

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Russell E Cooley IV

U.S. Army Soldiers from 3rd Brigade Reconnaissance Team, 3rd Infantry Division, visit a town literally made from trash and mud on the outskirts of Baghdad, Iraq. The team talks with the residents to make sure no insurgents have sought refuge. The Soldiers also handed out school supplies, toys and candy to the children.

## Iraqi Forces to provide bulk of election security

By Sgt. Sara Wood  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Iraqi Security Forces will provide the primary security for the Oct. 15 constitutional referendum and the December elections, said a U.S. commander in Baghdad Friday.

In a news briefing, Army Lt. Gen. John Vines, commander of Multi-National Corps - Iraq, said that because Iraqis will be mainly responsible for security, U.S. forces in the area will be

increased only by about 2,000 troops for the referendum and elections.

Vines said he expects insurgents to increase attacks as the referendum approaches, but Coalition and Iraqi Forces will be prepared to defend the Iraqis' democratic process.

"Unfortunately, there are those who want to deprive them of the opportunity to determine their own destiny, and they'll use violence to do it," he said. "We'll do everything we can to create the conditions so Iraqis have the opportunity to be heard and make their own decisions."

Iraqi Security Forces continue to make progress in their training, Vines said, and they are closely partnered with Coalition units in all aspects of their operations.

"They work together, they plan together, and, in some cases, they fight together," he said.

On an average day, more than 30 combined operations are conducted throughout Iraq, and Coalition and Iraqi Forces are making progress against the insurgents, Vines said. Ultimately,

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# U.S. Army colonel receives Distinguished Service Cross

Story and photo by Sgt. Lorie Jewell  
Multi-National Security Transition  
Command - Iraq Public Affairs

**BAGHDAD** — The Distinguished Service Cross — second only to the Medal of Honor in military decorations — has been awarded to U.S. Army Col. James H. Coffman Jr. for his role in leading Iraqi Special Police Commandos through a five-and-a-half hour battle against insurgents trying to overrun an Iraqi police station.

Flanked by the commando unit Coffman fought with, U.S. Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr., commander of Multi-National Forces - Iraq, pinned the cross and eagle medal on Coffman's body armor during an Aug. 24 ceremony at Adnon Palace in Baghdad's International Zone. Iraq's Minister of Interior, Bayan Jabr, and a number of other high-ranking Iraqi and Coalition

leaders also attended the ceremony.

"It's humbling to me to be in the company of heroes," Casey said, noting Coffman's extraordinary heroism in the battle that killed 12 Iraqi commandos and wounded 24. "Such exemplary conduct is a great example to Iraqi commandos and to all American Soldiers and warriors."

Coffman, 51, is a special assistant to the commanding general of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, and a senior adviser to the Iraqi Special Police Commandos. He accompanied a commando Quick Reaction Force with the 3rd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Special Police Commando Brigade on Nov. 14, 2004, to help a commando platoon under attack in a Mosul, Iraq, police station.

As the QRF approached the station, it was besieged with rocket-propelled grenades, small arms fire and mortar rounds. Coffman

and the commandos fought the insurgents for four hours before help arrived. When the initial firefight killed or seriously wounded all but one of the commando officers, Coffman rallied the remaining commandos while trying to radio for assistance, according to his award citation.

"Under heavy fire, he moved from commando to commando, looking each in the eye and using hand and arm signals to demonstrate what he wanted done," the citation said.

At one point, an enemy round shattered his left shooting hand, damaging his M4 rifle in the process. Coffman bandaged it and continued fighting with AK-47 rifles he collected from commando casualties until each ran out of ammunition.

"Col. Coffman, the blood you shed will never be forgotten," said Jabr, the Interior Minister. "We, the forces of the [Ministry of Interior] and the [Ministry of Defense] will continue to fight until we defeat terrorism."



Gen. George W. Casey Jr., commander of MNF-I, pins the Distinguished Service Cross medal on Col. James H. Coffman Jr.

## Aviation Brigade celebrates Women's Equality Day

Story and photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario  
Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq** — Women celebrated their new right to vote Aug. 18, 1920, with the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Women and men in Task Force Baghdad celebrated that milestone 85 years later on Aug. 26 in a Women's Equality Day ceremony at the dining facility here.

The 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Reconnaissance) sponsored the ceremony, which featured a song and video presentation and an address by guest speaker Chief Warrant Officer Sezandra Pinckney, B Company, 603rd Aviation Support Brigade.

"The 19th Amendment paved the way for women in America," Pinckney said in her speech. "We live in a much different country today. We have made progress over the last 85 years, but we still have a way to go."

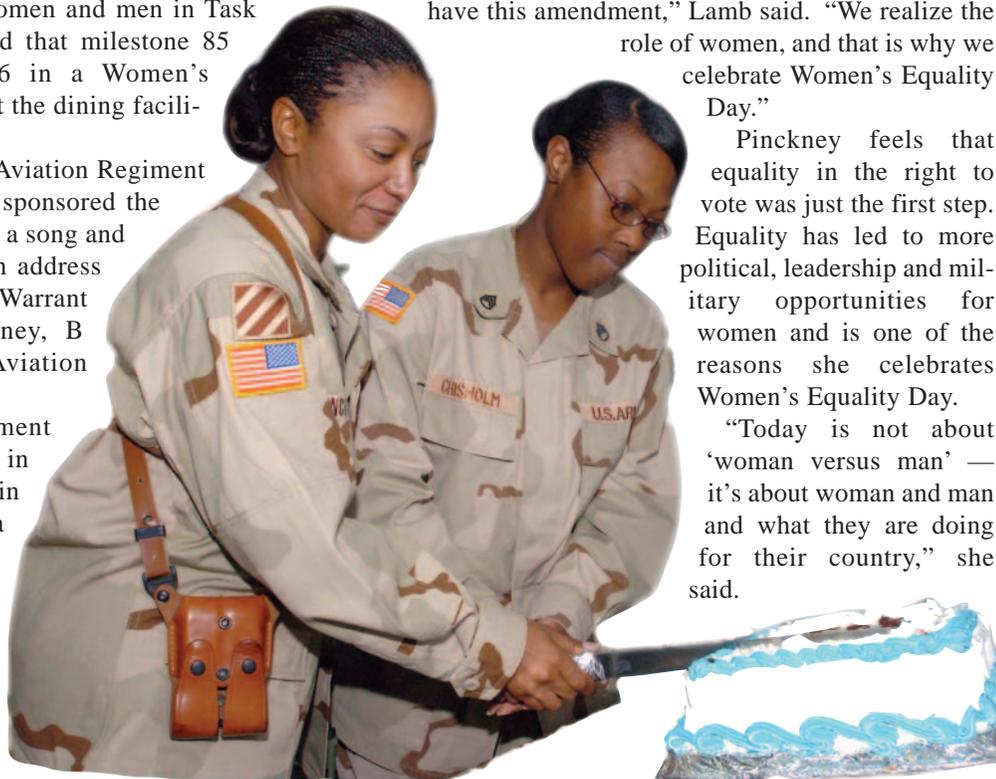
The 19th Amendment grants U.S. citizens a vote that "shall not be denied or abridged by the United

States or by any state on account of sex," and is an amendment that Lt. Col. Morgan Lamb, 3/3 ARB commander, recognizes as an essential document to the progress of America.

"Thankfully, we live in a nation that accepts change, and change has to occur [for progress]. That is why we have this amendment," Lamb said. "We realize the role of women, and that is why we celebrate Women's Equality Day."

Pinckney feels that equality in the right to vote was just the first step. Equality has led to more political, leadership and military opportunities for women and is one of the reasons she celebrates Women's Equality Day.

"Today is not about 'woman versus man' — it's about woman and man and what they are doing for their country," she said.



Chief Warrant Officer Sezandra Pinckney and Staff Sgt. Tonya Chisholm open the Women's Equality Day ceremony by cutting the cake.

## Election

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though, the freedom of Iraq is not going to be won by force, he said.

"The success of our endeavor here, in large measure, is not a military solution," he said. "It is a political solution, and it is one that must be achieved by the Iraqi people, the Iraqi Security Forces and the Iraqi government. We'll do everything we can to help create those conditions so they can and will succeed."

When considering the validity of the cause in Iraq, people need to remember how much progress has been made since U.S. forces have been there, Vines said. Iraq now has a sovereign government, a transitional assembly, a draft constitution and ministries of defense, electricity, oil, water and interior, he said. These accomplishments point to great success, he added, but do not mean the threat has diminished.

"We've been successful enough that some may think there's no longer a threat," he said. "I can assure you, there is. There are some evil people that wish to attack us."

The work of U.S. forces in Iraq and other parts of the world against those who wish to spread terror has increased the safety and defended the freedoms of all Americans, Vines said.



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## PERSPECTIVES

# Turning tragedy into opportunity

By Maj. Flora Lee

Combined Press Information Center

Living in San Francisco, I survived the Loma Prieta Earthquake in 1989. I felt the impact when the World Trade Towers were destroyed on 9/11. The world witnessed the aftermath of the Tsunami in Southeast Asia last December. I have even experienced personal loss of loved ones. There are those who might consider being deployed to Iraq a personal disaster. What have I learned from all of this? Disasters or difficult times seem to bring people together. Sad but true, such events tend to unite people toward a common cause. I predict Hurricane Katrina will probably garner the same support. After all, I believe people are for the most part good and find comfort in doing their part to help.

Even when a disaster occurs far away, you can probably find a way to help from the deserts of Iraq. Relief organizations can often use help organizing donations or preparing boxes for disaster victims and their families. You can put together care packages with cards and other non-essential items to help boost spirits. You can also help by encouraging friends and family to contribute to a relief organization such as the Red Cross, or donate needed supplies to organizations like the Salvation Army, Catholic charities or other charitable agencies recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). All donations, even a small one, helps. What is a few dollars or a few hours of my time, if in the end I am able to help those who are not able?

I can't help but realize that those of us in Iraq have somehow switched roles with the victims of Hurricane Katrina. I feel for the troops that are here in country waiting for a flight to go home. Normally leaving theater is a happy time. It means leaving a war zone, reuniting with loved ones and

returning to homes and routines we left. Sadly, for some returning to the area affected by Hurricane Katrina, it might be to face another war — destroyed homes, loved ones who have been killed, remain missing and probably nightmares I cannot begin to understand.

Since I have been in country, I have been the recipient of numerous letters, emails and care packages (some of which I have been able to share with the Iraqi people) from people whom I haven't even met. I realize the only reason our paths have crossed is because I am here in Iraq. I get letters and emails offering, help, prayers and support on a daily basis not only to me, but to the Iraqi people. Now it's my turn to return the favor to people I have never met and where circumstance such as a disaster have brought us together. Even though I am here in Iraq, I realize while I can't offer my physical self to help Hurricane Katrina victims, I certainly can offer emotional and financial support. Whether you are a Soldier, Airman, Marine, Sailor or contractor, you can help turn tragedies and disasters into opportunities.

For whatever reasons, disasters do bring communities together. I have always believed that the heart and strength of a city lies in its people. This is especially evident when the survival or rebuilding of a city, state or country is not negotiable. The Iraqis have shown me that they are a determined and resilient people. It is with this determination and perseverance that will make them successful in making their new government work for the good of everyone. Coalition Forces have come together to unite the Iraqi people as they work towards putting what has been a disaster to their country towards a democratic future where its people can move forward. Yes, those affected by Hurricane Katrina, your cities will rebuild and you will survive for the simple reason that you have the support of people far and near united towards a common cause — *you*.

## Scimitar Pulse

What do you think people serving here in Iraq can do to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina?

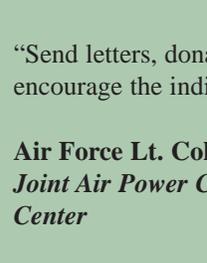
"Send cash."

**Robert Tilton**  
*Raytheon*



"Send donations to the distribution funds."

**Army Col. Nelson McCouch**  
*U.S. Army Military District of Washington*



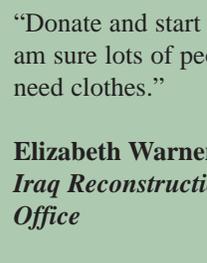
"Send letters, donations and try to encourage the individuals."

**Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Welch**  
*Joint Air Power Competence Center*



"Continue to support anyone we have in that area."

**Army Sgt. Christen Sean**  
*416th Engineers Command*



"Donate and start a clothing drive. I am sure lots of people out there need clothes."

**Elizabeth Warner**  
*Iraq Reconstruction Management Office*



"Support the troops that are getting sent back to help with the disaster effort."

**Air Force Capt. Chris Watt**  
*Joint Area Support Group - Central*

"Send donations to charitable organizations, and send letters to the victims."

**Navy Captain Kurt Baker**  
*Naval Forces Central Command*



## Help is on time...



Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jorge Rodriguez

**Capt. John Fulk, a doctor with 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry, listens to the heart of an Iraqi man in western Baghdad as part of a mission to provide medical assistance and toys in the White Gold village recently.**

# Movement control team: 'Gate keepers' for fuel

Story and photo by  
**Capt. Sonise Lumbaca**  
 1st Corps Support Command Public Affairs

**TREBIL, Iraq** — A team of eight Soldiers from the 1st Corps Support Command are responsible for operating a large mission: controlling the movement of thousands of gallons of fuel between the Jordanian and Iraqi borders.

These "gate keepers" are the first and last control point for the fuel brought in by civilian contractors and vendors distributed throughout western and southwestern Iraq each day.

Members of the 635th Movement Control Team, a unit from Weisbaden, Germany, have taken on the large mission, while running their operations in an efficient manner to ensure fuel gets to the warfighters.

"It's our job to ensure what's been ordered is received, staged and moved forward," said Capt. Gary D. Whittacre, 635th MCT detachment commander. "We coordinate movement of military combat logistics patrols within Iraq, but mainly provide direct support for civilian movement in Iraq and across the border."

The 635th MCT is responsible for expediting, coordinating and monitoring traffic moving through the transportation system. In this case, their main commodity is fuel, which is brought in from Jordan.

The 635th MCT is able to run their operations by splitting up into two cells: opera-

tions and staging yard.

The operations cell is responsible for coordination, monitoring and dispersion of fuel from Jordan to meet Corps Support Group requirements.

"We make a point of knowing when it is coming in, where it is going and that the [military] escorts are here to guide them to their final destination," Whittacre said.

Additionally, their mission includes support to Iraqi and Jordanian customs officials at the border to ensure civilians cross the border safely.

"We have a good working relationship with the different customs organizations. We learn from each other and work on ways to improve the system," Whittacre said.

The staging yard cell is responsible for receiving the trucks of supplies in a designated area and staging them in lanes set up specifically for inspecting and meeting up with their security escorts.

"When trucks come through my yard, we inspect every truck to ensure they meet the maintenance and security requirements," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael L. Neff, maintenance technician, 635th MCT.

Neff created a 24-point inspection for the civilian trucks that enter and exit across the border. This system was developed based on his past experience as a motor sergeant. To date, Neff has conducted more than 4,000 inspections since the MCT arrived in April.

"We have a great system in place here so



**Sgt. 1st Class Michael L. Neff, maintenance technician, 635th Movement Control Team, 1st Corps Support Command, shows a third country national a deficiency on a battery in one of the trucks in the staging yard at Trebil, Iraq.**

the trucks don't break down on the way," Neff said. "The trucks come in from Jordan, and they are inspected for maintenance and contraband. Once the deficiencies, if any, are fixed, everyone is manifested, and [civilian] convoy serials are staged."

The MCT runs a tight schedule to ensure these trucks are staged so when military escorts arrive, the trucks are ready to leave.

"The only thing the escorts have to do is conduct a convoy brief, and then they are ready to hit the road," Neff said.

Despite the challenges they have faced, the MCT members made great strides to get them to where they are today.

"We've come a long way living out here," Whittacre said. "There's no situation or operation we can't handle. We are always ready to serve."

## Fuels Airmen keep more than planes operational

By **Tech. Sgt. Melissa Phillips**  
 407th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

**ALI BASE, Iraq** — For 19 years now, Master Sgt. David Chandler's mother proudly tells everyone she meets that her son "passes gas for a living" in the U.S. Air Force.

The fuels manager with the 407th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels management flight here is not fazed. He has heard them all and is ready to dish out a few jokes himself on a moment's notice.

However, the petroleum, oil and lubricants specialist also knows his job is serious business.

"We provide fuel to keep it rolling — whether they are vehicles, aircraft, [generators to provide] power or light carts," said Chandler, who is from McConnell Air Force Base, Kan. And unlike having to drive to the corner gas station for a tank of gas, Chandler and crew deliver directly to the customer.

"Our mobility and flexibility are our greatest assets," he said. "If you can land it here or tell us where the equipment is, we go to you."

Since May, the fuels Airmen have distributed over 3.3 million gallons of liquid energy to the Air Force, their sister services and Coalition customers.

It is not as simple as it seems, however. The fuels specialists do not just hook up a fuel line to the receptacle and mindlessly pump away. There is a science to ensuring there is a proper blend of fuel.

And the proper blend of fuel is a tad bit more of a concern to customers who maneuver at more than 20,000 feet above the ground.

Dedicated to perfectionism, the fuels Airmen check their product to ensure conductivity is high enough, water content is correct and the fuel will ignite at a certain flash point.

"If condensation forms in a [C-5 Galaxy] fuel tank that holds



**Airmen 1st Class Sarah Stewart drives a diesel truck to provide fuel to more than 40 U.S. service members and Coalition customers daily.**

20,000 gallons and it clogs up the fuel line, then you have 100 dead service members on your hands. It's a big deal," said Tech. Sgt. Roy Townsend, 407th ELRS fuels information service center superintendent, who is deployed from McConnell. "Attention to detail is critical in my career field," Townsend said.

That is where Staff Sgt. Jason Bello, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 407th ELRS fuels lab, steps in. He filters gasoline that is not up to par before it ever gets to the customer. If a batch turns up with the levels out of balance, he blends it with approved fuel until he creates a safe mixture suitable for his customers.

While some Airmen here may spend much of their day behind computers, more than 15 fuels specialists have a front row seat to

see a parade of the world's most interesting aircraft.

"I always like [that in POL I can do] different things and interact with [many different cultures and people who fly] on foreign aircraft," Bello said.

They recently refueled Belgian aircraft, Marine Corps CH-53 and CH-46 helicopters, along with their standard routine of supporting C-130 Hercules, Italian helos and Army aircraft here.

"We recently got to 'hot refuel' 40 Marine helicopters and go 'under the blades,'" said Chandler, who until then was the only one in his crew to hot refuel a helicopter. Hot refueling is the fueling of aircraft while their engines are still running.

Most of the time, fuels Airmen refuel aircraft while the propellers are off, but with a hot refuel, the blades are turning, and any mistake can turn deadly.

"The Marines loved the support," Chandler said. "They had a limited amount of ground time scheduled, and we jumped in and got them gassed and on their way."

However, Airmen 1st Class Sarah Stewart said what most people do not know is the services they provide do not just affect flightline operations.

"If there is a generator on base, there is a good bet that I've been there," said Stewart, a 407th ELRS fuels operator, who is also deployed from McConnell.

Without their products, the entire base, which is powered by generators that run off fuel, would come to a screeching halt.

"When you get on the plane to go home, you're welcome. When you power up your computers, you're welcome. When you call home or enjoy the air conditioning, you're welcome ... because without POL you're out of luck," Stewart said.

# Marine forms camaraderie with four-legged friend

Story and photos by Cpl. Tom Sloan  
2nd Marine Division

**CAMP HURRICANE POINT, AR RAMADI, Iraq** — Shawn M. Gallagher routinely puts his life on the line to support the ongoing war on terrorism, but he does not let the risks get him down.

“It’s an adventure out here for me,” said the lance corporal, “and I enjoy it.”

Each day, the 21-year-old from Fairfax, Va., takes to the streets of the Al-Anbar capital with Marines of 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment and conducts security and stabilization operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Gallagher has maintained a high level of motivation throughout his deployment, which is now more than halfway finished. He said he has been able to maintain his zeal because of his partner, Youry, a four-year-old Belgian Malinois.

“It’s easier being out here with my dog,” said Gallagher, who is a military dog handler from Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan.

Gallagher and Youry deployed here in May and were attached to 1st Bn., 5th Marines to support OIF.

“I don’t get very homesick because of him,” said Gallagher on the companionship provided by his short, brown-haired colleague and four-legged friend. “I’ll play with him and exercise him. When I am having a bad day, he cheers me up. My job is great because I get to play with a dog and have companionship.”

Gallagher and Youry seldom have much playtime, however, because they are always

on the go. The two are often the frontline defense against insurgents transporting weapons and explosives into the city.

They work for hours at the infantry battalion’s vehicle check points, where they search vehicles entering the city.

Youry “sniffs out” explosives, explosive making material, grenades, rockets and even rifles and ammunition, explained Gallagher. Youry picks up on the scent of residual gun powder, which is what he has been trained to detect.

Gallagher and Youry also accompany infantrymen on patrols and other missions. The team recently hit the streets with Marines from Company A for what proved to be a large undertaking.

The Marines cordoned off a portion of the city’s market place in an attempt to capture insurgents. Gallagher and Youry searched more than 100 vehicles during the two-hour operation.

Gallagher’s job, though fun and exciting, “can be hard sometimes,” he said. “[Youry] is like a little child. He can’t

tell me when he’s tired or hurting so I have to constantly remain alert to his needs.”

Gallagher’s mindfulness prompted him to improve Youry’s abilities to work under the scorching Iraqi sun.

“I could tell he was struggling to work when we first got here,” he explained “He wasn’t use to the heat.”

Gallagher placed his dog on a light physical training program to help him get acclimated.

“I started taking him out on half-mile runs

once a week to get him in shape,” he said.

“He needed to get in better shape for the many missions we do. It didn’t take long for him to get in good shape. Before, he’d be breathing so hard that he wasn’t sniffing well, which is counterproductive because his whole purpose is to smell and find explosives.”

Gallagher continues to take his dog on afternoon runs within



**Lance Cpl. Shawn M. Gallagher and Youry take a break from their vehicle searches to provide security for Marines during a mission in Ar Ramadi, Iraq.**



**Lance Cpl. Shawn M. Gallagher and Youry, his military police dog, search a vehicle for explosives during a recent mission in Ar Ramadi, Iraq.**

the confines of the camp here. The site is a morale booster for many of the Marines.

“It’s cool seeing them jogging together,” said Lance Cpl. Michael S. Fisher, a squad automatic gunner with 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon, A Co. “In a way, seeing a dog out here and patting him is a little reminder of home.”

Gallagher and Youry will return to MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, in November when they finish their seven-month OIF deployment, which is Youry’s second and Gallagher’s first.

“I’m a boot compared to him,” Gallagher said, laughing. “He’s been here more than I have.”

## Explosive ordnance disposal Airmen rely on high-tech, raw nerves

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Lek Mateo  
56th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

**ALI BASE, Iraq** — Soldiers of the 56th Brigade Combat Team encounter explosive situations daily as they travel along Iraq’s highways during convoy escort missions. But things hit closer to home when the Texas Army National Guardsmen found a suspicious package in a trailer near their headquarters recently.

Security forces Airmen with the 407th Air Expeditionary Group and Soldiers of the 56th BCT quickly evacuated everyone and cordoned off the area around the package.



**Airman 1st Class Ian Wise installs an explosive cartridge into the firing attachment of a robot before it investigates a suspicious package found unattended on base.**

Within minutes, explosive ordnance disposal Airmen arrived along with two of their bomb disposal robots. EOD Airmen are specially trained to deal with a variety of explosive devices. The teams quickly deployed their space-age-looking vehicles to the area where the package was found.

Senior Airman Cameron Champion, from Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga., assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, gin-

gerly maneuvered a robot tethered by a thin fiber optic cable through a maze of concrete barriers and military vehicles in the parking lot to remove the package.

Champion recovered the package and relocated it to a safe area adjacent to an 18-inch thick reinforced concrete blast wall, which was designed to protect people from the blast of an artillery rocket or mortar round.

The Airman used the robot’s mechanical gripper and explosive tools to open the package and reveal the contents inside that turned out to be harmless. The suspicious package turned out to be nothing but a foreign military field ration that had been left unattended. Despite the ordeal, everyone agreed that acting on the side of caution was the best judgment call.

The team regularly receives suspicious package calls and treats every one of them as the real thing, said Master Sgt. Thomas Carroll, EOD team chief who is deployed from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J.

“We can’t afford to make any second guesses because it may cause someone to lose their life,” Carroll said.

The Lewiston, Maine, native emphasized that safety is paramount in their business because they handle dangerous materials such as explosives and ordnances. They use the robots to go into harm’s way in place of a human because humans do not get a second chance if something should go wrong.

Airman 1st Class Ian Wise, an EOD technician deployed from Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, took safety to heart while he prepared the explosive cartridge for the robot during the hottest part of the day.

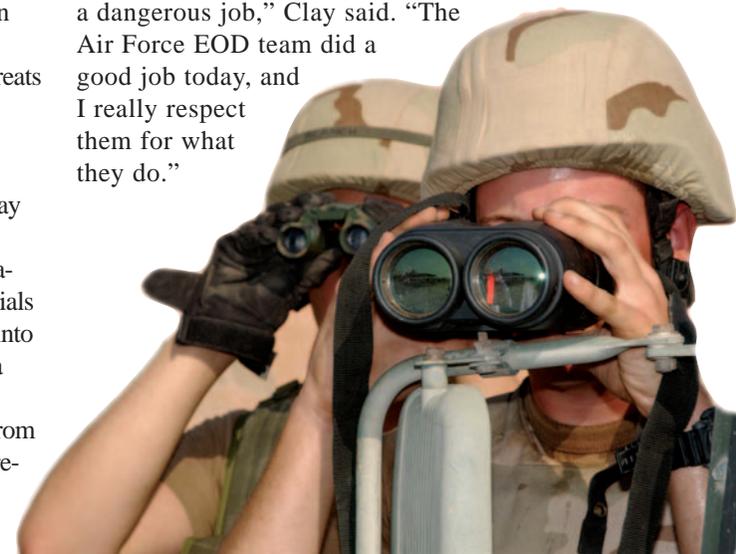
“I don’t let the heat bother me because I’m trying to do my best to stay focused,” Wise said. “I try to concentrate on what I am doing at the moment to make sure I remember all the training I’ve

received for the job and don’t miss a step.”

Spc. Brian Clay said the incident was a sobering reminder they are in a combat zone and cannot become complacent. It could have been a real bomb.

The specialist was one of the first responders who helped evacuate the area. The North Webster, Ind., native said he has a newfound respect for the EOD team and the dangerous work its Airmen perform. He said he was glad they were able to safely identify and destroy the package — even though it may have been someone’s meal.

“Any job that deals with explosives is a dangerous job,” Clay said. “The Air Force EOD team did a good job today, and I really respect them for what they do.”



**Explosive ordnance disposal Airmen with the 407th AEG monitor the progress of a robot as it slowly moves in to investigate a suspicious package found unattended on base.**

# Coalition Corner

... highlighting countries  
serving with MNF-Iraq



## South Korea

local name: *Taehan-min'guk*

The Republic of Korea is located in eastern Asia on the southern half of the Korean Peninsula, bordering the East and Yellow Seas. It has over 3,400 islands, and its neighbors are North Korea and Japan across the East Sea. Size-wise, it is slightly larger than Indiana.

Over 48 million people inhabit this country, with over 10 million living in Seoul, the capital. Korean is the official language spoken by these millions, and English is widely taught in junior high and high school even though it is not an official language. The country's currency is the South Korean Won.

Although relatively small in size, South Korea has thousands of beautiful and historic temples. Most of them were built in remote mountain areas after the Joseon Dynasty proclaimed Confucianism as the state religion, banning Buddhism from cities in the 14th century. Seoul also boasts the enchanting Changdeok Palace, which was started in 1405 as a royal residence to King Taejong. In 1463, King Sejo expanded it and created Biwon, the famous "Secret Garden," a six-acre private getaway used for centuries as a hidden relaxation retreat for royalty.

Not only does South Korea have historic getaway spots for kings, it also has modern-day retreats for the average person. Cheju-do Island, one hour south of Seoul and the country's largest island, is such a place because of its isolated location. Besides beautiful beaches and landscaping, the island boasts unique features such as the Tolharubang, stone grandfathers, which are black lava statues of a kind old man, which were once regarded as guardian deities. These statues are seen everywhere on the island. Other must-see sites include Yongduam, an unusual rock formation that looks like a dragon's head with its mouth open, and Manjanggul Cave, the longest lava tube in the world.

South Korea's national food is kimchi, which is fermented cabbage, pickled with salt and chili peppers. It is served at almost every meal, along with rice, which is a staple food in the Korean diet. Amazingly, there are over 100 different types of kimchi, varied by the region it is grown in and by the amount of salt and level of spice used. Fermented foods have recently become highly valued for their disease-prevention effects.

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

References: [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov), [www.iexplore.com](http://www.iexplore.com), [www.marimari.com](http://www.marimari.com), [www.lifeinkorea.com](http://www.lifeinkorea.com), [www.asiafood.org](http://www.asiafood.org), [seoulscene.com](http://seoulscene.com), [www.orientalarchitecture.com](http://www.orientalarchitecture.com).

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## CHAPLAIN'S TALK

# The Big "C" Word!

**Chaplain (Maj.) Doug Peterson**  
525th Military Intelligence  
Brigade

**M**arriage: the most difficult job in the world. How does one make it work?

This is the fifth and final of our discussions on why relatively few of us fully and deeply enjoy the marriage relationship and what we can do about it. My encouragement has been to use this deployment as an optimum time for introspection and personal growth toward making what we have back home even better.

A few years ago on the occasion of Peter Graves' 50th wedding anniversary, someone asked him how he managed to stay married to the same woman for 50 years — a feat rarely accomplished in the entertainment industry. I like his reply. It came in two words: "We promised."

What an absolutely novel idea! That a husband and wife — on the strength of their word given to each other — could remain faithful to each other for so long!

We live in times that encourage not-so-happy couples to ditch their spouses and seek their happiness and fulfillment in someone else. Now, I realize the pain that many have undergone through divorce.

But my encouragement to you — wherever you are in your marriage experience — is to take what you have and invest everything in making it work.

Making marriage work is indeed the hardest job in the world. It is

especially difficult if we are in the habit of making decisions based upon how we feel at any given moment, rather than based upon what we know to be the right thing to do or the right thing to say.

Think back to the day that you and your "Sugar Biscuit" were married. Whether you said formal vows or not, the concepts that ran through your mind included phrases like "for better, for worse" and "in sickness and in health."

Isn't easy to have those warm, gushy, romantic feelings toward each other when you are riding on top of the world and everything is going your way? But what about those times when one or both of you are going through the very pits of life's experience? And the emotions and feelings that you are experiencing are negative and painful. What then?

Let me illustrate. If you are like me, you are convinced that the most despicable invention ever devised on the face of the earth is running.

(Don't get me wrong; I can, I just don't enjoy the process.) Now, on the Army side, part of our physical training test is a two-mile run. And, let's say, today you have the privilege of running that event. The GO is given and you're off. You find yourself a quarter mile into the run and already you're experiencing the symptoms of total body shutdown. You're sucking wind, your heart is racing at 400 beats per minute and your legs seem heavier than lead. Every part of you is absolutely miserable. And you think to yourself, "And I still have seven times this far to go!" Friends, this is no party at

this point. It is not pleasure city!

What do you do? Everything in you says, "STOP!" And you feel like doing just that! Do you stop? No. Why not?

In spite of how you feel at that moment, you keep going. Why? Because your brain tells you that to keep going is the right thing to do. And you are mentally aware that as you persevere in placing one foot in front of the other, you will indeed eventually cross the finish line.

In everyday life and work contexts, do we not practice this principle? Very often we are faced with unpleasant tasks that we carry out in spite of not really feeling like it. (For many, it may start with your response to the alarm clock the first thing in the morning!)

Why, then, can we not apply this principle of COMMITMENT to our most important human relationship? Feelings will fluctuate with changing circumstances. Commitment is that which seeks first and foremost the welfare of the other and says, "I am here to be the best possible husband/wife for you NO MATTER WHAT."

What keeps you going and working — oftentimes very painfully and unselfishly — through the most challenging times as a husband or wife?

It really does go back to all that's implied in those two words: "We promised."



**Chaplain  
Peterson**

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Services established for Army Reserve families, Soldiers affected by hurricane

**FORT MCPHERSON, Ga.** — Army Reserve family members and Soldiers affected by Hurricane Katrina now have a way to contact the Army Reserve through a newly created call center.

The toll free number for the center is 1-877-464-9330, or from a military phone DSN 367-9330. Phones have been manned 24 hours a day as of noon Friday. Operators take down information to aid deployed Army Reserve Soldiers in determining the status and whereabouts of their families affected by Hurricane Katrina. Additionally, callers are screened to determine what other assistance they may need. The call center has information, and will help guide callers to specific resources.

In addition to the toll-free number, there is a Web site established where families of deployed/mobilized Army Reserve Soldiers and Army Reserve civilians may provide their current contact information. The address of the Web page is: <http://www.arfp.org>. The Web site also provides information and links to the many agencies providing specific relief to those in need.

Army Reserve Soldiers and Army Reserve civilians who

have been dislocated as a result of the hurricane should also call the number or log into the Web site to aid in establishing accountability.

### Ramadi-based terrorists captured

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Multi-National Forces raided a suspected terrorist hideout in Ramadi, Iraq, Aug. 23 and captured a pair of known terrorists based in Ramadi.

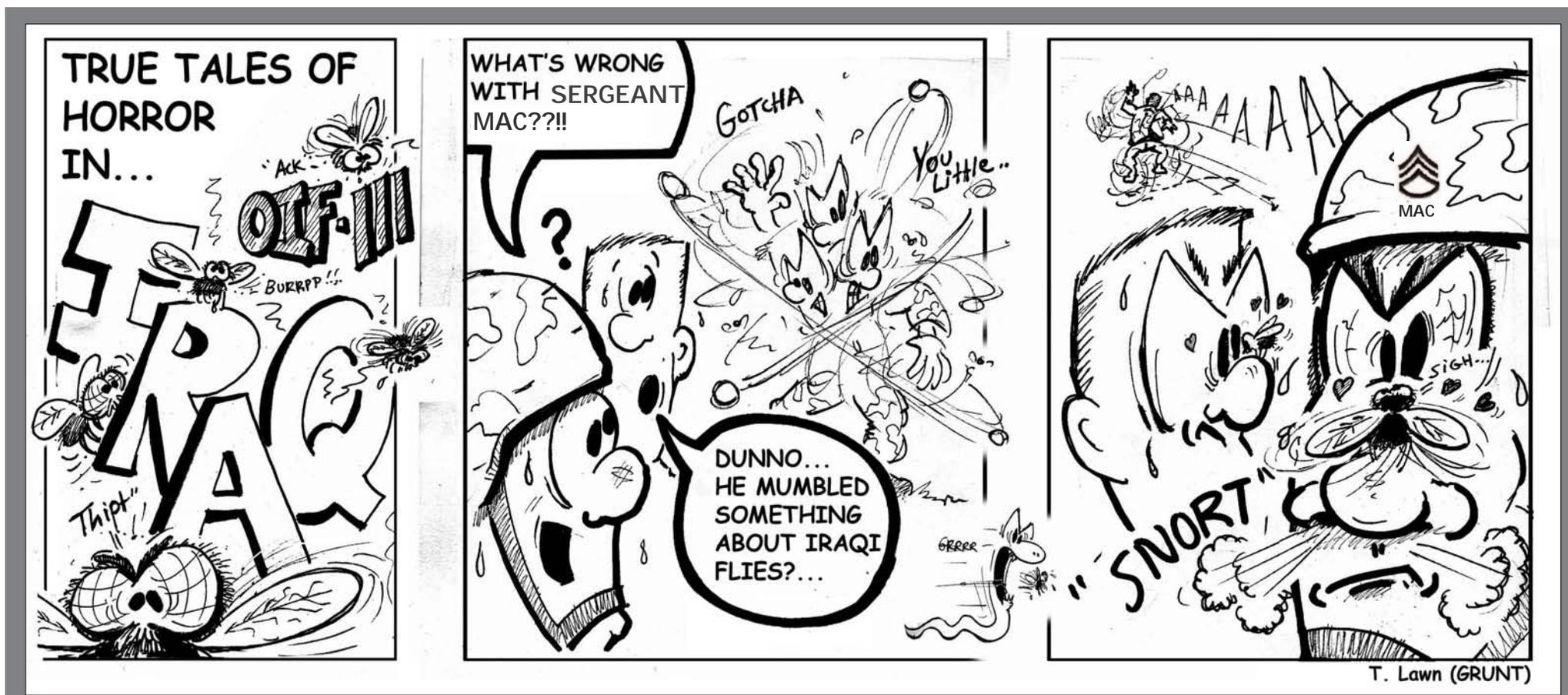
Captured were Durayd Jassar Khalifah Hamud (aka Abu Jabbar), a known terrorist leader and weapons dealer for the Nu'man Brigade and Ali Husayn Muhammad Jasim, (aka Khalid Nazal or Abu Umar), a known improvised explosive device cell leader in the Nu'man Brigade.

Multiple intelligence sources led Multi-National Forces to Abu Jabbar's and Khalid Nazal's Ramadi location. Multi-National Forces raided the location and detained them without incident.

Abu Jabbar, a key al-Qaeda in Iraq leader in the Ramadi-based Nu'man Brigade, is alleged to have facilitated the purchase, transportation and distribution of weapons for the brigade.

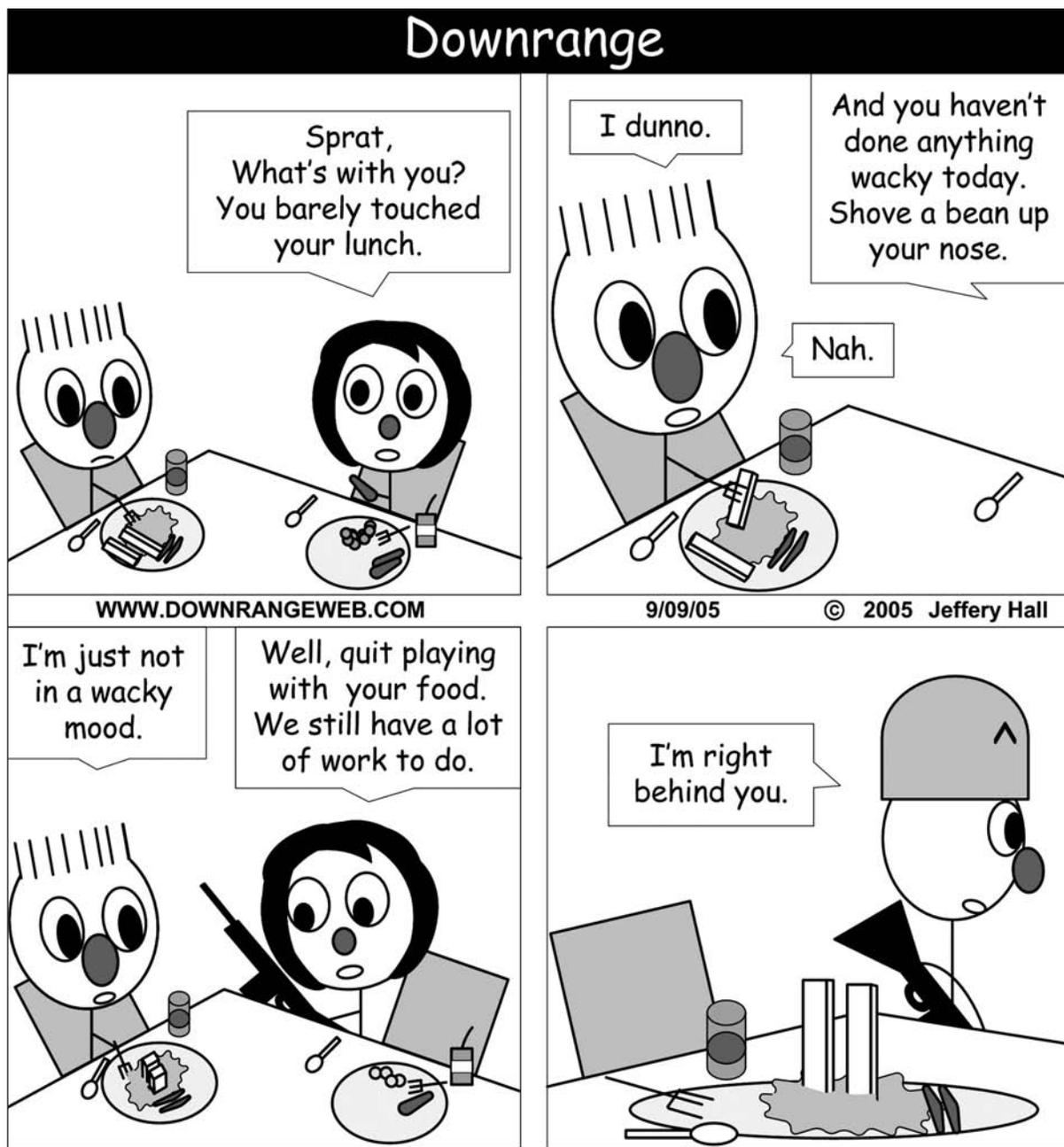
Khalid Nazal was an IED cell leader who was responsible for numerous IED attacks in the Ramadi area.

# Scimitar Slapstick



T. Lawn (GRUNT)

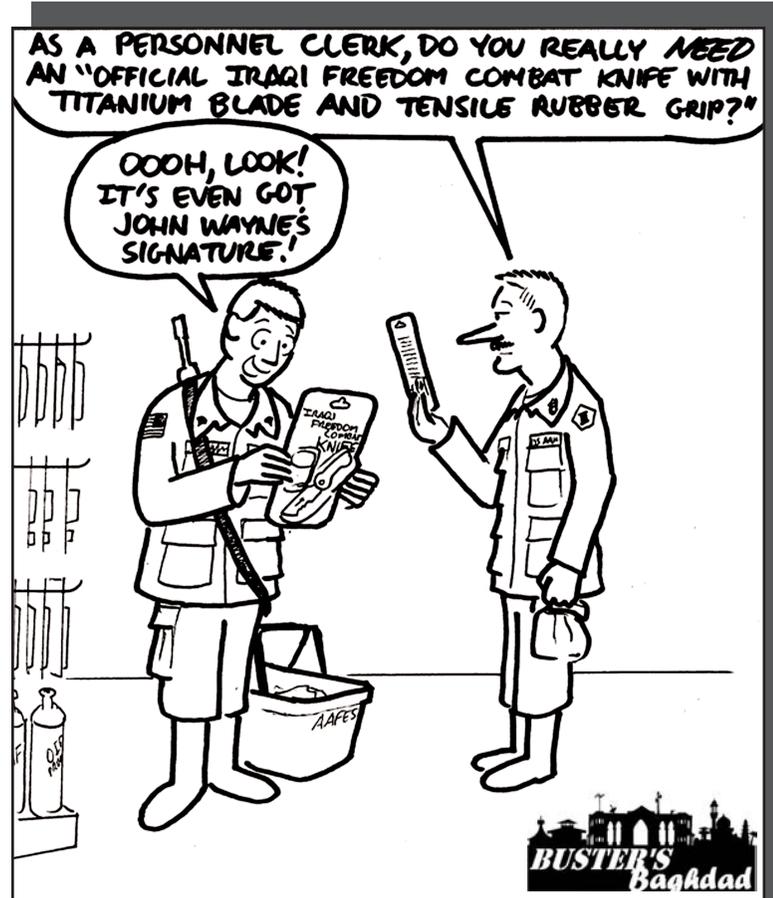
Art by Staff Sgt. Timothy Lawn



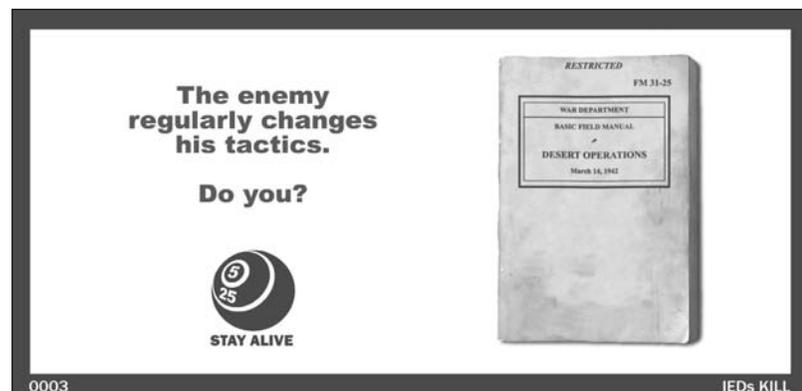
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Art by Jeffery Hall



Art by Maj. James D. Crabtree



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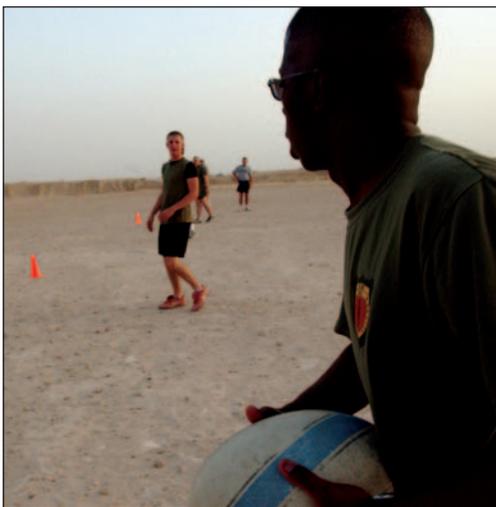
IEDs KILL

# Rugby becomes reality getaway

Story and photos by  
Spc. Ferdinand Thomas  
Scimitar Assistant Editor

**CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq** — Finding an effective way to make time pass quicker is a mystery for many deployed service members in Iraq. The troops of Camp Taqaddum found a way to do just that: a touch Rugby league.

Every Sunday, 20 or more Marines, Sailors, Soldiers and civilians meet before sunset on an open field that varies in elevation in certain spots and is covered by sand and rocks. Some



Service members practice passing in motion in preparation of the game.

even play during the week when time permits.

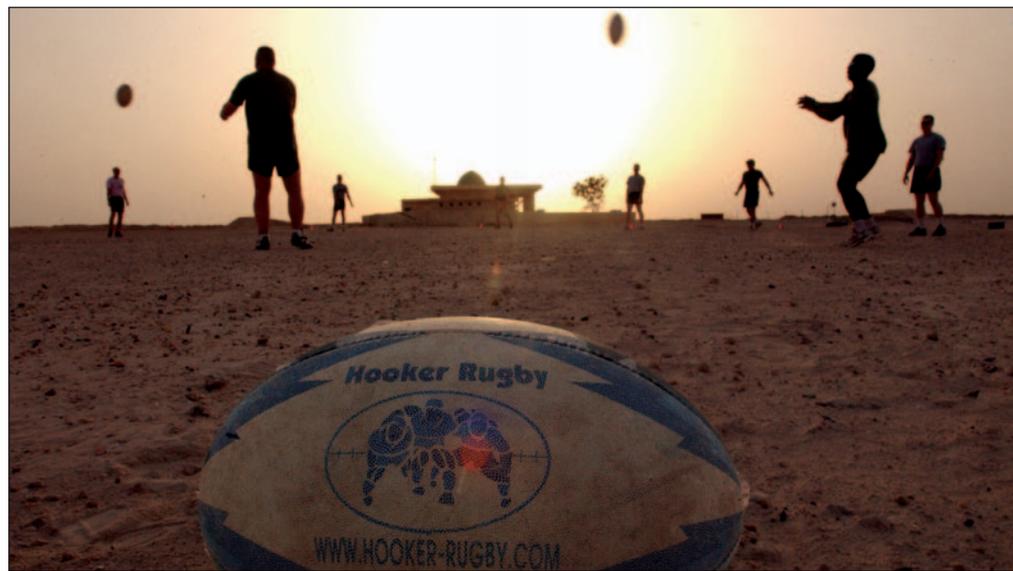
“We started out with 10 players, and four of them didn’t know how to play,” said Marine Col. Bob DeStafney, Combat Logistics Regiment 25 commanding officer at Camp “TQ.” “As time passed, more people started to show up. Now we have about 25 people who come out to participate regularly.”

DeStafney, known as the Marine who brought the sport to TQ, also plays in the league. He said the league is not like most others where a team may travel or host other teams during a season. This league is more like pick-up Rugby. Two to four different teams are made out of the 20 or more people who come out to play, and the action begins.

“We would eventually like to have a seven-on-seven tournament against other guys at TQ,” said Spc. Nicholas Lieb, one of the regular participants in the league. “Playing guys from other forward operating bases would be nice, too.”

Sundays are more like Rugby class, DeStafney said. A lot of the guys who come out and do not know much about the game seem to get a little confused. “The most difficult thing is teaching beginners that the game is not American football.”

To solve that problem, the veterans on the field stress the warm up drills to the beginners a little bit more than usual. Catching the ball and running is one of the main things one does in the game, so they work on that the most. Pre-game practices are packed with



Marine, Sailors and Soldiers run a few practice drills before starting their every-Sunday game of touch-Rugby.

short and long catch and throwing drills. This is also a time for the veterans to pay attention to each person’s weak spots and help strengthen them.

DeStafney said every person that has come out to participate so far has taken pleasure in the experience. “Once we get them, we got them. They come out one time and they’re hooked. People enjoy the sport because it’s fast. It requires fitness and making decisions fairly quickly,” he explained.

“I love playing,” Lieb said. “I started playing in the league when I got to TQ in June. It

has been memorable.”

Even though the league is split into two different teams, they are all one big team. The TQ Rugby players are trying to find people who want to join their club every day, and they have a special way of doing it. DeStafney said he and his touch Rugby players motivate others to come out and share their experience.

He added, “When I meet someone and they tell me, ‘I’m bored.’ I tell that person, ‘meet me Sunday, and I’ll un-bore you.’ They usually come to out play and love it.”

## American comics take drums of laughs to Iraq

Story and photo by Spc. Erin Robicheaux  
256th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

**CAMP TIGERLAND, BAGHDAD** — For a couple of hours, laughter rang out in the midst of the combat zone in Baghdad.

The Comics on Duty World Tour brought four comedians to the Tiger Den dining facility at Camp Tigerland Aug. 12. Dave Mishevitz, Sarah Tiana, John Bizarre and Danny Bevins formed the side-splitting team who kept the Task Force Baghdad Soldiers rolling with laughter. The comics touched on subjects such as the funnier side of military life in a combat zone, politics, relationships and random acts of everyday life.

John Bizarre, an Air Force “brat” and brother of a Marine, has appeared on “The Tonight Show,” “The Drew Carey Show,” “The District” and now he adds a Middle Eastern tour to his resume.

Bizarre said he jumped at the chance to perform for the U.S. Armed Forces. So far, his travels include Japan, Afghanistan, South Korea and the Persian Gulf. He said he is always amazed at the attitudes of the Soldiers he encounters.

“Everyone is so strong, and what is surprising is the consistency of the bravery and dedication of the Soldiers,” he said. “No matter where I go, the attitudes are great and I’m amazed at how much the troops do, and they do it without complaining.”

Bizarre said one of the most rewarding aspects of the tour is having the opportunity to meet America’s heroes after each show.

“I always look them in the eye, shake their hand and

make sure I see their name. It makes me feel so good each time to see that they are in the moment,” stated Bizarre.

During this particular show, he offered a present to any Soldier in the audience with a birthday approaching.

Pfc. Justin Morrison from Alexandria, La., 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, quickly raised his hand and told the comic his 18th birthday was the very next day.

After making sure his hands were good and dry, Bizarre

cupped them together and after a little “tuning,” he proceeded to transform his hands into a musical instrument of flatulence as he squeezed out the tune, “Happy Birthday to You.” He even managed to hit all of the high notes.

Morrison said it was one of the most unique birthday experiences he ever had, and he was glad he took the time to come out and enjoy the show.

“These guys were hilarious,” he said. “I was surprised at how much they really knew about our lives out here.”

Richard J. Davis, of Davis Entertainment Group and executive producer of the Comics on Duty World Tour, said his motivation for this project, as well as the comics’ motivation, is strictly the individual Soldier.

“As far as money, we do this for next to nothing, and we try to get to as many bases as possible,” said Davis. “It’s about reaching as many troops as we can in the time that we’re here.”

In the nine days the comics were in the area, they performed 17 shows.

Davis said the comics are true Americans whose goals are to get out there and show support to the Soldiers.

“Just being funny doesn’t necessarily make them qualified — there are so many more elements. I look for comics who will provide a lot of interaction with the Soldiers, which is as beneficial as the laughter,” he said.

Davis said he began the tour to brighten the attitudes and bring brighter outlooks to the Soldiers in the field.

“When you have the opportunity to positively affect something, even if it’s only 14 Soldiers at a time, that effect ripples on, and makes their time here, even if for a moment, a little more enjoyable,” he said.



Dave Mishevitz, a comedian on the Comics on Duty World Tour, entertains Task Force Baghdad Soldiers at the Tiger Den dining facility in Baghdad Aug. 12.