

The Warrior

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Saber troopers take
charge down south

Comics

Operation Double Steal

Cav Stakes

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The Warrior September 2005 Volume 2, Number 8

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Saber builds support from locals -

Troopers from 3-7 Cav. build relationships with locals, as humanitarian aid and security missions go hand-in-hand in Baghdad.

On the cover: Staff Sgt. James Jr. Hall, B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, scout, maintains security for fellow Soldiers in Eastern Baghdad Aug. 12.

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"Showtime!"

A year ago our zone was in high intensity combat with the future in question with respect to the country of Iraq being a viable democratic nation.

In less than three weeks this fledgling, free country will take a huge step as it votes on the constitution.

History will be made and we are all fortunate to be part of it. In fact, you all are more than just part of it; you all play a key role.

Our key role has actually already begun. We must do our best to root out the terrorists so they do not impact on the right for all Iraqis to vote.

In other words, continue what you all are doing now — aggressively actioning on these bastards at every opportunity.

We must send a message that Spartan Warriors will do whatever it takes to eliminate these cowards who cannot stand to see freedom loving people pursue their right to freedom.

Every Spartan Warrior has a valuable and important role, regardless if your duties are outside or inside the FOB.

Be ready to surge everything; attacking the enemy, combined patrols, civil-military actions, and force protection.

I will ask all Spartan Warriors to view this like football at the start of the 4th quarter of the game. Like football, whoever is in best condition, hits hardest, and executes better wins, especially in the 4th quarter.

We spent almost a year preparing, we have executed our mission for almost a year, and now it is the final quarter — show time. We have

worked too hard for this game to go into overtime; in fact that ain't going to happen.

The Spartan team has a shut out going and nothing is going to wreck it.

We will continue to root out the enemy at every opportunity, we will not let up, and we will be relentless.

Now all the above reads well, but making it a reality is another thing. This must be reality, and it will be as long as we all adhere to the 4 tenets that have gotten us this far to date:

- 1) Know your task and purpose
- 2) PCI/PCC every time before a mission
- 3) Rehearse everything before executing
- 4) Pause and mitigate risk before every mission.

Nothing should be considered routine and easy. Keep your game face on and stay ready. No high stepping before the goal line.

And lastly, stay professional - it's not like we have not been in the end zone before.

I know all the Spartan Warriors have been through a lot. We miss our families terribly, the mission is hard, and frustration and stress levels can be high.

All that said, we have worked too hard to blow the shutout. Its show time, so let's kick the enemy's ass and end his season and career once and for all.

Keep up the great work and God Bless.

SEND ME,
DiSalvo



The Warrior

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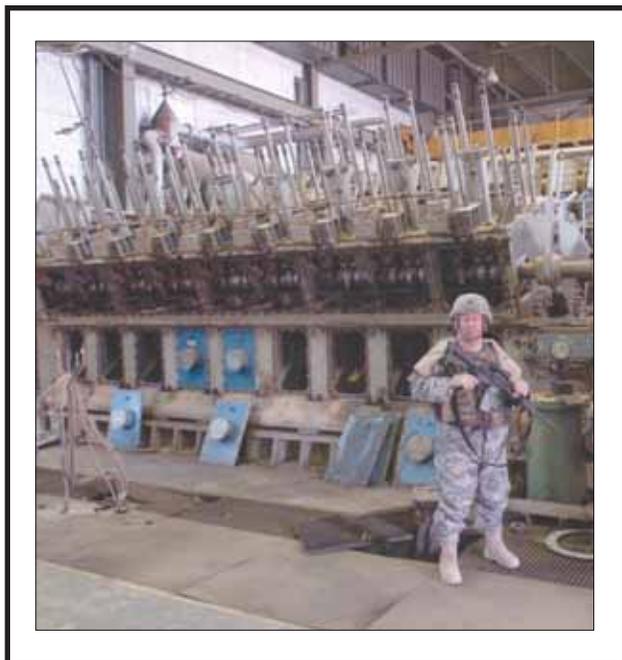
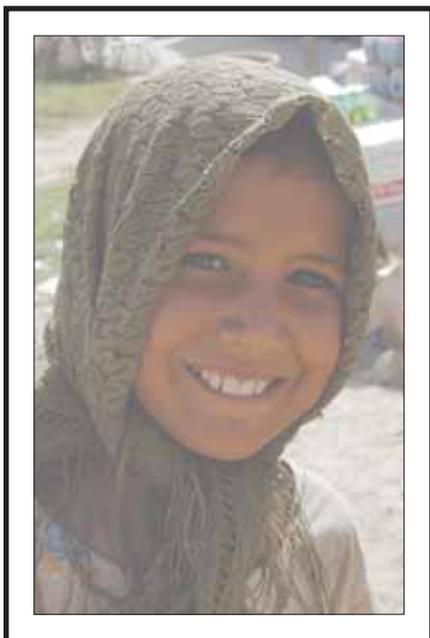
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ATTENTION!

“Shots from the field” is always looking for photos taken by Spartan Brigade Combat Team Soldiers serving in Iraq. If you have a good photo, and we have room, we’ll print it. Email your photos via AKO to: craig.zentkovich@us.army.mil. Subject: Shots from the field. Be sure to include your rank, name, and unit as well as a caption for the photograph that includes the subject of the photograph with names and dates. I look forward to receiving your shots.

Staff Sgt. Craig Zentkovich
Editor, *The Warrior*



Living outside the wire...



Rogue engineers keep U.N. compound safe

Story and photos by Sgt. Andrew Miller

DOG BASE, Iraq – Since their arrival in Iraq, combat engineers with 2nd Brigade Combat Team have served their time in an especially Spartan way.

Soldiers with E Company, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor are charged with guarding a huge concrete wall, isolated from comfort and distanced from the rest of their unit at Camp Rustamiyah. Inside the large wall is another wall – this one with a gate marked with two light-blue letters: U and N.

To civilians it's called Canal Hotel. Servicemembers call it Dog Base. On a biweekly basis, E Co. Soldiers call this crumbling U.N. compound home.

Staff Sgt. Perre Echolz, a squad leader with E Co., pointed out a large section of a building that was destroyed by a car bomb in 2003. That section of the compound represents the reason for E Co.'s mission, Echolz said.

Before and since that bombing, the compound has served as the main logistical base for U.N. personnel working out of the International Zone in Baghdad.

"[1/64 Armor] battalion knew this was going to be an important mission before we got here," said Captain Todd S. Duncan, E Co. commander, "This has been the main focus for our company since the beginning of OIF 3."

To secure the compound, engineers are posted in guard towers and at gates along the perimeter. Though their presence is considered a deterrent, the engineers have seen attacks. According to 1st Lt. Adam Smith, a platoon leader with E Co., they have been assaulted by rifle fire, mortars and snipers.

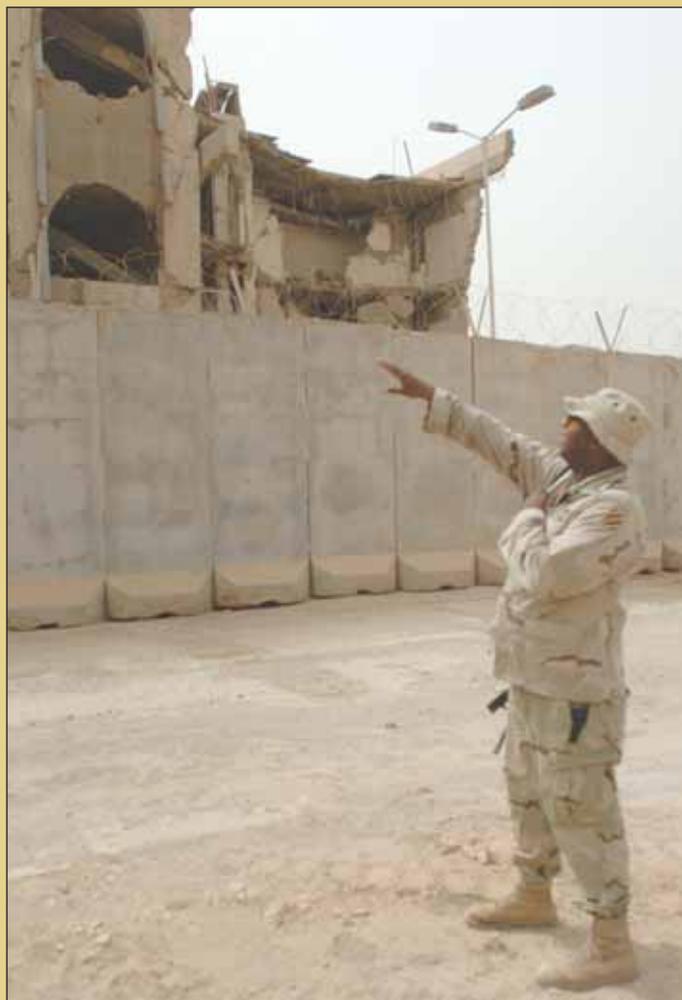
During a recent attack, seven mortars landed inside the compound and several others exploded nearby, Smith said. No one was injured during the attack. In fact, the walls of the compound have never been breached since E Co. took the job.

With security measures tight, Soldiers not manning the gates or towers have taken the fight to their enemy.

Using armored humvees, personnel carriers and tracked earthmovers, the engineers conduct missions in the area around their base. By day or by night, they are

out gathering intelligence and looking for roadside bombs.

According to Echolz, a Brooklyn, N.Y. native, the key to their offense is based on building relationships with local Iraqis.



Staff Sgt. Perre Echolz, a squad leader with E Co., 1-64 Armor, points out where and how a car bomb destroyed a section of the UN compound.



(Above and Right) Spc. Justin Mitchem, a combat engineer with E Co., 1-64 Armor, mans a .50 caliber machine gun at one of the gates of the UN compound Aug. 11.



“We went out into our sectors and cleaned them up,” said Echolz. “In the last six months we turned the whole area around.”

Establishing their presence and displaying a willingness to act on intelligence has shown the locals that E Co. is there to help, he said. “The people trust us and if something happens they’re not afraid to tell us,” Echolz said, pausing. “They don’t want us to leave, you know?”

For now, no one has to worry about the engineers leaving. Unlike any other unit before them, E Co. has been assigned to the U.N. compound for the duration of their tour.

“All other previous units never took ownership of it,” Duncan said. “When we got here it was dirt piled upon dirt.”

Despite making improvements, Soldiers at Dog Base live in humble conditions are without some of the conveniences found on larger installations. A few engineers said they miss such comforts as laundry service, telephones and a choice of food while at the compound. Yet none of the engineers spent much time complaining.

“We’re in Iraq, I’m not at home,” said Spc. Gary Blair, a combat engineer with E Co. “You just deal with it.”

Dealing with austere living conditions is part of what engineers do. Since arriving at their temporary home, the Soldiers have spent a great deal of their down time mak-

ing improvements there, Smith said.

The engineers fixed electrical wiring that had been shorting and damaging their personal appliances. Large equipment, from when the base was a cooking school, had to be moved out. They also built a gym and fixed local roads. The engineers even set up and continue to maintain an internet connection for themselves.

Smith said great improvements have been made to the building the engineers sleep in, and they are now working on the structure next to it.

“So the next people who come into guarding the compound have a better place of living,” he said.

Smith mentioned something else that makes life at Dog Base more comfortable.

“We have a lot of support from people back home,” said Smith, of Hudson, Wis., “They take time out of their day, millions of them do, and they send care packages, they send emails, they send letters, and I just appreciate them doing that for my Soldiers. It makes it easier and

it’s nice to know that people actually care about you.”

In spite of all this support, some of the Soldiers said it’s difficult to determine if they are making a difference or not. In supporting the U.N., they are a small part of a very large operation. Soldiers, however, don’t need to feel significant to do their job. They just need orders.

“The Army deems it as important,” Blair said with a grin. “So it’s important to me.”



Pvt. Matthew Ennis, a combat engineer with E Co., 1-64 Armor, watches the perimeter of the compound from a tower Aug. 11.

COMICS ON DUTY: World-wide

Story and photos by Sgt. Andrew Miller

CAMP RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq – More than 100 Soldiers broke into convulsions and fits here Aug. 10, although no medics were needed.

The Soldiers' split sides and busted seams were a direct result of hilarious performances from comedians with the Comics on Duty World Tour. Four comics shook the house for nearly two hours of uproar.

Featured in the show were Danny Bevins, John Bizzare, Dave Mishevitz and Sarah Tiana.

Mishevitz opened the show with an intense, eye-popping style that immediately shocked the audience into a riot. Throughout and beyond his act, sweat poured and veins bulged all over his face. Never slowing down, some in the crowd were no doubt wondering, "What is this guy on?"

Tiana was next, and, after sizing up her mostly male audience, she went straight for the kill. Her opening line referred to four cakes placed in the entrance of the building, each with a picture of one of the comedians.

"Next time you put my picture on a cake," Tiana joked, "don't put a sign next to it saying 'do not eat.'"

Her audience, sort of laughing and ogling at the same time, was smitten.

Third on stage was the aptly named John Bizzare. Using stories, hopefully exaggerated, from his own life, he drove his punch lines home with wild gestures. Bizzare's style

was one that could get a person to agree with anything. Given a minute, he could have his audience convinced that cancer is hilarious.

Bevins went last, using his knowledge of Army life to get the crowd rolling for a solid half-hour. The former Soldier spit profanity as well as the most talented service member could, while his jokes on field latrines and other hassles of deployment rang tearfully true.

For some of the comics, this was their first trip into a combat zone. Others could be called veterans. For the comedy tour itself, however, combat zones are the normal venue.

Since 1992, the Comics on Duty Tour has continuously traveled the globe bringing laughs to service members in deployed areas.

Initially limited to the continental United States, the tour has expanded with the goal of being able to go anywhere the military does, said Richard Davis, executive producer of the show and a former Navy man.

The stop here was the tour's 149th performance in Iraq.

Because of the small size of the act, the tour has been able to put on a show at bases where larger events couldn't, Davis said.

"We try to bring the show to where the troops need it most," he said.

After the show, thanks were bounced between the service members

and the comics as autographed pictures were handed out. While some troops spoke of appreciation for the visit and had praise for the comics' skills, each of the comedians agreed that the tour was their pleasure.

According to Tiana, a spot on the tour is difficult to get. Performing for troops is something many comedians want to do.

Bizzare said he has sent in audition tapes for several of his friends, none of whom have been selected for the tour.

"It's very competitive," Tiana said.

Whether touring for the troops or working back home, Bizzare said he believes he might not have his job if service members didn't make the sacrifices inherent in theirs.

"I have the coolest job in the world," Bizzare said. "This is the least I could do."

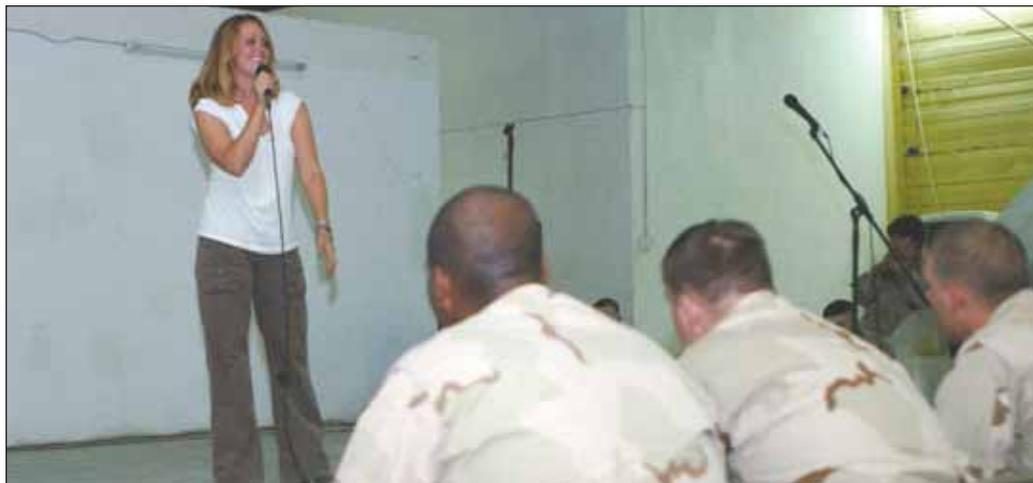
Tiana spoke of a satisfaction she gets from performing for service members in deployed areas.

Some of the comedians said they will have memories from this tour that they'll never forget.

Before she left, Tiana's father wanted to know what she would learn from her trip, she said.

"What do you want to get out of this," she said he asked.

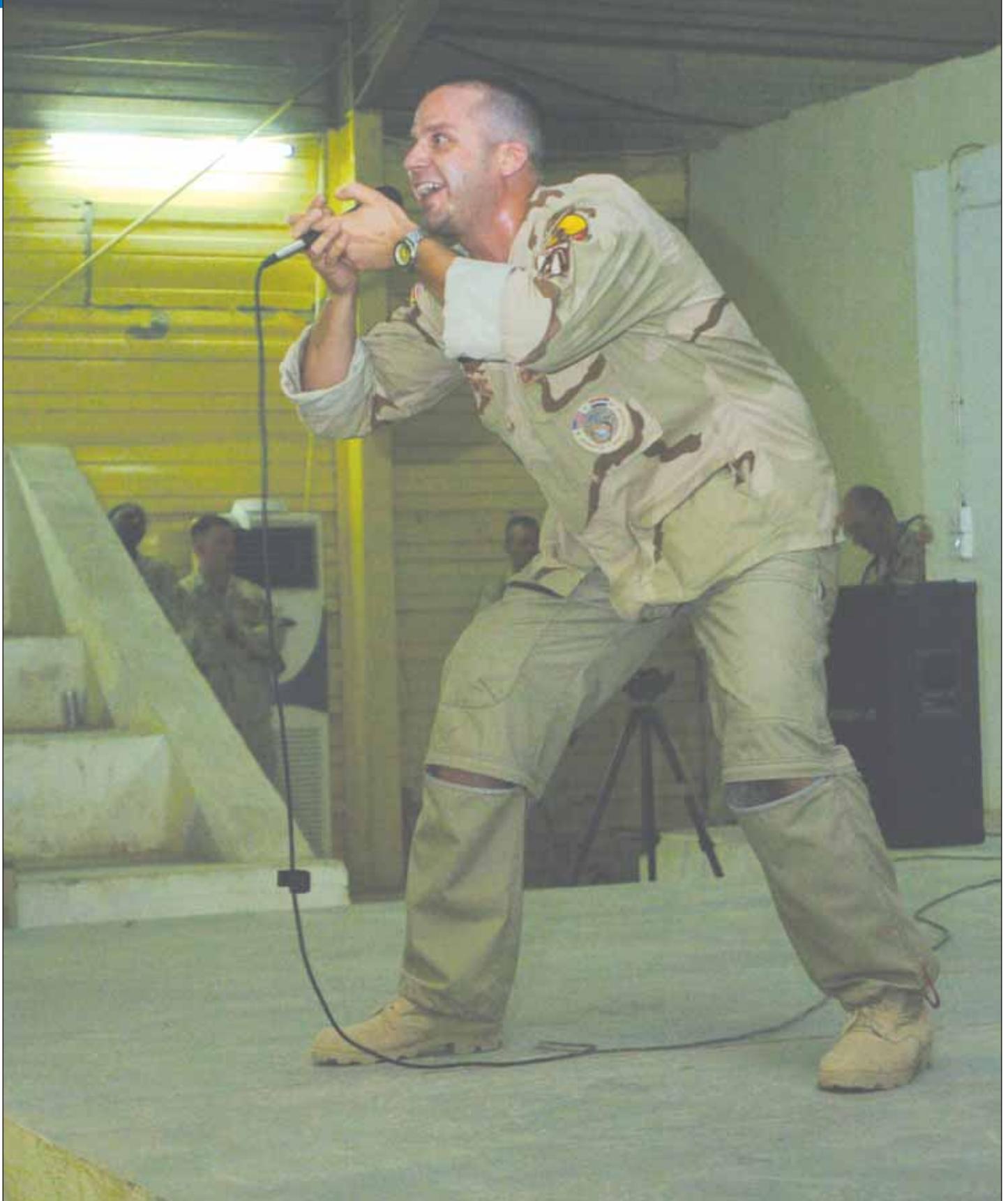
"I don't know," she said. "At least a lieutenant."



(Left) Comedienne Sarah Tiana captivated her audience with at Camp Rustamiyah Aug 10, telling jokes through her Georgia accent.

(Right) Comedian Dave Mishevitz gives his audience a taste of his intense comedic style. Fellow comedian Danny Bevins later told the crowd, "That's not an act. He is really like that."

tour brings comic relief to Rustimiyah





Saber gaining

Story and photos by Sgt. Andrew Miller

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Soldiers of 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry became responsible for securing a new, larger section of Baghdad Aug. 1, and they are already seeing positive results.

The new area is different in several respects, but by now, Saber veterans know the drill. Everything begins with learning the territory and interacting with the people.

According to 1st Lt. Jason Fritz, acting commander of A Troop, 3-7 Cav., the people in his new sector have been exceptionally receptive.

The cavalry recognizes this unprecedented level of support and they're using it to build momentum in their new sector.

Some Soldiers expressed appreciation for their popular support because they have served in areas where they had much less.

"When I first got here, you couldn't get people to come up to you and give you any information," said Sgt. 1st Class Joe Williams, a tank platoon sergeant with A Troop, 3-7 Cav. "They were always scared of what the repercussions were."

That has begun to change for Saber.

"Since we've transitioned to this AO, we've seen a lot of Iraqis are coming to us and saying that they don't support the [anti-Iraqi forces]," Fritz said. "They support Coalition forces because they know that, in the long term, we're doing what's best for their country. We've had a lot of informants come up to us because of that."

Information volunteered by locals can be invaluable to any unit. Scouts with 3-7 Cav. said it's also an indication of progress.

"It lets me know that we're a lot further than where we were in the past two years," Williams, an Odenton, Md. native, said. "They believe that if they give us the information that we can catch these guys before they do anything."

According to Williams, maintaining their popular support is no simple matter.

Soldiers must preserve their image as a lethal and professional army, he said. At the same time, they have to have compassion and a willingness to help the people.

Fritz said his soldiers have extensive combat experience. They are now learning to combine those skills with humanitarian aid to enhance the local support.

"Usually the first thing they start asking us about is security," Fritz said. "We have to explain how we're trying to help them with security, but at the same time we need their help with it – that we need to know who the bad guys are, where they're living, what they're doing."

"If we can get that information from them," Fritz continued, "we try to give them something else. We'll see if we can start doing

water or sewage projects in their area."

In this way, humanitarian aid and security go hand-in-hand, he said. Those neighborhoods that work to become secure are the places soldiers want to see improved.

"It's not technically a reward system," Fritz said. "But if there's an area where they don't want to help us out at all and we know there is a lot of activity, well, I'm not going to help them out."



1st Lt. Carter Deekens, B Troop, 3-7 Cav., platoon leader, patrols at night in Eastern Baghdad Aug. 12.



Fritz said he feels lucky that his unit picked up an area inhabited by friendly people. But he and the rest of 3-7 Cav. have worked hard to improve their situation further.

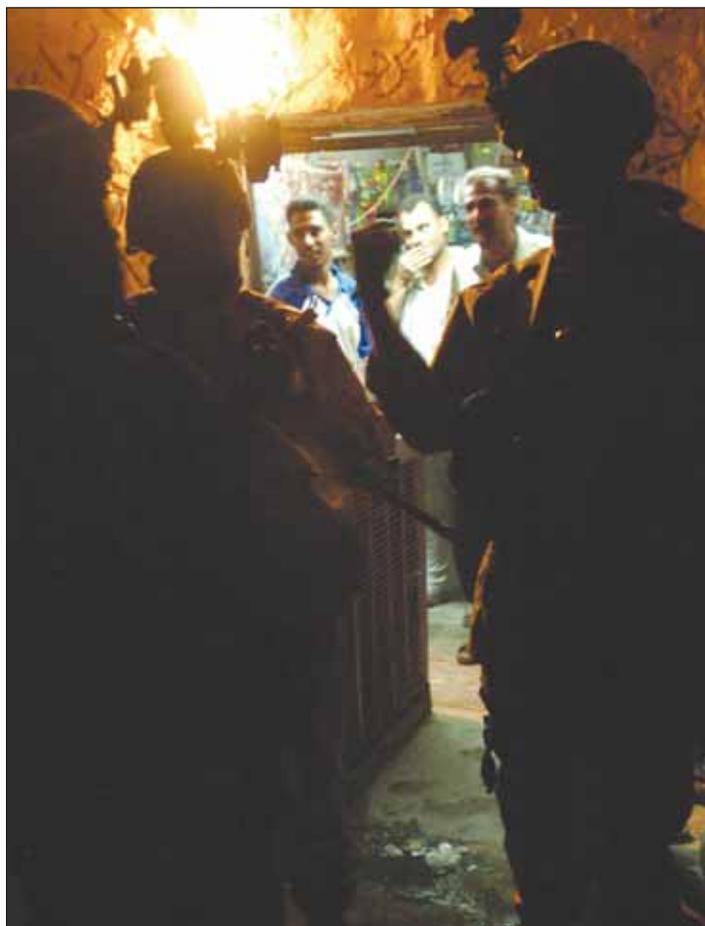
The squadron is constantly present at several key locations along major supply routes. Security patrols venture into even the most rural areas. Scouts are always out gathering intelligence and conducting counter-insurgency operations.

“I love being a scout, said Spc. Brian Kucharsky, a scout with 3-7 Cav. “I get to do a lot of reconnaissance and that’s pretty much what defines us and our mission with 3-7 Cavalry. We provide reconnaissance and good intel for the higher ups.”

With operations running around the clock, Iraqis can’t help seeing a strong Coalition security presence.

During missions, many locals say they appreciate the added security, Williams said. Older gentlemen offer tea and conversation.

“No matter if we get hit with IEDs or get shot,” Kucharski, a Sonoma, Calif. native, said. “If we keep going back, you know, they get a lot of respect for us.”

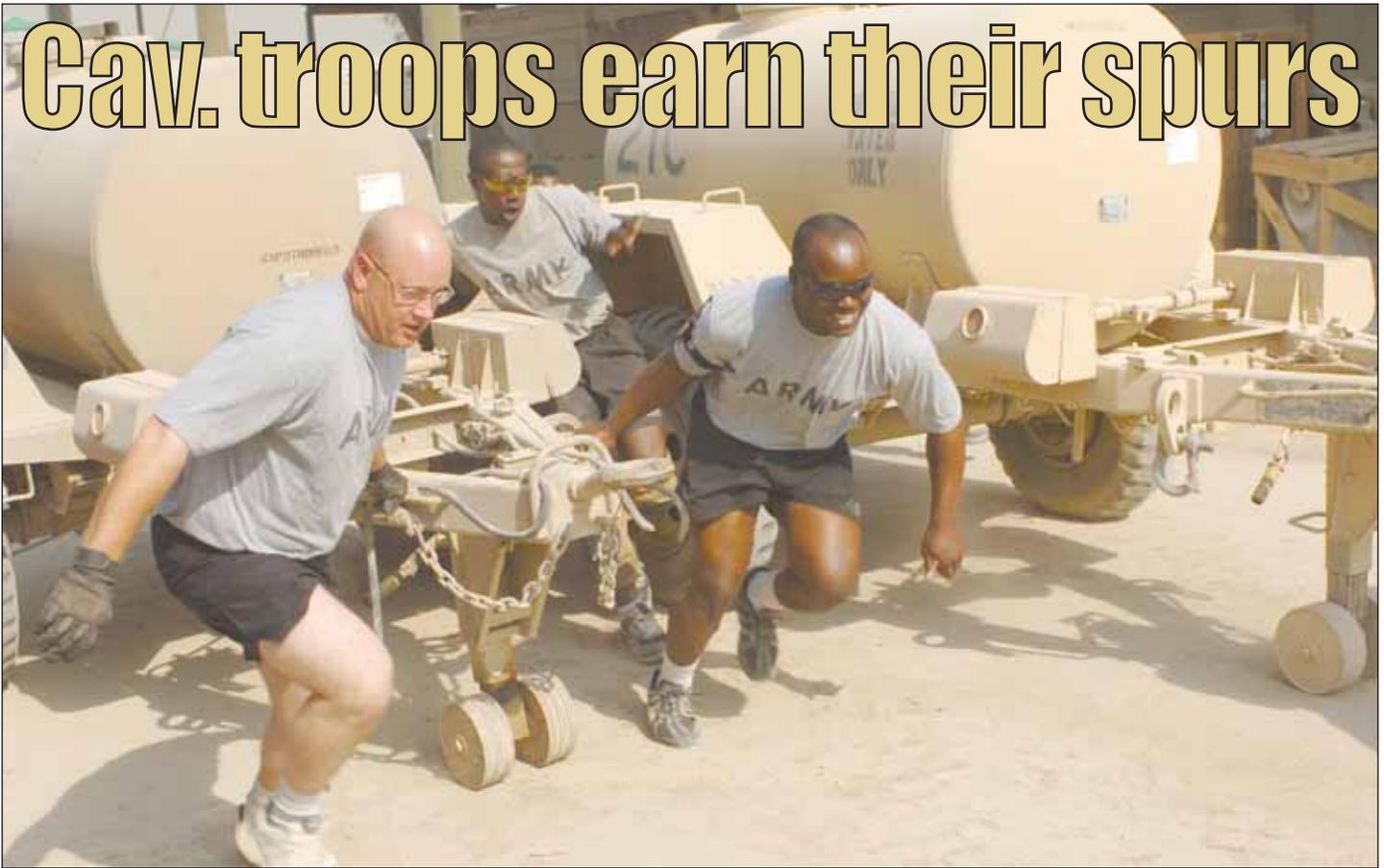


(Above) Soldiers of B Troop, 3-7 Cav. meet with residents of a rural area of Eastern Baghdad Aug. 12 to gather intelligence and discuss security issues.

(Left) Staff Sgt. Richard Green, A Troop, 3-7 Cav., fire support NCO, looks for hidden weapons Aug. 12.



Cav. troops earn their spurs



Troopers from HHT, 3-7 Cav., compete in "The John Wayne Relay Race" during their unit's Cavalry Stakes at Camp Rustimiyah Sept. 1. The events are symbolic of historic cavalry missions.



A tug-of-war gets muddy during the event.

Story and photos by Sgt. Andrew Miller

CAMP RUSTIMIYAH, Iraq – More than 100 troopers were awarded their spurs Sept. 1 in recognition of their valorous contributions to the cavalry.

Troopers with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, were honored in a traditional ceremony following a day of custom and competition. Friendly rivals went head to head throughout the Cavalry Stakes – a grueling series of events each symbolic of the history and mission of "The Cav."

The unit began its ceremony with several promotions and a series of videos that were put together to get the troopers motivated.

Soon after, the Hellraisers were unleashed.

What followed was a sequence of competitive games ostensibly intended to get the troopers as tired and dirty as possible – as quickly as possi-

ble.

Sandbags, tires, and other heavy objects were moved from one place to another. Tanker's bars were thrown like javelins. Humvees, water buffalos and trailers were hauled around – sometimes with a person sitting on top.

"The events replicate everything that HHT does every day," said Capt. Jeffrey Barnes, HHT commander.

Barnes, from Newark, Ohio, pointed out that his is a headquarters unit – they maintain and recover vehicles and push out supplies to wherever the squadron needs them.

"At the end of the deployment, the troop will have compiled well over 250,000 miles," Barnes said. "We do a lot of hauling."

The troop is also responsible for processing detainees, and it has elements working to counter the threat of improvised explo-

“These guys are making a large contribution... in Eastern Baghdad - that’s how they earn their spurs.”



HHT Troopers continue "The John Wayne Relay Race" with HEMMIT tires.

sive devices.

During these operations and others is where the troopers earn their spurs, he said. Traditionally, there are two ways to become a spur holder – through a customary spur ride or to serve with valor in a combat zone. All of those honored in this recent event earned their spurs through the latter.

“These guys are making a large contribution to the success that the brigade is feeling in Eastern

Baghdad,” he said. “That’s how they earn it.”

Barnes said the Cavalry Stakes his troop organized is quite different from the traditional spur ride. That event usually spans several days and is notoriously exhausting.

“We’re not really trying to test a guy’s endurance,” Barnes explained. “They came off of a guard tower, some of them, four hours ago – and they’re going back in 12.”

Barnes said he instead wanted to

make it a fun event that tests technical proficiency and contains the tradition so honored by the cavalry. That tradition, he said, is extremely important.

Seeing scouts covered in mud, including a sergeant major in his desert uniform, smiling and enjoying their cookout – one could imagine tradition was strong.

For more than 100 troopers who became spur holders, there was no question.

Redlegs' Operati

Story and photos by Sgt. Andrew Miller

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Spartan Brigade Combat Team Soldiers began an operation Aug. 5 designed to deter attacks on coalition forces and Iraqis along a dangerous supply route here.

Operation Double Steal, spearheaded by 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, combined the efforts of Soldiers throughout and beyond 2nd BCT as well as Iraqi Police and firefighters.

According to Maj. Jay Sawyer, 1-9 FA, operations officer, the route targeted by Operation Double Steal “has been a significant hub of IED and sniper activity since 2nd BCT has taken over the battle space.”

Operation Double Steal is designed to curb these attacks, and to frustrate the enemy on two fronts, Sawyer said. At night, engineers work along the route, removing trash and guard rails. By day, “effects teams” are out gathering intelligence and bolstering local support.

Combat engineers from 1st Battalion, 64th Armor and 36th Engineer Group are some of the Soldiers working the route. Operating M-9 Armored Combat Earthmovers, the Soldiers worked under the cover of dust and darkness, moving mountains of trash and ripping out guardrails.

“We designed the operation to clear the entire route of trash and debris and guardrails so that we can mitigate the risk to coalition and Iraqi traffic,” Sawyer said. “It limits the enemy’s capability to place roadside bombs – or IEDs – indiscriminately along the route.”

Clearing the routes also makes it much easier for coalition forces to identify threats, he added.

Once the route is clear, Iraqi and Coalition patrols will be increased, he said. This will help maintain the security of the roads and let locals know their neighborhoods are protected.

Throughout the operation, locals have been exceptionally receptive toward coalition forces, said Maj. Criss Dizick, the civil affairs officer with 1-9 FA. A large number of roadside and car bomb attacks have provoked locals to provide information.

“They are obviously not happy with what’s going on over here,” Dizick said.

Soldiers collecting this information

have been proactive with the support they’ve found. By meeting the locals and handing out tips hotline cards and pamphlets with contact information, the effects team is making sure Iraqis with information know where they can take it, he added.

The effects team also gets their message across with a somewhat less personal method. Psychological Operations Soldiers drive around transmitting information to entire neighborhoods.

“We’re able to use the PSYOP guys to use their loud-speaker broadcast to put more information out to more people faster than we could on foot,” said Cpt. David Ahl, 1-9 FA, information operations officer.

Broadcasting the contact information also gets it to residents who are too intimidated to come out and meet coalition forces.

“That intelligence will go a long way to defeat the IED threat along [the route],” said Sawyer.

Defeating this threat is important to both the Coalition and the Iraqi people. Logistical and combat convoys travel the besieged route regularly. So do Iraqi civilians, who also live alongside it.

“Reducing the IED threat on that route, we’re not only saving U.S. or coalition Soldiers’ lives,” Sawyer



Staff Sgt. Sean Stout, a combat medic with B Co., 448th Civil Affairs Battalion, ties a sling around the broken arm of a woman Aug. 6.

on Double Steal

said, “but Iraqi Security Forces and the Iraqi population in general.”

A safe supply route is the goal that Iraqi and Coalition forces are working towards, both at night and during the day. Aug. 6, their enemy reminded them of the operation’s importance.

While the effects team was building relationships and gathering intelligence on a street parallel to the route, a suicide bomber jumped the median and exploded at the same intersection where a Soldier and 24 children were killed less than a month earlier.

This attack was less successful – one local woman had to be evacuated to a hospital. Two U.S. soldiers and another local were injured and treated at the scene.

Moments after the blast, Ahl was resilient.

“The bomb that went off today is just another example of why we’re here,” he said. “We are not going to let this slow us down. We are not going to let this intimidate the Iraqi people. We are going to come back tomorrow, and the next day, and the next day, until we are victorious.”



Residents received flyers from psychological operations troops during the mission Aug. 6.

“We are going to come back tomorrow, and the next day, and the next day, until we are victorious.”



(Above) Spc. Victoria Elordi (Left) and Staff Sgt. Sean Stout (Right), both combat medics from B Co., 448th Civil Affairs Battalion, render aid to an Iraqi woman moments after she was wounded by a car bomber in Eastern Baghdad Aug. 6.

(Right) A kitchen is destroyed after the car bomber detonated. The injured woman was taken into this home for treatment after unexploded munitions were found at the scene.



Medics in action

Story and photos by Sgt. Andrew Miller

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Army medics rendered immediate aid to an Eastern Baghdad resident who was injured by suicide car bombing here Aug. 6.

At approximately 9:30 a.m., a van swerved from an eastbound highway in the direction of a U.S. military convoy parked on a parallel residential street, detonating just short of the lead vehicle. A thunderous explosion sent fire and debris in every direction.

Before either dust or confusion cleared from the air, Spc. Victoria Elordi and Staff Sgt. Sean Stout, both combat medics from B Company, 448th Civil Affairs Battalion, responded.

“First reaction was to initially check everybody on the ground, make sure all the troops were ok and get accountability,” Elordi, the Caldwell, Idaho, native said. “After that, I checked on the civilians.”

Although there were several people in close proximity to the explosion, only one local Iraqi woman was seriously injured. She sustained shrapnel wounds to both legs and was soon surrounded by a frantic crowd, but directly next to her were Elordi and Stout, who hails from Pascagoula, Miss.

The medics splinted and dressed each leg but had to work around the woman, who was constantly pulling down her dress – concerned the men on the scene would see her exposed legs, Elordi said.

“UXO in the hole!” a Soldier hollered from beyond the crowd, referring to a 155mm artillery round unexploded in the car bomb’s blast.

“We had heard that there was additional (explosives near) the blast site, so we immediately took the woman into her house,” Elordi said.

Stout remained outside to secure the area, and Elordi soon found herself in a small room, alone with the injured woman, an interpreter and a swarm of frenzied relatives and neighbors.

“Everybody was trying to take care of everything outside and get accountability of things,” she said. “I had a couple Soldiers in there with me that tried to control the crowd but, the problem is, we had two entries, concerned family members, children,” she said, “and everybody was concerned about the woman.”

Spc. Adam Musil, a broadcast journalist with the 100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, was one of the two soldiers who aided

Elordi in the injured woman’s house.

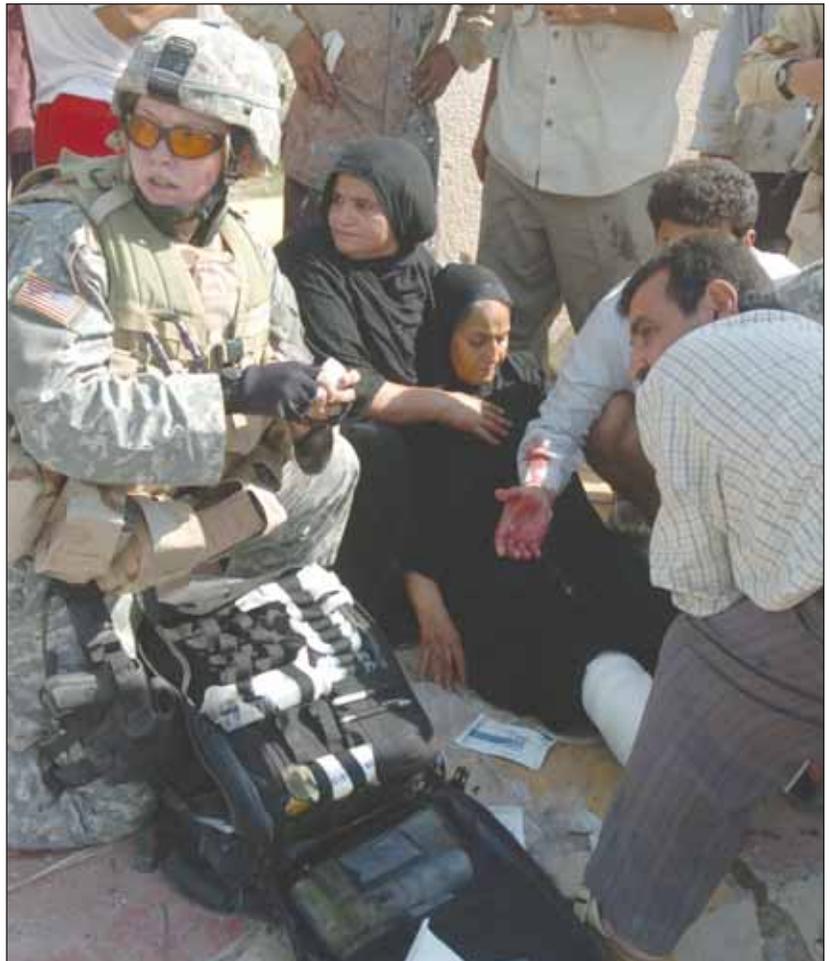
“It was mass hysteria in that room,” Musil, from Austin, Texas, said. “There was no control - people were screaming and crying.”

Elordi administered a saline IV and, through the interpreter, assured the woman she would be alright, said Musil.

Twenty minutes later, further help, and a stretcher, arrived at the home. Then an ambulance siren was heard and the local woman was rushed to a hospital.

As the woman was taken away, the small room grew calm, until only the sniffing of teary-eyed relatives could be heard.

One young girl had been sobbing through the whole scene. She had only watched through the doorway, unable to help, as all of this transpired. With her eyes blurry and her face red, she had something to say as the last Soldier backed out of the room – “Shokran” – a simple thank you.



Elordi renders aid to the Iraqi woman wounded in the blast.

Spartans, ACOE rehabilitate

Story by Norris Jones - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Sadr City residents are looking forward to the day when they have functioning sewers, clean drinking water, and reliable electricity.

Last summer, the Baghdad suburb was besieged in deadly violence as insurgents and U.S. forces clashed. In June 2004, four contracts were awarded totaling nearly \$60 million to renovate about 39 kilometers (24 miles) of Sadr City sewers. The work got underway but had to be stopped on several occasions as the fighting continued. On Oct. 7, a truce was brokered and the sewer work proceeded.

“Sadr City sewers, which were originally installed over four decades ago, had been neglected for years,” said Mike Mitchell, the Sadr City

sewer rehabilitation project manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Central District. “Some of the major trunk lines, like the Zeblin Line were blocked up to 60 percent. That line is 3000 millimeters in diameter, nearly 10 feet wide.

“The contractor pulled everything you can imagine out of those lines as his crew cleaned them – tires, engines, and a washing machine. One of our Quality Assurance representatives told me he saw a dead horse pulled out,” Mitchell said. People threw their garbage and anything else they didn’t want down those manholes.”

As the project moved forward, the contractor had to solve a few unexpected challenges as well – such as residents who built their homes or

businesses right over an existing manhole. But eventually the work was completed.

Apart from the trunk lines, some lateral lines 600-800 mm (32 inches) in diameter were completely blocked and had to be cleaned or replaced. “Over 70 breaks and collapses in these major lines were repaired and three new force mains installed, all of which greatly improved not only the efficiency of the network, but helped create a safer, cleaner environment for the people,” said 1st Lt. Joshua Conary, Waste Water Officer-in-Charge, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

In addition to the sewer line work, 15 sewer pump stations and the Rustamiyah Treatment Plant also had

Other Sadr City projects

- \$106 million for the installation of new electrical poles, power lines, and transformers in 76 sectors (impacting 1.2 million Sadr City residents).
- \$3.7 million for 28 Sadr City schools to upgrade their electrical wiring, lights, heat, water, doors and windows, blackboards, functioning bathrooms, and furniture for both students and faculty.
- \$902,000 for a new Sadr City Fire Station which will open next spring. The three-story, 925-square-meter structure will include a dormitory area for 20 firefighters, dining room for 30, commercial-grade kitchenette to feed 40 people, a training room for 20, locker room, a control room, and a Chief’s office.
- \$2.3 million for 27 new compact water treatment units, each producing 15,000 liters of clean, potable water daily. Ten of these units will use water from wells, 17 from the Sadr City raw water system. The compact water unit at Thawrat Al-Hijara School is the first to be fully operational and clean water from there is being supplied to Sadr City residents.

ating Sadr City's sewers

to be repaired.

Three of the four contracts are completed and the final one is 87 percent completed, with roads torn up by the sewer project the sole unfinished area, Mitchell said. Currently, 130 Iraqis are working on those Sadr City road repairs.

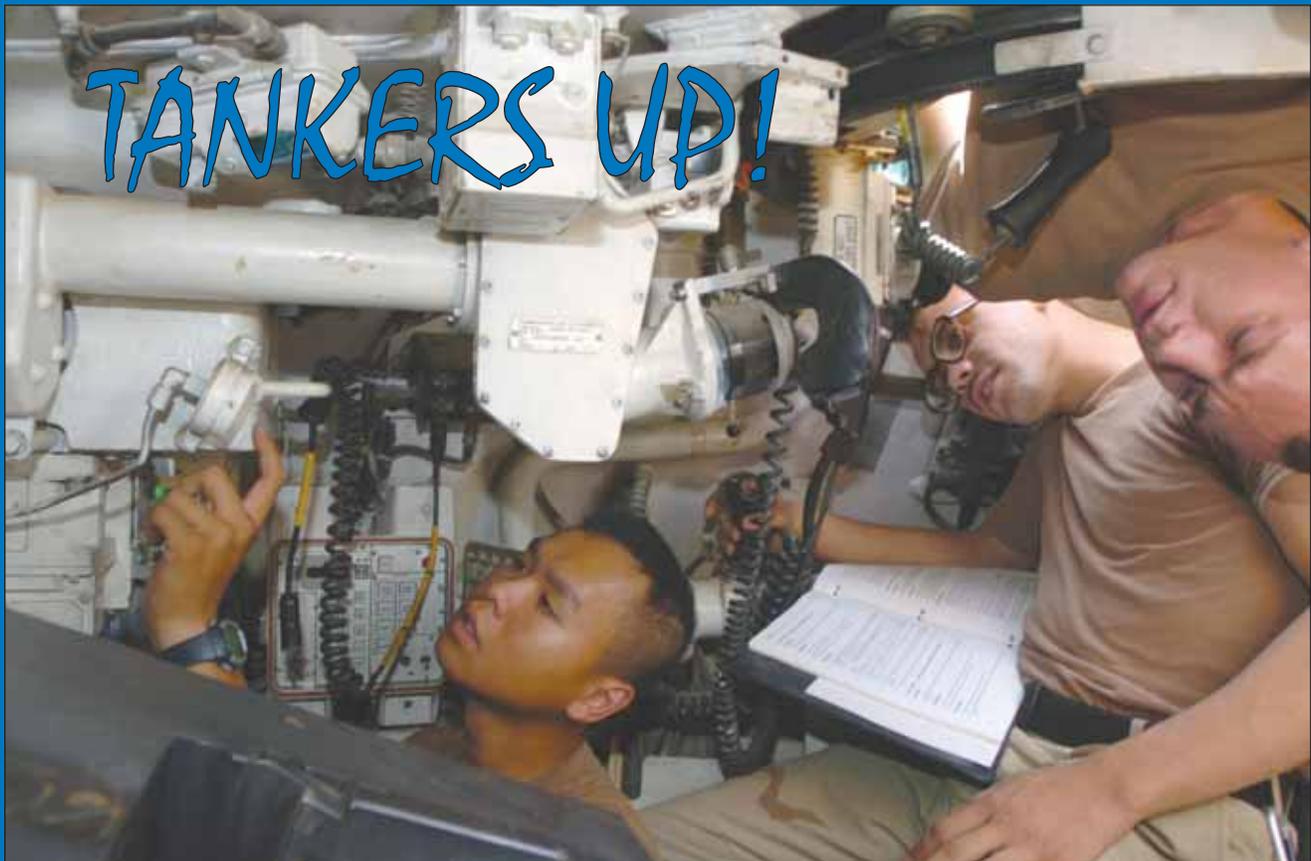
"We haven't fixed all the problems regarding Sadr City sewers," Mitchell continued, "but there's definitely a lot less sewage on the streets than there was a year ago."

"Iraqis are taking the lead (in providing essential services)," said Lt. Col. Jamie Gayton, 2-3 BTB, commander. "These projects are contracted by Iraqis, supervised by Iraqis, and worked on by Iraqis."



Spc. Ben Brody

Two Iraqi men work to install a water purification unit in Sadr City.



Spc. Ben Brody

Pfc. Qiwan Liang learns tank operations under the instruction of Spc. Christopher Hyde and Sgt. Justin Bailey, all of C Co., 3-15 Inf.'s quick reaction force at Camp Hope.

Ad Valorem - Taxes and vehicle registration

Capt. Gary McNeal

2nd Brigade Combat Team Trial Counsel

An issue that nearly every Soldier faces during deployment is what to do about getting their car registered and license plates renewed while they are away from home. Many Soldiers register their vehicles in the State of Georgia. One option is to execute a power of attorney for someone to be able to take care of it for them, but in situations where there is no one in the rear who may do this Soldiers need to know about other options. The Tag Office in Liberty County will allow registration of vehicles to be done from theater. If you are not a Georgia resident you will need to get an Ad Valorem Tax Form 941 from JAG in order to avoid paying the higher tax for registering your vehicle.

The Tag Office will only give you a break on the taxes if you have a Georgia driver's license or one from the state that you list as your state of residence on the Form 941. In addition you will need to send a money order for \$21 which you may get at the Post Office for 25 cents. Finally you will want to give instructions to the Tag Office regarding where you wish the tags to be sent. You may also renew your tags online for some counties in Georgia. Go to the Department of Motor



Vehicles website for Georgia, www.dmv.ga.gov. You will need an RIN or Renewal Identification Number to register online. This number will appear on your renewal notice, so if you don't have access to it, you may have to contact your County Tax Commissioner via email to get one. In addition to the registration fee there is an online processing fee to use the service. If you register your vehicle in another state, you will have to contact the Department of Motor Vehicles or Secretary of State's Office directly to get information on registration procedures.

If you let your registration lapse there will be a penalty that you will have to pay when you renew it upon getting home. Since the vehicle will not be registered when you take it out of storage you may be ticked for no registration if you get stopped by the police. Insurance Companies require a valid registration in order to insure the vehicle. If the registration lapses, the insurance will too.

Keep your vehicle registration and insurance current. That will save you time and money later on when you get home. If you have questions regarding the registration of your vehicle contact JAG or you may contact the Tax Commissioner's Office of your County. They are listed on the Department of Motor Vehicles website along with phone numbers and email addresses.

From the Chaplain

Taking back the day: Reflection on the 9-11 tragedy

Chaplain (Capt.) Ric Thompson

2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Brigade Troops Battalion

September 11th is my daughter's birthday. She turned eight the day those appalling events unfolded in New York and Washington. At the time she was quite upset that this tragedy had to happen on her special day. For her it was anything but a happy birthday.

Every year since her birthday has been overshadowed by the images, the vigils, the memorial ceremonies and the tears of tragedy. Although she doesn't talk about it much, I am certain that she feels that this day has been taken away from her. I also know she would like very much to take it back. She would like her birthday to be happy once again.

However, this day was not just taken away from her. September 11th was taken away from all of us, hijacked by terrorists. A day of peace and safety in the United States has been turned into a day of evil and horror; a day of loss and grief. And it is a day that we would like very much to take it back.

Certainly we cannot go back in time and change history. Neither can the day be taken back by force.

Yes, the terrorists must be brought to justice and we must do all that we can to prevent this tragedy from happening again. That is our responsibility to the people of the United States. But even that won't give us back the day that was taken from us.



We are here to bring peace and stability to the Iraqi people. The people see our true nature - they know we are not terrorists. We must battle the terrorists but our real goal is peace.

Yet I believe there is a way we can at least begin to take September 11th back from the terrorists. It is a simple principle that has been taught for centuries: instead of countering evil with evil, fight evil with good.

Commenting on this, the 4th century monk Pelagius said: "You are overcome by your enemies when he succeeds in making you like himself." We become like our enemies when we return evil for evil, violence for violence.

But we don't have to be like them. We must not be like them. The day terrorists took from us and used for evil can be taken back and turned into a day of compassion and mercy. We can meet deeds of evil with deeds of goodness.

But this first must begin in each one of us individually. In order for us to take back the day for our country, we first must take back the day for ourselves.

We will never forget must not become our mantra for revenge and violence. Instead, it ought to be our mantra for good. No, we will never forget how evil they were to us; we will never forget the day they took away from us. But now the day belongs to us, and we must take it back.

Let's get physical...

Maj. Robert Meadows

2nd Brigade Combat Team Surgeon

The docs have gone crazy and have way too much time on their hands. Here we are in Baghdad, Iraq, in the middle of a combat zone, and they are telling me that my physical examination is overdue! What is the deal?

Physical examinations are an important tool in early identification of medical problems. Everyone is required to have a physical prior to entry into the military. Some schools require additional physical examinations. And, at a minimum, the Army requires a physical examination every 5 years starting at age 30. You are not required to have a physical at any particular age and each physical after the age of 25 is good for a full 5 years. The physical examination is tracked as part of MEDPROS "Fully Medically Ready" and is annotated on your ORB or ERB.

Apparently there is no "good time" for a physical. When we left Fort Stewart over 500 2nd BCT soldiers were overdue their periodic physical so it was not convenient to get while in garrison. At the time I am writing this article there are still 198 soldiers overdue and they are all tied up with missions. As with everything else important, we need to find a time to make it happen. If you are overdue or know you are coming due stop in at your aid station and get caught up – it really is for your own good and should only take about 30 minutes.

AR 40-501 states, maintenance of physical and medical fitness is an individual military responsibility, particularly with reference to preventable conditions and remediable defects. Soldiers have an obligation to maintain themselves in a state of good physical condition so that

they may perform their duties efficiently. Soldiers should seek timely medical advice whenever they have reason to believe that a medical condition or physical defect affects, or is likely to affect, their physical or mental well being.

The physical examination is a way of identifying health problems that may not be readily apparent. The items checked during a physical are intended to find relatively common problems in certain age groups. Blood pressure and pulse are called "vital signs" for good reason.

Abnormal vital signs can indicate coronary artery disease, hypertension, thyroid disease, and other serious health problems. The dozens of medical questions on the physical often indicate annoying medical problems like heartburn, rashes, headaches, and others that are easy to treat. Labs vary by age but test for diabetes, elevated cholesterol, anemia, kidney disease, prostate problems, and HIV. The over 40 examination includes the Cardiovascular Screening Program and involves an EKG and screens for coronary risk factors, colon cancer, and prostate cancer.

There usually is not much treatment at the time of the physical but it is your chance to mention to your providers "those little things" that you have not had the time to go to sick call for. Some may be easy fixes that we can take care of during the physical though others may require follow up visits.

If you ignore everything else in this article and are convinced that the docs are crazy, still have your physical done because if the doc says it is out of date, so does your ORB or ERB. Officers, warrant officers, and enlisted personnel are considered medically qualified for promotion on the basis of the periodic medical examination (AR 40-501).



Use the five C's to secure an IED site.

Confirm : the device

Clear : the area

Call : EOD

Cordon : the perimeter

Control : site access



STAY ALIVE



IEDs KILL

Stateside

Girl Captures Gator After Watching TV Show

TARENTUM, Pa. - Crocus, a 2-foot pet alligator escaped from his backyard enclosure, but was captured by a girl who used what she learned on a nature TV program.

Nicki Hilliard and several friends saw the animal swimming in the Allegheny River.

Hilliard said she learned how to catch the animals safely by watching the television show "Crocodile Hunter." The secret is to grab the animal's snout and hold its mouth closed.

The kids put the animal in a beverage cooler and took it to the police station, where it was locked inside a cell until owner Belinda Thomson arrived to claim it.

Thompson said neighborhood cats opened the fence in her back yard, enabling Crocus to escape.

Fox's NY affiliate refuses Bush 'no clothes' ad

NEW YORK - A local affiliate of the Fox television network has rejected a campaign advertisement for a Democratic politician that lampoons President George W. Bush by superimposing his head on a naked torso.

The ad, produced by Brian Ellner, an openly gay candidate for Manhattan borough president, opens with a close-up of Bush's face and zooms out to show the torso from the hips up, with a voice-over saying, "New Yorkers know the emperor has no clothes."

Ellner also introduces his male partner during the 30-second commercial.

A spokeswoman for Fox's WNYW/Channel 5 affiliate said the channel was not running the ad, but declined to say why. A spokeswoman for sister cable network Fox News Channel said: "The decision was made at the station level."

Ellner said on Tuesday, "This is censorship and it's un-American. ... It's either anti-gay because I introduce my partner, or it's anti-free speech because I criticize the president."

A spokesman for his campaign said

no other network had refused to carry the ad, which has been running over the weekend as part of a \$300,000 media campaign on various channels including the ABC and NBC network-owned stations Channel 7 and Channel 4.

Ellner said WNYW representatives told his campaign officials that the ad was rejected because Fox viewed it as disrespectful to the office of the president.

"Fox claims that this ad is disrespectful to the president. What is truly disrespectful to Manhattan voters is to deny them the chance to hear a serious message from a candidate for public office," Ellner said.

Part of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. empire, Fox News is the leading cable news channel in the United States, operating under the slogan "Fair and Balanced."

According to an annual report by a research arm of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, its audience is increasingly more Republican than viewers of other cable channels.

Unique L.A. School Offers Mule Training

LOS ANGELES - Sugar the mule was anything but sweet. She bit her owner, kicked him and dragged him around his corral. "At first I could do things with her, but she slowly turned on me," said Will Green, a 43-year-old warehouseman, who bought Sugar and a two-acre Mojave desert spread to lead a life of packing and hunting.

"It's these animals; they're very smart. When you don't know, it gives them a window of opportunity to take over."

This summer, Green hauled the cranky creature to what is believed to be the nation's only mule school at Pierce College in Woodland Hills, a Los Angeles suburb.

Within a few hours, mule charmer Steve Edwards had Sugar behaving like a lamb, obediently waltzing around a dusty corral on a length of rope.

"The biggest problem with mules is that most people aren't smart

enough to be around them," said Edwards, 56, an old-time cowboy who calls people "pardner" and wears a big-brimmed hat. "People say they're stubborn, but they're just very smart. You have to be able to outthink them."

The Arizona-based Edwards is the point man for the mule training program that Pierce College launched in 2002 to promote its sagging equestrian program.

The class quickly became popular with baby boomers and active retirees enamored with the Old West and eager to explore rugged back country. More than 100 people from all over the country have taken the \$42, week-long classes at the school's Equestrian Education Center.

Starting Tuesday, Pierce will offer a semester-long course in mule riding.

Edwards teaches basic mule packing, treatment of injuries and disease and how to communicate as one with the long-eared equines whose hard work is chronicled in the Bible and in history books.

"What a lot of them find is they've bought a mule and it's supposed to be trained, so they climb on, and now they're not able to get it to do what they want it to do," Edwards said. "The problem is generally not with the mule, it's with the rider."

Gas Prices Drive Man to Commute by Horse

MINOT, N.D. - Jim Jundt was so determined to rein in his spending on gasoline that he got out of bed early and rode his 14-year-old quarterhorse mare to work.

Jundt lives 15 miles south of Minot and works as a mechanic at Goodyear Tire & Auto Service in the city.

He said he and his co-workers had been talking about rising fuel prices, and he joked that he would ride his horse to work if gasoline ever hit \$3 a gallon.

His co-workers laughed, but when the price at the pump soared to \$3.20 last week, Jundt headed for the barn.

He said he was only five minutes late riding his mare, Patty, to work.

While he worked, Patty waited patiently, eating hay out of the back of a truck.

Around the world

Drunk woman dies in cemetery accident

BRUSSELS - An inebriated Belgian woman died in a freak accident when she ended up beneath a heavy grave stone at a cemetery, local news agency Belga said Wednesday.

The 33-year-old was on her way home from a bar in the Belgian town of Pulle in the early hours of Saturday when she took a short cut through the cemetery.

But she urgently needed to relieve herself and crouched down between two gravestones. As she lost her balance, she grabbed one of the stones which gave way and landed on top of her.

The public prosecutor's office said she died of suffocation as she was unable to lift the heavy stone.

So, don't accept chocolates from a Nazi..

LONDON - Luckily, the exploding Smedley's English Red Plums in Heavy Syrup were intercepted in Turkey before anyone got killed.

But what of the hand grenade disguised as a chocolate bar? Or the incendiary Vichy pastille sweets?

A secret file from the archives of Britain's spy services released this week shows ingenious methods, conjured up by Germans during World War Two, for disguising bombs.

Britain's Security Service began opening its records this year under the country's new Freedom of Information Act.

Among the files declassified by the National Archive was a treasure trove of nifty exploding gadgets, labeled "Camouflages for sabotage equipment used by the German sabotage services."

The drawing of the design for the chocolate bar grenade says it is made from steel coated with real chocolate, and activated by breaking off a bit at one end. It doesn't say whether the grenade was ever actually manufactured or used.

The file also includes photos of the incendiary pastille sweets, and bombs hidden in anything from oil cans and food tins to a lump of coal.

DNA evidence traps spitter

LONDON - Britain's much abused and derided traffic wardens have a new weapon in their struggle with irate car drivers — DNA evidence.

British car-parking firm NCP is to issue one pound DNA "spit kits" to its staff after a man who spat at a traffic warden pleaded guilty to assault when his saliva was identified.

Dennis Samms, 42, of Manchester in northwest England, will be sentenced Thursday.

"This is the first successful prosecution in Britain of the assault of a traffic warden due to DNA evidence," a spokesman for NCP, the company that employed the traffic warden, said.

"The DNA evidence did not come out in court, but that is because the man knew he was guilty."

NCP, which manages off-street parking for various local authorities, supplying traffic warden and vehicle-clamping services, began a trial of the "spit kit" in March and now plans to make the kit more widely available to its wardens.

"Nobody should have to be spat at while they go about their work. The 'spit kit' will be a powerful deterrent against the small minority who think they can spit at traffic wardens," said the spokesman.

Love-struck man faces jail over terror hoax

KARACHI - A love-struck Pakistani faces up to three years in jail for falsely accusing a brother and a cousin of the woman he hoped to marry of planning a suicide attack on the U.S. consulate in Karachi, police said Monday.

Jobless laborer Mohammad Imran sparked a security scare when he made the allegations in a telephone call to the U.S. embassy in Islamabad last month after the relatives ordered him not to see or speak to his would-be bride, police said.

Investigating officer Sadaullah Bangash said Imran, 22, had told police he got the idea after news of a spate of arrests of militant suspects in

Pakistan after the July 7 London bombings.

Bangash said police had questioned the relatives, who appeared to be ordinary people with no connection to terrorism.

Imran is due in court in Karachi Wednesday and faces up to three years' jail if convicted of making false accusations, he said.

"It appears to be a case of a man infatuated by a girl going to extremes to realize his dream of marrying her one day."

Anarchist party's TV ad offends viewers

BERLIN - A fringe German anarchist party has outraged national television audiences with its election campaign television spot — a video montage of booze-fuelled chaos, syringe needles and men cavorting with topless women.

An estimated one million viewers watched the German Anarchist Pogo Party's already heavily censored political broadcast when it was shown for the first time Monday.

Rather than offer any presentation of policies, the party's campaign spot spliced together scenes of debauched revellers smashing furniture, pouring beer down each other's throats and groups of couples kissing and groping each other, all set to a frantic heavy metal soundtrack.

As an officially registered political party, the Hamburg-based APPD is entitled to free television airtime for its advertisements.

Karl Nagl, campaign manager of the APPD told Reuters on Wednesday that the party will continue to run the ad.

"The next broadcast is scheduled for Monday night," he said.

However, he said the broadcasting authorities may insist they remove scenes featuring needles, which he said depicted people taking a blood sample and not intravenous drug abuse.

German newspapers say the party's roughly 750 members would not have any discernable impact on the September 18 parliamentary elections.

To Our Fallen Warriors

Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional. I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.



Sgt. 1st Class Lonnie Parson
3-7 Cavalry
Killed in action
September 2



Cpl. Luke Williams
3-7 Cavalry
Killed in line of duty
September 4