgeon helped him with his recovery.

"The most important thing he did was tell me 'You've got to grow up and get on with your life. You've got to do the best you can with what you have,'" Dole said.

Dole said that of the 16 million who served in World War II, there are now only about 4.5 million left alive, and they are dying at an estimated 1,500 per day.

"We've gone from the greatest generation to the disappearing generation," Dole said. "But now, after 60 years, our generation can pass the mantle of the greatest generation to another generation — the current generation."

Kroesen said speaking after Dole, Mansfield and Harvey was a "daunting assignment."

He said the National World War II Memorial commemorates more than the memory of those who fought in the war.

"It recognizes something more — we all went to war. Not just the 16 million in the military, but the 130 million in the country. Our industrial might, our scientific community and our medical professionals ... It was a nation that was attacked and it was our generation who responded to the grisly task of going to war," Kroesen said.

"I reserve my principle homage for those who gave their lives," he said. "This memorial is our guarantee that those who gave their lives before VE Day will not be among those who perished as if they'd never been born."

## Scimitar Pulse

What is the dumbest thing you did as a child?

"I tried to break a board with my foot and there were nails in the board. When I kicked it, the nails went right through my foot."

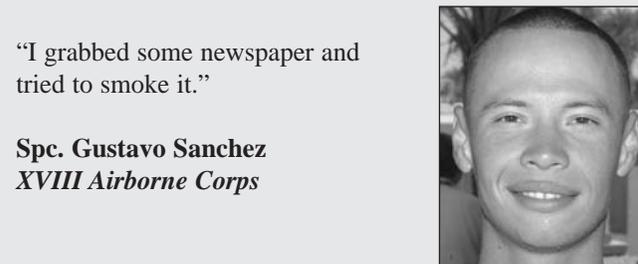


Navy Ensign Robin Brooks  
Civilian Police Assistance  
Training Team



"I shot a cap gun off at the White House."

Army 1st Lt. Richard Gudis  
Multi-National Force – Iraq



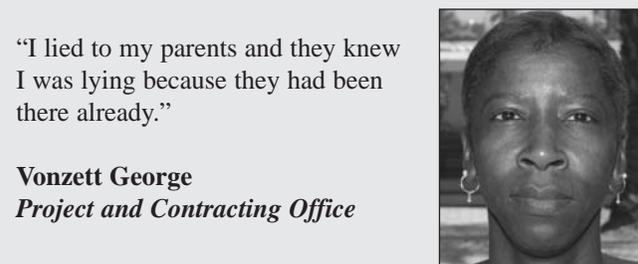
"I grabbed some newspaper and tried to smoke it."

Spc. Gustavo Sanchez  
XVIII Airborne Corps



"The dumbest thing I ever did was lying about getting my hands on some firecrackers. My father tore me up for that one."

Air Force  
Master Sgt. Frank Taylor  
Joint Area Support Group – Central



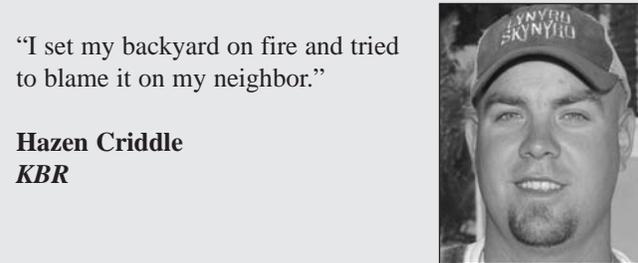
"I lied to my parents and they knew I was lying because they had been there already."

Vonzett George  
Project and Contracting Office



"I threatened my parents that I would run away, but I sat on the front porch for two hours because I couldn't walk across the street by myself."

Spc. Sean Christen  
Multi-National Force – Iraq



"I set my backyard on fire and tried to blame it on my neighbor."

Hazen Criddle  
KBR





May 15, 2005

Members of the Coalition:

As we celebrate the first anniversary of the Multi-National Force, I want to thank you and your predecessors for your selfless service in bringing the opportunity for freedom and liberty to Iraq.

One year ago, a small formation assembled in Baghdad to form the Multi-National Force headquarters. Since that time, we have fought a ruthless insurgency, trained capable Iraqi security forces, supported reconstruction efforts across Iraq, and witnessed the birth of the first democratically elected government in Iraqi history. You have executed our mission magnificently and nobly, with dignity, respect and a collective, cooperative and positive spirit that has been truly inspiring.

I ask that you remember our comrades, and their families, who made the ultimate sacrifice. We can never forget their contributions in bringing democracy to 25 million Iraqis.

While we have had an historic year, we have much left to do here in Iraq. I know you are up to the mission. Thanks again for your professionalism, dedication and service. Together with the Iraqi Security Forces we will work toward making the next year an even better one for Iraq.

Sincerely,

George W. Casey, Jr.
General, United States Army
Commanding

U.S. general: Zarqawi losing support from Iraqi citizens

By John D. Banusiewicz
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Any remaining support among Iraqis for fugitive Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is fading as his network's attacks continue to take aim at their country's security forces and civilians, the director of operations for the Joint Staff said at a Pentagon news conference May 5.

Marine Lt. Gen. James T. Conway, who commanded the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force during two combat tours in Iraq, said he's "absolutely confident" that if Zarqawi stays in Iraq, he'll be captured or killed.

"And I might add that I think his stock is running pretty thin with the Iraqi people," Conway said. "He continues to take credit for some of these massive attacks where Iraqis — Iraqi civilians in particular — are killed in large numbers. And it's our belief, and I think some of the trends are starting to indicate, that there's a saturation point that the Iraqi citizens are starting to get to."

Iraqi citizens more frequently are providing authorities with tips helpful in fighting the insurgency, he noted.

Conway addressed reports that Zarqawi narrowly avoided capture during a recent raid on a hospital in Ramadi and that the terrorist mastermind might have been at the hospital because he is ill or injured.

"[The raid] was not based, necessarily, upon information that Zarqawi was there," Conway told reporters. "We have not been able to confirm that Zarqawi was either wounded in a firefight in Rawah or was receiving treatment at the hospital. We were simply told that a group of insurgents were there, and the Marines and Soldiers responded, circled the hospital, and went in." No evidence of Zarqawi's presence at the hospital was found, he noted.

The general said forces involved in the search for Zarqawi respond any time they receive a tip that might lead his way. "And as you might imagine, with a \$25 million reward on his head, we get a lot of tips and a lot of rumors of Zarqawi sightings," Conway said. The general noted he was "absolutely confident" that the terrorist leader would be captured or killed.

Conway said the capture in Pakistan of Abu Faraj al-Libbi, operations chief for Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda terror network, was accomplished with no U.S. military involvement.

"I think that the Pakistani people should be delighted that their security forces have completed such a sophisticated operation," the general said. "Remember, this guy tried to kill their president twice. He was their No. 1 terrorist, and now their commandos have taken him down and put him behind bars."

Conway said that with Libbi now in custody, other terrorists have something to think about. "I think it should send a strong message to bin Laden and his followers that you are not going to rest in peace as long as this global war on terrorism is in search of you and your compatriots," he said. "We will hunt you to your dying days and either capture you, or kill you if you resist."

Essentials

from Page 2

Moore, a Boone, N.C., native, added, "The work is going to get done soon with our intent met — to provide water to everyone [in Zafaraniya]."

A \$3.4 million water project in Al-Amari is near completion. The venture includes rehabilitating the water network for four of the villages in the town as well as the constructing of a water treatment unit to feed the network. It has employed upwards of 62 local laborers since the groundbreaking in June.

Gayton said he is pleased with the completed projects and encouraged by what he sees with all the projects in progress.

"[When Coalition forces] first initiated stabilization opera-

tions in Iraq, Coalition forces decided what infrastructure improvements were priority in country," Gayton said. "Now, two years later, more and more of the projects are based on the needs of the people as voiced through their neighborhood advisory councils. This allows us to focus our money and efforts on the greatest needs of the Iraqi people."

Although many projects, millions of dollars later, have improved the lives of countless Iraqis, Gayton said there is still much work to be done, and millions of Iraqis who still need essential services.

"Iraqis are taking the lead [in providing essential services]," he said, adding that the Amanat, or municipal authority, oversees many of the projects that are completed or in the works. "These projects are contracted by Iraqis, supervised by Iraqis, and worked on by Iraqis.

"They are building a new Iraq for the good people of Iraq."

The place to access the latest MNF-I/MNC-I news, information and policies, is online. Check out www.mnf-iraq.com to stay informed.



## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Army announces new Combat Action Badge

WASHINGTON — A Combat Action Badge will soon be available to all Soldiers who engage the enemy in battle.

Although the Close Combat Badge was once considered an option, Army leadership created the CAB instead to recognize all Soldiers who are in combat. They said the decision was based on input from leaders and Soldiers in the field.

“Warfare is still a human endeavor,” said Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, Army chief of staff. “Our intent is to recognize Soldiers who demonstrate and live the Warrior Ethos.”

The CAB may be awarded to any Soldier, branch and military occupational specialty immaterial, performing assigned duties in an area where hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay is authorized, who is personally present and actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy, and performing satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement.

Commanders at the rank of major general will have award authority for the CAB.

The CAB is distinct from other combat badges, officials said. The Combat Infantryman’s Badge, or CIB, and Combat Medical Badge will remain unchanged, they said.

The Army will release an administrative message outlining exact rules and regulations for the CAB in the near future, officials said.

Although the final design of the CAB has not yet been released, officials said the award should be available this summer through unit supply and for purchase in military clothing sales stores.

For additional information, see the soon-to-be-operational Web site at [www.army.mil/symbols/combatbadges](http://www.army.mil/symbols/combatbadges). (Army News Service)

## DoD to resume Anthrax vaccinations

WASHINGTON — The Department of Defense announced May 3 a resumption of its Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program (AVIP) under the conditions set forth in the emergency use authorization issued by the Food and Drug Administration Jan. 27.

Based on the implementing memorandum signed by the under secretary of defense for personnel and readiness on April 29, military commanders may resume the vaccination program upon authorization by their service. The directive memos also will be available at: <http://www.anthrax.mil/eua>.

The implementing program requires commanders to follow EUA conditions very carefully, providing members of the armed services both education on the program and an option to refuse the vaccination without penalty.

Dr. William Winkenwerder, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, said this directive “is a significant step that allows the department to resume this vital protection measure for military personnel, who are at increased risk of exposure to an anthrax attack. We are pleased to be able to again protect our personnel against anthrax.”

On April 6, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia granted the government’s motion to modify the court’s AVIP injunction against mandatory anthrax vaccination from Oct. 27, 2004. This modification allowed the department to resume its anthrax vaccine program to prevent inhalation anthrax for designated personnel.

Once vaccinations begin, DoD will provide an education and information program, including an FDA-approved brochure, to inform potential vaccine recipients and healthcare providers that FDA has authorized the emergency use of anthrax vaccine to prevent inhalation anthrax. Personnel will also be informed about the vaccine’s benefits and side effects before they are asked to decide about vaccination.

## Key Zarqawi aide captured

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Multi-National Forces conducted a raid in western Iraq capturing the Qa’idat al-Jihad Fi Bilad Al-Rafidayn (QJBR) Amir of Rawah, Ghassan Muhammad Amin Husayn Al-Rawi April 26. Ghassan Amin was one of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi’s key associates; he served to coordinate meetings for other senior QJBR members, facilitated movement and meetings for Zarqawi in the Rawah region, facilitated movement of foreign fighters, and allegedly was responsible for terrorist activity resulting in the murder of innocent Iraqis.

MNF conducted three consecutive raids in late April to capture Ghassan Amin and his followers. In the first raid, multi-national forces discovered a car bomb factory three kilometers west of Rawah linked to Ghassan Amin.

Four vehicles being prepared as car bombs with approximately 200 bags of ammonium phosphate, two DSKH 38/46 12.7 mm machine guns and ammunition were found inside the warehouse. Coalition forces destroyed the warehouse and its contents to prevent their use in manufacturing a variety of bombs to be used by the terrorists. As reported just three days later, AMZ’s network claimed responsibility for the multiple car bombs that were detonated throughout Iraq April 29.

In the second raid, two of Ghassan Amin’s associates were captured. The third raid of the morning netted Ghassan Amin.

According to statements provided by Iraqi residents of Rawah, Ghassan Amin and his network terrorized the local citizens by stealing cars to convert into bombs and allegedly kidnapping Iraqis for profit to further support the purchase of weapons and ammunition. One male who was temporarily detained due to his proximity with Ghassan Amin during the third raid claimed, “Ghassan Amin runs Rawah and nobody does anything without Ghassan Amin’s approval. Ghassan Amin is well known in Rawah and it is well known that he is part of the mujahideen. Ghassan Amin destroyed the police station and the Headquarters of the Islamic party of Rawah.”

In a raid days prior to capture of the Rawah Amir, forces found several weapons caches buried near a farm belonging to Ghassan Amin. Due to the large amount discovered, the weapons and ammunition were destroyed in place.

Ghassan admitted to meeting Zarqawi once in January and allowed Zarqawi to reside with one of Ghassan’s relatives for approximately five days.

## Abu Ghraib attack planner captured

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Multi-National Forces captured wanted Abu Musab al-Zarqawi terrorist, Amar Adnan Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi, aka Abu al Abbas during an early morning raid in Baghdad May 5.

Among the documents seized with al-Zubaydi were plans to assassinate Iraqi government leaders.

Abu al Abbas was allegedly the key planner for both the April 2 attack on Abu Ghraib and the series of car bomb attacks carried out April 29 within the vicinity of Baghdad. The Zarqawi terrorist network has publicly claimed both the Abu Ghraib attack and the multiple car bomb explosions that killed scores of innocent Iraqis.

Abu al Abbas partially explained the purpose of documents found at his home during the May 5 raid. He confirmed that letters, notes and sketches contained plans and intelligence for an operation to assassinate a prominent Iraqi government official.

In addition to his involvement in assassination plans, Abu al Abbas provided explosive devices, assisted in the preparation of vehicles, selected targets, coordinated for suicide bombers, facilitated foreign fighters into Iraq and orchestrated the execution of several bombing operations in recent weeks to include the Abu Ghraib attack April 2 and the car bomb attacks April 29.

Abu al Abbas confessed to stealing 300 to 400 rockets and more than 720 cases of plastic explosives from a weapons facility in Yussifiyah in early 2003. Abu al Abbas claimed he buried some of the stolen weapons and explosives material at his farm in Yussifiyah and stored the remaining stolen weapons and explosives at two other underground sites located approximately one-and-a-half kilometers from his farm.

Abu al Abbas claimed the stockpile located at his farm was exhausted for use as road and car bombs while Coalition forces found and destroyed the remaining weapons and explosive material buried at the two outlying storage sites.

The recently captured Zarqawi associate admitted to providing explosive devices to Umar al-Kurdi, the notorious bomber responsible for preparing and detonating over 75 percent of all vehicle bombs in Baghdad prior to Umar’s capture Jan 15. Abu al Abbas gave Abu Umar access to his stockpile of explosives during a one month period spanning from December 2004 to January 2005.

*Continued on next page*

## After the VBIED...



Photo courtesy of Task Force Baghdad Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal

**A view of the crater and damage resulting from a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that detonated on Baghdad’s Karradah peninsula May 2. Six Iraqi civilians were killed and 10 wounded during the explosion.**

## NEWS IN BRIEF

In that time frame Abu Umar constructed approximately ten car bombs near or on Abu al Abbas' farm in Yussifiyah. Abu al Abbas claimed Abu Umar and a suicide bomber would each drive a car from Baghdad to his location in Yussifiyah. Abu Umar would then prepare one vehicle for detonation and always instruct the suicide bomber to drive the newly-constructed car bomb back to Baghdad for future attacks.

The capture of Abu Al Abbas prevents one of the most wanted terrorists in Iraq from further terrorizing Iraqis and delaying them from a peaceful and stable environment.

Both Abu al Abbas and another recently captured Zarqawi associate, Ghassan Amin, the former QJBR Amir of Rawah, have provided Iraqi and Coalition forces with significant insight into the Zarqawi network. The most notable details gained from these detained terrorists specifically concern the operations, logistics and locations of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi network members, foreign fighters and suicide bombers within Baghdad and the western corridor of Iraq.

### 54 terrorists netted in Al Qaim raid

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Multi-National Forces initiated operations north of Al Qaim Sunday to capture or kill terrorists within the Abu Musab al-Zarqawi network. Multiple sources of intelligence indicate that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's key lieutenants, suicide bombers and a large population of foreign fighters are located in the region in and around Al Qaim.

In recent months, terrorists operating in the unstable region of Al Qaim attacked Iraqis and Coalition forces, established safe houses and facilitated the movement of foreign fighters, weapons and money from Syria into Iraq.

Simultaneous operations conducted early this morning against identified locations resulted in killing six and capturing 54 terrorists. Coalition forces also destroyed car bombs, bomb-making material and two buildings that contained large weapons caches to include hand and rocket-propelled grenades.

Ghassan Amin, now detained, recently provided significant information regarding operations, logistics and the organization of the Zarqawi network in Baghdad and the western corridor of Iraq. Intelligence sources also indicated terrorists from this area are known to conduct attacks in Baghdad and as far east as Fallujah.

### Task Force Baghdad raids snare 38 terror suspects

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Task Force Baghdad Soldiers stormed through terror networks here, netting 33 suspected terrorists, including two high value targets in a series of early morning raids Saturday.

One of the men captured was a high ranking military officer in the former regime, and is believed to have planned and participated in numerous terrorist activities against Iraqi civilians and Multi-National Forces.

The largest strike of the day on Sunday was at 2:30 a.m. when U.S. Soldiers captured 29 suspected terrorists during a series of cordon and searches operations in south Baghdad.

At approximately 8:45 a.m. Sunday, Task Force Baghdad Soldiers detained five more suspected terrorists. One of the detainees is thought to be the leader of a terror cell in south-

## Up, up and away!



Photo by Cpl. Alicia M. Garcia

**A CH-53E Super Stallion from the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing lifts a Humvee from the flight line of Al Asad, Iraq, to be delivered to infantry units inserted at a forward location. The Humvee will be used by Marines during Operation River Sweep in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 04-06.**

west Baghdad. The Soldiers also found 1,000 rounds of assault rifle ammunition in a burlap bag covered with mud.

### Pesticide spraying to begin May 14

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — The Iraqi government plans to spray date palms for insects beginning tomorrow for approximately one month to revitalize the local date palm industry. The Coalition is working with the Iraqi government to ensure that spraying, which will occur in Baghdad, Divala, Karbala, Hilla, Kut and Najaf, will be safe for local and Coalition personnel.

The planes spraying the pesticide will be CH-801 light airplanes painted yellow with a lateral blue stripe on each side.

All personnel should stay at least 800 feet away from spraying, if possible, and avoid the sprayed area for 24 hours. Carry a poncho or hooded rain gear in case of pesticide drift or if planes spray off-target. The signs of pesticide exposure include sudden headache, shortness of breath, coughing, runny or stuffy nose, nausea, involuntary twitching, chest pain and difficulty breathing. First aid for accidental exposure is to remove the person from further exposure, wash with soap and water and seek medical attention.

## Frequencies

Al Asad	93.3 FM
Ar Ramadi	107.3 FM
Baghdad	92.3 FM
	and 107.7 FM
Balad	107.3 FM
Camp Taji	102.5 FM
Fallujah	105.1 FM
Kirkuk	107.3 FM
Mosul	105.1 FM
Q-West	93.3 FM
Ridgeway	107.1 FM
Sinjar	107.9 FM
Talil AB	107.3 FM
Tikrit	93.3 FM
Taji	107.7 FM



Listen in May to win an EarRadio courtesy of [www.americasupportsyou.mil](http://www.americasupportsyou.mil).

## Worship and Prayer Schedule for the International Zone

### Sunday

9:30 a.m. — Choir Rehearsal  
 10 a.m. — Catholic Mass (3rd BTC)  
 10:30 a.m. — General Christian  
 Noon — Episcopal/Lutheran/Anglican  
 2 p.m. — Latter Day Saints  
 4 p.m. — Catholic Confession  
 4:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass  
 6 p.m. — Contemporary Protestant

### Monday-Friday

Noon — Catholic Mass (Mon.-Thurs.)  
 Noon — Catholic Communion Service (Tues.)  
 5:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass (Fri. at Camp Steel Dragon)  
 6 p.m. — Jewish Shabbat Services (Fri.)  
 7:30 p.m. — Prayer Service (Tue.)  
 8 p.m. — Bible Study (Thurs. at Senior Advisors Conf. Rm.)  
 8:30 p.m. — Bible Study (Wed. at Ambassadors Conf. Rm.)

### Saturday

11:30 a.m. — Catholic Mass (Camp Headhunter)  
 12:30 p.m. — Buddhist Worship  
 4 p.m. — Catholic Confession  
 4:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass

### Daily Islamic Prayer

For more information, call DSN 318-239-8659.

# Civil Affairs unit helps build relationships

Story and photos by  
Pfc. Ferdinand Thomas  
Scimitar Staff

## FORWARD OPERATING BASE ST.

**MICHAEL, AL MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq** — With improvised explosive devices here, vehicle-borne IEDs there and mortar rounds constantly falling around the base camp, FOB St. Michael is part of the three cities known as the 'Triangle of Death.' But Soldiers of Company A, 407th Civil Affairs Battalion, stationed here said where they are based doesn't matter to them.

According to these Soldiers, they have a mission to help strengthen the relationship between the Multi-National Force – Iraq and the Iraqi people, and they are doing that with each mission they accomplish. The Soldiers from Arden Hills, Minn., are responsible for helping the people of Al Mahmudiyah, Al Yusafiyah, Al Rasheed, and Lutafiyah receive potable water. Assisting the Iraqi people with humanitarian aid is their main mission. The 407th has many projects in the works, but their main project

deals with potable water, said Maj. David Langfellow, A Co.'s commander.

"Water is very important, it is the lifeline. The people understand they need water," Langfellow said. "Without water, some of the

Iraqi people are drinking out of the sewers. It's sad. The Mahmudiyah water plant was our first goal. It is the biggest water plant around here and is now rebuilt."

Since then the 407th has also started water pipe projects, Langfellow said.

"Now we have water circulating to 80 percent of the population here."

Water projects may be their emphasis, but the 407th Soldiers help the Iraqi people in many ways.

"We develop projects that put people to work, projects that will develop water plants," Langfellow said. "We build schools and roads. There are missions where we go out and do humanitarian aid. We give out medical packages. We'll give away food packages, toys, book bags, desks and equipment for children and schools. You name it and we do it."

Traveling to different cities passing out supplies door-to-door can have its advantages. Sometimes Soldiers are invited into houses and businesses of the Iraqi people, and they will inform them about their problems. A lot of Iraqi people are living in

houses made of mud, hay and sticks. Some Iraqis live in brick and wood houses or apartments, but many of their appliances and pipes do not work. Numerous locals go through each day without electricity and running water,

according to military officials.

"Most of the homes around here don't have electricity. We are working that angle as well," said Capt. Dennis A. Stancil of Co. A. "Anything that deals with improving the quality of life is the reason why we are here. With time and constant work on these projects, we will accomplish the mission."

Since starting their door-to-door missions, CA troops said they haven't had trouble talking to people. The families are usually a little fearful at first, but then they warm up to the Soldiers after they start talking and receiving gifts, Langfellow said. Soldiers' worst enemies are usually lying on the sides of the roads during their convoys.

"IEDs are our biggest threats. We are provided special jamming devices by the Special Forces of Fort Bragg, N.C.," Stancil said. "We are able to stop most of them. We have been hit twice, so they don't stop everything. There are places we won't go. We try to cover every city in our area of operation though."

Traveling on the ground with the anticipation of an explosion is the worst part of the job, but there are satisfying moments also, said A Co.'s Sgt. Kristine Ringler. "The thing



Sp. Amanda Pieschek, 407th Civil Affairs Battalion, gives a doll to an Iraqi child during one of her humanitarian aid missions.

I like about my job is that it is always different. It is never the same. Sometimes I get to help vaccinate sheep and then the next day I am interviewing the manager of a company. You get to work with a variety of people with different backgrounds, and they all bring different skills to the table."

Using their skills, CA Soldiers help diminish the insurgency, Ringler said. Often families they visit volunteer information about terrorist operations and suspicious activities.

"Our overall mission is to help rebuild this country and help the Iraqi people stand on their own, so they can be self-sufficient," Stancil said. "If we are going to make that happen, it is going to take a civil affairs team to be on the ground to assess the situation. We are adding a piece to the pie. We are winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people by coming out and helping any way we can."



Capt. Katherine Knake and the 407th Civil Affairs Battalion's interpreter discuss how they can help a chicken breeder with his business.

## MEDCAP proves successful in 'Triangle of Death'

Story and photo by Pfc. Ferdinand Thomas  
Scimitar Staff

**YUSAFIYAH, Iraq** — Iraqi women stood their ground and tried to persuade the Iraqi and U.S. security personnel to let them move to the front of the line to enter a primary schoolyard May 1. Children tried to sneak through every nook and cranny. Iraqi men stood back in awe.

One would have thought an entertainer was about to throw a free show or sign autographs, but instead the event happening on the grounds of Al Kessir Alawsat Primary School in Yusafiyah was a medical civil assistance program. Company A, 407th Civil Affairs Battalion Soldiers, organized the program called a MEDCAP, which they said is the most successful out of three they have given.

"We did all the coordination ahead of time, so we could have security there before we arrived. We also had the camouflage nets set up before we arrived to save time," said Spc. Kurt Carlstrom, Co. A.

The primary school's facilities were a plus in treating and supplying close to 200 Iraqi people in need of medical care, medical supplies, hygienic supplies and school supplies. The Soldiers hit the ground with the necessary resources for most medical problems.

Two medics, a pediatrician and a dentist also supported the MEDCAP. The Soldiers set up two stations. One station contained a temporary medical facility, and the other was a giveaway table where Iraqi children could pick up school supplies,

hygiene items and toys. Iraqi people took advantage of the free medical treatment at the field medical facility for three hours. Soldiers supporting it were a little disappointed they could not help more people, they said.

"In this situation, it is sort of two-sided," said Capt. Jennifer M. Rael, pediatrician for the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, who was on staff during the MEDCAP. "With some of the children here, you cannot do everything you want to do to help them. We just don't have the supplies or capabilities to do it here. It makes you feel good that you are helping people though. Seeing the children and their smiles are the best part of my job."

Other Soldiers also described the best parts of their days as



Capt. Joseph Bernier injects anesthetic solution into a Iraqi boy's mouth before starting dental work.

the smiles and thanks they received from the people. Capt. Joseph Bernier, regimental dentist for the 3rd ACR, treated about half of those smiles. He said that to his surprise, it was not hard to work under the conditions and still keep up the hygiene standards. This was his first MEDCAP. Bernier used an interpreter to communicate ways to improve oral hygiene. Dental services were provided to about 100 people, and Bernier pulled 22 teeth.

"This was a lot of teeth to be taken out for the number of people I treated. We let them know that they can hang on to their teeth long-term as opposed to running to a dentist to get them taken out," he said. "If the patient trusts you and feels comfortable, you can do just about anything they need done medically. I was proud to be part of the team. One of the best things that happened to me was when a few children came up and kissed me. They were also saying 'thank you' in Arabic for the services we provided. That was special for me."

Regardless of some of the problems Soldiers encountered, they described these MEDCAPs as memorable moments in their lives. Making an impact on the Iraqi people's lives holds a special place in their hearts and helping win the war on terror, they added.

"We enjoy hanging out and talking to the locals. My Soldiers and I don't have very many opportunities to have a good time with the Iraqi people. When we get the chance, we take advantage of it," said Capt. Leslie Y. Vazquez, team four leader, A Co., 407th CA. "There are a lot of positive things that we do and the biggest is building a relationship with Iraqi people."

# 364th Supply keeps troops mission-ready

Story and photos by Sgt. Misha King  
Scimitar Assistant Editor

**CAMP STRYKER, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Operation Iraqi Freedom consists of endless moving parts, each being essential to the success of the overall mission — the infantrymen fighting the daily battles, the air support moving personnel and cargo, the civil affairs helping the Iraqi people, the engineers rebuilding post-Saddam Iraq. But none of these parts would be moving if it weren't for the logistic companies behind the scenes providing mission-essential support, such as the 364th Supply Company from Fort Bragg, N.C., currently operating at Camp Stryker.

"We actually provide support to the war fighters," said 1st Lt. Cherry Hollensteiner, executive officer of the 364th Supply Co., Logistic Task Force 264. "We're the ones who provide fuel and food, and produce and distribute water to the northern and central Iraq units — Iraqi nationals and Coalition American forces — as well as provide convoy support. Before we came to Stryker, we were in An Najaf providing support to nine forward operating bases throughout southern Iraq."

Most companies, whether military or civilian, are like vehicles — they have a multitude of components, each performing specific functions that are all crucial to their overall performance. The 364th is an example of these components working together to keep the vehicle moving.

"We play a big part in the mission," said Pfc. Andre R. Moore, Class I (subsistence) yard specialist. "In the Class I yard, we stock, inventory and warehouse bottled water, [meals ready to eat], and heat-and-serve rations. We keep these Class I [materials] ready on a daily basis to be distributed to the troops."

Since arriving in-theater June 2004, Hollensteiner said the 364th has traveled over 30,000 miles in more than 250 convoys and transported over two

million gallons of fuel to various FOBs throughout Iraq. But these impressive statistics would not have been possible without the wheels of the vehicle: the maintenance section.

"I keep all the Humvees, [light medium tactical vehicles], and the tankers operational," said Spc. Christopher Pesta, one of the 364th mechanics. "I feel field mechanics are probably the most important part of [our] mission because the troops can't do their jobs without fuel and water. We have to keep the trucks rolling and keep them on the road to get these things to the troops."

But providing mission-essential materials is only part of what makes the 364th one of the hottest cars on the block. The diverse training backgrounds and experiences of its Soldiers in contrast to their

assigned duties is what sets it apart from the others.

"We have a mixture of [military occupational specialties] in our company," said Hollensteiner. "We have crane operators, supply sergeants, water supply specialists, petroleum specialists, mechanics and cooks, and they've all gone on convoys to support the mission, regardless of their MOS. For example, our supply sergeants are gunners, and our E6s and above are convoy commanders."

Although the 364th's troops

are not infantry-trained, they are Soldiers first and prove it on their day-to-day missions. "I'm proud of my Soldiers," Hollensteiner boasted. "They're not school-trained for their [current] jobs and they're not infantry-trained, yet they go out

and support the mission. They don't complain and they get the job done. They get as much road-time as the combat arms troops do."

Like the saying goes, all good things must come to an end. Even though the 364th is preparing for its return to Fort Bragg next month, Hollensteiner said her company will leave Iraq with more than they came with.

"I think we've all grown a lot since we've been here," she said. "I think the most

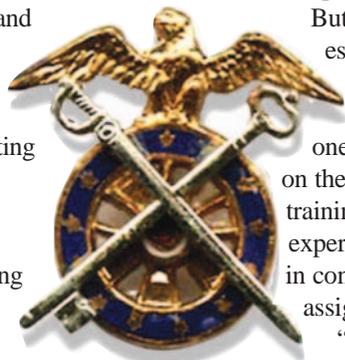
important thing we've learned is to trust each other and to trust leadership. When you've traveled as much as we have and have done that much support, it would be a definite setback if the Soldiers didn't have good leadership."

Good leadership keeps the wheels greased and the vehicle on the road. And at the end of the trip, the sense of accomplishment is worth the thousands of miles traveled.

"We've done a lot — a lot more than a lot of companies can do together," said Moore. "It gives me a lot of pride knowing we weren't out here just doing nothing, like it's a waste of time or we shouldn't have been here. I know we were here for a reason, and I'm glad I was a part of it."



**Sgt. Anthony Chavis, mechanic and power generation non-commissioned officer in charge for the 364th Supply Co., cages brakes on a tanker after it came back from a supply run.**



**Sgt. Charles Jerkins, a Class I (subsistence) noncommissioned officer in charge for the 364th Supply Co., Logistic Task Force 264, asks his supervisor a question before he loads a pallet of bottled water onto a truck for transport to another forward operating base.**



SGT. Joseph Renteria from Yakima, Wash., works to stabilize a Soldier while transporting him to the nearest Combat Support Hospital. The patient suffered from head trauma and seizure at Forward Operating Base Cobra.

# Caldwell Air Medevacs

## Responding to FOB Cobra Soldier in need

Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn  
Scimitar Staff

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE CALDWELL, DIYALA, Iraq** — Troops of the operations office scrambled to action as aviation Soldiers of the 54th Medical Company, Air Ambulance out of Fort Lewis, Wash., rushed to respond to an urgent nine-line medical evacuation request.

Chief Warrant Officer Eric Bray, pilot of Brewmaster 07, grabbed his gear and ran to the flight line. Bray was heading out to get the UH-60 ready. "During a medical evacuation (commonly referred to as a 9-line) I run out to the aircraft and prepare it for departure," said Bray.

Pilot-in-Command of the medical evacuation, Chief Warrant Officer Rodney Merrill, was right behind him.

At forward operating base Cobra, a Soldier had a seizure, passed out and suffered head trauma. As Brewmaster 07 was inbound to Cobra, the medic Sgt. Joseph Renteria from Yakima, Wash.,

was preparing the materials needed to stabilize the Soldier until they transferred him to a medical facility.

The helicopter flew low and to the nape of the earth.

A Humvee field ambulance waited and several Soldiers rushed out to guide Brewmaster 07 to the landing zone.

Renteria and Spc. Joseph Losee, of San Jacinto, Calif., jumped out and rushed over to the Soldiers and ambulance. Renteria discussed the patient's status. On the count of three, the Soldiers picked up the litter patient and rushed to the side of the helicopter, placing him inside.

"I had to hook the patient up to a Pro Pack Monitor to check his heart rate and run an electrocardiogram because his pulse was running high and was abnormal," said Renteria.

"A normal heart rate is 60 to 80 beats a minute; his was 150. I put some pressure infusers on him and gave him some Valium to ease the seizures."

Medical staff of the 332nd Combat Support Hospital at FOB Anaconda were waiting. They rushed to the side of the helicopter and off-loaded the patient, escorting him safely into the medical facility. Renteria quickly informed medical staff of the patient's condition and medications he had been given.

Brewmaster 07 then lifted off and returned to FOB Caldwell, arriving more than two hours after its crew

received the medevac request. As the crew shut the helicopter down, they restocked oxygen and medical supplies they had used.

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*"It's a team effort. The focus is getting the aircraft to the patient and the patient to the medical facility."*

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Chief Warrant Officer  
Rodney Merrill

"It's a team effort," said Merrill. "The focus is getting the aircraft to the patient and the patient to the medical facility." The medic's job is to stabilize the patient en route, Merrill said. Renteria nodded in agreement and said the Soldier should be OK.



A stretcher team of 278th Tennessee Army National Guard troops being supervised by air medic SGT. Joseph Renteria (center background) carry a Soldier who had a seizure, to a waiting medevac helicopter from the 54th Medical Company, Air Ambulance, from Fort Lewis, Washington. The 54th Medical Company is based at forward operating base Caldwell.

# Company B engineers build Endurance

Story and photos by Maj. John House  
30th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE ENDURANCE, AL QAY-YARAH, Iraq** — It is known as “Q-West,” owing the difficult-to-pronounce name of the nearby city of Al Qayyarah in northern Iraq. The base, a relic of Saddam Hussein’s former military machine, has slowly deteriorated from years of neglect.

Now Forward Operating Base Endurance, the base is undergoing significant upgrades thanks to Company B, 463rd Engineer Battalion, U.S. Army Reserve, Weirton, W.V. The upgrades include construction of a guard tower, grading the staging area at the entry control point, building berms and roads for a fuel tank farm, and renovating several barracks.

“Q-West needed to have work done,” said Brig. Gen. Thomas Lawing, commander of the 30th Engineer Brigade, North Carolina National Guard, which is higher headquarters for the 463rd. Lawing and his staff did a site assessment in February. “You could not drive through the fuel farm; you couldn’t drive through the ECP — people got stuck; you couldn’t operate the fuel farm effectively.”

Lt. Col. Robert Clark, deputy commander of the 917th Corps Support Group, the primary tenant organization, added, “We had to make the ECP accessible to 300-plus trucks a day. We didn’t have the visibility we needed from the tower — it did not meet force protection standards. And, we didn’t have adequate troop housing.”



**Sgt. Daniel Bigelow wields his hammer on the improved guard tower at the entry control point at Camp Endurance in northern Iraq.**

Engineers of the 30th’s Construction Management Section analyzed the site assessment data to determine what type of effort the overall job required in terms of personnel and equipment.

The 463rd Engineer Battalion has three combat-heavy companies capable of undertaking horizontal (earth-moving) and vertical (building) engineer missions.

“Company B was the first line company that successfully



**Spec. Christopher Grole (left) and Spec. Warren Chestang team up to install a new electric panel in one of the “quads” at Camp Endurance.**

completed their holdover projects from our predecessors [at Logistics Support Area Anaconda].” The company was “primed to tackle very similar work ... at FOB Endurance,” said Lt. Col. Bruce Hackett, battalion commander.

Capt. Timothy Gale, B Co. commander, a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom I, was eager to take on the mission. We’re here to “improve the [base] infrastructure,” said Gale. He observed that his company was perfectly suited for the task. “This is the best utilization of [engineer] equipment I’ve seen in theater.”

The new wooden guard tower at FOB Endurance will be 30 feet tall, weigh 37 tons, and rest on a 15-ton concrete base. It will have two tiers.

It’ll be one of the “largest wooden guard towers in all of Iraq,” said 2nd Lt. Eric Bowser, 2nd platoon leader, who helped design and build it.

“A .50-cal. [machine gun] position looks out over the wire, and an M-249 [machine-gun] position covers the ECP,” said Staff Sgt. Paul Pivic.

As many as 300 or more tractor-trailers can arrive at Q-West ECP on a single day. The camp had to have “a staging area for inbound convoy trucks before they proceed through the inspection lanes,” said Sgt. Joshua Kerr.

D7 bulldozers and 130G load graders team up to “cut down the grade,” Kerr said. The dozers are equipped with “laserplane” systems, “which enable us to grade the dirt precisely where we need it [for drainage],” he said.

A Hyex excavator removes excess dirt that can be used at other project sites.

One such site is the bulk fuel storage area. “Our job consists of taking the existing field, bringing it to grade, initially. Then, we

start with the placement of the [four-sided] berms,” said 1st Lt. William Irwin, 3rd platoon. “When the berms are done, the quartermaster company can install the plastic liners and the bags.”

The 3rd platoon is also improving the access roads. The result of this effort “makes it faster and safer to transfer fuel,” said Sgt. Laverne Overton, 50th Quartermaster Company out of Fort Carson, Colo.

The 59th receives fuel from civilian trucks from Turkey and issues bulk fuel to three transportation companies for distribution to Coalition forces throughout northern Iraq.

When completed, the area will store 120, 50,000 gallon fuel bladders, effectively “doubling our storage capacity,” Clark said.

Much of the earth-moving work is being accomplished by the Soldiers and machines of the 1436th Construction Support Equipment Company, Michigan National Guard. They’re working with a sense of urgency, because “there’s a lot of fuel backlog,” said Staff Sgt. Anthony Alvesteffer.

One workhorse on the job is the 621 B scraper, or pan, which can move more than 17 cubic yards of soil.

“We’re moving 100 pans a day, average,” said Alvesteffer.

Keeping the equipment functioning in the desert environment is a challenge for B Co.’s maintenance platoon.

“Dust and debris cause problems,” said Spc. Sarah Grubb, one of the mechanics. The equipment “needs a lot of replacement parts.”

“Being so far from our supply chain” has posed some problems added Gale. “But the maintenance platoon is doing a great job keeping things running.”

Tents and aircraft hangars provide temporary shelter for many Soldiers at FOB Endurance. That translates to a critical housing shortage. To help alleviate the shortage, B Co. is renovating 16 “Quads” — four-bay barracks — and bringing them up to hygiene and force-protection standards. Each quad, when complete, will house 64 Soldiers.

That’s “housing for [over] 1,000 Soldiers,” said Gale.

“We completely gut the buildings, concrete the windows, install all new electric, including ceiling fans, lighting and air-conditioning,” said 1st Lt. Matthew Slyder, 1st platoon leader. The platoon also clears debris from roofs, courtyards and guts the shower area. “The new tenants can use the former shower area for offices, supply storage, or a common area,” said Slyder.

Each quad renovation requires 900 two-by-fours, 400 sheets of plywood, 200 bags of cement and 20 rolls of wire, depending on the size of the spool.

Obtaining building materials is always a challenge because of scarcity and the danger involved in transporting it, Gale said.

Gale is proud of his Soldiers for meeting the challenges. “They take the mission seriously, stay on schedule, and get the job done,” he said. “Building Endurance is their business.”

## Soldiers shepherd sheep to needy Iraqis

Story and photo by Pfc. Dan Balda  
4th Brigade Combat Team  
Public Affairs

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Sgt. Luis Herrera, a fueler assigned to Forward Support Company, 4th Battalion 64th Armor Battalion, normally spends his days bringing ammunition and fuel to Soldiers in need.

The cargo he brought to needy residents of the al Sayiah and al Marouf districts April 20 was not bullets and gas, but something that is going to help us win the war. The cargo, you ask?

Twenty-five sheep, driven around by a local butcher, were delivered to families that a civil affairs team had sought out a week before. These families had anywhere from 20 to 25 people living together under one roof and could use the help, said Staff Sgt. Daniel MacDonald, Company B, 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion team sergeant.

“These people have been hurting for a long time,” Herrera said. “It’s nice to give them something back in addition to freedom, which is not a bad thing by itself.”

The logistics of the operation was the easy part. The hard part was getting the stubborn sheep out of the back of the truck to the families. MacDonald, a police officer from Philadelphia, has not had much hands-on contact with sheep in the past.

“It’s definitely a new experience,” MacDonald said. “I don’t know if the sheep knew what was going on, but there was no way they were going to cooperate with going to the families.”

Besides helping the residents, MacDonald enjoyed the comedy inherent in a bunch of city boys wrangling sheep.

“We got to see the look on the company commander’s face when we told him he had to hand the first sheep out,” MacDonald said. “That, and the sheep bumping into the Soldiers,

was pretty funny.”

MacDonald enjoyed himself, but there were still hard parts involved in the mission.

“The crowds were the only difficult part,” MacDonald said. “There are a lot of poor needy people in Baghdad, and whenever you’re giving stuff out, there’s never enough for everyone. You feel bad that you can’t help everybody.”

Herrera, a New York native, was glad to get outside of the FOB and help the people he flew halfway around the world to protect.

“I want to come out here and do stuff like this as much as I can,” Herrera said. “I just like meeting people, seeing how the rest of the world lives. Being away from home is hard, but seeing how the people live here, and you get to put a smile on their face, that makes it all worthwhile.”

MacDonald said he would like to do something similar to donating sheep in the future.



**Spec. Brendan Piper, a civil affairs specialist with the 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion, carries a stubborn sheep to a needy family April 20, during Operation Sheep Drop.**

“We could probably do it bigger and better next time if we get the chance,” he said. “We all like handing the sheep out better than the other animal donations we’ve had. Donkeys and frozen chickens are a lot harder, believe me.”

# 42 ID PREPARING FOR SALAMI ASSAULT

Story and art by Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn  
Scimitar Staff

## FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq

— “I just want a sandwich named after me, like a Rothman Reuban or something,” said Capt. Michael Rothman from Melville, N.Y. Other Soldiers sitting outside the division tactical command post roared with laughter.

Rothman is the judge advocate general for Brig. Gen. Paul

Genereux and is the acting JAG representative in the DTAC. He said he has quickly become the butt of good-natured jokes and ribbing from his fellow Soldiers at FOB Danger.

Major U.S. media networks featured a story about a deployed Soldier's family and the owners of a neighborhood deli making good on an enormous edible promise, May 3.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn

**Unwitting celebrity Capt. Michael Rothman and his officer in charge, Maj. John Andonie, ham it up for the camera.**

That promise was to deliver a whole salami for every Soldier in the 42nd Infantry Division based in Tikrit. The first 2,000 of an estimated 23,000 salamis are now on their way over, weighing in at more than two tons.

Hobby's Deli in Newark, N.J., is owned by Marc and Mike Brummer, who organized the edible care packages. Mike Brummer and Rothman have been best friends for more than 20 years and were also college roommates.

The idea began at Fort Drum, N.Y., when the unit was

mobilizing and Brummer wanted to do something nice for the troops, said Rothman.

“We thought it was a joke,” said Sgt. Jason (last name withheld for security). Jason is the operations noncommissioned officer for the DTAC. “Early on he talked about it, then it escalated to this massive thing. We are going to be overrun by salamis,” exclaimed Jason.

Brummer's father, Sam, a World War II vet, recalled receiving a salami about once a month from home while in France. The salamis held up well in adverse conditions and were a big hit with the troops. The Brummer family and Rothman's father thought it would be popular with the troops now.

The Brummers, Rothman's father, and the local community teamed together to make the project happen. “The guys at Hobby's Deli aren't making a dime,” said Rothman.

Rothman's father helped circulate fliers the Brummers printed; \$10.00 purchases a salami, real deli mustard, postage and a letter to a Soldier. The Newark post office donated the boxes for shipping. Newark Mayor James Sharpe even held a salami departure ceremony, said Rothman.

“We all thought it was a joke until until we saw it on the news,” said Maj. John Andonie from Albany, N.Y. Andonie is the officer in charge of the DTAC and one of Rothman's friends.

Andonie said the troops already receive positive support, but the salamis will be something many of the Soldiers in Tikrit and other FOBs will look forward to.

“It's a fun thing to do,” said Rothman as he talked about the

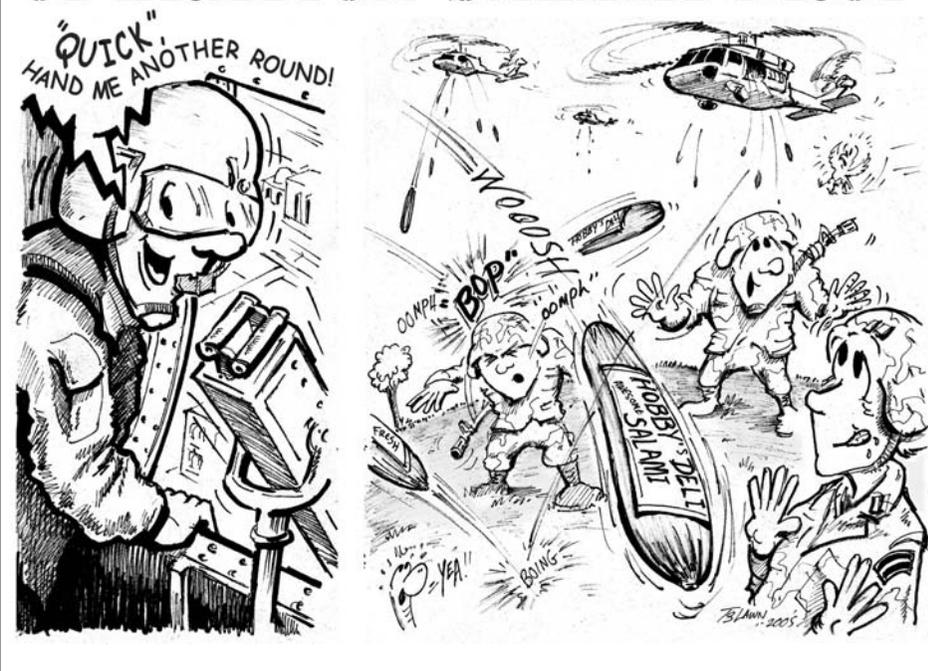
community rallying to help the troops. “To get something that is an authentic piece of home is really cool, and if we ever run out of illumination rounds, we can use salami.”



Courtesy photo

**The first batch of more than 2,000 salamis, two tons in all, hangs on the wall in Hobby's Deli.**

## OPERATION SALAMI DROP



## Artillery Soldier serves in Iraq 3 times



**Staff Sgt. Carl Antoine points out to a police recruit what can and cannot be kept during the two-week training academy class.**

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn  
Scimitar Staff

## FORWARD OPERATING BASE DAN-

**GER, TIKRIT, Iraq** — “Not again,” said Staff Sgt. Carl Antoine when he found out he was going back to Iraq for a third time. From Operation Desert Storm to Operation Iraqi Freedom I, and III. Antoine, from Hinesville Ga., can't seem to stay away from Iraq.

In Desert Storm, Antoine served as an artillery gun section chief, and in OIF I, he served as an artillery battalion ammunition section chief. Antoine went on to become a drill sergeant at Fort Sill, Okla., training American Soldiers. Now, he is with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery Regiment, applying his drill sergeant skills to train the new Iraqi Army and police at the Iraqi Academy.

Most of the recruits seem pretty motivated, he said.

During his previous two tours, Antoine said he was not sure how he felt about the Iraqi people. He had doubts whether they could be a peaceful and prosperous nation. Now he has a completely different opinion, he said.

“By the type of questions they ask, it seems they really want to learn,” he said of the recruits.

Antoine has taught three Iraqi Army basic training courses and two, two-week police academy courses.

“He has a strict drill sergeant mentality when he is trying to get his message across,” said Staff Sgt. Todd Griffin, a combat medic, of the Army Reserve 95th Division from Texas.

“When we were sent over, we were told to train ourselves out of a job. We train the trainer,” said drill sergeant Griffin. The Iraqi sergeants do all the teaching now; U.S. Army drill sergeants step in and assist them only when necessary.

The recruits begin their training in the

classroom and then move to practical application in various training scenarios.

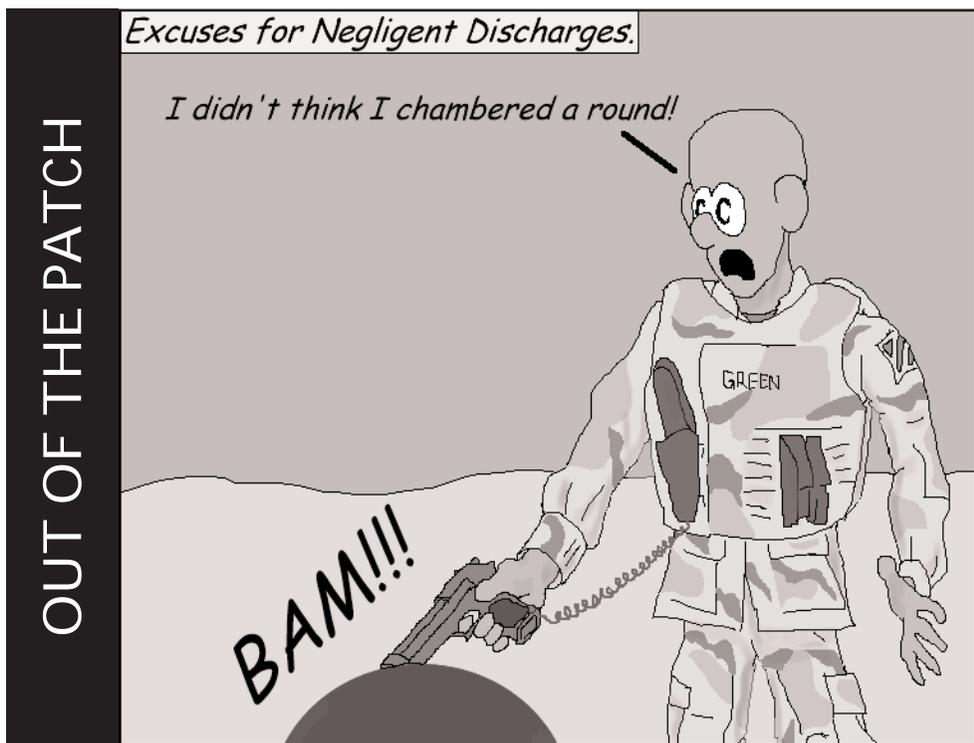
Antoine oversees the training, which includes exercises from search and seizure, ranges, police ethics, values and more, and teaches recruits to think on their feet.

“Antoine is doing more mentoring now,” said Maj. Donald Mcardle, of the 1/127th Armor Battalion of the N.Y. Army National Guard, and the academy's commandant. “He has the right spark to get everybody motivated.”

Antoine said he believes the Iraqi people are destined for better days. He recalled an event he witnessed during his last basic training cycle that took place between an Arab and several Kurds. “The Kurds have to listen to Arabic cadence, and the Arabs have to teach them,” Antoine said. It was pretty nice to see three Kurds and an Arab practicing their drill and ceremony, he said.

“They are taking their own and their families' lives in their hands. I respect them a heck of a lot for that,” he said.

# Scimitar Slapstick

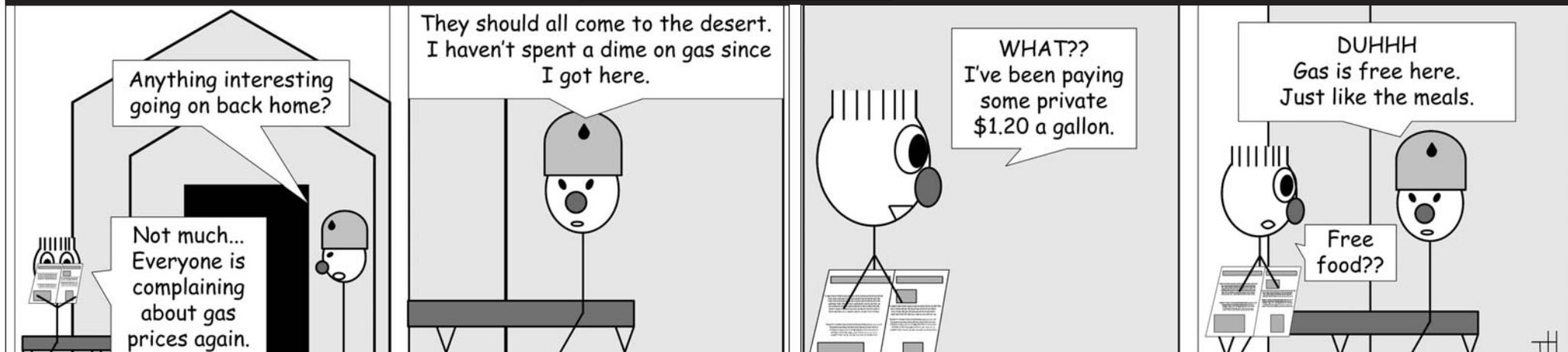


Art by Chief Warrant Officer Mark J. Hart



Art by Maj. James D. Crabtree

## Downrange



Art by Jeffery Hall

# AIR CAV - YOU CALL WE HAUL!



**CAB CO.**



Dedicated to all the pilots and crews in theater!

Art by Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn

# DRINK WATER



# ISF, Marines branch out during 'Operation Badlands'

Story and photos by  
Cpl. Mike Escobar  
2nd Marine Division

**SAQLAWIYAH, Iraq** — The metallic grinding sound of assault amphibian vehicles and the rumble of truck engines cut through the silent, early morning air as dozens of armored transports penetrated the town.

The vehicles offloaded armed Marines and Iraqi Soldiers at various points throughout the town. They rushed into the pitch black streets and nearby homes, setting up hasty positions from which to operate.

This was the scene of the pre-dawn hours here April 12, when Iraqi Security Forces, Marines with 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment and supporting mechanized elements from Regimental Combat Team 8 moved to secure the town of Saqlawiyah and establish a base of operations.

ISF personnel and Marines from Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment are operating just northwest of Fallujah conducting security and stability operations to root out insurgent activity and illegal weapons caches.

According to Capt. Ed Burns, the battalion's assistant operations officer, the Iraqi and U.S. forces have thus far apprehended several known terrorist supporters.

The Bethesda, Md., native added that Saqlawiyah is one of the major areas outside Fallujah where terrorists could attempt to regroup.

The 1997 Arizona State University graduate also said this town can serve as a key transportation location for insurgents due to its proximity to bigger cities like Ramadi and Mosul.

As part of their mission, ISF and A Co. personnel will remain entrenched here. The troops will continue to fortify their base of operations and constantly conduct joint Iraqi-American patrols throughout the area.

"We're just going to keep on doing basic counter-insurgency operations," stated Staff Sgt. Jason A. Rockwell, 2nd Platoon's platoon sergeant.

The New London, N.H., native added that along with these operations, the troops work with civil affairs Marines to help rebuild the community here.

Team 3, Detachment 2, 5th Civil Affairs Group, the CAG team in direct support of 1st Bn., 6th Marine Regt. operations, patrol with the ISF and A Co. Marines to speak with the Iraqis and assess their needs. The team helps the population rebuild its infrastructure by determining what facilities, such as water pumps and power stations, need to be replaced or restored.

Rockwell also said the Iraqi Soldiers are instrumental in



**Maj. Chris E. Phelps, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment's civil affairs team leader, shakes hands with local farmers while patrolling alongside Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment personnel in Saqlawiyah. Civil affairs Marines are assessing the community to determine what utilities and services the locals need.**

accomplishing these counter-insurgency operations.

"They're good Soldiers, and we work well with them," he continued. "They help with things that we might be unfamiliar with in the area and help us talk to the people to make sure they know we're here to help and not hurt them in any manner whatsoever."

ISF personnel are present in every patrol and raid the battalion conducts.

"The ISF are a huge asset on patrol," stated Sgt. Richard W. Shelp, the squad leader for 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon.

"They speak the language, and they know when something's just not right. If a guy starts speaking Arabic and he's from Syria, we wouldn't know, but they do."

Rockwell added that the local Soldiers already helped Marines apprehend a terrorist supporter early in the deployment at one of Fallujah's vehicle entry control points.

"They can tell by looking at vehicles where they're from, and which ones might be

bad," he continued. "Just by talking to the people and picking out their dialect, they can tell who's from around here, and who shouldn't be here."

Burns agreed with Rockwell's assessment.

"We try to spin our Marines up on Iraqi culture before deploying, but when we get here, there are still big gaps to be filled. I was lucky enough to be stationed in Saudi Arabia last year, living with Arabs and learning the culture. Unfortunately, that's not available to lance corporals on the ground, so they (ISF personnel) help facilitate more

of this cultural learning."

Pvt. Kaiser Mohssen Ali, a Soldier with the Iraqi Army's 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment, 1st Brigade, said he feels happy to work alongside U.S. forces to contribute to this cultural understanding and help secure Saqlawiyah. "I like serving my country to help make it safe. We are working to build the country up. If we don't do it, who will?"

Ali added that along with patrolling, he mans guard and observation posts, conducts raids alongside Marines and fellow ISF Soldiers and serves as a driver for his company.

"I worked for four months with the Marines in Fallujah before coming out here," he continued. "I feel comfortable with them and all the Soldiers around me."

Days after the initial push into the small rural town, the sounds of mechanized transports have been replaced by "Hey, mister," the common greeting of the children to patrolling troops.

Residents now walk the city streets beside their own nation's Soldiers on patrol. With the vigilant eyes of the Soldiers and Marines overseeing the village, Saqlawiyah's residents can sleep easy and look forward to a brighter future free from terrorists.



**ISF Pvt. Kaiser Mohssen Ali stops while patrolling alongside Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment personnel to direct city traffic away from the patrol.**



**A Marine with Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, directs his patrol as they walk through a dirt path in search of insurgents and illegal weapons.**

# Cancer survivor brings 'Walk for a Cure' to Iraq

Story and photos by Pfc. Matthew Clifton  
Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

**LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA SPRING LAKE, CAMP TAQQADUM, Iraq** — "It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching." — Saint Francis of Assisi (1181-1226).

Soldiers from the 620th Corps Support Battalion, 1st Corps Support Command, Fort Bragg, N.C., acted on the words of St. Francis by organizing and participating in a 2-mile cancer walk aimed at raising money for research to find a cure.

Maj. Susan Shapiro, support operations officer-in-charge, 620th CSB, was the catalyst in a string of events that led to the creation of "The 620th Walk For The Cure."

"In 2001, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, and I went through about six months of chemotherapy," Shapiro said. "I received eight treatments of chemo and about six to eight weeks of radiation."

Her entire family supported her, and every time she had a treatment, one of her family members would take care of her in her home, Shapiro said.

Chemo takes a lot out of a person and she was very tired.

"My son had to mature very fast, being 8 at the time. He was there through thick and thin," Shapiro said. "Through all the surgeries and through all of the chemo he was with me."

After the chemo, she became a member of Bosom Buddies, a support group that helps patients get through the strenuous treatments, she said.

"One of the bosom buddies is a very special friend of mine who was going through a rough time," Shapiro said. "She did an Avon Breast Cancer Walk and then turned me on to it. Ever since then, I have been trying to do a walk every year to thank those who supported me and to help raise money for those who have to go after me."

"I did my first cancer walk in 2002 in Atlanta with my cousin," Shapiro said. "The next year I did another walk in Washington with my sisters."

There are usually about four or five walks spread throughout the year, so someone can choose what location they want to go to, or which is closest, Shapiro said.

This year Shapiro intended to walk in Charlotte, N.C., but duty called and she was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, she said.

Her sisters and brother-in-law started the walk by sending a letter to the public relations people at Avon, who got in touch with everybody else, Shapiro said. "My brother and sisters knew I was upset about not being able to do the walk this year, so they decided to do it for me."

Avon was asking for stories, so her brother sent in the story of her surviving cancer and told them she was here in Iraq, Shapiro said. "Over an e-mail between me and my brother-in-law he mentioned he was going to walk for me."

"My sergeant major just happened to be in my office at the time I was reading the e-mail and I told him about it," Shapiro said. "He said, 'Wow, wouldn't it be great if we had a cancer walk in Iraq?'"

With her commander's approval, "We just kind of ran with it," she said. "It's not about me; it's about my family who supported me through chemo and radiation."

"It's hard not to get emotional," Shapiro said.

Just as her family helped with her treatments, they also supported her through the walks she did, Shapiro said. They gave her money to do the walks and have done them with her.

"This year it was nice to be able to say, 'You supported me, and now I am going to support you,'" Shapiro said. "I might be in a different country, but I am doing it."

Walk for the Cure supporter, Staff Sgt. Jason Hall, support operations maintenance sergeant, 620th CSB, said when Shapiro told him about the walk, his thoughts immediately went to his grandmother who died from breast cancer, as well as a

family friend who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. "This issue is close to me on multiple levels," he said. "I was stationed in Germany when I found out that my grandmother had passed away, and I will do anything I can for her memory."

"Maj. Shapiro mentioned several times she could not walk with her family, and here at the 620th we try to make it a family environment," Hall said. "We consider ourselves a family."

"To be able to do the walk over here is a statement in itself to what we can do — what anyone can do — no matter where they are," Hall said. "As long as they have the mind to do it, it can get accomplished."

Hall's role in this event was to get people to sign up, and every time he could, he would ask people if they would participate, he said. "Instead of doing regular physical training, let's take some time out and walk for a cure," he would suggest.

"Maj. Shapiro notified me about the walk, and I went out and made up the signs for the route," said Master Sgt. Arthur Ebert, support operations maintenance sergeant, 620th CSB. "We surveyed the route a couple of times and made sure it was a decent route without any kind of hazardous areas."

"Maj. Shapiro is one of the reasons why I was on this walk," Ebert said. "My dad died of cancer and so did my mother-in-law."

The sooner they find a cure for this, the sooner people



**Maj. Susan Shapiro gives a motivational speech before Soldiers at Camp Taqqadum, Iraq, embark on the "620th CSB Walk for the Cure."**

## Coalition Corner

... highlighting countries  
serving with MNF-Iraq



### Romania

local name: *Romania*

Romania is located in southeastern Europe and borders the Black Sea, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, Moldova, Hungary and Ukraine. It is slightly smaller than Oregon. Over 22 million people live here, and the Leu is their currency system. Romanian is their official language, but Hungarian and German are also widely spoken throughout the country. Romania joined NATO in March 2004 and is projected to join the European Union in 2007.

Romania is full of enough historic sites and famous legends to fill an entire library. Once known as "the Paris of the East," Bucharest, the capital, is home to the 12-story Palace of Parliament, which is second to the Pentagon for the title of largest building in the world. Surrounded by beautiful Transylvanian hills, Brasov is one of Romania's most visited places. The main attraction of this historic city is the Black Church, which is said to be the largest Gothic church between Vienna and Istanbul. Sighisoara, only 30 kilometers from Brasov, is home to one of the most legendary structures — Bran Castle, commonly known as "Dracula's Castle." This tourist trap was the birthplace of Vlad "the impaler" Tepes, who is said to be the basis of Bram Stoker's famous book, Dracula.

Not only does Romania have sites to quench one's thirst for history and legendary characters, it also has an array of foods that would make Dracula himself come off his liquid diet. One such food is sarmale, which is made with a mixture of rice and hacked meat, wrapped in cabbage leaves. Mamagliga, a hard or soft cornmeal mush that is boiled, baked or fried, and is often served with cheese and cream, is especially associated with traditional Romanian culture. Most Romanian lunches are not complete without a bowl of soup, or ciorba, which comes in so many varieties it takes up entire cookbooks.

Romania — yet another piece of the Multi-National Force - Iraq puzzle, dedicated to rebuilding Iraq.



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# Coalition forces compete in Ali Olympics

Story and photos by Sgt. David Foley  
Multi-National Corps - Iraq  
Public Affairs

**ALI AIR BASE, TALIL, Iraq** — As Coalition forces work together fighting the war on terror, fun usually takes a back seat to the missions at hand, but all that changed for a day April 18 in Talil, Iraq.

Service members and civilian contractors from the U.S., Romania, Britain, and Italy took the day off work to compete in the Ali Olympics, where they tested their skills at soccer, basketball, dodgeball, tug-of-war, arm wrestling, table tennis, volleyball and a strongman competition. Many of the competitors then competed in a 26.2-mile marathon that coincided with the Boston marathon the next day.

The Ali Olympics were the brainchild of Capt. Rodney T. Freeman, Base Camp Adder Morale Welfare and Recreation officer in charge, and Air Force Capt. Sabrina Jones, 407th Expeditionary Service Squadron commander.

Freeman, being a New England native, had plans to host a marathon in Talil that would coincide with the Boston Marathon, and Jones was planning a sports day for her Airmen. The two put their heads together, and the Ali Olympics were born.

The Olympics were a good reason for members of the Coalition to spend time together and learn about different cultures, Jones said.

All in all, more than 200 people turned out for the



**Jason Romal (right), U.S. Air Force, arm wrestles Christian Dinkle, Romanian Army, during the Talil Olympics at Ali Air Base, Iraq, April 17. Romal placed first in the event.**



**The Romanian tug-of-war team battles the U.S. Army during the Ali Olympics in Talil, Iraq. Soldiers, Airmen and civilians represented five countries in the daylong competition that included table tennis, basketball, volleyball, arm wrestling, soccer, and strongman contests.**

Olympics, and more than twice that number ran the marathon, which was a complete success, declared Freeman.

Jones said she organized the events based on the availability of resources the base already had, and tried to get as much diversity as possible.

During the first game of the basketball competition, Romanian Soldiers played against U.S. Soldiers despite their lack of practice.

The Romanians, who took first place in the soccer competition and placed second in tug-of-war, table tennis and volleyball competitions, turned out for the basketball with no intentions of winning, but wanted to be a part of all the events.

"It is important to participate in all the games," said Romanian Staff Sgt.

Alexander Mihai, a member of the Romanian basketball team. "We like to talk and make friends, and it is good to take a break from the missions.

"The stress of our missions is sometimes too much," he added. "So it is very good for us to do this."

Mihai said his team was playing basketball just for fun and exercise, but they were serious in the soccer and volleyball competitions.

The U.S. troops also enjoyed the opportunity to spend some time with their Coalition comrades while taking part in some friendly competition.

Sgt. John Dennis, a mechanic with the 206th Corps Support Battalion, 1st Corps Support Command, Fort Bragg, N.C., who was on the U.S. Army basketball team, said he really enjoyed playing basketball against the Romanians and had plans to tell his family about the event.

"It's not every day you can say you played basketball against Romanians in the

## Competition results

### Soccer:

- 1) Romania
- 2) Italy
- 3) Army

### Table Tennis:

- 1) Patrick Mualem, ITT Co.
- 2) Gurin Valentin, Romania
- 3) Mario Mezza, Italy

### Dodgeball:

- 1) Army
- Note: only Army teams competed in the dodgeball competition.

### Strongman

#### Competition:

- 1) Romone Martinez, Army
- 2) Alyn Brown, Army
- 3) Kelley Regan, Army

### Volleyball:

- 1) Air Force
- 2) Romania
- 3) Italy

### Basketball:

- 1) Army
- 2) Air Force
- 3) Army



**Lance Cpl. Rob Butterworth (left) and Sgt. Scotty Mann, both with the British Army, pass a water point during the Boston/Talil Marathon in Talil, Iraq, April 19.**

Olympics," he said.

Dennis and his team went on to defeat all other competitors in the basketball competition and finished in first place. The Army also took first place in the dodgeball tournament and won all three medals in the strongman competition.

By the end of the day, many of the Soldiers, Airmen and civilians had met several people who they would normally pass by on their way to work or lunch, and the Olympics led to many new friendships.

## Survivor

from Page 15

will stop losing loved ones, Ebert said. He said it was rough watching his mother-in-law and father die from cancer, and he doesn't want to see anybody else go through that kind of pain.

"I hope when people see us doing this here, in all of our gear, it will motivate them to get out there with all of the others who are doing it back home," Ebert said.

"We had a lot of supporters who showed up, and there were others that would have liked to have shown up but couldn't because they were called away on other missions," Hall said. "The support was great."

"I hoped for a bigger turnout for the walk, but with all of the missions going on here as well as the heat factor, I think the turnout was great," Shapiro said. "I couldn't have asked for more."

"Through the fears that everybody has from having to do missions, from being in a constant state of threats, from being in a combat zone; I think it is great that we can take time to go take on another enemy," Hall said.

LSA Spring Lake was in a heightened alert status so Shapiro was concerned that they wouldn't even be able to do the walk, she said. The alert status was called off with enough time to do the walk, and thanks to the weather, the walk was very nice.

"It rained here, cooled the place off and got the dust down, so it actually wasn't too hot with all of our gear on," Shapiro said.

"I hope this is something that can continue, because a lot of research needs to be done and a lot of money needs to be raised," Shapiro said. "Everybody can do a little part to raise more money for research to find a cure, and I know in my heart of hearts if they find the cure for one type of cancer, they are going to find the cure for all types of cancer."



**Soldiers from the 620th Corps Support Battalion at LSA Spring Lake, Camp Taqqadum, Iraq, display their banner before beginning the "620th CSB Walk for the Cure" April 15.**