

# TIGER R A C K S

Designed by: Spc. Chris Foster FREE MAIL

256th Brigade Combat Team  
Public Affairs Office

Photo by: Sgt. Thomas Benoit

Please forward to your loved ones  
To:

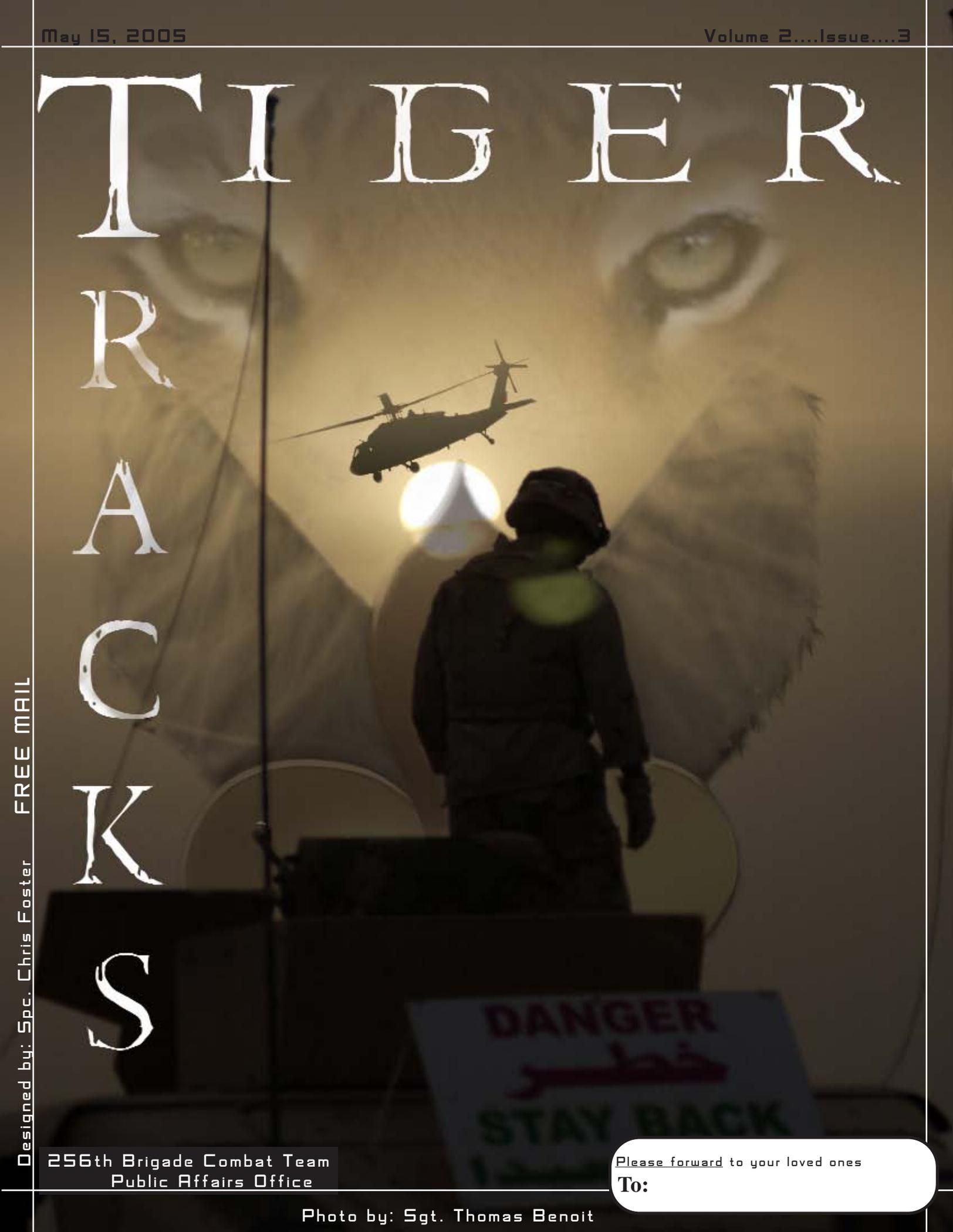


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This Edition

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The *Tiger Tracks* is a publication of the 256th Brigade Public Affairs Office. This Soldier and Family Support Group newsletter contains official information and complies with the provisions of AR 360-81 and AR 25-51. Questions or concerns can be directed to the editor at taysha.deaton@us.army.mil or Soldiers can call VOIP 242-4644.

**BG John Basilica, Jr.**  
256 BCT Commander



As this edition of the Tiger Tracks goes to press, the 256th BCT will have assumed new battle space. This is another milestone event as the Tiger Brigade will now operate in the highly populated urban areas of Kadhamiya and Mansour. This change of battle space will bring

with it some new challenges. As in the past, I am confident that the 256th will adapt and adjust to its new responsibilities and continue the progress of those before us. We must keep the pressure on the insurgents and never let our guard down. Stay focused, and remember that force protection is your No. 1 priority.

The main effort during the upcoming period will be to increase our direct support to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). The new battle space we control is exactly the same as the eventual area the 1st Brigade of the Iraqi Army will ultimately occupy.

Our mission is to complete the manning, equipping and training of five Iraqi Army battalions. We have

## To the Families and Troops

established the framework for this partnership through the creation of Military Transition Teams (MiTTs). Over 200 Soldiers of the 256th BCT will be directly involved and assigned to these MiTTs. We are committed to the success of our Iraqi partners and are on the leading edge of the Marne Division's efforts to establish the 6th Iraqi Division (the Baghdad Division). In addition, we will be working very closely with the Iraqi Police units. Our goal is to assist with their training and to synchronize their efforts with those of the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces.

The extremely hot weather is approaching fast. Remember to stay hydrated and to eat properly. Also, take appropriate precautions and use sun screen to prevent over exposure. Similarly, use insect repellent and wash your hands often to prevent sickness. Always use all elements of your personal protective equipment.

Keep up the great work. Do not relax. Thank you all for your superb performance. Thank you to the Family Readiness Groups for everything that you do for the 256th BCT and its families.

**TIGER BRIGADE!**

### Editor's Note

Dear Soldiers,

I would like to get more feedback from all of you. What do you want to see more or less of in the *Tiger Tracks*? Please remember this publication is yours. If you have photos, story ideas, or even your own submissions, please feel free to email them to us or bring them by the PRD office. Please keep in mind, that not all submissions will be printed, but we will showcase as much of your work as possible. I know there are writers and photographers among you, so please send us your stories and pictures.

I Lt. Taysha Deaton  
256th BCT PRD

**CSM James Mays**  
256 BCT Sergeant Major



Soldiers of the 256th BCT continue to prove their ability to handle themselves in a professional manner. Changes are on the rise, so each Soldier cannot let their guard down. Our Soldiers are facing new terrain and having to adapt to different Tips, Techniques and Procedures.

Leaders at all levels need to embrace the change and ensure our Soldiers are well trained on these new TTPs.

The heat is upon us, the temperature will continue to climb within the next few months. Soldiers at all level need to hydrate themselves by drinking plenty of water. There is no substitution for water. Sports drinks are great, but they do not take the place of water. I expect NCOs to ensure Soldiers have and are drinking water. In addition, Soldiers have to eat right to maintain their body strength.

Uniform standards have not changed since we first arrived in country. I continue to see uniform violations throughout Tigerland. NCOs, I need your help to ensure Soldiers remain in the proper uniform. It is an NCO's business to make on the spot corrections when they see deficiency.

Enlisted Personnel System packets are out. Soldiers need to take the time to ensure their packets are complete. It is a Soldier's responsibility to ensure his/her packet contains all documents to ensure he/she gets their promotion points. If you have not seen your EPS packet yet, take the time and speak to your unit admin NCO.

In closing, I am proud of the outstanding work our Soldiers are accomplishing everyday. We must continue working on bettering our efforts and work close with the Iraqi Army to ensure they are prepared to one day take our place on the battlefield defending the Iraqi people.

*Lt. Col. Robert Baker, Jr.  
256th BCT Chaplain*

Easter is over and Passover is here. Passover, what a great example of God's mercy to the Jewish people and also to us gentiles.

As you recall, the children of Isreal were held as captives, as slaves in the nation of Egypt by the pharaoh of that country. He refused to let the people of the promise land go, even after numerous plagues that deavated Egypt.

Moses, a Jew, raised as a priviledged Egyptian, gave many warnings to the pharaoh to let the people of God leave Egypt and travel to the land which God would show them.

At long last, the pharaoh finally agreed to let Isreal leave, but had a change of heart and went back on his promise.

Finally, the Death Angel visited Egypt. Only the households of those who had blood sprinkled on them were spared.

As the Jews left Egypt, the army of pharaoh gave chase -- the army was drowned in the sea.

Passover has a new testament connected through the lamb of God, even after our Christ Jesus, who is the lamb, was slain from the foundation of the world.

His blood and His sacrifice make it possible for all to be forgiven and be declared righteous by God. Our Christian Baptismal services affirm the fact that Christians, have died with Christ, are buried with Christ and are now raised to newness of life with Jesus Himself, who is sitting on the throne of heaven.

What a joy to know that we worship the king of kings and the lord of lords, that God himself dwells in each believer.

I encourage each of you to make certain of your relationship to Jesus Christ.

I hope that you have allowed Him to sprinkle your life with His shed blood that you may be made right with our Father in heaven.

God Bless each of you. Praise be to God who has liberally given us His love and forgiveness.

### Sunday:

- 0900 Roman Catholic Mass - CH Sanchez
- 1030 Contemporary Protestant - CH Madrid / Gillett
- 1230 Gospel Protestant - CH Baker
- 1500 Traditional Protestant - CH Lucas
- 1900 Non Denominational Christian - CH Staunton

### Monday:

- 0900 "The Gospel of John" - CH Lucas (p)
- 1830 Roman Catholic Mass - CH Sanchez (p)
- 1900 "R.C.M.A. Catechetical Instruction" - CH Sanchez (p)
- 1900 "The Gospel of John" - CH Lucas (c)
- 2000 "Tough Questions Bible Study" - CH Wagenmaker

### Tuesday:

- 1900 "Wild At Heart" (Men's Bible Study) - CH Madrid (s)

### Wednesday:

- 0900 "Old Testament Shadows of Christ" - CH Lucas (p)
- 1800 Catholic Choir practice - SPC Istre (s)
- 1830 Roman Catholic Mass - CH Sanchez (p)
- 1900 Midweek Worship Service - CH Gillett (p)

2000 "Old Testament Shadows of Christ" - CH Lucas (p)

### Thursday:

- 0900 "Gospel According to Isaiah" - CH Lucas (p)
- 1900 Contemporary Praise Team Practice - SPC Istre (s)
- 1900 "Gospel According to Isaiah" - CH Lucas (p)

### Friday:

- 1830 Roman Catholic Mass - CH Sanchez (p)
- 1900 Bible Study - SPC Dotson (c)
- 1900 Catholic Apologetics - CH Sanchez (p)
- 2000 Gospel Choir - Instrumental only practice- SGT Amis (s)

### Saturday:

- 0900 Lutheran Worship Service - CH Lucas (p)
- 1800 Women's Bible Study - CH Madrid (p)
- 1900 Roman Catholic Mass - CH Sanchez (s)
- 1900 Intercessory Prayer Group - Full Gospel Service (c)
- 1900 "Every Man's Battle" - SFC Martin (p)
- 2000 Gospel Choir practice - SGT Amis (s)

(s) = Sanctuary  
(p) = Prayer Room  
(c) = Counseling Room

## '5-25' Campaign Increases IED awareness

**How many people  
does it take to check  
a suspicious vehicle?**



**None.**



**STAY ALIVE**

0046

IEDs KILL

### MNC-I Public Affairs

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

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

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

"IEDs are our number one killers here," said Eric Eglund, who works at the Iraq headquarters of Joint IED

Defeat Task Force at Camp Victory. The task force is responsible for developing innovative ways to rid the country of IEDs.

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

Stockdale, who serves as the equivalent of a colonel in the American Air Force, has been actively working the issue of IEDs and their effects since arriving in Iraq a few months ago.

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

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

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

The group's solution for getting vital information to the forces required three objectives: First, ensure information gets to those troops who need it most; second, develop an effective counter-IED organization that

can take the fight to the enemy; third, produce pinpointed products from one organization which can be approved and delivered in a timely fashion.

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

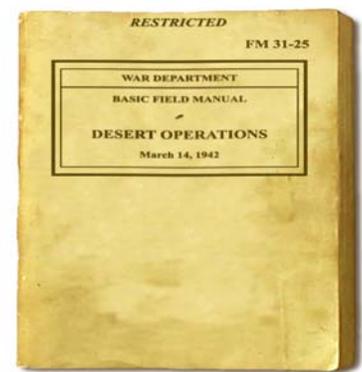
To push information to the troops anywhere and any time trends change, the working group assembled a small team of designers to brainstorm effective ways to get the word out. The first idea also seemed the most obvious one to start the campaign — military publications.

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

"The [designers] suggested we needed to have [a logo] that everybody recognizes," said Lt. Col. Theodore Martin, field team leader, Joint IED Defeat Task Force-Iraq. "5-and-25" became that logo. "The most important thing coalition forces can accomplish is situational awareness

*Continued on Page 9...*

**The enemy regularly  
changes his tactics.**



**Do you?**



**STAY ALIVE**

0003

IEDs KILL

# Photos



Mrs. Baton Rouge supports our troops from Louisiana!

# From Your



Wives of Blacksheep, from L to R, Nicole Sonnier, Susanna Blanchard,

Tiffany Comeaux, Valerie Ockman pose for a picture at a care package workday. Supplies donated from [www.suppliesforsoldiers.org](http://www.suppliesforsoldiers.org).

# Loved



Cherryl Ortego, Dell Hebert, 199th FRG Leader, Ellen Lawrence, Monica Bowen, Sherri Rogers, Dena Scott, and Keisha Etheridge pack care packages for Soldiers of the 199th FSB.

# Ones



Three of the volunteers for the 3-156th golf tournament Angie Allen, Cammi Quinn, 3-156 FAC and A Co., 3-156th FRG leader, Kimberly Clay.

Hello everyone, I wanted to give a quick update on how well the Golf tournament went. We had a great time being around so many people that truly support all of our troops. Everyone was so nice and generous and we couldn't thank them enough. It is not determined just how much money has been raised but after speaking to the DA from Jennings Michael Cassidy it is going to be close to \$20,000. All these proceeds will be split equally among the four companies in 3rd Bn. Mr. Cassidy and Jeff Davis Bank in Jennings sponsored \$2,500 and we had several other companies donate anywhere from \$150 to \$1,000. All the food, drinks, and beer were donated as well. We had several more companies donate door prizes. A company out of



Jennings donated some BBQ pits that were auctioned off to bring in \$1,200. We could not have done this without the help of Jennings country club. The staff was very helpful. On Monday April 25, Cassidy will present our BN POC Darline Parish and the FRG leaders from each company with the check. It will broadcast on KPLC. I would like to thank everyone who was involved. All the money raised will help each company continue to send care packages to all of our soldiers and prepare for their coming home party. Take care and God speed. Our prayers are with each and everyone of you. You make us proud.

Kimberly Clay  
A Co. 3-156th FRG Leader

# Into The Storm

## A day with Team Comanche - Task Force Geronimo

By: Sgt. Daniel Prime  
C Co. 1-156th

On Saturday, April 2, 2005, there was an attack made against United States forces in the Abu Ghraib area of Iraq. The following accounts demonstrate the integrity, teamwork and resolve of our units.

On April 2, there were coordinated attacks carried out against the Abu Ghraib, Team Comanche and units called to assist.

Our area, Western Abu Ghraib, borders the prison and was the epicenter of the diversionary attacks that wounded several of our Soldiers. In the late afternoon, every position and observation post in our area was attacked with multiple weapon systems from multiple positions in an effort to disrupt our ability to defend the Abu Ghraib Prison. Mortar fire landed on top of our observation post on the southern border of our area, and small arms fire was directed at our personnel at that location.

Within minutes of that attack, our M1A1 Abrams tanks were engaged with multiple weapons systems just east of the prison. With the exception of weapons of mass destruction, every enemy offensive was repelled by our forces, in the face of constant RPG, mortar, IED, anti-tank mine and VBIED (car bomb) attacks.

Task Force Geronimo immediately directed surrounding units to render aid while directing division-level air assets, our friends in the Viper Apache units, to help identify and eradicate the enemy. Simultaneously, enemy forces were assault-

ing the prison and being destroyed by the Marines that defend its walls. Our elements adjacent to the prison were engaged by multiple weapons systems while repelling the attacks. Team Comanche put the word out and within a half-hour of the initial attacks, a platoon of M2 Bradleys and a section of M1A1 Abrams were thundering towards our sector to support our brothers. Our company commander, acting executive officer, first sergeant and 80 percent of our vehicles were in-sector engaged in direct close combat with enemy forces.

On that day, Staff Sgt. Michael McCrary was asked to give up the keys to his tank so that 1st Lt. Joseph Carey, our acting executive officer and 2nd platoon leader, could command his tank in part of the Quick Reaction Force. McCrary insisted that if his tank rode into battle, he would be at the helm, and gladly took Carey on for command and control in the loader's place. Having just come off of 12 hours of combat patrols in the most frequently attacked area of operations in TF Geronimo, McCrary volunteered to respond with the QRF and assume normal patrols the next morning with his crew. An hour later the call came from Sgt. Damien Harper that McCrary and Carey were wounded and immediate air medevac was needed.

A vehicle packed with high explosives detonated near their tank while securing a highly-populated checkpoint that was vital in our defense of the prison. As hearts sunk and personal feelings were suppressed, the Soldiers of Team

Comanche sprung into action and defied the odds under enemy fire to save the lives of our wounded. Carey regained consciousness just as the severity of McCrary's wounds were realized. Carey, having temporarily lost his vision from debris from the explosion, managed to get out and pull McCrary out while Harper, the gunner, stabilized his body. In one fluid motion, a Bradley section with some of the finest infantry in all of Iraq was en route to provide security and an on-board medic for the medevac site. With the tank commander semi-conscious, the executive officer in pain and unable to see, and the driver with a head injury, Harper coordinated with other tank sections for the medevac of the injured and defended against the enemy.

Due to the extraordinary efforts of our task organized Soldiers, a friend's life was saved and Team Comanche never lost an inch of position to the enemy.

Under attack, our Soldiers made of infantry, tankers, field artillery, medics, and maintenance, came together as one to accomplish a common mission, upon which our lives depended. My personal perception of the word "teamwork" was shattered and then redefined on April 2.

I have come to realize that teamwork is measured by the success or failure of the unit. Team Comanche and Task Force Geronimo succeeded that night, in what the world news labeled a "heated battle." We succeeded because of teamwork.

## Minnesota Leadership Visits Soldiers of B Co. 134th Signal Battalion



Photo by: Thomas Benoit

By: Spc. Erin Robicheaux

Maj. Gen. Lawrence Shellito, adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard, visited Baghdad, Iraq, on April 22 to discuss the mission of B Company, 134th Signal Battalion, 34th Infantry Division, attached to the 256th Brigade Combat Team.

The day began with breakfast with Soldiers of B-134, followed by a tour of the unit's facilities. Capt. Shelley Hermes, the company commander from Annandale, Minn., said she wanted Shellito to see the good work her Soldiers have done since arriving in Baghdad.

"My purpose was to

have him go to the heart of each platoon, so we took him to certain spots and allowed our Soldiers to brief him on their missions and successes," said Hermes.

Shellito's reaction to the Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System, or JLENS, was a grin from ear to ear. The JLENS is an air surveillance system which allows the operator to see action in the field.

Sgt. Holly Timmer, from Ellsworth, Minn., is a JLENS operator with B-134, and explained the training the unit received while they prepared to deploy.

"He was impressed

**Maj. Gen. Lawrence Shellito, Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard, shakes hands and thanks Soldiers of B Company, 134th Signal Battalion. Shellito traveled to Baghdad to see how his Soldiers were doing.**

with our capabilities and said that we were a good asset that needed to be utilized to our entire potential," said Timmer. "We're the first company in the 3rd ID to work with the JLENS system."

Overall, B-134 is the third group to ever go through the training, and for a while, was the only group in theater trained on the system.

Shellito also toured the B-134 node center, which channels all secured and unsecured voice communication.

Staff Sgt. Marty Byrne, a node center switch supervisor for B-134 from Handover, Minn., said his platoon is very efficient and plays a vital role in the mission of the Army.

"We link between 10,000 to 14,000 phone calls daily, and our phones are up over 99 percent of the time, 24 hours a day and seven days a week," said Byrne.

At the motor pool, Shellito questioned Staff

Sgt. Keven Vonrump, a mechanic with B-134, from Lonsdale, Minn., about the add-on-armor for the humvees. Vonrump described the pros and cons, and along with other Soldiers, gave the General a better understanding of their functions.

Hermes said she believes this was a successful visit, and she feels that Shellito was both satisfied and impressed with the progress.

"He thought we had very intelligent Soldiers who were on top of the situation and experienced at doing their jobs and performing well," said Hermes. He was very happy that we've been as successful and done as much for the brigade as we can. I think he'll take this back to the states."

Shellito described B-134 as a unit that has the ability to get things done, and he particularly emphasized to the unit the need to reflect on their surroundings sometimes.

"As we drove up here, we saw all the events that we've seen on the news for the past two years," he said. "You are living in the middle of history."

**Stay in neck  
defilade when  
in the turret.**



STAY ALIVE

## IED Awareness

Continued from page 5

when they're outside the wire; it is the most basic [tactic] that you have to master."

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

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

"Evidence shows that [many] Soldiers, who are at a short halt [for as little as] four to five minutes, are getting hit by IEDs near their vehicles," Martin said.

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

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

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

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

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

It's not too late to file taxes

# Tax advice for the deployed Soldier

Tiger Brigade Soldiers who are residents of Louisiana may be able to exempt military pay earned outside of Louisiana prior to deployment overseas.

If you served 120 or more consecutive days on active duty, your military pay earned while serving outside of Louisiana is exempt from Louisiana income tax. Example: On May 15, 2004, you went on active duty and continuously remained on active duty at least through September 15, 2004 (120 days), up to \$29,999 of your military pay may be exempt from Louisiana income tax.

The exempt portion is that amount of compensation earned outside of Louisiana during and after more than 120 consecutive days of active duty. In the above example, if you served 40 days in Louisiana and the remainder of duty outside of Louisiana, income from the 41st day forward is exempt once you have served more than 120 consecutive days of active duty.

*Please attach a copy of your official orders that establish more than 120 consecutive days of active duty outside of Louisiana. This state exemption is in addition to the Combat Zone Tax Exemption from Louisiana taxes for service in Iraq.*

If you have already filed your state taxes and failed to claim the exemption, an amended state return can be filed.

If you have not filed your state taxes, May 15 is the state personal income tax filing deadline. Soldiers serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom do not have to file 2004 Federal or State Income Tax returns until 180 days after they return home.

Soldiers requiring assistance with their federal or state personal income tax returns can utilize the Tax Assistance Center at the Division Legal Services Center.

The center is open to all 3rd Infantry Division Soldiers. The NCOIC of the Tax Assistance Center is SFC Russell, who can be reached at 242-4568. Soldiers with personal income tax issues can also contact Capt. Thibodeaux at 242-4918.

- NOTE -

**Tax filing will not end because of deadline. Sgt. 1st Class Russell will assist Soldiers with tax filings until October.**

- NOTE -

Secure the incident site.

A second device could be waiting for you.



**256th BCT Driving to Save Soldiers**

*Confidence Course on Track For Drivers' Safety.*

By: Spc. Chris Foster

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

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

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

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

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

"The driver's training course is designed to provide a Tiger Brigade Soldiers with a

*Continued on Page 18...*



Photo by: Chris Foster

**Above: An M114 Humvee rolls through the training course that is helping the drivers of the 256th BCT improve their driving skills as they face the dangerous terrain conditions on the streets that they patrol**



**Left: Command Sgt. Maj. James Mays, inspects the confidence course as an M114 Humvee roles through one of the obstacles on the course.**

**Once, they see you.  
Twice, you're known.  
Three times you're dead.**

**Don't be predictable.**



**STAY ALIVE**

**FAMILY READINESS GROUP**

(Really Feels Good)

They trained to go answer freedom's call in Iraq.  
 We stayed home and trained to pick-up their slack.  
 They carried weapons in their hands.  
 We stood behind them always ready to lend a hand.  
 Off to war they went to fight.  
 At home we fought our own battles in private, out of the line of sight.  
 They learned defensive measures for when the guns started blazing.  
 We became proficient at different ways of fund raising.  
 They wore their patriotism on their sleeves for all to see  
 We told them we were as proud of them as anyone had the right to be.  
 They did their jobs flawlessly without any inhibition  
 We sent packages, tried to keep their moral up, that was our mission  
 They requested all sorts of personal items for us to send.  
 We mail packages as often as possible this we will do till the end.  
 They were called on to go to a faraway land.  
 We stayed home with our families, this is where we make our stand.  
 They all will give some, some will give all.  
 We will always honor and support them for this is our call.  
 They will not return till their job is done.  
 We will not stop supporting them till they all return each and every one.  
 Then one day they will all come home to the USA  
 We, the FRG will have achieved our goal with us they will stay

--A.J. Olivier

**Carnival Cruise Line's**



**Military Pricing Promotion**

Want to take a cruise when your soldier gets home? Carnival Cruise Lines is offering Military pricing for a limited time. Military discounts are valid for all Active, Reserve and Retired Personnel, which includes National Guard. This is the best discount that Carnival is currently offering. Military pricing will also apply to soldier's immediate family (mother, father, and spouse). Carnival is also offering a "military friends and family" pricing for cabins that are booked at the same time as the soldiers.

**Sample Itinerary & Pricing:  
 Carnival "Senation" - 5 Night Western Caribbean  
 Departs New Orleans 10/8/05**

**\*\*Military pricing subject to cabin availability.**

Pricing per person	Retail	Military
Inside Cabin	\$369.00 pp	\$322.00pp
Ocean View	\$439.00pp	\$382.00pp

For more information and Booking,  
 Call or Email Denise  
 225-937-7603  
[thibtate@cox.net](mailto:thibtate@cox.net)

**You could lose your hand with three of a kind...**

**or your life. Don't set patterns.**



*Mortars unit conducts first combat mission since WW II*

# 256 BCT MORTARS CONDUCT AREA DENIAL MISSION



Photo by HHC, 2-156th mortar platoon

By: Spc. Erin Robicheaux

For the first time in six decades, the mortar platoon of 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, conducted an area-denial mission in combat on March 9.

It was the first such mission for the brigade since World War II.

Lt. Col. Conrad Gavel from Mandeville, La., commander of 2-156th, said he is proud of his Soldiers' performance.

"This mortar platoon has been a combat multiplier since the early days of our mobilization. They all scored 'expert' on their mortar gunner's exams, and have performed consistently ever since," he said.

Gavel claimed the lack of opportunity to use indirect fires has not affected the mortar platoon's abilities to execute a successful mission. Though it has been months since they conducted a live fire, their first round was within 50 meters of the target and the adjustments were perfect. He said since arriving in Iraq, the mortar platoon was tasked with other duties and has performed the various jobs well.

"Their flexibility and professionalism has been outstanding, and I'm proud to have them represent this task force," said Gavel.

Staff Sgt. Randy Roaix, from Carencro, La., the mortar platoon sergeant for Headquarters Company, 2-156th, said he's very proud his Soldiers made a significant contribution to securing the safety of their comrades.

"Area denial is all about taking out the point of origin, where the enemy fires a lot of indirect fire or rockets," Roaix said. "We wanted the insurgents to know that we can reach them anytime, anywhere, and it seems like it had the effect that we were looking for."

Roaix said the terrorists got the message, adding that the local citizens talked about it for a long time

**Spc. Camille Fossier, with HHC 2-156th  
"hangs a round"  
during a combat mortar mission.**

after the fact, and they now know that U.S. Forces can get to them if needed.

Roaix explained even though the platoon was split up for various duties when they arrived in Baghdad six months ago, the mortars did not forget where they came from. He said some of his guys were placed on a personal security detachment, while others were sent to a light infantry platoon. When they came together for the historical mission, however, they never missed a beat.

"I think it says a lot about the platoon that they haven't worked together for months, but still performed successfully," said Roaix.

Sgt. Ryan McCool, from Prairieville, La., is the fire direction control for the 2-156th mortar platoon, and Roaix endorsed him as the most experienced in the brigade. Prior to deployment, all FDCs were required to be certified on an advanced computer system necessary for conducting mortar missions. Three FDCs from 2-156th were certified on the first try, and they were the only three in the 256th to do so. In addition, McCool was No. 1 in the brigade.

The process of a mortar mission begins in the field with the forward observers. They find a target and call into the FDC with a location. McCool's job is to compute the data, plot the coordinates and communicate the mission down to the gun. He said they performed two missions March 9: area denial (or high explosive) which was the

*Continued on Page 18...*

Helping to Rebuild

I R A Q



Photo by: Chris Foster

**In northern Baghdad, an Iraqi contractor digs a trench that will connect a water pump to the generator to irrigate the local fields.**

By: Spc. Chris Foster

An Army joint task force composed of engineers and civil affairs personnel spearheaded the rebuilding of Iraq's economy by working hand in hand with Iraqi people. Together they are making substantial progress in the reconstruction of the new Iraq.

The Essential Service Team for the 1088th Engineer Battalion, 256th Brigade Combat Team is composed of the civil affairs personnel from 2nd Brigade, 10 Mountain Division, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and C Co. 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion.

Project Payment and Management Sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Carl Griffin, from Denham Springs, La., with 1088th Eng. Bn., tracks the weekly progress of each project and assesses any problems that the local contractors have. Since April, EST has started 54 new projects that range from running water lines to a house in a village, to cleaning up

trash that has built up over the years.

With a purpose to help the Iraqi people rebuild its economy, the 256th EST and its counterparts are providing a way for this nation to get back on its feet. While these projects are helping to rebuild Iraq, they provided 3,142 jobs to the locales within their area of responsibility.

"We currently have 162 projects that we are tracking that are spread throughout the 3rd Infantry Division's AOR," said Griffin. "These projects consist of electricity, water, health, government, agriculture, humanitarian, condolence, fuel, transportation, sewage, trash and academics. Even though all issues are important and are being addressed, our main concern right now is the lack of electricity, water, sewage and trash our areas," he said.

In keeping the Tiger Brigade's commitment to provide humanitarian aid to the towns and villages in the Tiger AOR, the EST completed the Talta Jueba Water Network, which was the final step to supplying the people of Jueba Village with a steady source of clean drinking water.

The first phase of the project consisted of the installation of a water treatment unit, with the final phase consisting of bringing water supply to each house. Since the 256th BCT occupied its current AOR, its EST has been successful in the completion of 63 projects that are benefiting the Iraqi people. The success of these projects has a lot to do with the constant patrols that are conducted by the civil affairs teams within the joint task force. Staff Sgt. Brandon Boe from Rich Field, Minn., is part of the CA team for the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment and conducts project assessment missions at least four times a week to ensure the sites in their AOR are

progressing.

"With the summer heat just around the corner, we are really focusing on getting electricity and water to the people in our AO," said Boe. "We try to access the projects with a rolling schedule since it is hard to check all of our projects. We go out four times a week checking the projects that are on our task forces' operational tempo."

Recently, Boe and Capt. Jesy Yeates from Thibodeaux, La., project payment and management officer for 1088th Eng. Batt. EST, checked on some of the projects to assess which ones are on schedule so the local populace will have a steady source of water and electricity before the summer heat gets here. They stopped at two water treatment facilities and talked with the local shieks to see how the job was coming along.

During one conversation, Yeates thanked the shieks for putting pressure on the contractors to complete the project. This water facility, along with the water facility in Al Abedjarah will provide 3,000 to 7,000 villagers with a clean water supply.

Another project checked was the \$29 million Khan Dhari electric power substation in West Baghdad. With 15 percent of it complete it is the largest of the 15 active electrical projects in the 256th AOR.

With more than 100 active projects, the 256th EST is making substantial progress by supporting the locals with tasking its units to oversee and provide security to the local contractors by conducting daily project assessments at the sites. Because of their commitment, many Iraqi people will have the daily necessities that they were deprived of by Iraq's former regime. By supporting and assisting in the rebuilding of the economy, these Soldiers are forming life-long relations with the local leaders of Iraq.

# C o n t r i b u t i o n s

## Memorial Day

By: Staff Sgt. Dale Lofton  
HHC 1-156th

Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, the War on Drugs in Latin America, MOMEF, Haiti, the Gulf War, Panama, Guam, Vietnam, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Korean War, World War II, World War I, the War Between the States, the War of 1812, the American Revolution – when I think of my family history, military conflict comes to mind. I've had a family member – or in several cases all male members of my family of fighting age – in every military conflict this nation has had since its inception and revolt against England. My family has fought, shed blood, and died to secure the freedoms we share in the United States – and even throughout the world in many cases.

Does this mean that I'm better than anyone else? No, by far it does NOT. What it does mean is by virtue of knowing these things about my family history; I've found an acute respect for the freedoms granted to us by our form of government and the constitution that manages it. While I may not have known many of my ancestors who fought in World War II and before, I know firsthand the troubles that came about from combat in Vietnam and since. Sure, very few of the conflicts we've been in since World War II were to honestly secure our own freedoms here in the United States and even World War I and II could be argued over as to their real meanings. But in the end, it still

comes down to our men and women on a mission from our country to secure certain freedoms. I think many take for granted the freedoms we – as a nation of individuals – have earned over the past two centuries. In just the first Amendment to the US Constitution, we are granted five freedoms that many take for granted. Freedom of Speech is a banner for people to stand under and insult the intelligence of everyone who doesn't believe the way they do. It's your right to do. Freedom of Press allows for the printing of inflammatory statements about anyone and everything. It's your right to do. Freedom of Religion allows you to believe any way you wish to. It's your right to do. Freedom of Assembly allows you to gather in non-violent groups any time you choose. It's your right to do. Freedom of Petition allows you to form a group to attempt to change the government. It's your right to do. In just that first amendment, the citizens of the United States are given individually awesome powers. With those rights comes responsibility though.

You have the right to say, print, believe, gather, and ask the government anything you wish. On the other hand, you do NOT have the right to step on the rights of others. My father – being the one elder of my family that I've had the most time to learn about – fought three combat tours in Viet-Nam. Regardless of what he felt of the mission, he still went when his nation called him. He still put his life on the line for the nation that allowed him so many free

doms. For that matter, he nearly died twice. On retirement, we moved back to Louisiana and he set up a final resting place for his family. Again, only because this nation had given him the ability to do so – the freedom to choose where he would settle down with his family after retiring from twenty-six honorable years of service to his nation. Was he defined by his military service? Somewhat. Beyond the service to his country, he was a man of high values, unshakable morals, and a comedian in his own way. He was also a father, husband, and grandfather before his death. America has millions of unsung heroes.

The last Monday in May is Memorial Day here in the United States. It's a day for us to remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for freedom. It's a day to cherish the things we've earned over more than two centuries of struggle. It's a day to also look forward and see what could be done to make freedom more lasting and more worth the price so many have paid. Billy Ray Cyrus sang a song. It's possibly the only song of his that I've ever really enjoyed. In that song, an old vet talks about his experiences and thoughts on freedom. He says, "If you ever think of me, think of all your liberties and recall, some gave all."

Don't let Memorial Day be the only day you're thankful for the fact that you can even be thankful that men and women have died to keep you free.

# from your Soldiers Mission

By: Sgt. Benjamin Tanner  
HHC 1-156th

As I sit in the sand and sun,  
The Days pass, one by one,  
I count the minutes, I count the hours,  
I defend life with all of my power.  
No one here knows my name,  
No one here plays the game.  
No one back home understands  
Why we come to these foreign lands.  
Why we help those in need,  
They just see their children bleed  
And say its time to bring us back,  
When another Soldier is placed in a  
sack  
Send us home one and all,  
Iraq will be the US's fall.  
No more fighting, no more blood, no  
more pain,  
Bring us back and the deaths will be  
in vain.  
We have a job we started here,  
And even though we are in fear  
We must push on and give hope  
So our families must try to cope  
And deal with the loss of another son  
Or daughter to a foreigner's gun.  
I am not enough to fix the problem  
here,

But I will do all I can to wipe the tears  
From the eyes of the kids who hurt  
That play and sleep and live in dirt.  
I cannot allow anymore pain,  
Even if showered with distain.  
They hate us, they hurt us, they kill us  
But we are here to build good from  
dust.  
It is hard, and it takes time,  
Even while I write this rhyme,  
The Soldiers are doing all they can,  
To make our enemies understand.  
We don't want to kill any one,  
We want kids to play and have fun.  
We want life to be good here,  
A people who will not live in fear,  
So I still sit in the sand and sun,  
And I still have to clean my gun,  
I must be ready when the bombs  
explode,  
I must be ready when our enemies  
unload  
We must return fire and fight with  
pride,  
To prevent terror's genocide.

# Ambassadors of Goodwil



Photo by: Maj. Roderick Alvendia

**Sgt. Greg Philips,  
Staff Sgt. Jared Robinson, and  
Spc. Monty Johnson hand out  
toys and school supplies to the Iraqi  
children.**

As the 256 BCT moves into its newest area of responsibility in Baghdad, the 256 JAG Tiger Claims Team has met with their new Iraqi counterparts in two Community Centers known as GICs (Government Information Centers). The Staff at both GICs, which are located on opposite sides of a busy inner Baghdad suburb, have given the Team a warm welcome. The Team has also enjoyed giving varying forms of humanitarian assistance to the people. Handing out school supplies with toys to needy children is but one example of this aid. Also, the Team in conjunction with the 256 BCT Civil Affairs Officer, Maj. Adam Shilling, plans on coordinating medical care visits by the Tiger Brigade Surgeon and Medics at the GICs in the weeks to come.

## Court Martials

1. Pvt Terrince R. Jones, C. CO. 1088th Eng. Bn. – Four Specifications of failure to go to Place of Duty, a violation of Article 86, UCMJ; One Specification of disrespect to a non-commissioned officer, a violation of Article 91, UCMJ; One Specification of dereliction of duty, a violation of Article 92, UCMJ; One specification of violation of General Order Number One. Sentence: Reduction from E-3 to E-1, Forfeiture of 2/3 pay for 1 month, confinement for 30 days at a Military Detention Facility. Currently being processed for Separation with an Other Than Honorable Discharge.
2. Spc. Jerryd W. Tassin, HHC 2-156th – One specification of violation of General Order Number One, a violation of Article 92, UCMJ; one specification of wrongful possession of controlled substances (steroids), a violation of Article 112a, UCMJ. Sentence: Reduction from E-5 to E-4 and forfeiture of \$500 pay for one month.
3. Pvt. Anthony J. Wake, HHC 1-69th – One specification of absence without leave (failing to report back to the unit after EML for several days), a violation of Article 86, UCMJ. Sentence: Reduction from E-4 to E-1, Confinement for 30 days in a Military Detention Facility.
4. Pvt. Ernest E. Hennesy, Co. B, 199th – One specification of wrongful use of a controlled substance (valium), a violation of Article 112a, UCMJ. Sentence: Reduction from E-4 to E-1, Forfeiture of \$500 pay for one month, Confinement for 30 days in a Military Detention Facility.
5. Pvt. Christopher Hebert, HHC 256th – One specification of making a false official statement, a violation of Article 107, UCMJ; One specification of wrongful use of a controlled substance (marijuana), a violation of Article 112a, UCMJ; One specification of wrongful possession of a controlled substance (marijuana), a violation of Article 112a, UCMJ. Sentence: Reduction from E-4 to E-2, Forfeiture of \_ of one month's pay, Confinement for 30 days in a Military Detention Facility.
6. Sgt. William D. Montalbano, Battery B, 1-141 – One specification of disrespect to a non-commissioned officer, a violation of Article 91, UCMJ; Two specifications of violating General Order Number One (Alcohol), a violation of Article 92, UCMJ. Sentence: Reduction from E-5 to E-4 (Suspended for 180 days), Forfeiture of \$250 pay for one month.

256th BCT Families



Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Migues, battalion master gunner for HHC 2-156th INF and his brother, Master Sgt. William Migues, brigade master gunner for HHC 256, both are from New Iberia, La.



256th Public Affairs Officer, 1st Lt. Taysha Deaton with HHC 256th, from Lake Charles, La., takes a picture with her cousin, Spc. Anthony Reeves from Moss Bluff, La., with HHC 3-156th, attached to HHC 1-156th.



Spc. Eric Louviere, dismounted grenadier for a bradley team, and his brother Sgt. Ryan Louviere, team leader for a dismounted bradley team. Both are from Franklin, La., and serve in C Co. 1-156th AR in Camp Liberty, Iraq.



Staff Sgt. Jonathan Meziere from Natchitoches, La., truck commander for A Co. 1-156, visits his brother, Rodney Meziere, who works for KBR at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

**Driven to save Soldiers***(continued from page 10)*

challenging, realistic training experience that closely mirrors the environment in which we fight, said Maj. Kenneth Copple, safety officer for the 256th BCT.

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

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

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

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



Photo by: Chris Foster

**Staff Sgt. Terry Readout, from Lafayette, La, with Headquarters 1088th Engineer Battalion, clears the area in a Volvo front loader for the new Driver Confidence Courses at Camp Liberty, Iraq.**

**Mortar unit conducts first combat mission since WW II**  
*(continued from page 12)*

primary focus, and illumination. Illumination missions are conducted at night and provide light for the forward observers, and hopefully, to catch someone in the act of placing an improvised explosive device. McCool said both missions were successful.

"With the high explosive mission, we were right on target, and we hit everything we shot at," he said. "The illumination mission was successful in that we accurately engaged our targets, but the forward observers didn't see anyone out there."

When McCool called the directions down to the guns, there was a rush of combat boots as the crew with the weapon prepared the coordinates for fire. Sgt. Chad Welch, from Pineville, La., was the squad leader who received the directions, and he said once the call came in, one would never know this was their first mission since arriving in Baghdad.

"When the FDC gave instructions, the gunner, assistant gunner, and ammunition bearer went to work to set the fuse, and prepare the gun for fire," he said.

When those magic words, "Fire for effect!" were spoken by McCool, the round was dropped and the mortars of 2-156th could chalk up another success.

Spc. Camille Fossier, from Lafayette, La., served as a mortar infantryman on active duty and now serves with the 256th BCT in Baghdad. He puts everything into his missions, literally. While hanging a round for fire, Fossier pulled a muscle in his chest.

"I don't know what happened, something just caught and I was in pain," he said.

In the end, the mission was completed with the desired effect, and Fossier returned to duty.

Welch said that at times, the job can be a little stressful.

"The squad leader's job is to observe for safety and accuracy, and at the same time, receive commands from the FDC and give them down to the gunner," he said. "You really have to pay attention to everything going on around you."

Roaix said he agreed that as a leader, when the directions were given, he was very anxious. After the first round went off, however, they were right on top of it.

"That was the longest 34-and-a-half seconds of my life," he said.

## 256th BCT Photo Album



Spc. Thomas Faul, with HHC 256th, takes a picture with some Iraqi kids, after giving them candy and toys. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Rachal)



Staff Sgt. Thomas Berryhill from Pineville, La., "Charlie Rock" commander Capt. Jody Guidry from Lake Charles, La., and Spc. Matt Carnicle is from Pineville, La., stop for a photo before going out on patrol. (Photo by Staff Sgt. William Whitehead)

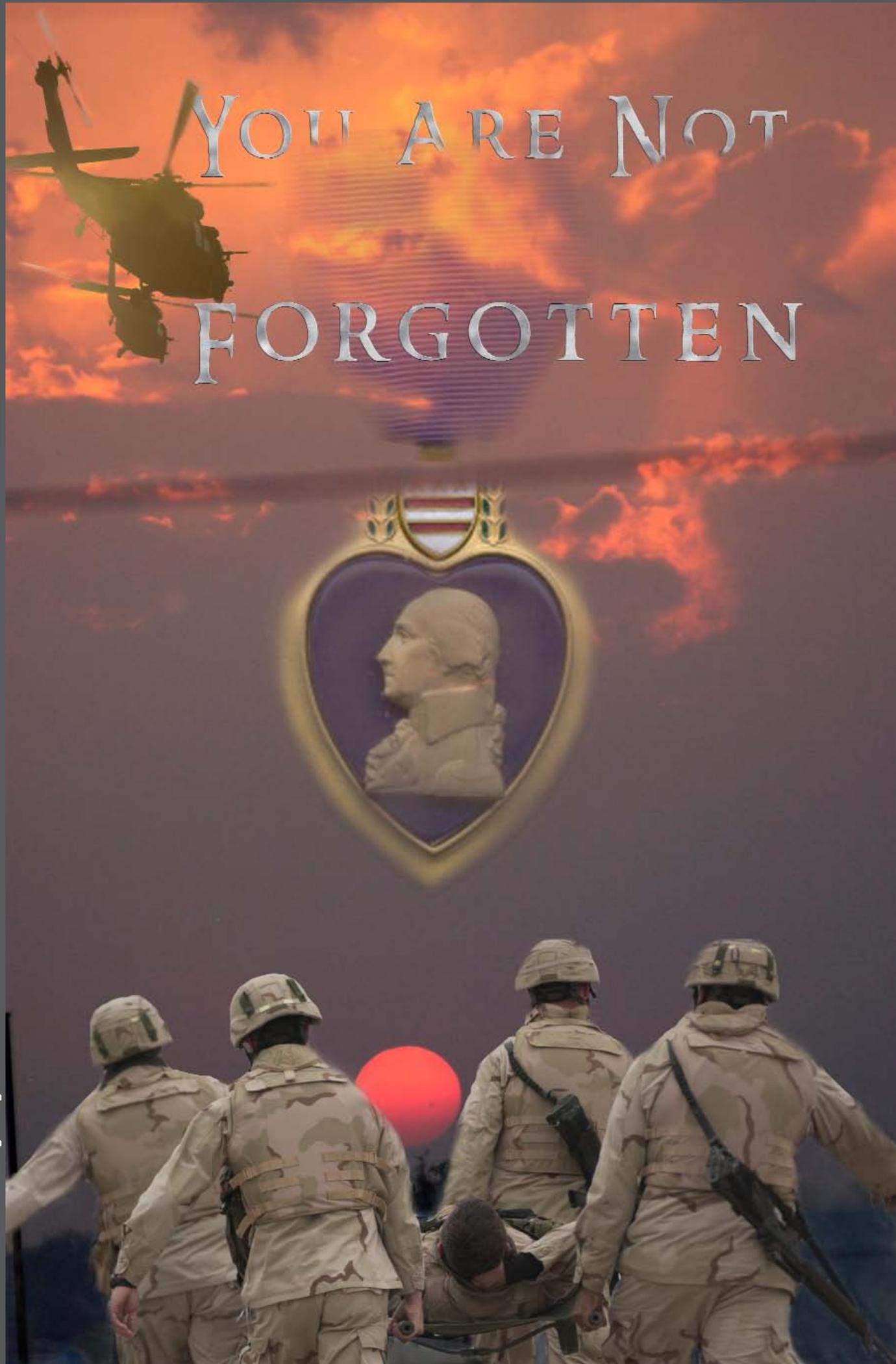


Soldiers from B Battery 1-141st FA hand out supplies to Iraqi children donated to the Kids-for-Kids program. (Photo by Sgt. Thomas Benoit)



With the help of the troops from E Troop, 101st Cav., attached to 3-156th, a local Iraqi man's truck is pulled out of the mud. (Photo by Maj. Adam Shilling)

# YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN



Created by: Spc. Chris Foster  
Spc. Joy Smith  
Photos by: Sgt. Thomas Benoit