



The Official Newsletter of the 116th Brigade Combat Team

Commander's Corner

by Brigadier General Alan Gayhart, Commander

Fellow Warriors, Protecting yourself and each other is the keystone of our success. Continue to guard against complacency. Although we have made significant gains against the enemy, the threat against our FOBs and patrols continue. Maintain your vigilance, and always be alert and aware of your surroundings.

I know each of you would feel the same way I would, if a negligent discharge from a personal

weapon were to injure or kill a fellow Warrior. Take the time to correctly clear your weapons when entering

FOB's and DFACs. Never assume any weapon is clear!! Utilize the buddy system and have a fellow Warrior verify that your

weapon is clear. I hold leaders at all levels responsible to ensure that correct clearing procedures are conducted. Nothing is so important that each of us

Continued on page 2



BG Gayhart

CSM Briefing

by 116th BCT Command Sgt. Maj. LeRoy Lewis

I will try to write an article on something other than safety, though it is one of my major concerns. I visited with the great soldiers of 3rd Battalion A Company today and went on a patrol with them in their AO. One thing I did notice was that the people were really friendly and there are some really cute children out there. I do

know this; you better keep your head in the game while you are out of the wire. They might look friendly but remember, never turn your back and trust no one. The soldiers were very polite, but alert and always ready. I know they realized that the tables could turn at any time and they

Continued on page 2



CSM Lewis

Senator visits 116th's Oregon troops

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Jack White, 116th Public Affairs NCO

Oregon state Senator, the honorable Gordon Smith, visited members of TF 3-116 Armor on March 21st at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Warrior.

Though short in duration, the stopover visit meant a lot to the thirty-five or so soldiers assembled to greet the Senator. "I felt the need to come here to say thank you," Senator Smith told the troops. "To express the appreciation of our state and the nation."

After the Senator's talk with the troops, he was presented a commander's coin by Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart, commander of the 116th BCT as well as an American flag from the 3/



Senator Gordon Smith and the Soldiers of TF 3-116th Armor Bn. met at FOB Warrior.

116, presented by Maj. William Cole.

In turn, Senator Smith presented an Oregon state flag to Maj. Cole, executive officer for TF 3-116 AR, who accepted on behalf of the unit. "This gives the soldiers the opportunity

to feel the impact of what they do for the citizens of Iraq. They get to see how it is seen back home," said Maj. Cole of the visit. Smith went on to say that Oregon is very proud of

Continued on page 5

Museum collects ancient artifacts

by Capt. Monte Hibbert, 116 BCT Public Affairs Officer

KIRKUK, Iraq- Coalition Forces and personnel from a Kirkuk museum are working together to inspect, transfer and preserve artifacts found on FOB Warrior here.

Soldiers from the 506th Air Expeditionary Group (AEG) and A Co., 358th Civil Affairs Brigade worked hand in hand with Shaeda Mohammed Amin, a local museum representative, to collect

artifacts and keep them safe until documentation and proper transfer are completed. The group worked March 10 at the Kirkuk Regional Air Base (KRAB) where the archeological site is located.

"This is a first time there was a transfer of antiques to the local directorate since the coalition forces arrived two years ago," said Amin. "These artifacts are not just

Continued on page 8

Inside

AO North Tour ... Pg 5

Cartoon ... Pg 9

Free Stuff ... Pg 9

Battalion Updates... Pgs 10-14

Homestate Briefs/ Iraq News ... Page 15



Snakebites is a 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.



Snakebites Staff

Capt. Monte Hibbert
Public Affairs Officer

Staff Sgt. Jack White
Public Affairs NCO

Spc. Cathy Alberto
Public Affairs Specialist



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 at Bldg. 370 near brigade HQ.

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.

A night out at the Clamtina

by Spc. Cathy Alberto, 116th BCT Public Affairs Specialist

Soldiers and airmen from the Army and Air Force participated in a night of Karaoke, at the Clamtina on Forward Operating Base Warrior.

Many Soldiers came out to enjoy the night after a hard day at work. The festivities began at 2000 hrs and continued until the crowning of the champion at 2300 hrs. Besides just singing, there were people having fun playing cards, drinking near beer (if that can actually be fun), singing, dancing and just hanging out with everyone and enjoying every minute of it.

One of the singers was Lt. Col. Steven Knutzen, commander of the 116th Engineer Battalion, singing his favorite rendition of the Beatles song "Back in the USSR," a favorite hit amongst our geriatric

Commanders Corner...

Continued from page 1

cannot take the time to ensure that our weapons are clear, and not a threat to fellow Warriors.

I commend each of you for maintaining safety awareness when operating combat vehicles. Daily, the lives of Soldiers are saved due to the wearing of seatbelts, keeping within the speed limits, and ensuring gunners keep down in the turrets of HWWMVs. Each of us must look out for each other. If you see an unsafe act, someone who has not cleared his weapon properly, gunners standing up in turrets, or other unsafe acts, you owe it to the Soldier and his loved ones to not ignore the act, but to remedy it. Keeping

crowd. (just kidding!)

Spc. Rachael Robertson sang the song "Black Velvet." Her friends thought she sounded wonderful, however trouble with the microphone kept her from achieving the full success she deserved. Robertson exclaimed, "I could have sang better if they replaced the microphone."

The steamy side of the night began when Sgt.

Brook Knutzen decided to sing "I Touch Myself." Sgt. Knutzen was accompanied by an Army and Air Force dancing ensemble which entertained the crowd and quite possibly took a few years off of Brigade Chaplain, (Lt. Col.) John Worster's life.

Chaplain Worster was one of the judges that

Continued on page 9



Brigade Chaplain (Maj.) John Worster led a panel of judges during the Clamtina's karaoke night competitions, featuring the best (and worst) of the 116th's musical talent. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Alcario Chapa, 116 BCT S-5)

each other safe will ensure that we all complete the mission here in Iraq, and return safely to our loved ones at home.

"Warriors First"

CSM Briefing...

Continued from page 1

were ready. I have visited all the FOBs and Soldiers are in good spirits. Some of the FOBs are better than others, but this does not seem to make any difference to the soldiers. Make sure you look out for your battle buddy and let someone know if he starts to do strange things. This could be a sign and you could be helping him by telling someone about it. We are a band of brothers and have to

look out for one another. It was the same way in WWII, Korea and Viet Nam. I do think with the lessons learned, we are better prepared to deal with Soldiers. I see more people out there carrying their weapons at the ready, and doing the proper clearing and I would like to thank everyone for that. This shows people are getting the word out and NCO's are helping. Just a warning-- there are TCP's out there and if you are stopped and in violation of our safety regulations, you will be walking back and getting your commanders to come and pick up your vehicle. I do not want to see anyone in the dog house with his commander.

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

Creating order & cosmos

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

As we perform missions around northern Iraq, it's pretty easy to see that this is a chaotic place. People and things are broken. Electricity and water are not always available. Political and governmental structures are steadily but only slowly receiving injections of new life. Insurgent activities indicate that the forces of dissolution and chaos are still active here - as they are in much of the world. This is a place that is benefiting much from what America and the west have to offer. Our Judeo-Christian culture is one that is masterful at creating order and Cosmos out of disorder and Chaos.



Chaplain Worster

Our Bible begins with creation. And the Book of Genesis shows that God, with his powerful Word, banishes the Chaos and creates Cosmos: a well-ordered world fit to live in with diversity and unity. The opening pages of our Bibles have forever marked our culture as one that is restless - that will never be satisfied to leave the powers of sin and darkness to have full sway over the world. The second half of our Bible, the New Testament, speaks about Jesus and his resurrection. This, of course, is the completion of God's promises to banish Chaos and invite all to participate in Cosmos. This ethos is one reason that those

in the west tend to have boundless energy. Whether we're building schools and infrastructure or merely distributing Operation Crayon packets, Americans never sit still when there is work to be done. Iraq is one, giant fix-up project. It invites us to roll up our sleeves and generously apply ourselves to righting wrongs, fixing what is broken and rebuilding what has been torn down.

Fearful and doubting at first, the Iraqi people, Arab, Turkoman, Kurd are responding to our making this place cosmos, an ordered whole. The application of this is quite wonderful in that more and more, we are doing less and less. Slowly but surely the Iraqi people are taking over and performing most missions themselves. The structures of government, civic leadership, armed forces and police, to name just a few, are catching on to what we take for granted: that in every moment it is possible for the individual to help himself. As they see the results of their own efforts, they are becoming braver in confronting those who still expect Saddam and his kind to return.

This place will not become the summit of Cosmos - the Garden of Eden - anytime soon. But with each passing day the dark forces and persons who enslaved this country are being beaten and a better way of life is emerging.

Donated medical books help Kirkuk Nursing College

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

KIRKUK, Iraq- Civil affairs soldiers attached to the 116th Brigade Combat Team delivered updated medical books to the Kirkuk Nursing College on March 9 to help them in their medical training programs.

The books, delivered by A Company, 358th Civil Affairs Brigade soldiers, were sent by donors in the United States to assist the college in improving both the content of its medical library and the



A student peers intently into a microscope at the Kirkuk Nursing College. The school received the donation of hundreds of medical books from the United States.

quality of its instruction. English, a practice dating Medical instruction at the college is delivered in **Continued on page 9**

Question of the Week

What is the most exciting mission you've gone out on so far?



Sgt. Brian O'Gorman
HHC, 163rd Infantry Bn.

“A mission where we never ended up getting the guy we went for.”



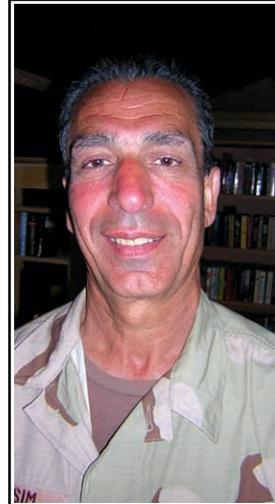
Pfc. Sam Cornett
C Co., 116h Engineer Bn.

“I would have to say it would be the mortar prevention missions because once we leave the main road it's nothing but muddin'.”



Pvt. Brandon Grunsted
C Co., 116th Engineer Bn.

“We ended up ready to chase down a vehicle and ended up (flying) down the road- I was driving!”



Hüla Kassim
DoD Interpreter, FOB McHenry

“Interrogation missions and the election mission. I was excited to see the turnout in Hawijah.”



Staff Sgt. Peter Akey
C Co., 1-163rd Infantry Bn.

“I'd have to say training the IA. It's a challenge, but it's interesting to see the improvement”

Taking the time to perform tasks safely

by Maj. Bill Miller,
116th BCT Safety Officer

Many of us in the 116 BCT come from an agricultural background. I remember seeing a study credited to the University of Florida regarding cutting time from agricultural tasks at the expense of safety and thought we could benefit from a similar study.

Jumping from an LMTV bed instead of climbing down might seem like a time-saving shortcut, but it exposes you to a much greater risk of injury. Often, there's a "recommended safe way" of doing a

task and a way that seems quicker but is more hazardous. Many people use the more dangerous shortcut to save time.

However, our timed study showed that the time invested in doing a task safely is quite insignificant, especially when compared to the costs of injuries or possible death that could result from the extra hazards involved in the shortcut.

Taking a few seconds to do a task safely may seem inconvenient at the time, but Table 1 shows how little time it takes. Remember that every

time you take a shortcut, you are rolling the dice for injury or death. For some specific examples of the small amount of time it takes to be safe, see Table 2. To put these times in perspective, the total time invested for 100 repetitions of the task was calculated. So, in our jumping from the LMTV example, if a soldier jumps from the bed 100 times they saved 12 entire minutes.

Table 1.

Time Invested	Total Time for 100 Repetitions
3 seconds	5 minutes
5 seconds	10 minutes
10 seconds	17 minutes

Table 2.

Task	Time Invested	100 Repetitions
Climb down instead of jump from LMTV bed	7 seconds	12 minutes
Walking around a gun tube instead of under it.	2 seconds	3 1/2 minutes
Placing chock blocks on a parked vehicle	30 seconds	50 minutes
Driving past the CHUs from the motor pool intersection to the DFAC intersection at 10 mph instead of 20 mph	54 seconds	1 1/2 hours

Remember: The time you invest in performing a task safely is minimal when you compare it to the high financial and emotional costs associated with death, injury and disability.

116th BCT commander tours AO north

by Staff Sgt. Jack White,
116th BCT Public Affairs
NCO

FOB WARRIOR, Iraq - The Commander of the 116th BCT, Brigadier General Alan Gayhart and Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Leroy Lewis, Brigade Sergeant Major, were recently escorted on a battlefield circulation tour of AO north by Lt. Col. Russell Johnson, commander of TF 148 Field Artillery.

For many within the Brigade, AO north remains largely a mystery, just an area on the map. For the members of the Scorpion Bn., this is a great area to work in. Large tracts of farm and pasture land bring to mind the prairies of the Midwest, with the occasional tell rising out in the middle of nowhere. To the west, a long, low ridge runs in a northeasterly direction where Saddam built watch towers every quarter-mile or so, to keep the Kurdish peoples driven to the north, from returning to their homes. For miles they perch atop this ridge, overlooking

the flatlands stretching to the mountainous regions to the north.

The first stop was in the village of Shwan, nestled back in a series of rolling hills and arroyos. Like dozens of villages in this area, it was decimated as Saddam's army drove the local population toward the mountains south of Turkey.

"Until 18 months ago, nothing was here, no one lived here," said Staff Sgt. Fullmer of TF 148th FA Bn. "Today some 300 families live here, building homes

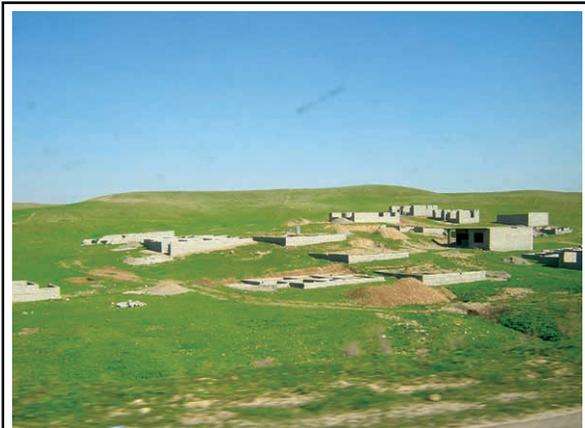
with the help of a government program which provides building materials, especially cinder blocks. Another 800 families live in the vicinity of Shwan and are building homes here. The change is amazing." Shwan boasts a police station and a nearly finished schoolhouse.

The next stop northward was at a large edifice painted with the words in Arabic, 'The Unconquerable Fortress of Saddam.'

Continued on page 6



The new schoolhouse at Shwan has gone up in a very short period of time.



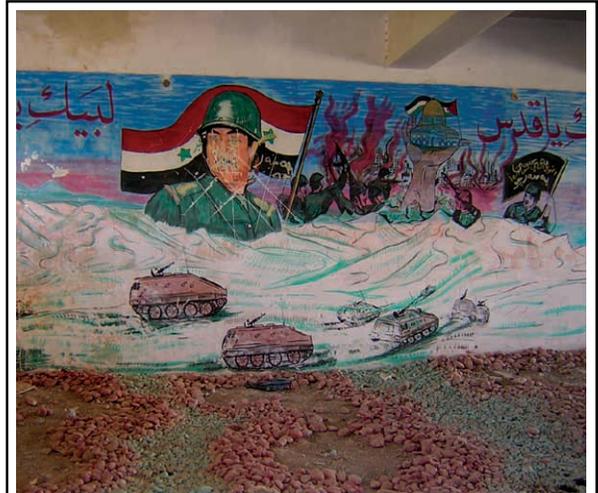
The village of Shwan is the bustling site of new home building in every direction. Houses stand in many stages of construction, some nearly finished.

Senator visits 116th's Oregon troops

Continued from page 1

it's soldier's contribution here in Iraq. "We pray for you and await your safe return home," he added.

"It really shows the support coming from Oregon. They've sent care packages, and the Oregonian did a weblog for us!" said Spc. Brandon Denley, a native Oregonian. "This is another example of their support. We're dedicated to helping others here and the state of Oregon is dedicated to helping us."



This partially defaced mural depicts Saddam standing with shoulders above the water, upholding a government building, troops and APC's charging through fire and wave



Senator Smith, with Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart and Air Force Col. Johnson, addresses the Oregon troops.



The Unconquerable Fortress of Saddam, as it appears today, after a visit from the U.S. Air Force.

Commander tours...

Continued from page 5

The home to the 3rd Division, 15th Brigade of Saddam's Iraqi Army, the once-formidable 3-story structure suffered a firestorm which collapsed walls, broke through floors and blackened entire sections within. Numerous paintings appear on the walls, political and doctrinal instructions, as well as slogans. It looks like a coliseum, with four large, round turrets at each corner. Damaged walls and ceilings choked the way with rubble, twisted rebar, and rubbish such as papers, rotting leather boots, and occasional helmet liners with holes in them, strewn everywhere.

Due north lies the village of Altun-Kupri, and the current base of the Iraqi Army. The commander inspected the new IA barracks and spoke with the IA post commander, who he praised for his efforts to provide peace and security for the people of Altun-Kupri and it's vicinity.

Passing beyond the ridge running to the northwest, the next stopover was at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Dibis along the Little Zab River, a small island of security in the middle of the town of Dibis. The thing which most impressed, was the friendliness and genuine appreciation of the local population toward the American forces stationed here. People waved, gave the thumbs-up, shouted and

raised an index finger in a universal (you're) #1, honked horns and flashed their car emergency lights as the convoy passed. It was a little reminiscent of the treatment a rock star might receive, everywhere one goes.

Swinging further north, the convoy stopped at the IPD station near Sargaran and at an oil refinery near Derke Kitchka. The swing southward toward home went directly through Dibis, where a checkpoint has a painted sign which says in Arabic, Kurdish and English, 'Goodbye.'

The AO north of FOB Warrior is a verdant area teeming with friendly people, a great deal of natural beauty, plus several historical sites and is well worth the time and effort to visit.



The General and his staff inspects the fortress ruins.



The line of ridges is seen in the background and a bend in the Little Zab River lies before it.



This wall might once have had a banner draped down the front.



The walls are covered with paintings such as this one.



The Iraqi Police Department station under renovation near the village of Sargaran.



A friendly sign stands at the edge of town, which reads 'Goodbye' in three languages.

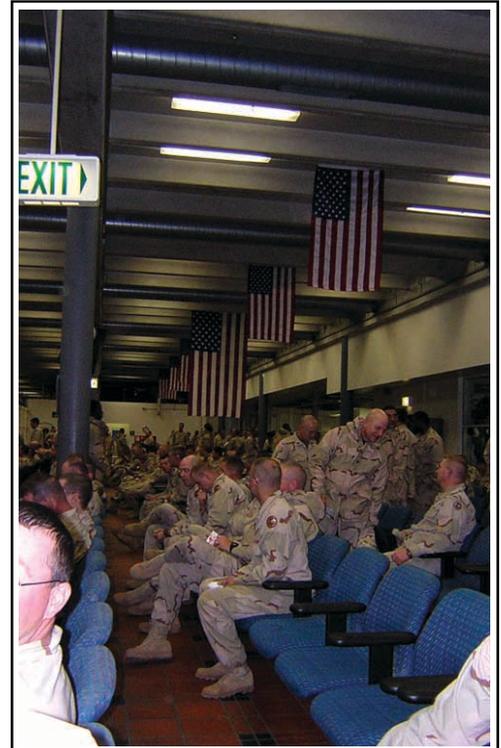
116th BCT Soldier snapshots



Soldiers of HHC, 116th BCT march at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jack White, 116 BCT PAO NCO)



Master Sgt. Leonard Brewer watches the clock as he waits for his PSD to return. (Photo by Spc. Cathy Alberto 116 BCT PAO)



116th BCT Soldiers relax at the air terminal in Germany, enroute to Kuwait. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jack White 116 BCT PAO NCO)



The food court at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait was a favorite of 116 BCT soldiers



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld posed for photos with soldiers.



116th BCT soldiers guard against vicious donkey insurgents



116th BCT soldiers relax with activities at the MWR 'Clamtina'

Museum collects...**Continued from page 1**

for the Iraqis, but for all of humanity.”

While on the base Mr. Amin inspected the archeological site where artifacts were found by coalition soldiers.

“This event has changed his [Amin’s] mind towards coalition forces and he now knows that the soldiers are not just looters,” said Staff Sgt. Matthew Heaney, A Co., 358th Civil Affairs Brigade. “Iraq is the region that gave the world it’s first civilization and is concerned with preserving it’s past while forging ahead to the future.”

A/358th Civil Affairs specializes in civil-military relations and is attached to the 116th BCT supporting operations in Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah provinces during Operation Iraqi Freedom III. Besides its headquarters and staff sections, the 116th BCT is comprised of 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 like A/358th Civil Affairs. The 116th BCT is one of several Army National Guard units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III.



Air Force soldiers of Kirkuk Regional Air Base work with Shaeda Mohammed Amin, a Kirkuk Museum representative.

Free stuff for Soldiers

<http://www.operationhomelink.org/> - Free computers for spouses or parents of deployed soldiers in ranks E1 – E5.

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2004/2/prweb106818.htm> - free mail/gifts sent to children of deployed soldiers.

<https://www.operationuplink.org/> - Free phonecards.

<http://anysoldier.com/ForSoldiersOnly.cfm> - To sign up for sponsoring soldier care packages for theater.

<http://www.appreciateourtroops.org/forourtroops.shtml> - To have commander sign up for mugs for unit troops.

<http://www.operationshoobox.com/> - free shoebox care package.

<http://www.treatthetroops.org/> - free cookies.

<http://bluestarmoms.org/airfare.html> - lowest airfare available.

<http://bluestarmoms.org/care.html> - free care packages.

<http://66.241.249.83/> - free air conditioners/heaters.

<http://www.heromiles.org/> - free air travel for Emergency Leave, and for the family members of injured soldiers to travel to Medical facility.



Don't Forget!

Important Dates to Remember:

27 March- Easter Sunday

25 April - Passover

1 April - April Fool's Day

8 May - Mother's Day!

15 April - Federal Income Tax Due Date, 2400

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

21 April - Secretary's Day

<http://www.bluestarmoms.org/airlinespecials.php> - Airline discounts for R & R.

<http://www.booksforsoldiers.com/forum/index.php> - free books, DVD's, CD's.

<http://prayercentral.net/engage/militaryprayer/daily.php> - daily prayer and scriptures.

<http://www.militarymoms.net/sot.html> - free care packages (your family member signs up to have sent to you).

<http://operationmilitarypride.org/smsignup.html> - free care packages.

http://www.soldiersangels.org/heroes/submit_a_soldier.php - get adopted to receive stuff.

<https://www.treatsfortroops.com/registration/index.php> - free gifts and care packages.

http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Nov2004/n11232004_2004112312.html - free shipping/packing materials for shipping to troops.

145th Support Battalion

At the Clamtina...

Continued from page 2

night. While he was heard to say how well each participant did, it is rumored that he does expect to see a couple of them in confession.

The winner for the night's festivities was a Soldier who sang, "The

Devil Went Down to Georgia." (Try keeping up with that song!). The crowd loved his rendition and the judges awarded the winner with a \$15.00 gift certificate to AAFES.

Soldiers chose songs from country, oldies, 80's, 90's and today's hip hop. Some even gave old school rap and today's rap a try.

There were Soldiers, Airmen and civilians up there singing on stage. Others just sat and enjoyed, while others mustered the nerve to get on stage and sing.

Some Soldiers sang as if they were professionals, and others, well, let's just leave it at that. "Anybody who thinks it's easy to get up in a room full of people and sing is crazy," declared Staff Sgt. Jack White of HHC, 116 BCT.

Karaoke happens one night a month, usually on the last Friday of the month. Of all the people who came out, all agreed that it was a good time not soon forgotten. Hope to see all of you at the next installment of FOB Warrior's version of "American Idol." The only rule is, keep it clean. Chaplain Worster can only handle so much.

Spring is in the air

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

Boy; have you noticed the change in weather, and the outdoor activities? The days are longer, and more activities are occurring than

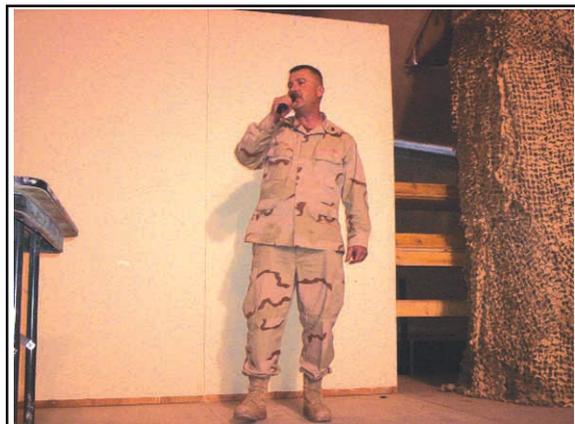


CSM Whittier

weather's pleasant and it will add energy to you, as well as help the time go by. Get the CHU rats out once in a while. It is nice to relax and have time alone, but

interacting with others will help the mental aspect. Some soldiers are looking forward to planting flowers or vegetables, others to Frisbee, and some to flag football. I find this time of the year the most comfortable to get out and do a run in the morning, when the air is cool and the traffic has not picked up yet. Even the birds are noisier, a sure sign of spring. One must stop once in a while to appreciate all we have, look what others lack, and be thankful for the country we do live in. If we watch out for each other, and do our jobs to the best of our ability, we can hope to be home by next spring in one piece. I may not get to do all I want while I am here, but like all of you, stay out of my way when I get home as there is a lot to make up for, but safely.

CSM Whittier



Lt. Col. Knutzen, commander of 116 Engineer Bn., belts out his rendition of 'Back in the U.S.S.R.' (Photo by Sgt 1st Class Alcario Chapa, 116 BCT S-5)

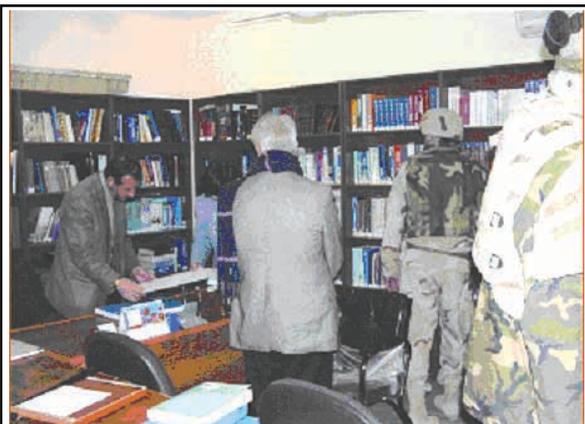
Medical College...

Continued from page 3

back to the 1920s, when the British occupied the area.

"These books contain the latest medical knowledge and techniques, and will be a great asset to the Iraqi medical profession," said Sgt. 1st Class Ranny Lewis, A/358th Civil Affairs Team Health leader, who helped deliver the books. "This will help the students and instructors learn the latest practices and techniques in modern medicine."

A/358th Civil Affairs specializes in civil-military relations and is attached to the 116th BCT supporting operations in Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah



New medical books wait to be catalogued and shelved as part of the student's reference library at the Kirkuk Nursing College.

provinces during Operation Iraqi Freedom III. Besides its headquarters and staff sections, the 116th BCT is comprised of 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 like A/358th Civil Affairs. The 116th BCT is one of several Army National Guard units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

ever before. Softball teams have popped up all over the place, and games are played. More Soldiers are running, more are staying outdoors later, bicycles are heading to the work place, and buds are forming on trees. This time last year we were ramping up for annual training, and deployment, and now talk will be starting about our re-deployment. Time is moving quickly, and Soldiers are looking forward to block leave, pass, and the best yet; heading home. The time will be here before we know it. But first we must accomplish vital tasks to get there. Safety must be observed by watching out for your buddy by driving carefully, observing the rules, and the weapons clearing procedures are as important as they come. No one wants to hurt a buddy. Start workouts now that the



Troops overseas are not being forgotten at home.

116th Engineer Battalion

Our efforts are paying off!

by Capt. Ryan Robinson, 116th Engineer Bn.

Do you work on the FOB everyday, wondering if your job is doing anything for the people of Iraq? Are you on patrol everyday finding IEDs and rolling up bad guys in an effort to bring security to your AO, wondering if good things are coming from your being here?

A great organization has been formed in Kirkuk since our occupation; it is the Kirkuk Business Center (KBC). This center is designed to facilitate business development and investment opportunities in the Kirkuk province. The KBC is a non-profit organization that provides a variety of services and training to businessmen and women. Initially the KBC was coalition run; now with 10 employees (of various ethnic, religious, and gender persuasion) the coalition has taken on more of an advisory/training role and assists in the development of new services.

Some of the KBC's services include: Training Courses on Accounting, Budgeting, HR, IT, and Business Plans; Micro Loan Program – Loans available for start-up businesses, business expansions, franchises, etc.; Security Assessments to analyze and recommend security improvements for businesses; and The Kirkuk Business

Journal, a monthly Journal reporting on local contracting project successes and business development issues. Local companies and contractors use this journal to advertise in English, Arabic, and Kurdish.

Team Economics, a division of the CERP office, is the coalition force working daily with the KBC. The members, lead by Lt. Col. Knutzen, include Capt. Robinson, Staff Sgt. Hilliard, Capt. Ghafoori, and Sgt. Maj. Winstead.

In addition, Team Economics has brought together the Economic Development Network (EDN), a group of 15 representatives of both government and non-government organizations. The EDN has a responsibility to the people of Kirkuk to work together in an effort to build a long-term, strong economy by discussing economic issues and giving recommendations to local government officials. This Network also acts as the Board of Directors for the KBC.

So the next time you are wondering if your efforts are for naught, know that there are teams in the field working daily with the local people, empowering them to succeed long after we are back home. Continue your great work!

TF 1-148th Field Artillery

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 7 March seven Scorpion Soldiers were sworn in by Task Force Commander Lt. Col. Russ Johnson at the Scorpion TOC on FOB 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 FA. HHS TF 1-148 had four soldiers take the oath during the



CSM Green

ceremony, Sgt. Roy Snyder, Sgt. Corbit Thomson, Spc. James Dunn and Cpl. Chris Magone.

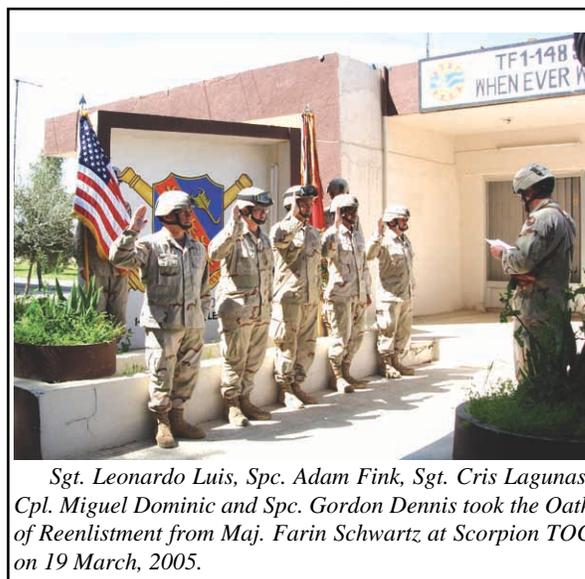
Scorpion Six has sworn in the following soldiers at FOB Warrior on 19 March; Spc. Dennis Gordon, Cpl. Miguel Dominic, Spc. Adam Fink, Spc. Cris Lagunas and Sgt. Leonardo Luis. Staff Sgt. Dell Barney and Pfc. Gomes at FOB Stone, Spc. Craig Brainard, Sgt. Michael Davenport, Spc. Chris Frasure, Spc. Jason 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 incentive program, 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
Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Green
Scorpion Seven



Sgt. Leonardo Luis, Spc. Adam Fink, Sgt. Cris Lagunas, Cpl. Miguel Dominic and Spc. Gordon Dennis took the Oath of Reenlistment from Maj. Farin Schwartz at Scorpion TOC on 19 March, 2005.

TF 2-116th Armor

2-116 soldiers receive CSM coins

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

Spc. Bautista continues to set the example for all E-4's to follow. He transitioned himself from tanks to up-armor HMMWV's by learning all the weapon systems thoroughly. Spc. Bautista is Second Platoon's RTO, and is in charge of all comms. He ensures all radios are operational and have current fills every week during COMSEC Changeover. Spc. Bautista is also Second Platoon's Project Manager. He is responsible for all projects involving layout changes in soldier living quarters and platoon common areas.

Staff Sgt. G. Larson has done an excellent job of managing the Scout vehicles in Team Alpha. He always ensures that maintenance and PMCS is accomplished. His hard work and dedication to the maintenance of the Scout Platoon vehicles has made it possible to carry out its mission outside the wire. His attention to detail, and overall leadership, has brought the Scout Platoon vehicles from NMC to Fully Capable in a very timely manner. His efforts have left the Platoon Leader and the Platoon Sergeant able to



Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Chin congratulates Spc. Bautista as he receives his CSM Coin.



Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Chin congratulates Staff Sgt. Larson as he receives his CSM Coin.

concentrate on the mission at hand. He is an example for all squad leaders to follow.

Since Team Alpha arrived in Iraq, Cpl. Sunderland has done an outstanding job ensuring all Crew Served Weapons are 100% inspected, functional, and repaired. He has worked closely with other armorers throughout the 116BCT, OGA's, and the Iraqi Army to recondition and repair captured AIF weapons for

redistribution to IA and IP stations. Since his enlistment, Team Alpha has had all necessary supply of ammunition and training for Crew Served and Individual Weapon Systems. Through his extensive experience and knowledge, all soldiers have had the proper PMI and qualification of their assigned weapon. Every soldier trained under him has become a proficient marksman, and therefore made Team Alpha more

Snake River patch

by Command Sgt. Maj. Henry Chin

Given the recent hype about earning combat patches, different thoughts and personal feelings have arisen within



Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Chin

me. I would like to take a moment to reflect and remember who I am and where I am from.

I am a soldier, a member of the Idaho National Guard. For 23 of 27 years I have worn our Snake River valley patch. I have worked hard, harder than most active duty soldiers, to make known my status, earn my reliability and acceptance, and to be

included and recognized as a dedicated professional soldier. I have witnessed personally how we as

Guardsmen have to work hard to prove ourselves all the time at NCOES, from MOSQ to the USASMA and even at War Fighters, to the active component, as trustworthy soldiers, competent to perform the very same jobs that they do. There has been a long standing thought by the civilian

Continued on page 12



Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Chin congratulates Cpl. Sunderland as he receives his CSM Coin.

combat effective. He has qualified 10 snipers in Team Alpha since its arrival to FOB Warrior. Cpl. Sunderland goes above and beyond the call of duty to attain the proper equipment needed for all squads to

complete missions. Any time a platoon needs to use a range, he is there coaching and providing training. Cpl. Sunderland has set the standard for job proficiency and dedication.

TF 2-116th Armor conducts Mass Casualty training in downtown Kirkuk

KIRKUK, Iraq - A citywide mass casualty exercise was conducted in Kirkuk on 14 JAN. 1-21 along with TF 2-116 Armor, participated in the exercise. The event was the result of months of working with local authorities in preparation for the upcoming elections. While many lessons were learned, it is one step forward in the right direction for making Iraq self-supportive and reliant on their own infrastructure.



Coalition interpreters play a big role in any training event. Here you see "Jose" working with local EMS.



The Event was a coordination of efforts between coalition soldiers, Iraqi Police, Iraqi Army, local EMS and hospitals.



For the event, Iraqi army soldiers were moulaged by I-21 medics to make the event more realistic.

Snake patch...

Continued from page 11

and the active duty sector that the National Guard is not a combat unit of the Army. We are simply Guardsmen, called in for natural disasters and humanitarian relief, not designed for or capable of the very same missions that the active duty are called upon to do. The set impression is that one weekend per month and two weeks per year is not enough training time for us to be an effective force. For years we have fought to prove ourselves, always needing to out-train, out-work, out-fight, and out-think the active

components counter parts to prove that we are as capable soldiers as they are.

Meanwhile, our families sacrifice greatly because of the pressures that we put upon ourselves to be the best so that we can be recognized as part of the great United States military force by our peers and ourselves. We as Guardsmen are citizen soldiers. We are active within our family units and also our communities. We can provide an outlook like no other. We know what struggles there are with everyday life and can relate to people well. Much of our support from Idaho comes from

the fact that so many of us have touched our communities in so many ways. We are part of them, as they are part of us. As an example, the Boise State football team adopted us by putting our patch on their helmet, and local scout troops have include our patch into theirs.

We have time and time again shown that our training is to the Army Standards, that our education is up to par, and that we as Guardsmen are a VITAL part of the United States military. The active component continually walks away amazed at the accomplishments of our soldiers, wondering how in such a short amount of time we can accomplish and prepare for a mission like we did at Ft. Bliss and Ft. Polk. We will earn our combat patch together, as Guardsmen (or the underclassmen, so to speak) and our families will rejoice because while we are fighting our battles here, they are defending our names at home when people say things such as "Why

the Idaho National Guard?

Aren't guardsmen designed to help with mud slides, floods, and fires?" It is wonderful to see a group of National Guard Soldiers honored by an active duty component ceremony issuing a 1st ID combat patch as a gesture of equalism. The active duty will always remember the soldiers of the Snake Patch who stood with them in this conflict. We can proudly wear the Snake Patch as the combat patch that best represents our National Guard accomplishments and heritage.

Finally, we have comrades back home, comrades that would do just about anything to be here with us. The comrades that trained us and gave us the hope and the dream of someday being able to be here. To put years of family sacrifices for the Guard, years of personal sacrifices, and let's face it, many miles of running for us to even be here to be a part of this wonderful battalion to make our mark in history. We will make our mark.

We are making our mark now, as Guardsmen. We are ready, able, confident, excited, honored, and we are a part of history; history that will live on for the Guardsmen for many generations. Blood, sweat, and tears over many years have gotten us here. We have covered each other's backs and formed long lasting relationships and friendships that will last a lifetime. Our spouses support each other and stand as one, showing unwavering support for the National Guard and for each of us personally. They speak of us with great pride, which will make the award of our combat patch mean more than just a piece of fabric on our right shoulder. Through all that we have endured, and all that is still to come, we will have all earned a place in history together for the 116 BCT, displaying proudly what for years most Guardsmen have only dreamed of having: The Snake River Brigade Combat Patch. SINE MORA

2-116 Armor captures artillery round cache

A large cache of ammunition was discovered by TF 2-116 Armor and Iraqi Army Soldiers on February 24th during an arms/ammo cache sweep north of Amu Shabi.



The rounds being detonated by U.S. Air Force Explosives, Ordnance & Demolitions (E.O.D.)

The rounds were located in a twelve foot trench and showed evidence of having been recently stacked. U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers immediately secured the area until U.S. Air Force Explosives, Ordnance and Demolitions personnel arrived on the scene. The cache consisted of 150- 152mm artillery rounds.

Local shepherders were questioned, though no useful information was obtained. The Air Force E.O.D. personnel blew the cache in place to dispose of the threat.



Looking down on the cache from the top of a twelve foot trench.

A game of soccer- universal language

KIRKUK, Iraq - TF B/2-116 AR recently challenged the Aruba Police Department to a game of soccer. The B Co. 'Barbarians' invited staff to come play with them. Capt. Spence, Capt. Sheridan, Capt. Holley, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Chin, Sgt. 1st Class Byrd

and Sgt. Miller took the invitation.

The Game started at 10:00 a.m., with thirty-one soldiers and two translators on the 2-116 side and eleven Iraqi Policemen. TF 2-116 rotated a fresh group of people out every six minutes so it was eleven

on eleven through the whole game, though the Soldiers had replacements. The Iraqis had many disadvantages starting with having to play continually.

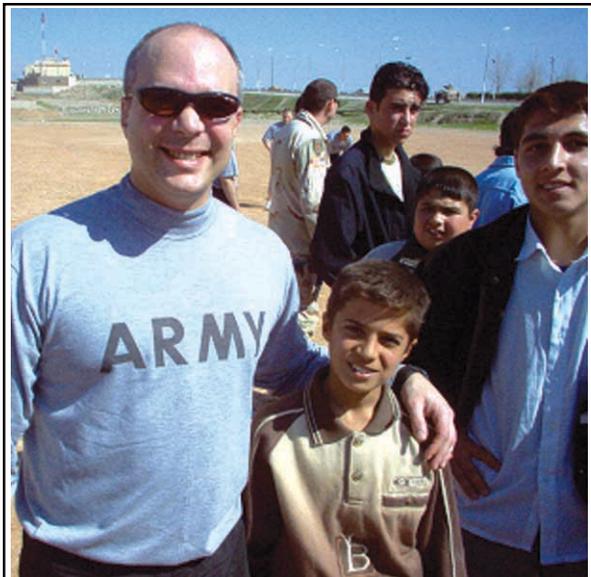
Another big disadvantage was that the Iraqis had two players without any footwear and five others only had working shoes which must have been difficult, considering that we were playing on a field with rocks everywhere.

The first half of the game the Soldiers scored two goals to the Iraqi's three goals. The lead changed later in the game, the soldiers holding a 4-3 lead, possibly due to the Iraqis getting tired.

It came down to the last 10 minutes of the game, when the Iraqis scored again to tie it



Soldiers of TF 2-116 Armor question a local shepherd about the munitions cache.



A Soldier of the TF 2-116 Armor, stands with a local Iraqi boy after the big soccer match with the Iraqi Police.

up. At that point in the game the Iraqis asked to call it a tie because they were getting really tired. The Soldiers chose to continue the last ten minutes of the game. The game came to a close still deadlocked at 4-4. So the Iraqis opted, though the Soldiers had replacements for a tie breaker and a shoot-off.

The game finally ended with the Iraqis hitting five kicks and the soldiers only hitting four. The Iraqi Police showed us who the better soccer players were, but on a more positive note all were

able to go out and have a fun day of playing soccer.

A lot of local citizens gathered to watch the play. It was good to see the difference that we all are making in Iraqi lives by not only bringing them freedom but also providing them a little entertainment. The unit hopes to be able to have a rematch before their time is up here, but if they don't it is still a memory that they will be able to share with their families, of the many good things that we did for and with the Iraqis here in Iraq.

TF 2-116th Armor

2-116 Reenlistments



Sgt. Richardson sworn in by Capt. Colton



Reenlistees of TF 2-116 with Capt. Colton (3rd from L) & Lt. Col. Woods (5th from L); (L to R) Sgt. Brett Richardson, Sgt. Fenton J. Doyle, Spc. Bryan Arndt, Spc. Timothy cook & Sgt. Randall Jerke.



Spc. Cook sworn in by Capt. Colton



Sgt. Doyle being sworn in by Capt. Colton



Sgt. Jerke sworn in by Capt. Colton



Sgt. Manwill of HHC, 2-116 sworn in by Capt. Dahlquist



Spc. Bryan Arndt shaking hands with Capt. Colton after being sworn in.



Cpl. Bautista of A Co., 2-116 being sworn in by Capt. Dahlquist

TF 3-116th Armor

In ancient times a standard referred to a flag that was placed in a high position where all could see and know that the Battle Commander's colors were present, and as long as it flew, every man could move to it and continue the battle. It provided a necessary function of showing the way for Soldiers to follow and it let them know what they needed to be successful in battle with the enemy. In a very similar way we are performing the same function for our modern Soldiers when we set standards for them to achieve. Today we define standards not by a piece of cloth on a pole, but as an achievement

to work towards. We still see standards as an ever fixed mark to meet, that all can see and understand; it is universal in everyone's eyes because we let them know that it is. Standards, now on paper, lets soldiers know what they must do in order to achieve success. We train tasks, with certain conditions, and judge their success by comparing their actions to the standards that have been set. We expect that when we meet the elements of the standard that the task is done right. This is an incredibly important point, because without standards being set and enforced we have no point of reference, like

Standards

by Lt. Col. Dan McCabe, Commander, 3-116 Armor Bn.



Lt. Col. McCabe

a flag on the hill, and can never be a focused and well trained force. In this case the bottom line is that there are clear standards for leaders to enforce. Now I've talked before in this column about the need

for physical fitness, saves lives, and executing the basics. Now I'm saying that without the ability and the will to meet the standards in each of these cases, neither will occur other than by random chance; they will never be met since they aren't enforced and we would be in danger of losing lives without this will to enforce standards.

So what's the bottom line of the bottom line? In this case the responsibility for the ability and the will to set and enforce the standards rest squarely on the shoulders of the leaders in each of your units. The officers set the standards and the NCOs

enforce them. Pretty simple, but always hard. Simple in that we can read and conceive these standards with relative ease, but hard because it requires constant vigilance and mental hardness and leadership down at the most basic level to keep the standard raised before your soldiers' eyes every day; day in and day out.

Leaders at all levels must keep standards above all else and keep their soldiers at this high level of expectation—raise the flag high and let them see where you are going and they will follow. It just might be the hardest part of your job here in Iraq.