



The Official Newsletter of the 116th Brigade Combat Team

116 BCT 'Snake' becomes combat patch

by Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer

FOB WARRIOR, Iraq- The 116th Brigade Combat Team officially authorized wear of its characteristic "snake patch" for wear as a combat patch in a ceremony held here April 8.

The historic move comes almost three months after the unit assumed authority from Hawaii's 2nd BCT for military ground operations in the provinces of Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. This is the first time the unit, in its current configuration, has fought in a combat zone and the first time the 116th BCT patch has been authorized as a combat patch.

"This ceremony marks a very significant moment in the history of the 116th Brigade Combat Team," said Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart, commander of the 116th BCT. "Our unit patch now joins those of other units that have fought proudly in combat to defend the freedoms we all hold dearly."

The ceremony was attended by representatives of all subordinate commands of the 116th BCT, as well as several coalition and Iraqi military dignitaries. Distinguished attendees included Brig. Gen. Gayhart, 42nd Infantry Division Commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, 31st Iraqi Army Brigade Deputy Commander

Brig. Gen. Ayad, 31st IA Brigade Public Affairs Officer Lt. Col. Khalil, and Iraqi Police Services Maj. Gen. Sherko, Kirkuk Police Chief.

Leaders addressed those in attendance and soldiers stood in formation with their combat patches covered until they were uncovered as part of the ceremony.

"The combat patch ceremony represents yet another significant milestone in the 116th's service in the global war on terrorism," said Gayhart.

Working with its Iraqi partners, the 116 BCT is filling an important role in efforts to establish a secure and prosperous environment in the provinces of Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah. The unit's multi-faceted mission also includes aiding the Iraqi government, supporting economic and infrastructure development, and facilitating communications.

The 116 BCT includes headquarters and staff

Commander's Corner

by Brigadier General Alan Gayhart, Commander

Fellow Warriors, Dignity and Respect. These words are most associated with our mission

the ISF, we will continue to eliminate the insurgency to reduce the number of insurgents the ISF will have to face.



BG Gayhart

here in the Kirkuk Province. As many of you are aware, there are significant differences in the conditions of our mission here in Kirkuk and those found in Baghdad. Our mission here is to train and develop the Iraqi security forces (ISF) to assume regional control of security in this province, without relying on the coalition forces. As we train

To ensure the success of the ISF, it is critical that the average Iraqi citizen have faith in the government and the security forces.

We must break the cycle of violence that this country has used throughout history to resolve differences. Too often,

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CSM Briefing

by 116th BCT Command Sgt. Maj. Leroy Lewis

We need to all take a moment to remember our fallen Comrades, Sgt. 1st Class Mark Warren, Sgt. 1st Class Robbie D. McNary, and Staff Sgt. Kevin D. Davis. These are all great Soldiers and will be remembered with honor. May the good Lord be with their families.



CSM Lewis

counterparts since we serve together for longer periods of time and know their families. I, like a lot of other soldiers, cried at the ceremony. I tried not to because I was always told when I was a child men do not cry. I know now that was wrong, as my wife would say it is ok to cry. Let us never forget what

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As a National Guard Brigade we are closer to our brothers and sisters in arms than our active duty

sections, two armor battalions, a mechanized infantry battalion, a support battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, and various intelligence, signal, and specialized units. The 116 BCT is one of several Army

National Guard units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III as part of the global war on terrorism.

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Capt. Cole Packwood, HHC, 116 BCT commander and Lt. Col. John Walsh, TF 1-163 Infantry commander; in front of their formations at the ceremony. (Photo by Lt. Col. Gordon Petrie, IO Tm. Chief)

Iraqi 101: Language and customs



Snakebites is a weekly product of the 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office. It is the official command information publication of the 116th BCT. This publication's intent is to provide timely and relevant information to the soldiers, families and employers of the 116th BCT.



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Submission Policy

The Snakebites staff welcomes submissions from its readers. If you have an article and/or photo that you feel would be appropriate for this publication please e-mail it to monte.hibbert@us.army.mil or drop it by the PAO office in Bldg. 370, FOB Warrior.

Media Interview Tips

- Always tell the truth.
- Assume that everything you say will be used and attributed to you. Avoid "Off the record" conversations with reporters. If you don't want to see it in print or on television, don't say it.
- Stay in your lane; talk only about things for which you are responsible.
- Do not speculate.
- It's ok to say: "I don't know."
- Refer specific recruiting questions to your recruiter.
- If you can't answer a reporter's question, explain why. For example, if the incident is under investigation, just let the reporter know.
- Always remain calm and professional.
- Practice what you want to say in front of a mirror or a friend to become more comfortable.
- Be yourself. You have a great story to tell and your community wants to hear it!
- Discuss what you know, provided OPSEC is not violated.

*****ATTENTION MEDIA OUTLETS*****
The 116th BCT has no release authority for information about casualties or deaths. This falls to our higher headquarters. Please don't query us directly for this information. Thank you.

by Lt. Col. Dean Hagerman

I thought I would do a quick refresher on the language and customs used by those who speak Arabic, regardless of their religious or ethnic background. The suggestions put forward here are somewhat different than the "textbook" Arabic I included in previous articles.

First and foremost, no one is ignored in Arab or Kurdish culture. If you are talking to a group of people, in or outdoors, say hello to everyone, and shake their hands. I have noticed that we don't always do this, and the local Iraqis have gotten used to it. However, they are generally pleased when we abide by their traditional customs.

As you pass someone on the street you can wave, or wave and say Salaam or Salaamu alaykum or don't wave and say either of these

greetings. By the way, Salaam is nothing but a shorter and less formal version of Salaamu alaykum.

When you approach someone to talk, in or outdoors, give the greeting of the day SabaaH al-khair or Masaah al-khair, and then as you shake their hand say Salaamu alykum. If they say it to you first, respond by saying Alaykum salaam.

If you want to have a bit more small talk, you can ask how they are doing, Shlonek or Kayfaalek. If you or they are well, say Zain or if you are doing exceptionally well and exuberant Al hamdullalaah is appropriate.

If you are seated or otherwise occupied and someone enters the office or approaches you, you can Allah bil khair which means "God is good." For Arabs is sort of like say-

ing "how you doin'." It's a friendly gesture that says something meaningful, without really saying anything.

Some other phrases that are helpful and can be sprinkled into any conversation, Arabic or English. Thank you is Shukran and Mom noon is saying, "I appreciate it." Moom kin is a phrase I just recently learned. It literally means, "Is it possible?" However, in usage it actually means the same as "Excuse me" as you would say when you are trying to get by someone, or if you accidentally bump into someone. Two last words you should know, naam and laah, which mean "yes" and "no" respectively. With these phrases, you should be able to initiate a polite, and hopefully, productive conversation.

PHRASE	RESPONSE
SabaaH al-khair	Good morning
MasaaH al-khair	Good evening
Salaamu alaykum	Peace be upon you
Shlonek or Kayfalaak	How are you
Al-hamdullalaah	Praise God (Outstanding)
Mom noon	I appreciate it
Moom kin	Excuse me

Commanders Corner...

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Iraqi's solve their differences through violence, rather than dialogue and negotiation. This cycle of violence is what Sadaam used to control the people in Iraq.

We must set the example for Iraqi's on how to peacefully resolve differences. By understanding our Rules of Engagement, each of us can make the decision whether to use deadly force or not, in the situations we face daily. When dealing with innocent Iraqis, treat them with the same dignity and respect we would

expect if the roles were reversed. This includes being professional when we interrogate citizens, and also not running Iraqi vehicles off the highway, simply because they are near our convoys. By being firm, but professional to all citizens, we will break the cycle of violence that has plagued this society for centuries.

Be safe and take care of each other.

"Warriors First"

CSM Briefing...

Continued from page 1

these great soldiers sacrificed,

so everyone at home and in Iraq can enjoy the freedoms we hold so dearly.

We have almost hit the half way point in country, we have done well on safety, and it is getting better all the time. More people are buckling up and following the safety guidelines. Keep up the good work and remember that the hot weather is coming up. Use the buddy system to watch out for each other. It will get up in the 120's sometime during the summer months and we need to remind everyone to drink water. Keep up the good work.

Warriors First-CSM Lewis

Freedom (Air Force) Chapel Schedule**Sunday**

0630 - Protestant Morning Prayer
 0800 - Gospel Service
 1000 - Contemporary Worship
 1130 - Catholic Mass
 1430 - Latter-Day-Saints
 1630 - Praise Dance Rehearsal
 1830 - Protestant Evening Prayer
 1900 - Protestant Worship Service
 1930 - Latter-Day-Saints (@ the LRC)
 2015 - Church of Christ Service

Monday

1130 - Catholic Mass
 1900 - Ladies Fellowship
 1945 - Godly Fathers/Godley Husbands Bible Study
 (@ Learning Resource Center)

Tuesday

1130 - Catholic Mass
 1600 - Church of Christ Bible Study
 1900 - Protestant Band Practice
 1900 - RCIA (@ Chapel Admin. Office)
 2145 - SFS Bible Study

Wednesday

1900 - Bible Study
 2130 - Praise and Worship Rehearsal

Thursday

1130 - Catholic Mass
 1900 - Protestant Band Practice

Friday

1130 - Catholic Mass
 1900 - Gospel Choir Practice
 2000 - SFS Bible Study (@ Chapel Admin. Office)

Saturday

1900 - Catholic Mass
 2115 - Rosary & Mass (DFAC)

Aloha Chapel Schedule**Sunday**

0800 - Episcopal Service
 0900 - Catholic Mass
 1000 - General Protestant
 1400 - Catholic Mass
 1530 - LDS
 2000 - AA Meeting

Tuesday

1900 - Men's Fellowship

Wednesday

2000 - Bible Study

Thursday

1930 - Bible Study

Saturday

1930 - Gospel Service

Seeds become harvests

by *Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Worster, 116th BCT Chaplain*

One of my annual chores has been planting a garden - which I was planning to do before we got word of this deployment. After receiving word of the Guard's travel plans for us in SW Asia, I was tempted to abandon the project. Last spring the garden was full of weeds and the borders needed repairing. Gardens require lots of patience and hope in the future - and the spring of 2004 was a time when I had neither in abundance. In the end I caved-in to tradition. As my Grandfather Rollie used



Chaplain Worster

to do, I ordered seeds from W. Atlee Burpee Company of Warminster, PA. I dug around in the dirt, built up the borders, and planted my normal "stew" garden of carrots, garlic, and potatoes. I did so knowing that I'd never myself enjoy the harvest - that if it survived the Soda Springs, Idaho, weather, others would benefit from it. At Fort Polk I received word that the garden was a success, and that others were making "stove lid stew" from the LL Bean Cookbook using veggies from my garden. (By the way, this is the finest game and fish cookbook I've even owned. It is well worth the effort to search for a new or used copy on the internet).

The harsh, often desert environment of the Middle East reveals that her people have had to choose their agricultural battles carefully. With canals and barriers they keep the desert out and cultivated land in. Even a short trip to downtown Kirkuk reveals that these people once had walled gardens. Behind all the concrete and razor wire you

can find areas that once had patios, fountains, roses and citrus trees. There were courtyards where families, especially the women, could relax in privacy. These refuges were havens where the family arts were practiced free from the neighbors' prying eyes. Arab and Persian literature is full of references to "gardens of delight." For many Iraqis, their homes and property destroyed by decades of war and economic hardship, these must only be memories. The Jewish/Christian Scriptures describe

this destruction by saying, "The walls and hedges have been knocked down, and the vineyard given to the ravages of the boar of the forest." The insurgents, with their stillborn Islam and aborted religious imaginations, see these gardens as existing now only in eternity - and embrace ways that hasten their journey to them.

Soldiers, seeing the rubble that is Iraq, express a healthy pessimism about straightening this country out. All we can do is keep the warring factions apart long enough for culture to begin anew. When we leave here, we won't know for years the extent that our labors have succeeded. We won't see the harvest of peace that is possible here. For now, we may be able to maintain enough security here so that Iraqis can build enough mosques, schools, and infrastructure to secure a future of hope for themselves. They may then remember their gardens and dare to start cultivating them again.

The first part of this article appeared in Vol. 5, Ed. 13 of *Snakebites*. Here is the conclusion of the article.

In between chow, history took place

by *Spc. Matt Salisbury, 216th MI Co.*

Continued from Vol. 5, Ed. 13 Snakebites

through the crowd, who this time broke out in sporadic cheers as he ran down the road with his wife held high, in all of her upended glory. Evening time, Election Day - Somewhere in Kirkuk, Iraq. Dinner -

Many of soldiers of Alpha Company are back in the Company assembly area, with their armor off, watching the president address the nation and trying to get something down for dinner. For me that consists of stale sunflower seeds and a can of Sprite. No one has

come to grips with what they witnessed during the day. There were no large scale attacks, there was massive voter turnout and now the night was filled with a thousand car horns, music, singing - the sounds of a nation being reborn.

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Question of the Week

What is your most favorite thing about Iraq so far?



*Spc. Jay Richman
A Co., 2-116th Armor Bn.*

“I like when the kids beg for candy. It’s cool. They’re so curious and they aren’t afraid of us.”



*Spc. Jud Harmon
A Co., 2-116th Armor Bn.*

“The freedom that the children have. They seem happy and well-cared for. Good parenting? I don’t know.”



*Spc. Tyrel Murfitt
E Troop, 163rd Cavalry*

“I don’t have a favorite yet.”



*Sgt. Eric Corbett
E Troop, 163rd Cavalry*

“I love the bread we get from the locals, and talking family with them over tea. They’re curious about us.”



*Sgt. Jory Bundy
E Troop, 163rd Cavalry*

“The Peshmerga. They don’t take no guff from nobody!”

It’s a small world - 116th BCT meets the 124th APF

by Sr. Mstr. Sgt. Robert W. Lyons, 8th EAMS/TRKR

Several of the Aerial Porters working the Passenger Service Counter make a habit

of checking unit patches on the uniforms of the passengers as they come through the gate. We handle a lot of people here; most of

them are on their way into the AOR, others are taking their four days of R&R. When we see the distinctive patch of the 116th, we always make a point of asking if they are from Idaho.

We must have had about one hundred troops come through the Passenger Terminal this morning when we began to notice a large number of 116th patches. TSgt Bill Couts had just received an Idaho state flag from his wife Sheryl and thought this would make a great photo opportunity.

Bill rounded up as many Aerial Porters as he could find, and then went into the Passenger holding area to round up the 116th guys. All

he had to do was have one of the guys yell, “Idaho!” and the room just broke out with cheers and hollering! We asked if any of them wanted to get pictures taken with some fellow Idahoans and their faces just lit up! We took several pictures using all the cameras we could find and everyone joked about sending the pictures back for the Idaho Statesman to publish. We spent the next twenty minutes or so talking nothing but IDAHO...”Where are you from?” “Do you know so-and-so?” It was a great visit. I was a little surprised that they were so unaware of how often they make the



news back home and how much the folks back home talk about them. They were very modest about the mission they are doing.

As the photo op was winding down, several people exchanged e-mail addresses, everyone shook hands with each other, and we all wished them a safe trip and well wishes for a safe return home.



A group of Soldiers and Airmen from the 116th Brigade Combat Team and the 124th Aerial Port Flight, both Idaho-based National Guard units, pose for an impromptu photo during an informal reunion at the Al Udeid air terminal in Qatar. (Photo submitted by Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Robert Lyons, 124th APF)

TF C/145th SB makes Medical Assistance Visit to Saadinia

by *Sgt. Matthew Acosta, 22nd MPAD*

FOB McHENRY, Iraq - Army medics in a combat zone are not only a vital necessity for the Soldiers, but in many ways can benefit the surrounding communities and the local civilians.

Medical personnel from Company C, 145th Support Battalion assisted with the medical treatment of local villagers during a visit to the small village of Saadinia, Iraq, March 18, 2005.

Medical supplies, six medics and three physician's assistants were escorted to the village medical clinic where the

Soldiers set up a make-shift pharmacy and utilized the examination rooms for the medical treatment of the villagers.

Many people came from surrounding villages and lined up outside the clinic walls waiting to enter the facility for treatment by the "magical healers."

"The whole point of the medical assistance visit (MAV) was to get quality medical care to those who otherwise won't be able to get the attention they need," said Capt. Heidi Munro, physician's assistant, Company C, 145th Support Battalion, 116th BCT. "This is a hearts

and minds mission; it's all about care."

Munro said soon after they started seeing and treating patients, the word that the Army medics were in town managed to spread quickly and Iraqi families started arriving and waiting in line for their turn.

"The Iraqi people have so much faith in the American medicine, they think we can cure everything," said Munro. "The truth is that most of the sicknesses we see can be treated with a little preventive medicine."

Due to the poor living conditions, many of the villagers shared the same sicknesses, requiring similar treatment.

"The poor air quality accounted for most of the asthma; the dirty water used for drinking, cooking and bathing is probably what attributed to the number of urinary tract infections, diarrhea and skin conditions as well as many other sicknesses," Munro said.

After the patients were examined by the physician's assistants (PAs), they were given written prescriptions to take outside the facility to the

pharmacist's counter where they were given medicines for their illnesses. Although the medicines were being distributed to the Iraqi people by National Guard PAs, the medicines were donated by

American health institutions and were not purchased by the U.S. government.

"All the medicines that we distributed to the Iraqi people during the MAV were

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This Iraqi woman is being given a shot to help with the pain in her knee, by a soldier with C Med/145th Support Bn. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Acosta, 22nd MPAD)



This frightened little Iraqi girl is being consoled by Capt. Heidi Munro, of C Med/145th Support Bn. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Acosta, 22nd MPAD)



The villagers of Saadinia came out to receive medical treatment, like this little boy having his ears checked. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Acosta, 22nd MPAD)

Ssg Anthony Fenicottero - Happy Birthday !!

From your family and friends back home...

A Happy Birthday wish to you...

We're all so very proud of you and what you're doing.

We all look forward to your safe return home!

116th BCT trains Kirkuk provincial judges

by *Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer*

KIRKUK, Iraq- Over 40 judges from Kirkuk province attended a judicial training seminar March 9 and 10 at the Regional Embassy Office in Kirkuk to review important aspects of the judicial process.

The training was sponsored by the Office of Prosecutorial Development and Training (OPDAT), the U.S. Department of Justice and the 116th Brigade Combat

Team's Judge Advocate General Section. According to organizers, the purpose of the seminar was to emphasize the importance of faith in the judicial process and respect for the rule of law.

"A strong independent judiciary is vital to a strong Iraq," said Capt. Paul Boice, a 116th Brigade Combat Team staff judge advocate officer. "One of the steps towards the aim is to ensure Iraqi judges receive the

training and support they need."

Seminar topics included international human rights, Coalition Provisional Assembly orders relating to Iraqi criminal law, the role of defense counsel, court administration and sentencing considerations in criminal cases.

The 116th BCT is a key player in efforts to bolster

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Iraqi media meets with Kirkuk region coalition leaders

by Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer

FOB WARRIOR, Iraq- The coalition's role in security, training, projects and information dissemination were among the questions reporters asked of the top coalition forces commanders in Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah

provinces at a press conference held here March 16.

Eleven media representatives from more than nine local and national Iraqi media outlets gathered to ask questions of 116th Brigade Combat Team Commander Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart and 506th

Air Expeditionary Group (AEG) Commander Air Force Col. Mark Johnson during the hour-long press event.

"I'm very enthused now and optimistic about Kirkuk, about the progress that is being made in security and economic development," said Gayhart in his opening comments. "Security—increased security—leads to increased economic development."

While most of the questions focused on anti-terrorist operations, projects and events in Brig. Gen. Gayhart's area of responsibility outside Forward Operating Base (FOB) Warrior, a couple of questions regarding the training of the Iraqi Air Force were answered by Air Force Col. Johnson. Units of the Iraqi Air Force are being trained on FOB Warrior which is also known as Kirkuk Regional Air Base.

This press event was an opportunity for media



More than nine Iraqi media outlets, including print, radio and television, attended a press conference at Forward Operating Base Warrior March 16 where they were able to question coalition commanders. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jack White, 116th BCT Public Affairs)



Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart (center), 116th Brigade Combat Team commander, addresses Iraqi media representatives at a press conference at Forward Operating Base Warrior March 16. Air Force Col. Mark Johnson (right), 506th Air Expeditionary Group commander, also answered questions at the event. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jack White, 116th BCT Public Affairs)

116 trains Kirkuk Judges...

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Iraq's newly-seated transitional government in the provinces of Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah. Supporting the Iraqi government is one part of the unit's multi-

faceted mission, which also includes establishing security, developing Iraqi security forces, stimulating economic development and facilitating communications.



Spc. Rachelle Brookshier, a 116th BCT paralegal specialist, briefs the duties and responsibilities of the Clerk of the Court for the Iraqi judges attending the seminar at the Regional Embassy Office in Kirkuk.

In between chow...

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Before today, I wondered what anything we were doing in Iraq would accomplish in the end. I only saw a futile task that I equated to casting 'pearls before swine.' I felt strongly that the Iraqis didn't want, understand or deserve the blood sacrifice Americans were paying for them. It was on Election Day in Iraq that I understood in this new century what it means to be an American

to have direct access to top coalition leadership, underscoring the emphasis the coalition and the 116th BCT places on maintaining positive relations with the press in their operations areas.

The 116th Brigade Combat Team is comprised of headquarters and staff sections, the 2nd and 3rd Armor Battalions, the 1-148th Field Artillery Battalion, the 1-163rd Mechanized Infantry Battalion, the 145th Support Battalion,

the 116th Engineer Battalion, and various intelligence, signal, and specialized units. The 116th BCT is one of several Army National Guard units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III. The U.S. Air Force's 506th AEG is the unit responsible for security, projects and development of Kirkuk Regional Airbase (FOB Warrior). The base serves as home to the headquarters of both units.

has transcended our borders. The Declaration of Independence says "But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new guards for their future security." It has become clear to me that tyranny must be confronted at the root, wherever it grows or flourishes. I am proud to be

a citizen soldier in the 116th Brigade Combat Team serving in Iraq. I am proud to stand my watch. Duty is not an easy burden. It is shouldered only by the brave, the strong and the proud. It was in the highest traditions of American minutemen fighting along-side the federal military in defense of freedom that my fellow guardsmen and I carried out our duty in the chaotic and mundane grind of military operations, measured in perfect increments that take place between chow even on Election Day in Iraq.

MAV to Saadinia...**Continued from page 5**

donated by American hospitals and health clinics for this purpose; to treat those who cannot afford or access proper (health) treatment," said Munro. "None of the medications were bought with US Army money."

The MAV was projected to last five hours but due to the turn-out of patients, the visit was extended.

"We were supposed to wrap things up at 1400 hours but because of the amount of people who showed up, we extended the patient treatment for an additional hour," said Sgt. 1st Class Albert Williams, civil affairs projects liaison, 116th Engineer Battalion, 116th BCT.

According to Williams, over 150 patients were treated during the visit.

"Although we cannot treat or cure everyone," said Munro, "providing medical care for the Iraqi people is showing them we care and are here to help in any way we can."

Spc. Kara Wortley, medic, C Company, 145th Spt. Bn., said they were able to treat many medical conditions such as colds or skin rashes but for those who need continuing health care for chronic conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes, they would have to seek care from local Iraqi medical clinics. "Helping out the communities in this way, aside from your job here, makes you feel like you are serving more of a purpose other than just cleaning your rifle every day," said Wortley. "It makes you feel really good inside," she added.

Easter photos from the homefront

The HHC, 116th Family Support Group put on an easter egg hunt for the children of deployed soldiers with the special guest being who else? The Easter Bunny himself!



Monroe said the unit plans to continue to conduct future MAVs with local villages and even plans to incorporate preventive medicine measures to help educate the villagers. Plans include conducting tests and possibly treatment of the water supplies of villages as well as conducting sanitation awareness clinics.

Don't Forget!**Important Dates to Remember:**

15 April - Income Tax Due Date-2400

21 April - Secretary's Day

24 April - Passover

8 May - Mother's Day!

21 May - Armed Forces Day

30 May - Memorial Day

You don't want to forget your loved ones' anniversaries or birthdays! Start planning now!

116th Engineer Battalion**Business Center assesses economic climate of region**

by Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer

KIRKUK, Iraq—Members of the 116th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) met March 11 with Iraqi businesspeople and representatives from the U.S. State Department to discuss the area's business climate.

The meeting, held at the Kirkuk Business Center (KBC) in downtown Kirkuk, allowed key players from the local business community to discuss the issues affecting the area's economic outlook. Besides business owners, key attendees at the event included Waria Salihi, Director of the KBC; Anne Bodine, U.S. State Department Representative and Lt. Col. Steven Knutzen, 116th BCT economic team leader.

"Several business owners expressed their views that security and land acquisition are still the primary issues affecting economic growth," said Knutzen. "When business owners understand Kirkuk's business climate, they can make the adjustments that allow their businesses to grow."

The KBC sponsors regular economic development network meetings and provides services to current and potential business owners. The center's services include business planning, facilitating loans, company certification, legal instruction, security assessments and providing information on contract opportunities.

Select members of the 116th BCT's 116th Engineer Battalion are heading up efforts to help revitalize the economies of Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah, the two provinces that make up the

brigade's area of responsibility in Iraq. They are available to actively assist Iraqis in developing business and job opportunities for area residents.



Lt. Col. Steven Knutzen, head of the 116th Brigade Combat Team's economic team, speaks with local business leaders about the region's business climate at the Kirkuk Business Center March 11.

145th Support Battalion

FOB Comparisons

by Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Whittier, 145th SPT Bn.

I have had opportunities to visit other FOB's while here in Iraq, and have seen how lucky we are to be at FOB Warrior instead of other



CSM Whittier

locations. It is like traveling the world, and knowing Idaho is by far the best place on Earth, and you would not live anywhere else. For those that convoyed from Kuwait, know what prime property Navistar and Camp Cedar where on the way here, so I do not think anyone will complain about not spending a year at those two prime spots. FOB Spiecher is similar to here, but I find the DFAC a little less in quality than here, and the PX no better. One CSM I talked to from there still has troops living in a shelled out building, using plywood to cover the holes. Being lower in elevation, I would think the temperatures will be hotter there this summer. FOB Bernstein is a former airfield built completely around bunkers. You sleep in a bunker, eat in a bunker, and work in a bunker. The wind usually blows, and its location is remote from the rest of the world. FOB Caldwell is unique as it is a major Iraqi training base. Two thirds of the base is occupied by Iraqi soldiers and buildings, with a small portion of the base occupied by the United States. They run their own PX, and while the DFAC serves good food, it is slightly more

cramped than ours. If we were to have an award for opulence, FOB Danger would win. With most units in a palace like building surrounded by the river, and a view of the town, this looks like the place to be. But even with all the marble tiles, and carved woodwork, the plumbing fails miserably, and one must go out to use a Porta John. In talking to various CSM's throughout the Division, the talk revolves around the same issues we have here. Housing is comparable and tight, leave allocations seem short, and lack of NTV's are notable. This FOB is by far one of the greenest ones in the AO, due to the milder climate than units farther south. Yes it may get hot this summer, but think of what it could be? The DFAC is by far a great place to visit, eat, and meet with friends. Very few have a beef with this facility, other than we get too large of portions at times. It is one of the few facilities with female servers with smiling faces, and by far the roomiest of the many I have visited. I am not here to say this is a picnic, but overall we have done all right for ourselves, and what we do with what we have, will determine how we cope with the next few months. This may not have much of the comforts of home, but it will do in a pinch.

CSM Whittier

Friendship

by Lt. Col. Terry Harrell, 145th SPT Bn. Commander

Friendship is one of the most important things in life, the very thing we all long for. We now have been together for almost a year and have experienced many things that have formed bonds that will last a lifetime. Experiences that others will never understand, events they will not find quite as humorous or grave as we do. We must



LTC Harrell

remember that these events and memories bind us together as comrades and cement a bond that will last the rest of our lives.

The following is a poem about friendship, but it expresses that bond of friendship we are forming here and have with our families.

We pulled each other through the hard times and the good

We pushed each other through more than anyone could

No one could see the connections we had

How we were so much alike, especially when we were sad

Sometimes, when I ponder as I sit in my room

I think about us and how lucky I was to have found you

You came into my life at a critical time

When I needed you the most, you stood at my side

All the ups and downs, I sometimes would frown

At just the thought of losing you

You who saved me, who gave me hope

Who showed me love when I felt like a dope

Through these past few months, I don't know what I would do

If I never would have met the beautiful, wonderful, loving you

You don't realize my life began the moment it went wrong

Cuz if it hadn't, I would not be

In such painful misery I have been suffering

Without you my cuts would still bleed

The bruises on my heart would continue to bruise my self-

esteem

You brought me up even when I was down

You made me smile when all I could do was frown.

Now what the future holds in front of you and me

I do not know other than I am almost

grateful for my misery

Becuz we may have not found each other through this great chaotic sea

I just wanna say thanks for always being there

For those warm gentle hugs you always had room to share

You gave me a reason to go on, I held on to you

I'd do anything for you, just as you've pulled me through

I will never leave and I won't ever forget

All the great times we had, and the friendship I could never split

Your friendship is one of a kind, I hold it dear to me

In my heart it will stay in all my wondrous dreams

Thanks so much for all those things you do,

But most of all thanks for just being you!

--Vanessa

“To have a good friend is one of the highest delights of life. To be a good friend is one of the noblest and most difficult of undertakings.” -- Anonymous

“There is a magnet in your heart that will attract true friends. That magnet is unselfishness, thinking of others first-- when you learn to live for others, they will live for you. -- Paramahansa Yogananda

145th Support Battalion

Bravo Co. keeping units rolling

by *Spc. Jeffrey Lucas, 145th SPT Bn. Historian*

Staff Sergeant Richard Bullock, Track Vehicle Mechanic for the 145 Support Battalion's Bravo Company Automotive Direct Support Section, remembers walking into "a basket case" when the 145th arrived in Kirkuk, Iraq at the end of December, 2004. SSG Bullock recalls parts all over the maintenance shop floor. His job was to put them all back together, to make safe and workable vehicles.

Platoon Sergeant, Sergeant First Class Kevin Maybon remembers being presented with one of their biggest challenges just after arriving at FOB Warrior. The 163rd Infantry unit brought one of their combat patrol vehicles in, a HMMWV that had "...smashed into a guard rail or a concrete barrier and bent both frame rails," said Maybon.

"We got two rail frames and tore the M1114 all the way down to nothing, we had to cut the engine out of it because it was bent up so bad," recalled SFC Maybon, "we had to rebuild the whole thing."

Getting the necessary repair parts was a joint effort between the Air Force, Class IX, and several FOBs. Using the regular supply system and a little battlefield ingenuity, the parts for the destroyed vehicle slowly came together. It took two months and 359 man hours to put the vehicle back together.

Keeping the Battalion's vehicles running takes a tremendous amount of coordination, according to Sgt. Bullock. "When it rains it pours," said Sergeant Bullock,



Staff Sgt. Richard Bullock stands in front of the company CP, next to a 1114 HMMWV which belonged to TF 1-163rd, that was smashed into a concrete barrier. The vehicle was completely rebuilt by their Automotive Direct Support Section.



A representative of TF 1-163 takes delivery of the newly rebuilt vehicle from B Co., 145th SB's ADSS.

describing the level of activity of job orders in the shop.

"We have had everything come through here," said SFC Maybon. "We are here to do direct support and maintenance for Brigade vehicles, tracked or wheeled," Maybon added.

The Direct Support shop's most common job orders are for repairs of HMMWVs and FMTVs. The shop keeps everything from HMMWVs to HEMTTs and Bradley Fighting Vehicles.

"We have one (vehicle) right now that was hit by an

IED," explained Maybon. "We got to redo the transmission and some of the up armor after it got smashed and rolled into a ditch." When asked if he thought that the armor, both up-armor and the add-on "hillbilly armor" that the DS Section installs does the job, Sgt. 1st Class Maybon answered, "Absolutely."

Maybon described one vehicle that hit a land mine, "It blew the driver's compartment out of it." If it had not been for the metal plate welded to the floor, Maybon emphasized, "He would have lost his life."

Continued on page15

PMCS for body and mind

Being away from family and friends, working long hours, and being in a combat zone are just some of the things that can contribute to stress for a soldier. Luckily, there is a way to help with the problems that can contribute to stress for a soldier. The Combat Stress Control Team, located directly in front of the 145th Support Battalion's Internet Café, is one way for soldiers to get help in a time of need.

The Combat behind Stress Team is made up of three individuals. The team is headed up by Lieutenant Larsen who works as a social worker in the civilian world. Two enlisted soldiers, Sgt. Powell and Sgt. McCright round out the team. Both members of the team are mental health workers. All three come to the 116BCT from a reserve unit with the 1835th Medical Detachment Combat Stress Control out of Denver, Colorado.

The Combat Stress Team is here to help soldiers who are having problems dealing with the daily stress of being in the combat zone. When soldiers come into the Combat Stress Clinic they are given an evaluation, which consists of several questions to determine the status of the soldier.

Some signs that soldiers may be feeling the effects of combat stress are changes in daily activities, changes in sleeping habits, eating an improper diet or changes in behavior. Additionally, lack of attention to detail or inability to focus on daily tasks are other signs a person may be under stress.

Sgt. McCright suggests that soldiers can combat stress by performing "PMCS for the body." Soldiers need to

exercise regularly, eat nutritious foods, manage their time and find activities they enjoy doing.

Other ways Sgt. McCright suggests for relaxing is to play cards or sports, write letters to friends and family or keep a diary. These techniques, along with taking slow deep breaths, talking with a battle buddy, or imagining a favorite place can help you recharge after a long day of work and can help you sleep better at night.

Other ways of coping with stress are to remind yourself that stress is a normal feeling, considering the situation in which soldiers currently find themselves. McCright suggests focusing on current missions, breaking down objectives into smaller tasks and rewarding yourself with rest breaks after each task is accomplished in order to avoid stress, overload and burnout.

But if things start to feel out of control, he suggests getting with your unit sergeant, chaplain or commander, or come by the Combat Stress Clinic to talk over the situation.

As a soldier, if you see that your battle buddy is getting stressed, you should talk to him or her and convince the soldier to go to the Combat Stress Clinic. If that doesn't work, Sgt. McCright suggests that you listen to your battle buddy and convince him or her to get help.

Also, know the members of your team and welcome

Continued on page15

AO West Ops Photos



A TF 148th FA soldier stands perimeter guard from the doorway of a building his platoon has just recently searched, as the neighbors and children wait and watch.



Some of our Iraqi Army friends are always ready to pose with their weapons, for a quick snapshot., while others like his friend, are a little shy.



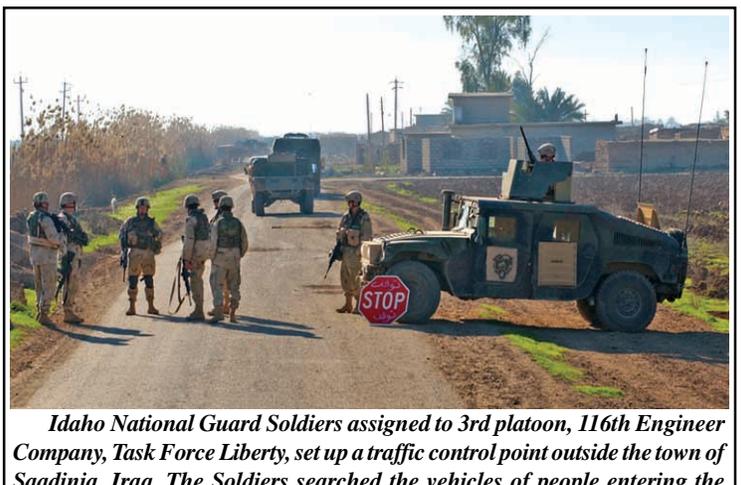
TF 148th FA soldiers conduct house searches at night, as seen with night vision devices.



A TF 148th FA gunner oversees the search of vehicles at a checkpoint



Montana National Guardsmen of TF 1-163 Infantry, rest in place during a mission postponement at FOB McHenry, Kurkuk, Iraq.



Idaho National Guard Soldiers assigned to 3rd platoon, 116th Engineer Company, Task Force Liberty, set up a traffic control point outside the town of Saadina, Iraq. The Soldiers searched the vehicles of people entering the village to go to the medical assistance visit (MAV) site. The MAV examined and treated over 150 patients.

TF 1-148 Field Artillery

1-148th Joint coalition and Iraqi Army operations getting the job done

by *Sgt. Matthew Acosta, 22nd MPAD*

FOB McHENRY, Iraq—As the war in Iraq continues, Iraqi Army Soldiers are receiving more responsibilities and additional training by Army Soldiers theatre-wide.

Idaho National Guardsmen assigned to the Combat Observation and Lasing Team (COLT) platoon, of the 116th Brigade Combat Team's 1st Battalion, 148th Field Artillery, frequently train Iraqi Army Soldiers by including them in their patrols when possible.

Although training the Iraqi Army is not their assigned

tasking, the "Colts" will allow the Iraqi Soldiers to lead joint combat patrols and counter IED patrols whenever possible.

"Sometimes while out on counter-IED missions or combat patrols, we may stop at an Iraqi Army traffic checkpoint and coordinated a joint patrol with the Iraqi Soldiers," said 1st Lt. Chad Knowles, the 1st Bn., 148th FA COLT platoon leader. "In doing so we can see what level they're at in their training and how much they have learned."

Knowles said they would let the Iraqi platoon sergeant plan the patrol, vehicle sequence and interval and

how he was going to employ the American Soldiers in the patrol.

"Doing this gives them the opportunity to use us as a resource but lets them start taking charge of the situations and it gets them in the thought process of taking control of patrols," he added.

The National Guardsmen routinely patrol the streets around Forward Operating Base McHenry, where they are currently stationed, passing through several Iraqi checkpoints and sometimes stop to assist the Iraqis in searching vehicles.

"Often we stop at the traffic control points to

assist the Iraqi Soldiers in searching vehicles and we have seen a difference in the way they operate in just the last three weeks," said Knowles.

They have absorbed what we have taught them and even the Iraqi people have more respect for the check-points and are more patient, knowing it is their job to search the vehicles."

Although the Iraqi Soldiers are doing well with taking charge of certain areas of responsibility, they still need continuing training until they are ready to completely take over operations.

"Training the Iraqis to take over the combat patrols and operations is going to be a long process," said Sgt. Brent Peterson, a 1st Bn., 148th FA artilleryman.

But I think the fact that they are willing to go out and show they want to be independent makes them feel like they're becoming the force they need to be for their own country."

"It's only a matter of time before the Iraqi people look to the Iraqi Army and for security," he added.

"We want them to be successful because they will eventually be taking the reigns," said Knowles.

WTC; A unique perspective on Iraq deployment

by *Spc. Jeffrey Lucas, 148th SB historian*

Sgt. Mark Nelson, 41, of Pendleton, Indiana prepared himself for his future mission to Iraq with a trip to the World Trade Center site in New York City. "It made me realize how important our military force is..." Nelson added, "our presence, and our strength are more important than ever."

Sgt. Nelson compared the feelings of seeing the site of the September 11th attack to those his parents experienced after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. "They went through the same thing with Pearl Harbor, they weren't there, but witnessed it on the news" he remarked.

"You see it through TV, but you don't really sometimes get a good feel for it, and I wanted to get personal with it," he said, adding, "I wanted to meet people who lived there, who saw what happened and experienced it. These people are our

neighbors, our countrymen."

Some told him about losing friends and family, others talked about being right across the street when the planes hit the Twin Towers. It brought things into reality, nothing is more realistic than to see where two enormous buildings like the New York City Trade Centers used to be, going there now and seeing nothing. It was a profound experience that helped bring the focus of the Iraq mission into a new perspective.

Actually, Sgt. Nelson almost missed his date in Iraq. He had been out of the Guard for two years and had tried to volunteer as a member of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). In the IRR, soldiers can volunteer for an overseas mission, if their MOS is needed. "Evidently, they didn't need my MOS, so I went on the

non-voluntary list for the IRR," he said. His primary MOS is a machinist (44E), his secondary is infantry (11B).

He got off the volunteer IRR list and started to look for a home to buy. Within two days of closing the deal on his new home, he received the Presidential Orders to return to active duty for no less than 25 days and no more than 545 days, unless extended by the proper authority. "I was a little bit surprised," Nelson commented, given his previous attempts to volunteer for duty.

After receiving his orders he went to Ft. Jackson, South Carolina on September 19, 2004 for participation in the Soldier Readiness Program (SRP) and a one week consolidated Brigade Combat Team training course. The one week course consisted of several briefings, basic rifle marksmanship (BRM), a nuclear biological

chemical (NBC) course, and other refresher training.

After nearly two weeks at Ft. Jackson, he traveled to Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland where he attended an MOS refresher course, a condensed version of Advanced Individual Training (AIT) lasting a week and a half. While there he went through another SRP and more briefings.

It was at Aberdeen that he made the decision to visit Ground Zero in New York City, NY. Nelson wanted to see for himself the area and the event that was at the forefront of the decision to go to war in Iraq. He was surprised at the candor of people when he asked about the events of September 11th. He found people very open and up front about what had happened.

Ft. Bliss was the next stop on Nelson's journey back to active duty. At Ft. Bliss, he joined other soldiers who would eventually join up with

the 116 BCT. Nelson, a tool and dye maker for General Motors Corporation in Kansas City, Kansas, suddenly found himself with other soldiers from all over the country, ready to head to Kirkuk, Iraq.

The soldiers received combat training, such as convoy training, navigation, and first aid. After nearly three weeks of Renegade Training, he was ready to leave for Kuwait to link up with the 145th Support Battalion. His departure would be delayed again due to a knee injury received during training. Finally, two months later he would join the 145th Support Battalion in Iraq.

Once joining the 145th, he was attached to Alpha Company working in the supply section. "Basically my mission here is to help wherever they need the help, not necessarily in my MOS," he said.

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TF 1-148th Field Artillery

TF 148 FA helps Bicycle Championship



Competitors line up at the beginning of the Iraqi National Bicycle Championship south of Altun Kapri on March 9. Security and support for the event was provided by Iraqi and Coalition forces.

by Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer

ALTUN KAPRI, Iraq- Coalition and Iraqi forces provided security and support for the Iraqi National Bicycle Championships held March 11, south of Altun Kapri, Iraq, allowing riders to compete with confidence.

Soldiers from the 116th Brigade Combat Team's 1-148th Field Artillery Battalion have been deployed to the area in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since December. They have been training Iraqi security forces in the area and frequently conduct combined missions with Iraqis to

maintain security in the region. "The sense of security that the Iraqis have along with their faith in their security forces gave them the momentum to conduct this event," said Capt. Matthew Godfrey, an operations officer with the 1-148th Field Artillery. "The event was a success with the Iraqi security forces providing security and coalition forces providing support as well as being volunteers in assisting the operation of the race."

According to organizers, this event demonstrates that Iraqis are taking more control over their nation and their future.

Scorpions re-up

by Command Sgt. Maj. Green, 1-148th FA Bn.

Twenty two Task Force 1-148 Soldiers recently took advantage of the new bonus incentive program and reenlisted. In a ceremony held on March 7, seven Scorpion Soldiers were sworn in by Task Force Commander Lt. Col. Russ Johnson at the Scorpion Tactical Operation Center on Forward Operating Base Warrior. The soldiers were presented with Battalion Coins in appreciation of their dedication and commitment. The other 15 soldiers who reenlisted are stationed on outlying FOB(s) and will take the reenlistment oath in the upcoming week. Additionally seven other Scorpion soldiers are awaiting finalization of paperwork and then will extend also. Soldiers who took the reenlistment oath on 7 March were Staff Sgt. Kevin Dean, Spc. Jared Martin, and Sgt. Dillon Goodwin, all of HOW Battery TF 1-148. HHS TF 1-148 had four soldiers take the oath during the ceremony, Sgt. Roy Snyder, Sgt. Corbit Thomson, Spc. James Dunn and Cpl. Chris Magone.

Scorpion Six have sworn in the following soldiers at



CSM Green

FOB Warrior on 19 March; Spc. Dennis Gordon, Cpl. Miguel Dominic, Spc. Adam Fink, Spc. Cris Lagunas and Sgt. Leonardo Luis. Staff Sgt. Dell Barney and Pvt. 1st Class Gomes at FOB Stone, Spc. Craig Brainard, Sgt. T Michael Davenport, Spc. Chris Frasure, Spc. Jason Hodgkinson and Spc. Daniel Rumble at FOB Dibis will take the oath from Scorpion Six in the upcoming days. The new bonus program makes this a great time to reenlist. Soldiers who extend for six years receive a lump sum, tax free payment of \$15,000. Three year reenlistments entitle soldiers to \$7500, again in one payment and tax free. Other incentive programs remain in effect and when taken all together can provide a soldier and his family with a handy sum of cash to

use as they wish. Some of those programs include Student Loan Repayment, College Tuition Assistance, reduced rates for Tricare and the Montgomery GI Bill. If you have any questions about the Bonus Program, or any other of the incentive programs, contact Sgt. 1st Class Jim Blake, the Brigade Retention NCO at DSN 460-0100.

I would like to congratulate and thank all Scorpion Soldiers for taking advantage of this great incentive program. The same goes for all 116th BCT Soldiers who have chosen to take advantage of this great program and extend here in Theater. Many of you, even some who don't think so now, would have reenlisted anyway. So why not get the cash while you can. Once again thanks for the great job that you do, the professional attitude and morale that you constantly display and the dedication to duty and sacrifices you make to fight the Global War on Terrorism.

See you on the High Ground. WARRIORS FIRST

New forts improve border security



Local workers build the walls for a new border fort along the Iraq-Iran border in the Qaladiza area. This photo was taken during a site inspection by Iraqi and coalition forces March 15.

by Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer

QALADIZA, Iraq- Iraq's Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) policemen in coordination with coalition forces inspected ongoing border fort construction at three locations along the Iran-Iraq border March 15.

The combined inspection, which

included inspectors from the Iraqi Border Patrol from the Qaladiza District and soldiers from the 116th Brigade Combat Team's B Battery, Task Force 1-148 Field Artillery, was conducted to monitor progress on three new border forts scheduled to be completed within a few months. "In just a few months time the DBE will have three brand new forts along

the border in the Qaladiza District," said Capt. Matthew Godfrey of the 116th BCT's TF 1-148 Field Artillery. The construction of new forts along the Iran-Iraq border is considered a significant step toward controlling influx of foreign extremists and others who may threaten Iraq's security as it continues on the road to full democracy.

TF 1-148th Field Artillery

March Achievements

by Lt. Col. Russell Johnson, Commander, 1-148th FA Bn.

The month of March was again historic for the proud Redlegs of the 1-148th Field Artillery. It marked the tenth month since the soldiers of the 1-148th FA deployed from home station and signified a 100 day milestone for consecutive days spent in the Iraqi Theater of Operation. The month passed quickly as these enthusiastic and capable soldiers continued to work long hours bringing stability to this great nation. As an integral part of the 116th Brigade Combat Team, the 1-148 FA continued to achieve milestones across all facets of operational, logistical, and humanitarian sectors. Our operational tempo and momentum have not diminished in the least as evidenced by our ever growing number of achievements. Throughout my travels this past month, I've seen the determination, dedication, courage and selflessness in your soldiers' eyes as they go about accomplishing a wide array of tasks and missions. Their professionalism and commitment are extraordinary and I'm constantly reminded how fortunate I am to command such a unique and talented Battalion of America's finest men and women.

Although the Scorpion soldiers are geographically dispersed throughout several locations here in northern Iraq, they all work together as a team and pull together for the good of the whole organization. Their efforts are complimentary

and have enabled both the Battalion and the Brigade to make significant strides in accomplishing our diverse mission here. Every day, I receive compliments from Iraqi citizens, government officials, Iraqi soldiers, policemen, school teachers, and non-governmental representatives telling me how grateful they are for the efforts of your talented soldiers. In the short time we have been here, we have made a substantial impact on improving security, enhancing the proficiency of the Iraqi security forces, improving the quality of life for thousands, and forging trust and confidence among the various ethnicities which populate our assigned area. Your soldiers continue to represent democracy, freedom, and liberty to the fullest and are great ambassadors to the Iraqi people!

Your soldiers continue to work both hard and smart. There have been no weekends off or down time since arriving here in mid December, however we have continued to cycle personnel out on 15-day R&R leaves throughout March and will continue to do so in the months ahead. Additionally, we have sent many deserving soldiers on 4-day R&R passes to regional destinations here in SW Asia, allowing them some well earned time to rest and relax.

Through the safe, focused and diligent efforts of the Scorpion soldiers, we continued to rack up some



LTC Johnson

impressive statistics across our broad area of operations. In March alone, we conducted over 300 combat patrols, transported over 10,000 gallons of fuel, hauled over 26 tons of food, 13,000 liters of water, 42 tons of barrier materials, and safely logged in excess of 39,000 vehicle miles across our extensive fleet of combat systems. Our Paladins fired over 16,000 pounds of ordinance bringing our total to over 18 tons of munitions fired from our 155 MM self propelled howitzers since arriving in theater.

Our capable mechanics repaired over 150 combat vehicles, completed more than 20 scheduled services, and performed recovery operations on 8 vehicles that required evacuation from remote areas. Collectively, they have inventoried and cataloged almost 8,500 individual parts, renovated their maintenance and parts-storage areas, and kept our vehicles and systems functioning despite near continual use in a combat environment. These great soldiers continue to work long, hard hours keeping our fleet on the road and maintaining our

exceptional operational-readiness rates.

Our area of operations remains dangerous as evidenced by our many successes in discovering unexploded ordinance, unsecured ordinance, and improvised explosive devices. Through the combined efforts of the coalition forces and the Iraqi Security Forces, we have had great success in identifying and destroying these potential bombs before they can harm anyone. The confidence and proficiency of the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police continues to improve with each successful discovery and safe disposal of these potential bombs.

We continue our focused efforts on providing force protection to not only the coalition forces, but also to the Iraqi citizens who are trying so hard to make their country a model of freedom and democracy. Our firefinder radar crews provided almost 2,500 hours of continual firefinder coverage (scanning the horizons for enemy indirect fire attacks) across a large area of northern Iraq. The professional radar operators, radar repairmen and support personnel worked around the clock to operate and maintain these complex, unique radar systems.

March kept us busy on multiple fronts, including the humanitarian sector. A total of nine projects totaling over \$77,000 consisting of schools, hospitals, clinics,

medical hardware, public buildings, and government buildings were completed in the 1-148 FA area of operations. A total of 35 new projects were started with the help of your soldiers while they continued to monitor progress on another 78. Our soldiers are directly involved with humanitarian project nominations, drafting scopes of work, securing bids, and submitting projects for analysis and approval through military and Iraqi governmental agencies. Additionally, your caring soldiers assisted Iraqi Security Forces and governmental agencies with the distribution of over 1,000 packets of school supplies to primary school students, (these packets consist of pencils, paper, rulers, glue, crayons, coloring books, educational toys, and other essential school supplies not normally available through the existing Iraqi educational system) along with special packets for the teachers. Our Physician Assistant and skilled medics provided both emergency and routine medical support to our soldiers wherever they were located. They also administered emergency care and trauma relief to several Iraqi citizens involved in automobile accidents they came across during routine patrols. Our medical teams have partnered with regional clinics to assist them in

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TF 2-116th Armor

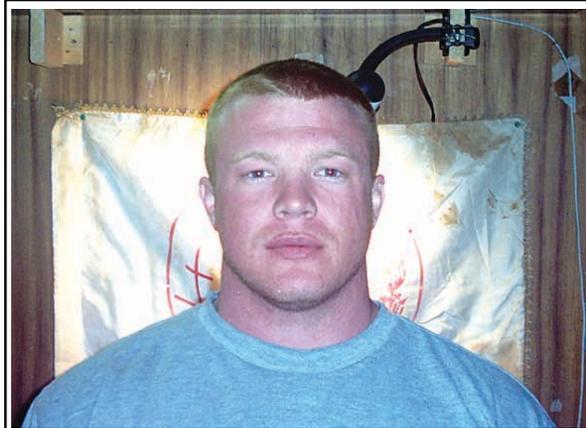
2-116 soldiers receive CSM coins

Four Soldiers were presented the Command Sergeant Major's coin recently.

On Jan 30, during a direct fire engagement, Spc. Justin Moschelle took cover and engaged Anti-Iraqi Forces (AIF), that were attempting to engage our flank. He is to be commended for executing the proper response under fire, protecting 3rd Platoon's flank without hesitation.

Spc. Clint Moore has over the past 8 months been an inspiration to the other soldiers of 3rd Sqd 3rd Plt. His can do attitude towards all missions and his willingness to learn has set him apart from the rest of 3rd Squad. Spc. Moore sets the standard for others to follow when it comes to being a Soldier as he continually strives to better himself and others. He always performs his duty to the utmost of his ability and is ever eager and ready for any mission. Spc. Moore always shows proper military bearing and is always willing to take on extra tasks to help the unit accomplish its mission.

Pvt. Bradle Harris has demonstrated to me a very professional and can do attitude for the past eight months. He was slotted to be the Radio-Teletype Operator (RTO) for third Plt. and his knowledge of the commo field has greatly enhanced the platoon's combat



Spc. Justin Moschelle of 3rd Platoon, 2-116 Armor Bn. received a Sergeant Major's coin from CSM Chin.



From left to right, Spc. Moschelle, Spc. Moore, Pvt. 1st Class Mercer, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Chin, Pvt. Harris and Spc. Massey of E Troop 1-163 are in front.

effectiveness. Pvt. Harris does not hold the commo MOS, which impresses me even more because I have the commo MOS and it is not something that is easily learned. Since arriving in Kirkuk, Pvt. Harris has been moved to the 4thth squad, and he has taken on the same enthusiasm, as an infantry team member as he did learning the commo field.

Pvt. 1st Class Jeremiah Mercer's alertness allowed his patrol to successfully apprehend a 'Be On the

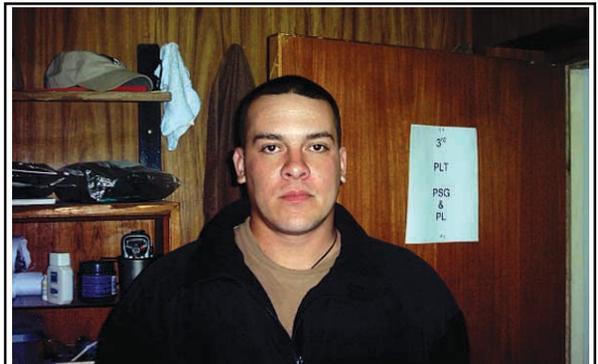
Look-Out for' (BOLO) list subject. Fortunately though, this individual was later determined not to be a BOLO subject. Pvt. 1st Class Mercer, a medic, spotted this individual in a vehicle at a traffic control point. He immediately alerted his superiors to his findings and guided them to the subject for further investigation. Pvt. 1st Class Mercer's keen eye and situational awareness is a great asset to his platoon and Troop E, 163 Cav.



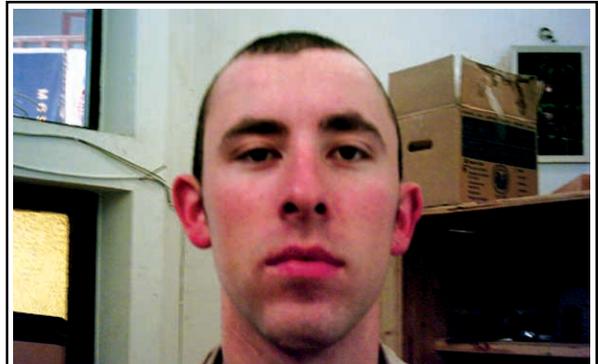
Spc. Clint Moore of 3rd squad, 3rd Platoon, 2-116 Armor Bn. received a Sergeant Major's coin from CSM Chin.



Pvt. Bradle Harris of 4th squad, 3rd Platoon, 2-116 Armor Bn. received a Sergeant Major's coin from CSM Chin.



Spc. Alberto Massey of 2-116 Armor Bn., received a Sergeant Major's coin from CSM Chin..



Pvt. 1st Class Mercer of 2-116 Armor Bn., received a Sergeant Major's coin from CSM Chin..

TF 2-116th Armor

5K fun runners burn rubber



Soldiers who competed were: (Kneeling) Sgt. Hight and Spc. Hensley, (Back-row) Pvt. 1st Class McNabb, Spc. Carroll, Sgt. 1st Class Gerrein, 1st Lt. Blamines, Spc. Metcalf and Staff Sgt. G. Brower.

These soldiers from HHC, 2-116th Cavalry, in their quest to remain in tip top condition, gave up their free time recently to participate in the MWR's monthly 5K fun run.

Winners were rewarded for finishing in the top 25 in the men's and women's field. These soldiers clearly displayed their "WAR-RIOR ATTITUDE."

March Acheive...

Continued from page 13
improving both the quality of medical care as well as facility improvements and enhancement of sterile work areas. The Iraqi emergency medical response teams are benefiting from close mentorship with our dedicated medics and are constantly improving their ability to provide emergency care to Iraqi citizens.

I mentioned in last month's note the heroics being performed daily by our communications personnel and support staff. This continues. In March, they ran new network lines from our tactical operations center to the main distribution nodes which significantly improved our network speeds and quality. Additionally, they found new ways to expand our coverage

areas thus enabling our command and control nodes to maintain communications over regions dominated by ridges, mountains, and valleys.

A quick note about our interpreters here in Iraq. These individuals are the "long pole in the tent" when it comes to communicating with our Iraqi counterparts and citizens. Every day, they are on the front lines with us conducting patrols, attending city council meetings, supporting school openings, civic events, and enabling us to conduct our daily activities. They are an integral part of our team and have taught us more about Iraqi culture, customs and history than any reference book available in most college libraries.

We recently trained a number of key soldiers in the operation of a

Nowruz observance

by Command Sgt. Maj. Henry Chin

Rattlers, great job in keeping the FOB and Patrol Bases safe. Your missions have been very successful throughout the week. Keep up the good work;



Sgt. Maj. Chin

you play a vital role against the threat here in Kirkuk.

We just celebrated Nowruz (the Kurdish New Year) with the Iraqi people on 21 March. This revered day, began with the night a Kurdish hero, Kawa the Blacksmith, led a rebellion against the tyrant Shah, Zuhak, or Dhuhak, who legend has it, was stricken by a rare illness. Two giant basilisks grew out of his shoulders, threatening to eat his brain for food. His doctor prescribed that he should feed the beasts with the fresh brains of two youths every day to keep them away from the Shah's own. Hence, a vicious campaign began

specialized unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) which we fly on a regular basis to keep observation on several key regions in our area of operations. These skilled teams have conducted numerous missions throughout March and have been instrumental in our ability to observe large tracts of ground from remote locations. These UAVs allow us to mitigate risks to our soldiers who would otherwise have to cover this same ground via mounted patrols as well as providing a certain element of

that claimed the lives of thousands of young boys, including seven of Kawa's children. Eventually, Kawa led a march to the

palace of the Shah, and successfully killed him, and the two basilisks. They set bonfires to announce the dawning of a new day throughout the land.

That is where Nowruz comes from and why on the 21 of March we saw so many bon fires. Also, the 23 of March is the holiday "Eidal Adha". This is a time when Muslims offer animal sacrifices and give the meat to the needy. If you have any questions on Kurdish holidays, or just want to know more, you can go to kurdishmedia.com.

Thanks again for all your hard work.

SINEMORA

surprise. They have proven themselves time and time again.

Executing deliberate, well resourced training to our Iraqi Security Force partners continues to be an important part of your soldier's mission here. Every day, our talented team of professional cadre train Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police, and Border Police on essential tasks needed to achieve self-reliant security organizations. The young Iraqi soldiers along with their leadership are

Continued on page 20

WTC...

Continued from page 11

"I think that since I have arrived here things here have been running pretty smooth. This is my first deployment, and I have met some really good people here, the Idaho National Guard are just great, and the people at Headquarters are good to work for, they have made life here in a war zone pretty decent," he added.

After everything that he has been through to get where he is today, he had one thing to say. "This is what it all comes down to, that we are defending freedom, the liberty that we all enjoy in the United States. As a soldier, I know what exactly I was trained for and what I am fighting for now."

Units rolling...

Continued from page 9

In order to keep up with the work load and keep the shop supplied with an adequate stock of repair parts, Maybon, Bullock and company keep a section of 17 soldiers running continually. The payoff for all this labor is safer vehicles for the Brigade soldiers running combat missions.

Body & mind...

Continued from page 9

newcomers when they arrive – help them learn skills they may need to cope. Include your buddies and new soldiers in opportunities to relax and offer encouragement for your buddy when he or she is doing well.

During this time away from our homes, remember it is stressful, but we as soldiers are trained to deal with it but when we can't, the Combat Stress Clinic is here to help.

TF 1-163rd Infantry

TF Griz Update

by Maj. T.J. Hull, Executive Officer, 163rd Infantry Bn.

Task Force Griz has been conducting operations in Hawija, Iraq for a little over three months. Task Force Griz is now made up of G Troop, 82d Cavalry (Oregon), C Company 116th Engineers (Idaho), B Company, C Company and Headquarters and Headquarters Company TF 1-163d Infantry Battalion (Montana). The very tough work that our soldiers have done since we have been here has resulted in incredible successes, experiences that will last lifetimes and have helped in many ways to contribute to the success of this fledgling country.

Operations conducted by Griz soldiers have resulted in an amazing list of

accomplishments. Hundreds of suspected enemy have been captured by Griz soldiers, many of whom are confirmed enemy. Griz has located and seized literally tons of hidden enemy weapons and explosives. There is little doubt that the soldiers of TF Griz will be remembered as one of the most successful units in this theater.

Daily life in our Forward Operating Base McHenry and in our area of responsibility have been rewarding, as well as challenging for our soldiers. Soldiers fulfill a range of responsibilities on a daily basis that are truly humbling. On the same day, a soldier might patrol to counter enemy mortar attacks in the morning and conduct a raid to capture an enemy



Maj. T.J. Hull

insurgent at night. Griz soldiers have done a great deal to improve the conditions in Iraq. TF Griz often conducts Medical Assistance Visits (MAV's) to improve the health of local Iraqi residents. Companies are also very involved in facilitating projects that range from improving the quality of drinking water, to refurbishing schools. TF Griz is committed to stabilizing our small part of this country, whether through engaging local religious, tribal, and government leaders, or

by helping communities solve infrastructure problems.

Living conditions at Griz Forward Operating Bases are austere, but soldier innovation, good company, and a strong sense of purpose have made life here much better than just tolerable.

We have had some of the best times and the worst times since arriving in Iraq. Our most difficult time occurred recently with the death of one of the most loved soldiers, Sgt. 1st Class Robbie McNary. On April 3, 2005, we conducted a memorial ceremony for Sgt. 1st Class McNary and paid our respects to this great soldier who worked so hard to be the outstanding NCO that he was and friend to so many. Soldiers of TF Griz

have gathered in small groups for the last week telling their favorite SFC McNary stories and wishing they could somehow be magically transported to Lewistown, Montana to comfort his family, or better, transported back in time to undo what cannot be undone.

Other soldiers who have gone home are constantly on the minds of soldiers here, especially Staff Sgt. John Bennett, who is prayed for daily.

Our soldiers have maintained a level of morale that can only be explained by their camaraderie, sense of purpose, and professionalism. TF Griz soldiers are proud to be part of the history that they are making and should be. They are truly a band of brothers.

One picture is worth a thousand words...

by Capt. Michael L. Beck,
Commander, B Co., 163rd
Infantry Bn.

Having been in country nearly four months now I already have several memories of Iraq. I must admit that there are some things that I'd much rather forget. The other day one of my platoon leaders, 1st Lt. Chad Schopp, gave me this photo which brought back a more pleasant memory. I like to call it a boy and his dog. I remember the day well. We had conducted a dismounted



patrol across the Tigris River into Samarra to visit

workers for the Ministry of Power. Samarra is notorious for what I would describe as a persistent Anti-Iraqi Force presence, and we were in an area where my soldiers had been shot at before. As we approached the worker's security building, a dog was barking at us out of control. I anticipated that one of my soldiers would rapidly find a solution to the problem, but it became obvious rather quickly that this dog was

a pet of the workers. Attempts to calm the dog by the workers and some of my soldiers were not successful, until Staff Sgt. Ward Eckenstein approached the pup. The result is in this photo. Take away the soldier's uniform and replace his weapon with a fishing pole, and one might think that the photo was taken on the banks of the Clark Fork River in Montana. No, this is half a world away...in more ways than one.

TF 1-163rd Infantry

In Memoriam Sgt. 1st Class Robbie D. McNary

A memorial service was held here at FOB McHenry recently, for Sgt. 1st Class Robbie Dean McNary of Lewistown, Mont. Sgt. 1st Class McNary, the Platoon Sergeant for C Company, TF 163rd Infantry, was lost in action at 1:50 p.m. on March 31, 2005.

The memorial service was conducted by Bn. Chaplain (Maj.) Oliver Washington, before the entire unit as well as Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, 42nd ID

memorial prayer. 1st Sgt. Flint then conducted the roll call for C Company, followed by the firing of volleys, a 21-gun salute, and the playing of Taps.

The ceremony was concluded with the silent bearing of Sgt. 1st Class McNary's boots, rifle, helmet and dog tags by 163rd soldiers where they were set for presentation on a platform,



*Sgt. 1st Class
McNary*

cannoneer in Det. 1, Howitzer Battery, 1-163rd AC, out of Lewistown, Mont. Later, while staying in Lewistown, he transferred into an auto rifleman position, part of the reorganized 1-163rd Infantry Bn. (M) and stayed true to his infantry roots as he developed into a fine Infantry fire team leader.

Once proving himself worthy as a leader, he took a promotion as a squad leader in Co. A, 163rd IN Bn. in Billings, Mont. He eventually found his way back to Lewistown as a squad leader and would soon make the transition to TOW gunner. He



Sgt. Travis Gradl of TF 1-163rd Infantry, sits with head bowed as he mourns the loss of a platoon leader and a friend.

again moved back to a fire team leader position, then back to a squad leader and remained in that position until finally taking up his true calling as the platoon sergeant for C Co., TF 1-163rd IN (the Outlaws), part of the 116th BCT.

"All of us who are associated with the 116th BCT mourn the tragic loss of Montana National Guardsman Sgt. 1st Class

gunneries, M16 Qualifications, Army Physical Fitness tests, reorganizations, and after-action reviews. He had sacrificed vast amounts of personal and family time to ensure that his soldiers (his other family) were squared away. Nothing was too great of a sacrifice for his unit and fellow soldiers. Whether it was in the burning forests of Montana, overseas in Bosnia or the oil-stained skies of Iraq, he was up to the challenge.



Soldiers of TF 1-163rd Infantry wait their turn in line to pay their last respects to Sgt. 1st Class Robbie McNary.

commander, Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart, 116th BCT commander, 42nd ID Chaplain (Col.) Dan Robinson and a large contingent of brigade staff members, with the 42nd ID band playing 'Oh, Danny Boy' quietly in the background.

The eulogy was delivered by Capt. Mark Sauvageau who quoted from Shakespeare, of a "Band of Brothers." This was followed by touching remarks from 1st Sgt. Garth Flint, 1st Lt. Joe George and Sgt. Travis Gradl. After the reading of scripture by Cmd. Sgt. Maj. William Lohrenz, Chaplain Washington led all those gathered in the

where his fellow soldiers were then allowed to pass and salute paying their final respects to a great soldier.

Sgt. 1st Class Robbie D. McNary was born January 17, 1963. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps on December 9, 1980 and remained for 3 years until December 12, 1983 when he joined the U.S.M.C. Reserve. He remained in the reserve until 1986 when he entered the IRR.

In 1987, McNary enlisted into the Montana Army National Guard as a



The members of C Co., 1-163rd Infantry, stand behind the memorial for their fallen comrade and friend, Sgt. 1st Class Robbie D. McNary. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Jack White)

Robbie McNary. This great soldier was lost while bringing peace, stability and freedom

to this critical part of our world. I know that all Idahoans extend our heart-felt sympathies and condolences to his family and pray that God will comfort and keep them during this terribly sad time," said Maj. Gen. Larry Lafrenz, the Idaho Adjutant General.

Sgt. 1st Class McNary had served the Montana ARNG in untold weekend drills, annual trainings, NTC and JRTC rotations,

There isn't a soldier among us who could rival the work ethic and pride in service of Robbie D. McNary.

At this time, he has been submitted for a Bronze Star medal with "valor" device as a result of his actions during Operation Iraqi Freedom III. He has recently been awarded the Combat Infantry Badge. Previous awards were numerous from both the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army.

He is survived by his wife Annette, sons Robert and Ryan, daughter Alyssa and his father, Bobbie McNary.

Flowers and cards are welcomed by the McNary family. Send to: 810W. Evelyn St., Lewistown, Mont. 59457.

TF 3-116th Armor

Three 3-116 AR soldiers awarded Bronze Star Medal



Spc. Josiah Jurich, Sgt. Charles Jordan, and Staff Sgt. Marvin Albert II, After receiving the Bronze Star Medal from Brig. Gen. Gayhart, 116 BCT commander.

Story and Photos by Spc. Cathy Alberto, 116 BCT Public Affairs Specialist

FOB WARRIOR, Iraq—Three 116th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers from received Bronze Star Medals for heroic achievement April 1.

Spc. Josiah Jurich, Sgt. Charles Jordan, and Staff Sgt. Marvin Albert II were presented the Bronze Star by Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart, commander of the 116th BCT. All three soldiers are from Task Force 3-116 Armor headquarters company.

On the morning of 13 January, all three rendered life saving treatment to a soldier

who was badly injured when his vehicle struck a land mine. According to the award recommendation letters, their quick thinking saved not only his arm, but his life as well.

According to reports, Staff Sgt. Albert was instrumental in getting the wounded soldier out of the truck so he could initiate intravenous fluids and continue treating for shock. Staff Sgt Albert reportedly spot checked the soldier for other injuries and adjusted the security perimeter set up around the scene,

so that it was evenly covered on all sides.

Sgt. Jordan and Spc. Jurich controlled the bleeding from a severed artery, working together to stem the bleeding within 10 minutes with numerous pressure dressings.

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army of the United States after 6 December 1941, distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy; or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.



Soldiers of HHC, 3-116 AR being addressed by Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart, commander of the 116 BCT.

The reverse side of the medal has the inscription "HEROIC OR MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT" and a space for the name of the recipient to be engraved.

"[Their] decisive actions cut the 'golden hour' of life-saving care in half and saved [the Soldier's] life," wrote TF 3-116 Platoon Leader 1st LT. Max Arvidson in the citation for the awards.

The 116 BCT was mobilized in support of the global war on terrorism in June 2004. The unit's multi-faceted mission in Iraq

includes security training and operations, aiding the Iraqi government, supporting economic and infrastructure development, and facilitating communications.

The 116 BCT includes headquarters and staff sections, two armor battalions, a mechanized infantry battalion, a support battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, and various intelligence, signal, and specialized units. The 116 BCT is one of several Army National Guard units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III.



Capt. John Dimeling, commander of HHC, 3-116 AR, salutes Brig. Gen. Gayhart at the beginning of the Bronze Star award ceremony



Brig. Gen. Gayhart confers the Bronze Star Medal upon Spc. Josiah Jurich, Sgt Charles Jordan, and Staff Sgt. Marvin Albert II, at a ceremony on April 1.



The Bronze Star Medal recipients wait as Brig. Gen. Gayhart prepares to place the Medal on their uniform left breast pockets.

TF 3-116th Armor

Operation Provide School Supplies, TF 3-116 deliver toys to Iraqi children

by Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer

TOBZAWA, Iraq-Iraqi and coalition forces delivered stuffed animals donated by Americans to disadvantaged children in the small village of Tobzawa, Iraq, March 9.

The combined force, including soldiers of the 116th Brigade Combat Team's Task Force 3-116 Armor, headquartered in La Grande, Oregon, delivered over 150 toys in an effort to improve relationships between themselves and community members in this small community southwest of Kirkuk.

"The children in the village of Tobzawa are extremely poor

and have very little to play with," said 2nd Lt. Joshua McLaughlin, a fire support officer with B Co., TF 3-116 Armor who helped deliver the toys.

"The children were very excited to receive the new toys and these efforts continue to strengthen the relationship between the Iraqi Army, coalition forces, and local citizens."

The stuffed animals were donated by Americans through Operation Provide School Supplies, a program through which individuals and organizations donate school supplies, toys and other items for distribution by

military personnel to children. According to TF 3-116 soldiers, toys are not the only things being delivered.



Iraqi children reach for toys distributed by Iraqi and coalition soldiers March 9 in the village of Tobzawa as part of efforts to develop positive relationships in the community.

"We make it a point to hit every village in our operations area with something like this," said

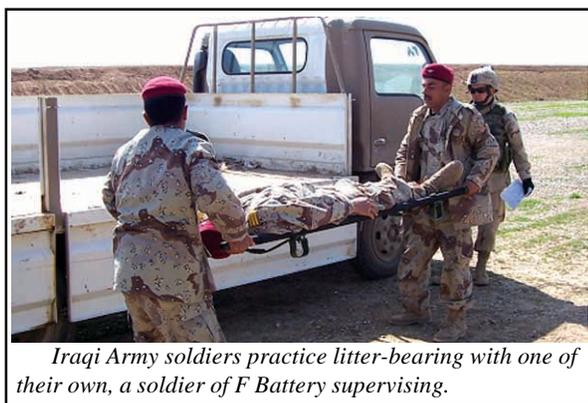
McLaughlin. "We have also distributed water, candy and other items. We just built 125 packets of school supplies for giving out." Besides the 3rd Armor Battalion, the 116th Brigade Combat Team is also comprised of headquarters and staff sections, the 2nd Armor Battalion, the 1-148th Field Artillery Battalion, the 1-163rd Mechanized Infantry Battalion, the 145th Support Battalion, the 116th Engineer Battalion, and various intelligence, signal, and specialized units. The 116th BCT is one of several Army National Guard units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

Fox Battery, 188th ADA Trains Iraqi Army

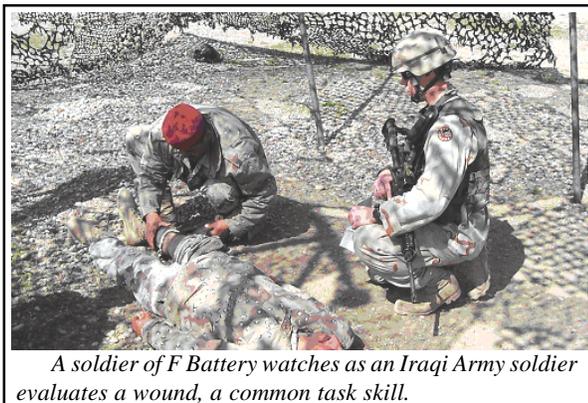
Story & Photo by Sgt. Luke Rodgers & Sgt. Kenith Kachena, 188th ADA

The soldiers of F Battery 188th ADA are getting the job done in Iraq. Fox Btry has been tasked with training the Iraqi Army (IA) in Kirkuk Iraq. Soldiers of this unit have been training the IA on common task skills to aid them on the security missions being performed in Iraq. This training will aid the transfer of power back to the Iraqis.

Fox Battery is responsible for training two companies of IA Soldiers. One main difficulty that the soldiers are facing is the language barrier. Attached to them are a number of Iraqi translators who assist them in the training. "The language barrier is tough," said specialist Shannon Kliniske a member of the unit. But the soldiers seem to understand what we are trying to teach them. They are



Iraqi Army soldiers practice litter-bearing with one of their own, a soldier of F Battery supervising.



A soldier of F Battery watches as an Iraqi Army soldier evaluates a wound, a common task skill.

working very hard to accomplish the tasks put before them." Fox Battery is

expected to be deployed through the month of December.

F/188th ADA Soldier of the Month

by Sgt. Luke Rodgers & Sgt. Kenith Kachena, 188th ADA

FOB WARRIOR, Iraq - Specialist Cody Johnson, a high school graduate of Griggs County Central in 2001 was named Soldier of the Month for January, 2005 for Fox Battery 188th ADA.

Cody is currently on deployment in Iraq for OIF III. Cody is the son of Gary and Janice Johnson who reside in Cooperstown, No. Dakota. He joined the

North Dakota National Guard in 2000 and was deployed to Iraq on July 2nd 2004. Cody was recognized for his hard work and excellence in training Iraqi soldiers in the field during the month of January.

Soldier of the Month is given as a reward to soldiers who display exemplary service during the month. This reward brings great credit to himself and his family.



Spec. Cody Johnson, F Battery, 188th ADA soldier of the month for January. (Photo by Sgt. Luke Rodgers, 188 ADA)

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1. Bingo 2000 Karaoke 2130	2. Final Four 0200 80's night 2000
3. Shuffleboard/ Blackjack 2000 Movie Premier 1900 @ Krab	4. JEOPARDY 1900 Madden 2000	5. NCAA Champ. 0500 Texas Hold'em/ 9-Ball 2000	6. Dart League 1900 Spades 2000	7. Ping-pong/ Dominoes 2000 Spring Bash Events All Day	8. Latino Night 2000 Spring Bash Events All Day	9. Spring Bash Events All Day
10. KRAB IDOL 2000 Movie Premier 1900 @ Krab	11. KRAB IDOL 2000	12. KRAB IDOL 2000	13. KRAB IDOL 2000	14. Ping-pong/ Dominoes 2000	15. Bazaar 1200-2100	16. Bingo 2000 Bazaar 0900-1700 Karaoke 2130
17. Talent Show 2000 Movie Premier 1900 @ Krab	18. JEOPARDY 1900 Madden 2000	19. Texas Hold'em/ 9-Ball 2000	20. Dart League 1900 Spades 2000	21. Ping-pong/ Dominoes 2000	22. Hip Hop Night 2000	23. Clamtina Closed Dining In
24. Gospel Night 1700 Dominoes 2000 Movie Premier 1900 @ Krab	25. JEOPARDY 1900 Halo 2 /NCAA March Madness 2000	26. Texas Hold'em/ 8-Ball 2000	27. Dart League 1900 Spades 2000	28. Casino Night 2000	29. Country Night 2000	30. Bingo 2000 Fear Factor 1400 Karaoke 2130

Rec Schedule April 2005



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USAF SERVICES
Combat Support & Community Service

March Acheive...

Continued from page 15

enthusiastically receptive to this training and continually offer praise to the efforts and maturity of the Coalition Soldiers. Through your soldier's efforts, these young men and women are continuing to learn and develop their skills for the betterment of themselves and their country. Through the dedication and talents of your soldiers, the Iraqi Security Forces are rapidly becoming a professional and confident force across the country.

Since we arrived in theater, many soldiers have been afforded the opportunity to

reenlist for some very lucrative, lump sum, tax free extension bonuses. In March alone, we reenlisted 22 soldiers here in the Scorpion Battalion equating to bonus payouts well over a quarter million dollars. I encourage any soldier who is eligible for these incentives to seriously consider taking advantage of this limited offer and maximize their deployment benefits. This bonus program will not last forever and I congratulate these soldiers and their families for their continued service to their country and the National Guard.

Your cards, letters, care packages and emails are making this deployment

bearable for many of our soldiers. Keep them coming! Although the days here are long, your soldiers are afforded the opportunity to call, write, and email on a regular basis. Your local Red Cross offices have been very prompt and efficient in communicating the few emergency notifications we have received from families thus far during the deployment. I encourage you to use their services to pass time-sensitive, emergency-related information to your loved ones. My administrative and command teams pass this information rapidly and confidentially to the soldiers

and afford them the opportunity to call or communicate home in very short time frames.

Our deployment is moving forward fast. We have now been in country nearly 120 days. Along with the other great units of the 116th Brigade Combat Team, we participated in a formal ceremony which officially awarded your outstanding soldiers the 116th BCT combat patch for wear on their right sleeve as a representation of their combat service. Your soldiers continue to set the standard for excellence and achieve what many only dream of doing.

Your soldiers are doing a stellar job! As I witness their contributions and achievements here in this foreign land, I'm constantly reminded that our soldiers truly represent the best of the best. Your soldiers are touching the lives of many Iraqis every day and making a real difference. From the capable Redlegs that man our Paladin howitzers to the soldiers out on mounted patrols at 0300 in the morning, we are making an impression here that will linger long after we have redeployed home. My heartfelt thanks for your continued support, prayers, and sacrifice. God Bless.

Whenever, Wherever!