THE TAJI TIMES

Supporting the Rock in Southwest Asia

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Study group prepares Soldiers for promotion

By Division Support Brigade Public Affairs Office

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers at Camp Taji are being given the opportunity to advance to sergeant or staff sergeant, even while deployed.

The standard is the same here as it is back at home station: prospective noncommissioned officers must still appear before a promotion board.

Prior to the board, however, a Soldier must get ready.

Preparing good Soldiers for advancement is extremely important to Staff Sgt. Everick L. Moore, who is serving with the 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq.

"If I send good Soldiers to the board, the Army will have good leaders," said Moore, a heavy-wheel vehicle operator with the 104th Transportation Company, 87th Corps Support Battalion, Division Support Brigade.

To prepare potential good leaders for the board, Moore, a Washington, D.C., native, developed a study club that meets during Soldiers' down time.

"It started out with just our own squad," said Spc. Ross P. Woodbury, a heavy-wheel vehicle operator with Moore's squad in 2nd Platoon. "Then other squads joined. Then other platoons."

Regardless of unit, Moore is glad to help.

"When I was coming up [through the ranks], NCOs helped me," said Moore, a six-year veteran.

The first thing his "students" noticed was his ability to help them prepare.

"He's good at studying," said Woodbury, a Mansfield, Mass., native.

But Moore doesn't just use a standard Army study guide.

"He had us study whole subjects, not just a list of questions," said Sgt. Joseph N. Cusumano, another heavy-wheel vehicle operator with Moore's squad.

Cusumano, who hails from Concord, N.H., said it's more than just memorizing regulations.

"You do a lot of presenting yourself," said Cusumano, who has six years in the Army. "[Moore] helps you with what to do and what to expect."

Consequently, practicing how to report to the board makes you comfortable and gives you confidence, said Woodbury.

Woodbury is preparing for the next sergeant's board, while Cusumano has already been to the staff sergeant board and scored the highest points of Moore's club members to date—148 out of 150 points. Moore said all the Soldiers from his club score more than 145. He hopes the next one will score the elusive 150.

Photo by Sgt. Victor Soto

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- Staff Sgt. Everick L. Moore, right, a heavy-wheel vehicle operator with the 104th Transportation Company, 87th Corps Support Battalion, Division Support Brigade, goes over study materials for the promotion board with Spc. Ross P. Woodbury, a transporter from his squad. Moore, a Washington, D.C., native, is dedicated to training Soldiers to be the best noncommissioned officers they can be. Woodbury, who is from Mansfield, Mass., will be Moore's fourth Soldier to appear before the board since deploying to Iraq.

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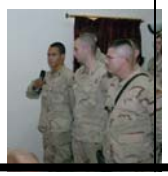

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The Command Corner

Col. Brian R. Layer
Commander

Stories I tell friends

If you ever wondered why you feel so busy, it's because the nation needs you.

As the Army prepared for World War II, Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall observed:

The Army used to have all the time in the world and no money; now we've got all the money and no time.

His words are equally appropriate today. You don't have to look far to see just how busy the Army is.

News of Operations in Iraq, Operations in Afghanistan, and Operations in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina dominate the Nation's newspapers.

These headlines not only remind us how busy we are but also how important our Army is to our Nation.

Our Army has played a vital role in the health and security of our nation from its inception.

FM 1, *The Army*, explains our contribution to joint operations is landpower.

Landpower includes the ability to:

1. Impose the Nation's will on adversaries--by force if necessary--in diverse and complex terrain.
2. Establish and maintain a stable environment that sets conditions for a lasting peace.
3. Addresses the consequences of catastrophic events—both natural and manmade—to restore infrastructure and reestablish basic civil services.
4. Support and provide a base from which forces can influence and dominate the air and sea dimensions of the joint operational area.

When our Nation needs results, it turns to the Army. Just two weeks ago, we saw how unique the Army's capabilities are. **(See Army, Pg. 3)**

Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmy I. Pegues
87th CSB Command Sergeant Major

Thoughts from an Old Soldier

I would like to take this opportunity to share some of my experiences from twenty-four years of military service with the DSB Soldiers.

My hope is that that the knowledge will help those who plan to stay on the "Team" and become a career Soldier to climb the ladder of success.

I never thought that I would ever become a command sergeant major when I enlisted in the delayed entry program back in December, 1980.

However, as I began to grow from private, to sergeant, to first sergeant and finally, to command sergeant major, I realized that my growth was due to the outstanding mentorship and training that I received from fine noncommissioned officers.

Here are a few things that have helped me succeed. I challenge you to consider these as you grow and become NCOs on your career path in the United States Army.

Education: Start educating yourself early, whether it's through college, correspondence courses or local training courses offered by your installation. Your education center is a helpful starting point. I started early and it has paid major dividends for me throughout my career.

Tough Assignments: Seek tough assignments. Don't settle for just doing your job. Go after those positions that your peers may not necessarily want. By accepting these positions, it will make you stand out from your peers. Examples are: drill sergeant, recruiting, observer controllers, battle staff positions, inspector general assignments, equal opportunity adviser, etc.

Official Military Personnel Files: Keep your OMPF updated at all times. **(See Old Soldier, Pg. 3)**

We never fail when we try to do our duty,

we always fail when we neglect to do it.

— Robert Baden-Powell

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Army, continued from Pg. 2

When the President asked the Army to move to the gulf and bring aid to the suffering, the results were immediate--things started moving, the confidence of the American people rose, and a collective sigh rose from the Nation.

If you ever wondered why you feel so busy, it's because the nation needs you.

Old Soldier, continued from Pg. 2

Its important to keep your records updated, this becomes even more important when you began to compete for promotions in the centralized zones for Sergeant First Class through Sergeant Major.

If you don't care about your records, then know one else will. Take charge of your career by keeping documents updated and filed accordingly.

NCOER's: This is perhaps the most important document in your OMPF as an NCO.

Importantly, you should ensure that you know who your rater is and that your initial and quarterly counseling are being conducted in a timely manner.

This will also ensure that your report won't be a surprise to you when it becomes due. Always strive to receive excellent marks in all areas.

Your overall performance and potential should set you apart from your peers. Often times you hear that the NCOER is over inflated.

Until you educate yourself on the process of board procedures you will never understand what takes place and what it takes to be recommended for the next higher grade.

The centralized boarding system is designed to be the fair and impartial. Don't blame the system or others for your shortfalls.

Respect: Treating others as you want to be treated. If we all practice this concept, a lot of issues that happen would not become issues at all.

Sometimes, we let our personalities conflict with reality. Just remember, the "GOLDEN RULE" applies whether you are a private, sergeant, captain or general.

Its all about human beings respecting and showing courtesy to each other.

Try to put yourself in the other Soldiers position and ask yourself the question, "How I would want to be treated under these circumstances or in this situation.

Respect will rule the day and make us all a better person.

Discipline: Discipline is not always about punishment. Discipline is also doing the right thing when no one is watching.

Discipline is all about self-control, self-command and having the will power to do what needs to be done.

There will be times where you have to impose corrective actions and you have to do it in accordance with the total soldier concept.

Not all soldiers will receive the same exact punishment. Just ensure you are fair and impartial in doing so.

Communication: This is a process of exchanging information. It's where individuals reach an understanding by receiving and transmitting messages.

Often times, the lowest member on the team will not know what is going on. Consequently, if a Soldier doesn't know it's probably because someone failed to convey the message.

As a result, things don't get completed or Soldiers are not where they should be. Leaders, our job is to communicate consistently and never leave our Soldiers uninformed.

So, be clear and concise about your thoughts and intent and ask that they be repeated to ensure it's understood.

Check the Checker: As consummate professionals, it's important to check those you give tasks to. As trainers and mentors, until you can develop the trust in your subordinates, its okay to check and follow-up on task or missions given.

Even you've developed that trust, you should continue to check their progress. If you fail to check and supervise, you will not only accept things as they are, you will miss that opportunity to mentor. Develop a standard and ensure everyone understands your intent.

The thoughts that I have shared are just some of the things that have gotten me this far. Hopefully, some of these thoughts from an "Old Soldier" in your tool bag of success will help you become a better Soldier and leader.

One last thought. Soldiers look toward leaders for mentorship and great leadership. Leaders should provide outstanding leadership for Soldiers to emulate. Soldiers are the reason leaders have their jobs.

Soldiers may not always remember what you say or do, but, they will always remember the way you treated them.

Soldier hard, Soldier safe, and stay focused until the mission is complete.

"Heart of the Rock"

DSB medics train IPs in basic trauma care

Capt. David Hamilton
550th Area Support Medical Company

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- "Nafiss and Nazif! Nafiss and Nazif!" said Col. John J. Lammie to the 20 Iraqi Policemen in a training session at the Al Taji IP Station north of Baghdad.

Those Arabic terms for "breathing" and "bleeding" were often repeated during the Basic Trauma Treatment course taught by Lammie, a medical doctor from Fayetteville, N.C.

Lammie was joined by other doctors, nurses and medics of the 550th Area Support Medical Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, Division Support Brigade as they taught IPs how to medically respond during emergencies.

The medics of the 550th ASMC—who deployed here from Fort Bragg, N.C., to support the 3rd Infantry Division—have teamed with 4th Platoon, 860th Military Police Company of the Arizona Army National Guard.

The MPs patrol with and mentor four IP stations in the communities surrounding Camp Taji.

Photo courtesy of 550th ASMC

Sgt. Jennifer L. Viera, left, a combat medic with the 550th Area Support Medical Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, Division Support Brigade, observes as an Iraqi police officer goes through his patient evaluation checks.

Photo courtesy of 550th ASMC

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Col. John J. Lammie, a doctor with the 550th Area Support Medical Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, Division Support Brigade, watches Iraqi Police officers simulate treatment of one of their colleagues role-playing a trauma victim.

Along with conducting daily patrols to the stations, the MPs also have the mission of providing classes to the local IPs on various subjects including medical life-saving measures.

The 550th ASMC medics seized the opportunity of the daily visits to provide much-needed first aid and basic trauma training to the IPs, who are often first on the scene of terrorist attacks.

The training was recently conducted in 17 classes at the four IP stations and one IP checkpoint.

More than 170 Iraqi Policemen were taught such basics as airway control, rescue breathing, chest wound dressings, bleeding control, tourniquets, burn treatment, and transporting the wounded.

1st Lt. Ronald Leach, a physician assistant with the 550th, planned the final training event using a scenario exercise.

Some of the IPs were spread throughout the station, role-playing as casualties, while teams of three policemen responded to their "wounded" partners, assessed their injuries, and treated them.

"They were very enthusiastic," said Leach, who is from Hardinsburg, Ky.

He said IPs did a great job evaluating casualties and providing the proper care.

Leach said future training will include teaching the policemen how to transport casualties in IP vehicles as well as how to coordinate with local medical clinics to develop training relationships and access to ambulance services.

Equal Opportunity Focus

by SFC Tanya Toussaint
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Equal Opportunity...

the Heart of Readiness!

Special thanks to everyone who attended and participated in the Women's Equality Day Program, held Aug. 26 at the Division Support Brigade Ministry Center on Camp Taji. You all made it a great success.

The observance began in 1971 when, at the behest of Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY), the U.S. Congress designated Aug. 26 as "Women's Equality Day." The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote.

This was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world's first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York.

Chief Warrant Officer Eunice Buffington, the Division Support Brigade food service manager at Dining Facility #1, spoke of that convention, as the program's key note speaker.

She took the audience through a brief history of the women's movement. Buffington made history come alive when she portrayed Sojourner Truth giving her "Ain't I a woman" speech from the 1851 women's convention in Akron, Ohio.

Buffington then spoke of Title 9 of the Civil Rights Act from 1972 and the service academies opening their doors to women in 1975.

She closed by reminding the gathering that there was more work to be done and there was a renewed commitment in the air.

Finally, Buffington said , "It is not enough to say that you are for equal opportunity and equal rights, you must take action. Action is how you put your principles into practice."

Thank you to the Army Air Force Exchange System and Anwar Tayaieb Crystal Shop for the door prizes for this event.

The next observance is Hispanic Heritage Month. The program, scheduled for Oct. 6, is sponsored by the 87th Corps Support Battalion. The point of contact is Sgt. 1st Class Miguel A. Merritt, the battalion's equal opportunity representative. Please see Merritt to volunteer your talents to make this event a great success.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

Chief Warrant Officer Eunice Buffington, brings Sojourner Truth back to life with a portrayal of her "Ain't I a woman" speech from the 1851 women's convention at Akron, Ohio.

Havin' a ball!

CAMP TAJI, Iraq —(left) Sgt. 1st Class Rochelle Jones, the motor sergeant for the 632nd Maintenance Company, 87th Corps Support Battalion, Division Support Brigade, prepares to make a free throw during the Women's Memorial Day Weekend 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament held at the outdoor courts by the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Theater here.

First Sgt. Shontina M. Edwards, left, the 24th Ordinance Company first sergeant, looks for an opening around Capt. Jennifer Cave, the company commander for headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade troops Battalion.

Edwards and Jones' team finished in third place at the end of the three-day contest.

From the Pulpit

Chaplain (Capt.) Stanislaw Jasiurkowski
87th Corps Support Battalion Chaplain

A rose in your hand

We've past a six month mark sign in our journey through OIF III. We've been busy conducting different missions, day in and day out, night in and night out but also we try to find time to build our spiritual, moral and physical strength as well as communicate with our loved ones in order to keep our relationships strong.

From time to time we think how our relationship and our marriage will look like upon our return home when our mission is accomplished. I'm convinced that this thought will be coming back to our mind more frequently as we will get closer and closer to the end.

Most people desire a happy marriage that lasts a life time, but we know that many couples do not achieve one. Recently, I read information saying that the divorce rate has increased significantly last year even though it was already high. We have to keep in mind that not only have we changed during this time of separation from our families but also our loved ones.

Therefore, we need to learn constructive ways to handle our differences. This is one of the most powerful things we can do to protect the promise that I will love you, cherish you, and not abandon you until death.

As a pastor and chaplain I've encountered a lot of different marriage problems and I noticed that the presence of certain negative patterns can destroy a relationship.

In the Book of Proverbs (12:18) we can read: "The prating of some men is like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise is healing."

Therefore we need to work hard in order to eliminate or at least to keep to minimum some key negative patterns and develop the positive things in our relationship.

The good news is that some of the most important elements that raise the risk for a relationship are things that can be changed or prevented with some labor.

The things that put our marriage at risk have to do with how we think and interact – especially, how we handle conflicts in our marriage.

If we can stop doing those things that put our marriage at risk, I believe that we have a much better chance of experiencing a long and happy marriage.

Based on scripture and experience, I can say that how we treat one another when we have disagreements, or when conflict erupts, speaks to the condition of our marriage after deployment and for years to come.

Let's keep in mind that the little negatives can just destroy an incredible amount of good we've achieved over the years.

Peter in his First Letter (3:9-11) gives us the following warning: "Do not return evil for evil, or insult for insult; but, on the contrary, a blessing, because to this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing. For: Whoever would love life and see good days must keep the tongue from evil and the lips from speaking deceit, must turn from evil and do good, seek peace and follow after it."

Let's take a look at a couple of basic negative patterns that we should avoid in our marriage in order to be happy and successful.

(See Rose, Pg. 7)

The Soldiers Creed!

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – (Left) Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston, right, observes as Spc. Cameron Jordon, a wheel vehicle mechanic, passes the microphone to Pfc. Devin M. Engles, a heavy wheel vehicle operator, at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Theater Aug. 27, here.

The two Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, Soldiers, were among the more than 30 servicemembers who accepted Preston's challenge to recite the Soldiers Creed.

Both Jordan, an Athens, Ga., native, and Engles, who hails from Falmouth, Mass., each received an SMA coin from Preston for their efforts.

Preston visited several units, as well as conducted on open forum during his visit here.

During the forum, Preston shared the vision of the Army's future and took time to answer question from the group.

Rose, continued from Pg. 6

Have you noticed that some times your conversation goes back and forth negatively and gets more and more hostile?

That's what we call *escalation*. During that conversation negative words and comments spiral into increasing anger and frustration.

As frustration and hostility grow, couples try to hurt each other by launching verbal and some times physical "arguments".

Just remember that your reckless words do unimaginable damage to unity, intimacy and a sense of safety in your relationship. If it sounds familiar to you, you need to recognize it, control yourself, and to do whatever you can in order to stop the negative process before it explodes into a fight.

Just softening your tone and acknowledging your partner's point of view are simple but very effective tools you can always use to scatter tension and obviously end escalation.

You may also have a tendency to put down the thoughts, feelings, character, achievements or decisions of your spouse.

This pattern we can call *invalidation* and it builds barriers, hurts very much and leads to covering up who we are and what we think.

To prevent your relationship from the destruction you need to validate your partner so she or he can bring the concern up to the table and be respected, acknowledged, and heard. It's obvious that you don't have to agree with your partner. But it is your obligation to validate and respect her or his feelings.

The next issue I would like to discuss is *negative interpretation* which occurs when one spouse believes that the motives of the other are more negative than they really are. This pattern makes every disagreement or conflict harder to solve constructively. Often we assume that we know what our spouse thinks and what his or her motives are for doing something.

Even though we are completely wrong in our assumptions, we have a habit of see what we expect to see. If this applies to you, you will need to reconsider what you thing is true about your spouse's motives.

They are probably much more positive than you have assumed. Keep in mind that only you can control how you interpret your companion's behavior.

It is also not unusual that couples are unwilling to discuss important issues or hung up, get up and leave the room, "turn off" during and argument when the other partner pushes the issue or agree quickly just to end the conversation but they have no intention for any cooperation.

Many studies show clearly that the couples, who are the happiest, relaxed together and who are the best friends are those who stay far away from this pattern of behavior.

If you have this tendency to avoid discussion, you need to realize that you are not independent but you need to work as a team.

If you push hard forward every issue, just realize that you are not a "domestic" drill sergeant. We know that it takes two to do tango.

Your marriage will be successful if you decide to work together to prevent or change these negative patterns we discussed in this article.

I'm realistic and I know that perfection is not possible but it is possible to avoid those kinds of traps that can destroy love, confidence and happiness of your marriage.

If you really love your partner, you don't begin by changing your partner, but by changing your heart, mind and behavior.

You need to learn how to be different and still respect, love, and care for each other.

One of the most beautiful lessons from the Bible is enclosed in this scripture verse: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31.

Have always a rose in your hand instead of a saber and you will win your battle for love and happiness.

Still maintaining the line!

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — Pvt. Chen Li and Sgt. Roman Schneur, both petroleum vehicle operators with the 226th Quartermaster Company, 87th Corps Support Battalion, prepare to hook up a hose to their tanker trailer during a recent fueling operation.

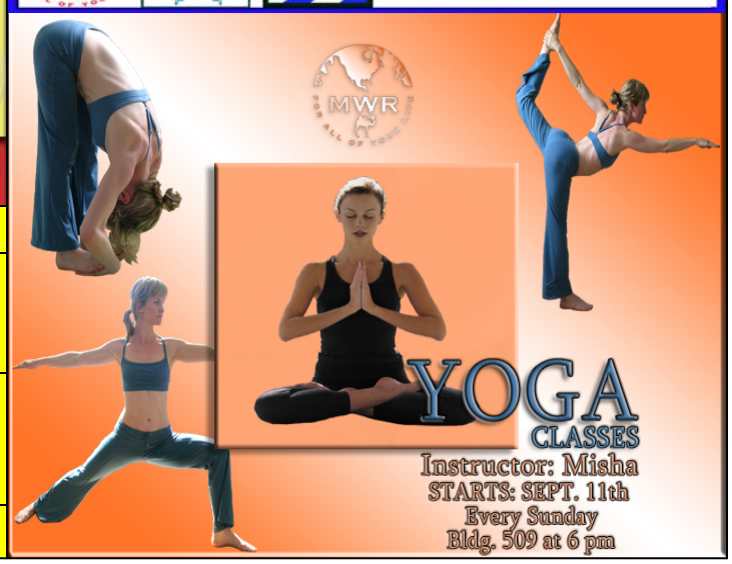
Li, from San Gabriel, Calif., and Schneur, from Brooklyn, N.Y., along with other members of their Division Support Brigade unit, are responsible for maintaining the flow of fuel throughout the Multi-National Division, Baghdad, area of operation.

Li and Schneur's Petroleum Oil and Lubricants Platoon primarily provides Jet Propulsion fuel, type 8, to various bases.

(*Photo by Sgt. Victor Soto)*

Photo by Sgt. Victor Soto

Taking it out of the park! CAMP TAJI, Iraq — Sgt. Fredrick Fairchild, the motor sergeant for the 24th Ordinance Company, 87th Corps Support Battalion, Division Support Brigade, takes aim at an incoming softball during the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Homerun Derby Sept. 5, at the MWR Softball Field here. Fairchild, who calls Savannah home, managed to belt four homeruns during the competition which was part of the camp's memorial Day festivities.



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