

SCIMITAR

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Airmen control Iraqi skies, Page 5

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DoD photo by Lance Cpl. Michael R. McMaugh

U.S. Army Soldiers of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, set up security after landing in the desert at the start of an operation in Baghdaddi, Iraq, Sept. 21. The Soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division attached to 2nd Marine Division conduct counter-insurgency operations with Iraqi Security Forces to create a secure environment that enables Iraqi self-reliance and self-governance.

Army's latest weapon: more effective with less collateral damage

By Sgt. Michael J. Carden and
Pfc. Matthew Clifton
Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — The newest addition to the U.S. Army's artillery arsenal was successfully fired recently during Operation Restoring Rights in Tall Afar, Iraq, and Operation Sayaid in Iraq's Al Anbar Province.

Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 13th Field Artillery Regiment used the Guided Multiple-Launch Rocket System to fire eight guided rockets from a distance of more than 50 kilometers at two insurgent strongholds in Tall Afar Sept. 9 and 10, killing 48 insurgents,

said Maj. Jeremy McGuire, deputy of operations, Force Field Artillery, Multi-National Corps - Iraq, Battery A, 3/13 FAR fired another six rockets Sept. 11, destroying the Mish'al Bridge and preventing its use for insurgent forces in the Al Anbar province in western Iraq, McGuire added.

Production of the GMLRS began more than 18 months ago at Fort Sill, Okla., and 3rd Bn., 13th FAR has been training with the system since June 2004. It was designed to reduce the amount of collateral damage in combat, giving commanders on the ground the ability to take out a terrorist or insurgent target accurately and effectively without creating the excess damage other artillery and air-dropped munitions may cause, McGuire said.

When the system was used in Tall Afar Sept. 9 and 10, damage to surrounding buildings was almost non-existent and the target's destruction was absolute, said Capt. Robert J. Hannah, 3rd Bn., 13th FAR.

"This system is something the artillery community has been working on for some time," McGuire said. "It was tested in the continental United States, and now we've demonstrated in Iraq that we're extremely effective with it.

"We can be accurate, we can be lethal, and we can also have a very low collateral damage estimate. We can engage the target

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Weapon

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without compromising the safety of the civilians nearby and also take out the terrorists or insurgencies that engage our forces.”

Operation Restoring Rights’ senior U.S. officer, Col. H. R. McMaster, commander, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, weighed in on the combat effectiveness of the new system. “The GMLRS proved itself in combat in Tall Afar and provided the regiment with tremendous capability. It not only was able to hit enemy positions with a great deal of precision but was able to limit collateral damage.”

The physical and psychological effect the system had on the enemy in Tall Afar — who was trying to either successfully defend against an attack or goad the Coalition into destroying large portions of the city — was extremely valuable, McMaster said.

“This [system] allows ground commanders to precisely attack small targets — even in an urban environment — with even lower collateral damage than precision bombs used by the U.S. Air Force,” said Hannah.

If the aircraft are unable to support a mission because of communication or weather issues, ground commanders will still have access to the new GMLRS system, which provides the same capabilities as the air power, McGuire said.

Before sending ground troops into Tall Afar during Operation Restoring Rights, there were a number of buildings that needed to be destroyed in preparation. Two separate targets were successfully destroyed by the guided MLRS system. The missiles were fired from an area more than 50 kilometers away. The targets were two housing complexes that had been fortified and were known to contain at least 40 insurgents, McGuire said.

“Each of the targets was pre-planned,” said Maj. James Daniels, Regimental Fire Support Officer, 13th

FAR. “Before we fire on a target, we have to prove the structure is linked to the insurgency, using intelligence from units in the field that have been engaged from the structure, or have made contact with the terrorists around the structure.”

Troops on the ground engaging the enemy will also benefit from the missile system’s small blast radius and effectiveness, improving their survivability and safety. The troops will be able to maneuver closer toward their aggressors to maintain a better visual of their targets, said Sgt. 1st Class Paul Luketich, senior fire control non-commissioned officer, FFA, MNC-I.

“Basically, it’s a safer munition for our troops and nearby civilians, but a more deadly munition for the insurgents,” Luketich said. “It’s the best munition in the arsenal today.”

The intent of Coalition Forces in combat situations is not to demolish an entire city block to eliminate a single insurgent or group of terrorists. Their intent is to purge the country of insurgency to help stabilize security and improve the quality of life for the citizens of Iraq, McGuire said.

This new missile system helps that cause dramatically. Commanders on the ground will have another option to engage the enemy with, allowing them to make better-informed decisions focused on the safety of innocent civilians as well as effectively countering Iraq’s insurgency, McGuire said.

“We’re engaging terrorists who are reckless and have no regard for civilian life, as they have demonstrated day in and day out,” McGuire said. “It’s very difficult for us to make the population believe that our choice is the best.”

“It’s very important that we’ve come up with this weapon. It will help the commanders make the call that will not only accomplish the mission and keep the population safe, but rid the country of terrorists as well.”

(Editor’s note: Information used in this story was provided by the 366th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.)

Anaconda opens Matt Maupin Computer Lab

Story and photo by Sgt. Jason Mikeworth
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq — Sgt. Keith Matthew Maupin, the only U.S. Soldier still listed as captured in Iraq, has not been forgotten by fellow Soldiers serving here. A new computer lab at the Education Center has been dedicated to him.

The Sgt. Matt Maupin Computer Lab officially opened Sept. 19. The lab was made possible by the donation of 35 computers by Maupin’s parents, Keith and Carolyn Maupin. Another 55 donated computers will be used to set up the Sgt. Matt Maupin Internet Café here.

Maupin, of Batavia, Ohio, is assigned to the 724th Transportation Company. The Army Reserve unit is based in Bartonville, Ill. Maupin deployed to Iraq February 2004 with the unit in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. One of his chief complaints during phone calls home was the difficulty he had accessing a computer to e-mail home.



Soldiers salute while the national anthem plays at the dedication ceremony for the Sgt. Matt Maupin Computer Lab at LSA Anaconda.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael J. Carden
A ball of fire emerges from the cloud of smoke and debris during a recent test-fire of the U.S. Army’s latest unitary-guided rocket system in Baghdad.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Alisan Gul

A precision-guided missile is first test-fired outside the United States near Tikrit, Iraq.



To learn more about Iraqi and Coalition successes, log on to: www.mnf-iraq.com and follow the link to download this week’s issue.

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PERSPECTIVES

Home is where ...

By Staff Sgt. Brett B. McMillan
Combined Press Information Center

Home is the place you grow up wanting to leave and the place you grow old wanting to return to.

I was a young teenager when I heard that adage and knew the first part was true, but I had serious doubts about the last. There were obviously bigger, more exciting places to live than my hometown; once I left I'd never return, or at least not to live.

As a child I loved the family vacations, especially visiting relatives in California, which may have influenced my desire to travel and see new places. In college I ventured out on a trip across the country to Chicago, New York, Boston and Washington, D.C. Another year I fell prey to a lure in the college newspaper and spent the summer in Alaska working in the fish industry just because it was a good excuse to go see that part of the world.

Eventually, a recruiter said the right words at the right time, and I joined the Army — “to be a photojournalist” and to travel. Now, not only have I photographed presidents, celebrities and athletes, I have visited all 50 U.S. states and more than a dozen foreign countries, and lived in England and Japan for a couple years each. Leaving active duty in 2002, I made the D.C. metro area my home. I liked my job and the people I worked with, and there's always something to do in the nation's capital — miles of biking and jogging trails, museums, galleries, concerts and clubs, the Army's Ten-Miler and the Marine Corps Marathon — I've done a lot there. And it is only a couple hours away from the beach. Despite the rush-hour traffic, it's been a great place to live and I've enjoyed my years there and look forward to returning there in a few months.

Nine months ago, a trailer in the Embassy Annex in Baghdad became my home — if “Home is where you hang your hat,” or in this case my ballistic helmet. Over the past year I have missed D.C. less and less. It has become more of the city where I got

stationed in October 1999 and just haven't left. In a strange sense, I feel like it's still not “home” home to me. I don't see myself raising a family or retiring there.

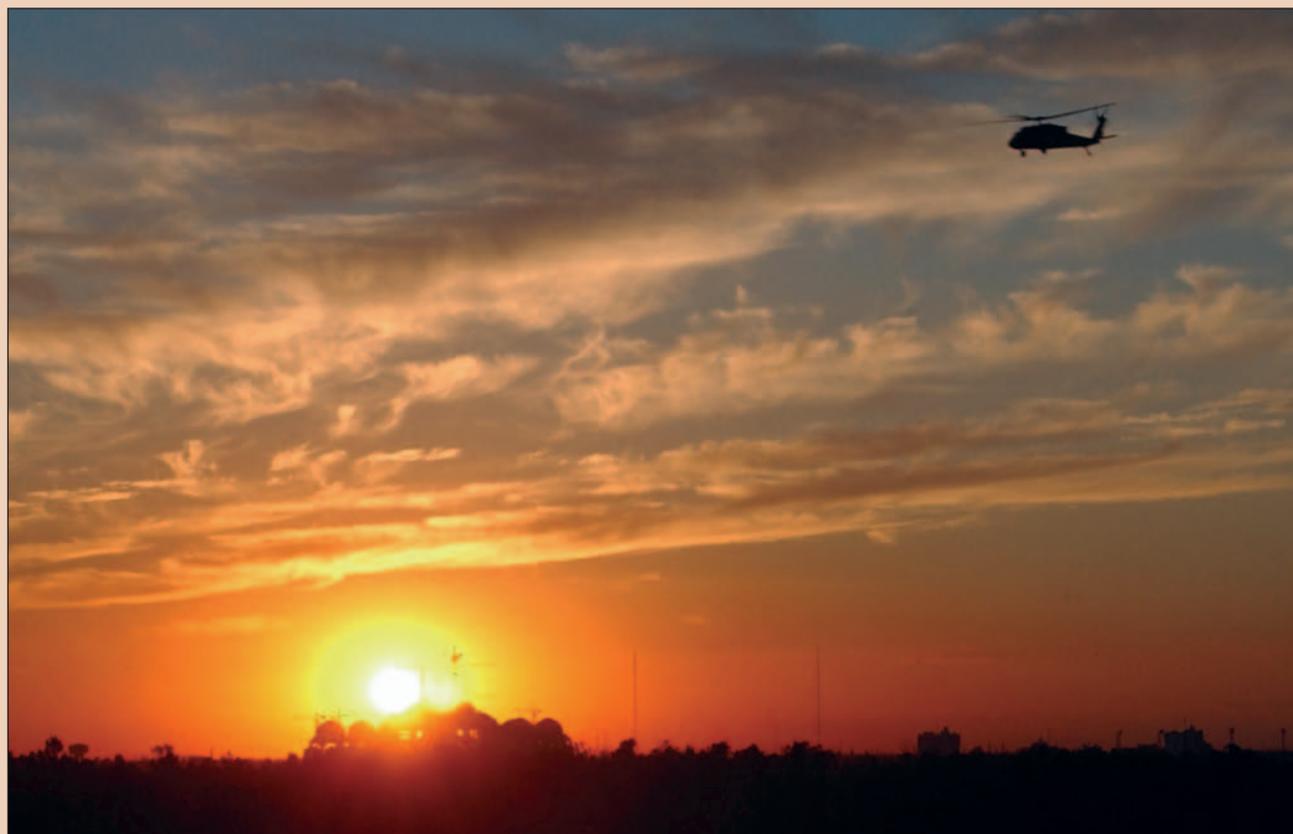
When I left active duty, my parents, brothers, sister and grandmother were a little surprised that I had decided to stay in D.C., 2,000-plus miles away, rather than move back “home.” Hopefully it didn't hurt their feelings, but I was happy where I was.

Three years later, a funny thing has happened. This deployment has made me realize some of the things I not only miss most about life in the U.S.A., but about my home state as well. I miss the beauty of the sun rising over the towering mountains and setting over the lake. I miss the abundant recreation opportunities: skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, hiking, camping; waterskiing at the various lakes and dams. I miss the amazing desert canyon lands a relatively short drive to the south, mountain biking in Moab, exploring the world's tallest narrowest canyon in Zion. I miss the peace and quiet, feeling safe and secure, breathing clean air, the environment where people don't live on top of each other and far fewer people expect the government to take care of them, and crime is a fraction of the nation's capital city.

Nowdays (except while deployed) we can travel nearly anywhere in the world we desire, and there's a lot more of the world I hope to enjoy, but for the reasons stated above, if I had to choose right now the one place to live for the rest of my life, I realize from this deployment that it would be Park City, Utah — a fun 30-minute motorcycle ride from the hometown where I spent the first 19 years of my life.

Maybe home is the place you grow up wanting to leave and the place you grow old wanting to return to after all. Maybe it's the memories, maybe it's who we are at heart, maybe it's what we miss from the younger years of life, maybe it's to be nearer to family members and the people who mean the most to us, but the saying “home is where the heart is” makes one want to be there.

Beautiful Baghdad...



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ferdinand Thomas

A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter races against time and daylight as another day comes to an end with a beautiful sunset in Baghdad. The sun set behind the Al Rahman mosque, which is the largest mosque in Iraq.

Scimitar Pulse

If you could live anywhere for the rest of your life, where would it be and why?

“Any place close to my family. Being over here has made me see how important they are to me.”

Army Sgt. Melanie Walker
351st Civil Affairs Command



“Germany, because the people are very friendly, and the country is very clean.”

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Ouida Jerrell
IZ Postal

“Ames, Iowa, because it is where I graduated college, and my youngest daughter is going to school there.”

Army Chaplain (Maj.) Robert Meyer
212th Field Artillery Brigade



“It would have to be New York City, because there is always something to do.”

Army Sgt. Brenda Wilburn
Joint Area Support Group - Central

“Mars, because I could get to start fresh all over again.”

Army Staff Sgt. Shaneque Ly
U.S. Embassy Clinic



“Wyoming, because it is clean and fresh, or a small village along the Mediterranean Sea.”

Lucy Hoover
Department of Justice

“It doesn't matter as long as I am with my wife.”

Navy Cmdr. John Dillinger
Naval Operations 41



Double Take

Identical twins cross paths in Iraq, reunite for first time in a year

Story and photo by Cpl. Adam C. Schnell
2nd Marine Division

CAMP HIT, AL ANBAR, Iraq — Being born a twin is an uncommon occurrence, but an even more unusual occasion is when two identical twins get a chance to hold a reunion on the sandy terrain of Iraq.

Cpl. Jason P. Abell and 1st Lt. Bryan J. Abell of Demasses, Md., crossed paths as one returns to Iraq and the other leaves the hot desert.

Bryan, the Scout Sniper Platoon commander for 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, and the rest of his unit arrived in Iraq recently to replace his brother's active reserve unit, 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines, which operated in the area for the last seven months.

"Once I found out we were replacing 3/25, I emailed him and let him know I would be coming out there," said Bryan. "It was actually pretty nice to hear because we haven't seen each other since September 2004."

The identical twins have been confusing people for years, and once they were in the same area, Marines from both units became confused. Many of them, not knowing the Abells were twins, mistook one for the other.

"I've been called 'sir' by people walking by me about 20 times since he got here," commented the corporal.

"And I've had Marines with 3/25 come up to me

confused at how I became a lieutenant thinking I was Jason," Bryan added, speaking of his twin brother.

Before their Iraq reunion, both brothers joined the Marine Corps a few years after graduating from Demasses High School in 1998. Jason enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 2000 while attending Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, Ohio, while his twin attended the U.S. Naval Academy.

Both were very interested in the Marine Corps in high school, but also knew college had to be a part of their lives. Therefore, Jason joined the reserves for a change of pace while going to college, and Bryan joined the academy to get the best of both worlds: college and the Marine Corps.

"I finished my degree at the Naval Academy and got commissioned in the Marines right after graduating," said Bryan. "It was a great way for me to get my degree and join the military at the same time."

As Jason leaves Iraq to go back to Columbus, Ohio, to continue his work as a graphic designer and freelance illustrator, Bryan looks forward to the next seven months where he will support Operation Iraqi Freedom for the second time since joining his unit a year ago. Knowing what to expect the second time around has made the deployment easier for Bryan, but he never expected to see his brother here.

"It is definitely something you don't expect to see — a family member in a place like Iraq," Bryan said. "It just goes to show how it sure is a small Corps."



Identical twins 1st Lt. Bryan J. Abell (left) and Cpl. Jason P. Abell crossed paths as Bryan arrives in and Jason departs Iraq.

Building dreams: engineer seeks to be film producer

By Sgt. David Kerr
70th Engineer Battalion

BAGHDAD — Is there a future Steven Spielberg hidden among the Army's ranks in Iraq?

Walk into 1st Lt. John Prettyman's room and you might start to think so. You will not find the normal pictures or calendars hanging on the walls. Instead, Prettyman, of the 70th Engineer Battalion, has news articles that have captured his interest neatly taped to the white fiberboard wall. Piled on a cot, you will see a computer, editing decks and perhaps the latest issue of *Moviemaker* magazine.

You will also find a camera that can fit in the palm of a hand. This is how Prettyman is pursuing a dream that began in junior high.

The Tacoma, Wash., native has devoted his spare time in Iraq to creating a film of Soldiers' experiences in war.

Prettyman was born in California, land of big movie

stars and even bigger starry-eyed dreams. Though he had creative aspirations, he majored in biology when he attended Pacific Lutheran University. He was an average student — never really fitting in and feeling as though something was missing, he said.

That changed when he attended the Army Officer Basic Course and shot a short film of his classmates.

Prettyman's film was shown during the graduation ceremony, and he had his first taste of the future when fellow officers later came up and asked for his autograph. He filmed another short movie of his unit during his first combat tour in Iraq in 2003. The film, a comedy reminiscent of "National Lampoon," was seen by virtually the entire 70th Eng. Bn. upon its

return.

"It had a lot of good special effects," said Sgt. Trinidad Rangel, of Oxnard, Calif. "He does good work."

Prettyman thought it was nice to be able to show the Soldiers' loved ones what they did to burn off steam.

Currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III, he has not missed the opportunity to work on yet another film showing the day-to-day lives of the Soldiers of the 70th Engineers.

His focus this rotation is to show the surreal environment faced every day in a multitude of situations and during numerous missions the Soldiers perform.

"I really didn't want to do anything that anybody

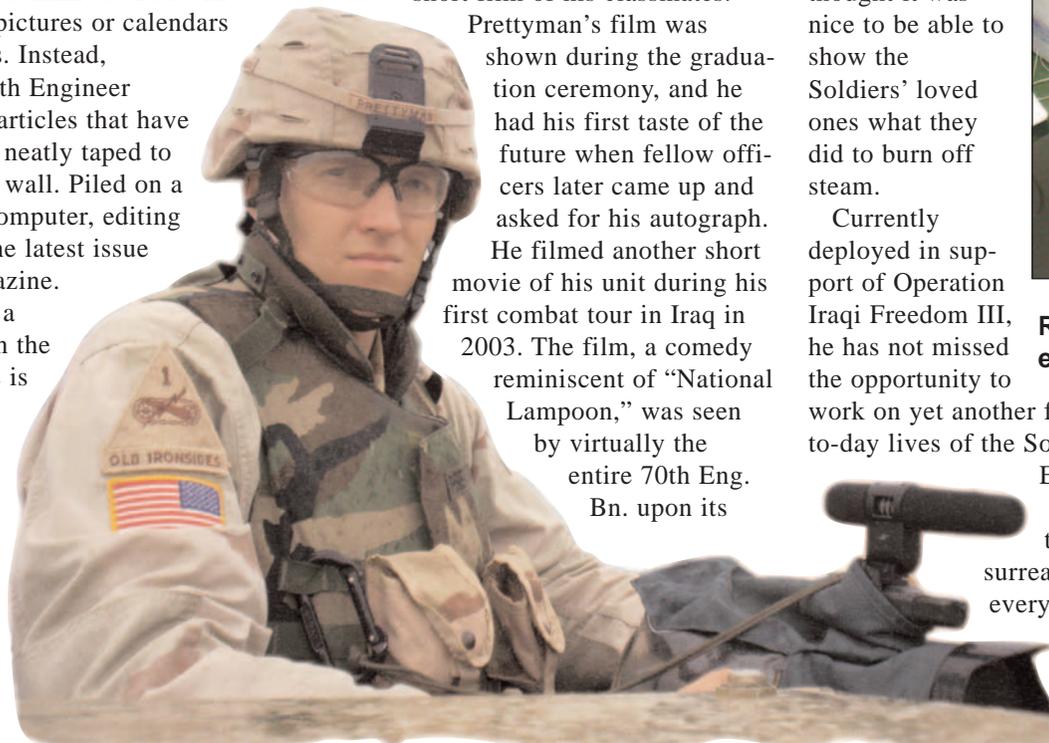


Relaxing in his room after work, 1st Lt. John Prettyman edits his latest film project.

has seen before," Prettyman said. "The focus is more on the mind of the Soldier. It follows two Soldiers as they go through the year."

Prettyman plans to further his education and seek a degree in film studies. He envisions himself starting out filming independent movies, working toward the day when he can get work as a film producer.

He says the military has given him the confidence and aggression to seek out what he wants. He feels he now has the courage to move into the market with a Soldier's battle cry.



Even while on patrol, 1st Lt. John Prettyman brings along his camera to capture the war-time experience for the short film he is producing.

U.S. Army photo

U.S. Army photo

Airmen provide eyes in northern Iraqi skies

By Tech. Sgt. J. LaVoie
506th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

KIRKUK AIR BASE, Iraq — The 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron Detachment 1 here provides instantaneous and continuous information superiority by providing commanders and pilots with a real-time view of northern Iraq's airspace.

The detachment's Airmen give operators at nearby Balad Air Base a key airspace picture, allowing them to communicate enemy targets and threats to pilots flying missions.

"The radar feed we provide is integral to fighters in the cockpits," said Capt. Donald Land, detachment commander. "Our picture allows operators to contact friendly aircraft and relay the position of hostile forces and when they will be within weapons range.

"The end goal is to deploy our weapons while the enemy is still looking for our aircraft."

The squadron's Airmen provide this capability for all of northern Iraq.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Gish

Airman 1st Class David Reed aligns a UPX-23 interrogator set, which provides target identification.

"We provide a picture for over 200 nautical miles, 360-degree rotation," said Airman 1st Class Derek Riley, a radar maintainer.

That is 285,000 square miles of air superiority that can be picked up and moved at a moment's notice. If given a supply of water, diesel and packaged meals, the squadron's Airmen can take all of its assets and move to a new location in a matter of days. Because the squadron brings everyone from medics to security with it, it can move to a bare base location and begin providing an air picture immediately.

"We don't always deploy to a base," said Tech. Sgt. James Johnson, 727th EACS Det. 1 support. "We can go wherever they need us. We are completely independent."

This rapid deployment ability makes it the most cost-efficient choice for a bare-base environment.

Airborne warning and control system aircraft cost more money because of fighter escort and refueler requirements, and every second the system is airborne, it is expensive in fuel costs alone, Capt. Land said.

The squadron's Airmen provide an air picture with completely recoverable equipment. They are able to relay that air picture to Balad, and then relay Balad's instructions to pilots via radio, providing a virtual presence here, squadron officials said.

"If we had to move our operators with the equipment, it would create a bigger footprint," said Staff Sgt. Charles Sherer. "This allows them to control aircraft while they are in another part of the country."

In theory, operators could control aircraft while in another part of the world, said Staff Sgt. Pete Johnson, the detachment's noncommissioned officer in charge of the communications support flight.

"This would keep troops safe by putting fewer people in a combat zone," he said.

Wherever the operators sit, the detachment's Airmen will continue to provide an important role in air superiority.

"Our picture allows for command and control,"



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Gish

Airman 1st Class Derek Riley, 727th EACS Det. 1, checks over a radar antenna.

said Staff Sgt. Alec McKinney, a radar maintainer. "Our information gives the commanders the big picture. It allows them to manage the airspace."

Repeating history: wartime footlocker continues to serve family

**3rd Infantry Division,
Division Support Brigade
Public Affairs**

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — The old footlocker had been semi-retired for nearly 50 years. Sure, it had been used for storage. It had even seen a few Army National Guard annual training sessions.

But retired Master Sgt. Robert M. Rawls' Army-issued footlocker had not been to combat since World War II. Now, it serves his son in Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

"He had several," said Capt. Charles R. Rawls, referring to his father's footlockers. "This is the one he always used."

The vintage storage box is complete — right down to the pull-out shelf, said Rawls, a fire direction officer with the 3rd Battalion, 117th Field Artillery Regiment, Alabama Army National Guard. His unit is providing force protection and convoy support for 3rd Infantry Division units here.

"I joined the National Guard in 1989," said Rawls, who grew up in Troy, Ala. He was 27 years old at the time.

His father asked him to join at 18, but Rawls said he was not ready then. He

instead went to Troy State University in his hometown, graduated and then started working for the Alabama State Forestry Commission.

Finally after nine years, he joined the military his father had loved for 32 years.

Eventually, it came time for Rawls, who has lived most of his life in Troy, to attend annual training with his unit. It was before that yearly, two-week field duty that Rawls' father gave him the footlocker. Rawls has used it ever since.

But the father and son warriors share more than an antique piece of luggage. They both mobilized for war from the same location.

Rawls said his father left for the Pacific theater of operations during World War II from Camp Shelby, Miss. He was on active duty at the time, having answered his country's call to arms.

When he returned from war, the elder Rawls joined the National Guard and stayed until he retired, said his son.

Eventually, the camp, which is the largest National Guard training area in the U.S., changed its name to Mobilization Center Shelby, said Rawls. His unit has conducted many annual training exercises there, and he and his unit mobilized from



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

Capt. Charles R. Rawls shows off his father's World War II footlocker. Rawls, who grew up in Troy, Ala., was given the vintage box by his father.

there to deploy to Iraq.

Rawls said if he never gets deployed again, the footlocker may still see a few more annual trainings before he retires.

Maybe the footlocker can finally settle into a garage for a well-deserved retirement.

Then again, Rawls does have a son of his own. ...

Coalition Corner

... highlighting countries
serving with MNF-Iraq



Poland

local name: *Polska*

The Republic of Poland is located in central Europe and east of Germany. Size-wise, it is slightly smaller than New Mexico. Polish is the official language for the 39 million Poles who live in this country. It is one of the newest members of the European Union, joining in 2004. However, the Polish currency system is still the Zloty.

Poland is full of historic and modern sites to satisfy almost anyone's interests. This land is graced with intriguing medieval castles and Baroque palaces. Some of the castles in the north were built in the 13th and 14th centuries by the Teutonic Knights, and southern Poland is home to the Eagles' Nest Trail, which boasts dozens of 14th and 15th century castle ruins. The city of Czestochowa is home to the holiest relic in Poland, the Black Madonna, also known as "Our Lady of Czestochowa." The Old Market Square, the largest medieval square in all of Europe, which is lined with historic buildings and modern restaurants and shops, is in Krakow. For sea-lovers, Leba has a resort with tall, Sahara-like sand dunes and long, beautiful beaches along the Baltic Sea.

Poland is well-known for its foods, sausages in particular. Bigos, Poland's national food, is one of many dishes with sausage as a main ingredient. Bigos, which is a traditional centuries-old Polish hunter's stew, is made with sausage and cabbage as the main ingredients, while different spices and additional meats and vegetables give this dish endless variety. Poles also consume large quantities of potatoes in their diets. Many of their main courses and side dishes include potatoes prepared in countless ways.

Besides historic landmarks and mouthwatering foods, Poland is also home to several world-famous people. Perhaps the most prominent Pole is the late Pope John Paul II, who was born Karol Jozef Wojtyla. Fryderyk Chopin, the famous 19th century composer and pianist, is also a renowned Pole. Famous temperature-gauging pioneer Gabriel Fahrenheit was born in the old port city of Gdansk.

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

References: www.cia.gov, www.answers.com, www.iexplore.com, www.travelpoland.com.hk, www.polandtrade.com.hk, www.geocities.com and www.travel.poland.com.

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CHAPLAIN'S TALK

Where is God in This?

By Chaplain (Maj.)
Stephen Walsh
42nd Military Police Brigade

Like most of us, I watched with a mixture of fascination and horror the television reports of Hurricane Katrina's havoc upon the city of New Orleans. With primitive awe, I sat mesmerized as reporters ominously predicted a natural disaster the scope of biblical proportions. I prayed along with the nation that the worst would not happen.

But it did, and the city of New Orleans was submerged in a watery grave along with much of lower Louisiana and Mississippi. Overnight, thousands of Americans were displaced without food, shelter or clean water.

Immediately, from the climate-controlled comfort of their studios, the talking heads began pointing fingers. Some pointed at their fellow man, and some pointed at God. Hollywood heroes rushed to the scene, many hoping to look three inches taller by standing on the misfortune of others. Politicians crooned, government agencies swooned, and charities seemed doomed.

Yet amid all the huff, puff and bluff, from the darkness a quiet force arose, unheralded and undaunted. Formed without fan-

fare or flourish, it gathered in armories and airfields, gymnasiums and parade fields, preparing to deploy as it has done so many times to bring a message of hope ... its mission to restore order from chaos and peace out of confusion.

And with the strength found in an Army of believers who trust in a power higher than themselves, a good greater than their own and a cause larger than their life, they left home and family to bring help.

They flew low in soaring Black Hawks and drove slow in lumbering Humvees. They packed themselves in buses and in gangly lightweight military-type vehicles. They assembled by the thousands under the guidance of their commander, who ordered them to roll up their battle dress uniform sleeves and begin to restore the Crescent City.

I watched as majestic Chinooks hovered Americans to safety, and I was proud to be in uniform. My chest swelled to see our young Soldiers plowing through flooded streets in enormous M977 Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks to bring food and clothing to the stricken citizens of the Big Easy. Many of these Soldiers were



Chaplain Walsh

deployed here in Iraq just a few months ago. When people ask me, "Where is God in all this?" I tell them to look at the men and women of our military. In their actions, you will see God's help and hope. In their willingness to sac-

rifice their lives, you will witness God's love and concern.

When all is said and done, our military is still the one organization that people trust to be able to provide them help. For at a time when most human institutions seem overwhelmed by natural or political events, the volunteers of our military continue to overcome all earthly odds to accomplish any mission. And, with the help of God, they will continue to prevail in the battle to overcome any force that threatens to hurt or harm people everywhere.

I predict long after the television news crews go home and Larry King returns to interviewing Pamela Anderson, members of our military will still be there in Louisiana and Mississippi working quietly to help restore people's lives and to rebuild a state. And they will do it without any reward except the one that comes from above. Thankfully, for most of them, that will be enough.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Civilian retailer delivers copycat uniforms

DALLAS — While Soldiers await the arrival of the new Army Combat Uniform, the Army & Air Force Exchange and Army G-1 Uniform Policy Section are receiving numerous complaints regarding commercial retailers offering look-alike uniforms that do not meet the Army's specifications for quality and design.

"Some commercial outlets are aggressively appealing to Soldiers awaiting the arrival of the official ACU in January," said Military Clothing Sales Store Army Program Manager Maj. Rachel Danielson.

AAFES has received complaints regarding commercial retailers delivering non-specification uniforms while representing themselves as an official MCSS. An Army Reserve staff sergeant who received a look-alike uniform advised of numerous problems.

"There was no [National Stock Number] on the label," wrote Staff Sgt. Grant Von Letkemann. "The top did not have a bellowed back, the arm pockets did not have the IR square or the covering tab, there was no pen pocket on the left sleeve and the zippers were not as described in the [Program Executive Officer] sheet for the ACU. The bottoms did not have a draw string on the hip pocket, there were cinch straps on the sides and no drawstring in the front. The flag was not the [correct] size ... I looked at the invoice and saw that there was no AAFES logo or letterhead. The invoice had the title 'Military Clothing Sales Store MCSS.'"

"Soldiers and commanders are responsible for ensuring they are purchasing and wearing uniforms that are authorized

for wear," said Danielson. "Unfortunately, a retailer falsely representing themselves as an AAFES MCSS can make it very difficult for troops to fulfill this responsibility."

Coalition nabs foreign fighter, facilitator

BAGHDAD — Coalition Forces captured two terrorists during a raid on a safe house in Mosul Sept. 17.

One of the detainees was a foreign fighter facilitator and the other a Tunisian terrorist.

The foreign fighter facilitator, Adnan 'Ammar Tahir Muhammad, also known as Abu Ammar, worked directly for the military Emir of Mosul. He admitted to Coalition Forces he had facilitated the housing and movement of foreign fighters throughout the Mosul area. These foreign fighters entered Iraq to conduct direct attacks on Iraqi Security Forces, Coalition Forces and the general Mosul population.

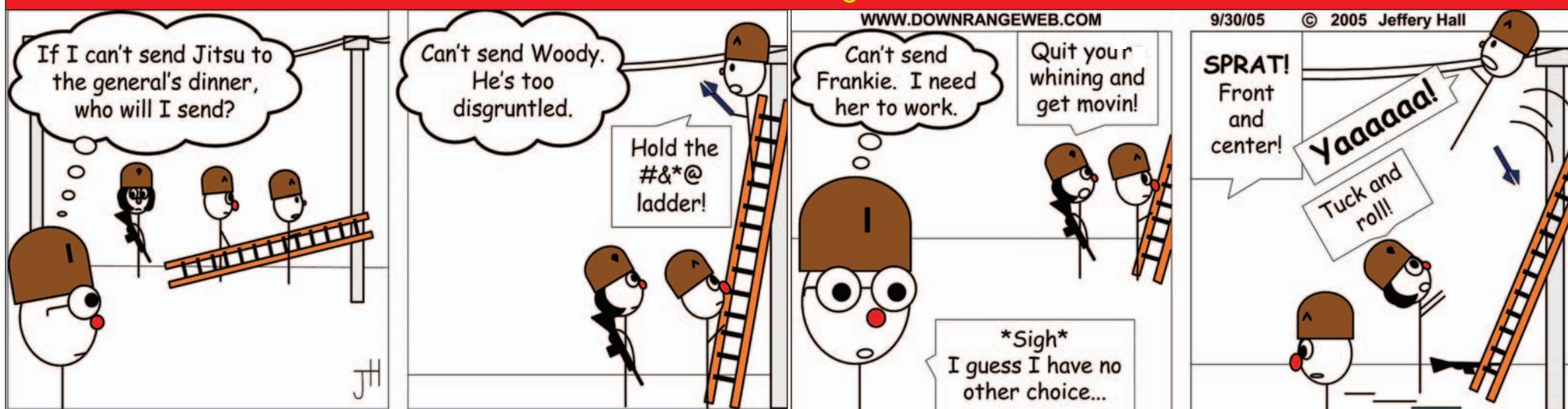
Ammar claims he was a terrorist himself prior to assuming his role as facilitator. He also transported weapons and ammunition in and around Mosul for Abu Zubayr, the al Qaida in Iraq Emir of Mosul, who was killed last month.

The Tunisian terrorist, Yusif Nur-Al-Din 'Ali Mabruk, also known as Abu Muhammad, claims he was recruited from a mosque in France and as he became more involved with extremist activities at the mosque, he decided to join the terror movement in Iraq.

Muhammad claims he left France and went to Damascus, Syria, and after making additional contacts was sent to eastern Syria, where he was then smuggled into Iraq and ultimately to Mosul.

Scimitar Slapstick

Downrange

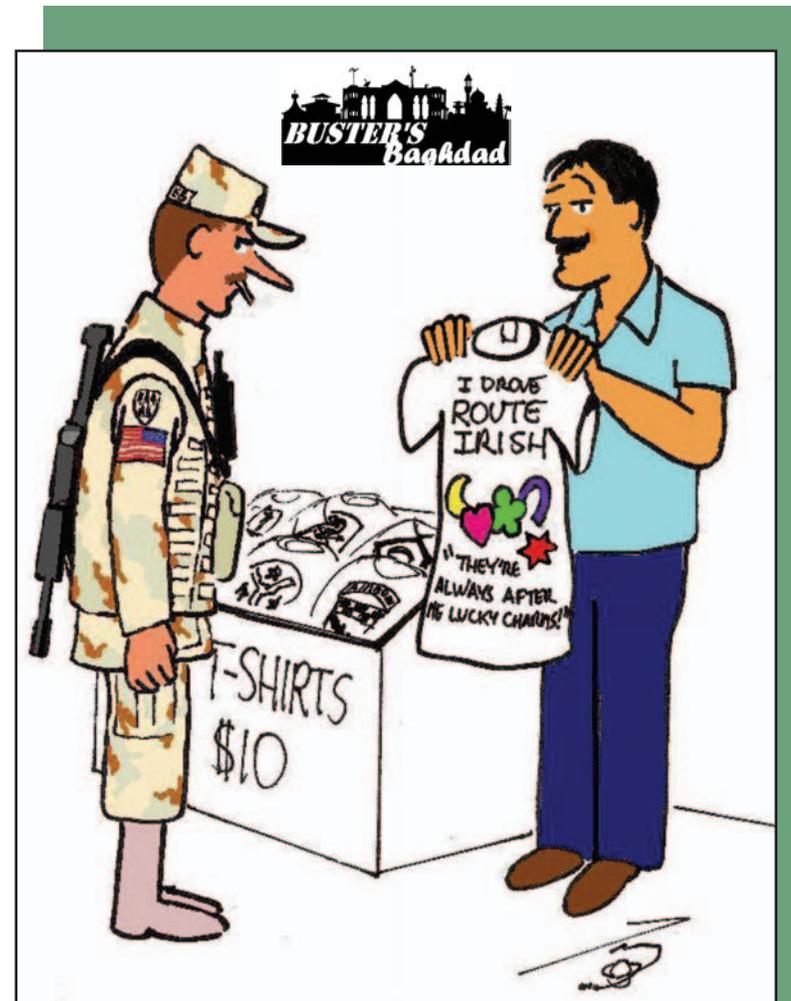


Art by Jeffery Hall

OUT WITH THE OLD... IN WITH THE NEW!



Art by Staff Sgt. Timothy Lawn



Art by Maj. James D. Crabtree

Story, photo, art and comic submissions are welcome! Please send to the *Scimitar* for consideration at: scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil

Drama unfolds at Q-West

Story and photos by
Sgt. Rachel Brune
101st Sustainment Brigade

Q-WEST BASE COMPLEX, QAY-YARAH, Iraq — “I don’t do the whole acting thing,” said 2nd Lt. Jason “JJ” Wood, 622nd Movement Control Team, before proceeding onstage to steal every scene.

“This is my first acting experience,” said Spc. Kris Taylor, 814th Quartermaster Company, before cracking up an audience filled with his fellow Q-West Soldiers.

“I wanted something to keep me occupied until the end of deployment,” said Spc. Brandy Vance, 917th Corps Support Group. Vance, as redneck airhead “Tina,” brought new meaning to the phrase “rolling in the aisles.”

The Soldiers, from various units on Q-West, ventured onstage for the Q-West Drama Club

performance of “Operation Redneck” Sept. 14 at the Recreation Center Theater here.

The six members of the cast first saw the play, written by D.M. Bocaz-Larson, about 17 days before the performance.

“I went on the Internet to find something we could do and not spend money [for it],” said Susan “Su-Z” Cothorn, Q-West Morale, Welfare and Recreation coordinator and production manager for the play.

The play is a classic fish-out-of-water comedy set in a hick town full of stereotypical rednecks.

“My city-slicker boyfriend is coming to meet my family, and we’re rednecks,” said Sgt. Michelle Allen, 917th CSG, who played the female lead “Julie.”

A half-hour before the show, cast members onstage wielded power drills and moved flats to rebuild the set. Backstage, Master Sgt. Virgil Sanders, 917th CSG senior supply ser-

geant, pored diligently over his lines.

“I don’t know how ready I am,” said Sanders. Although originally cast as “Pa,” Sanders had to drop out of the cast.

When the next Pa had to drop out as well, Sanders returned to the cast, this time with 30 hours to learn the script and perform in the play.

“We approach everything with humor,” said Cothorn. “The real challenge is time.”

Rehearsals were also pushed knowing the 917th CSG is scheduled to redeploy in the near future. Another challenge was working around cast members who were called away on missions, said Cothorn.

Lack of a budget was another challenge the drama club had to face.

“I’ve done lots of things from acting to lights to scrounging,” said Cothorn, who has 15 years of experience in community theater.

Things that are easy to acquire in the States are often hard to find in Iraq, according to Cothorn. When one of the Soldiers needed a cowboy shirt, she borrowed one from a Kellogg, Brown & Root contractor she happened to see.

In addition to learning blocking and lines, the actors made props and dressed the set with Elvis memorabilia and mail, such as a George Strait fan club newsletter, said Allen.

“We actually found one online,” said Allen. “Look, I wrote some of my lines in here.”

The audience responded favorably to the performance, laughing at key moments and applauding at others.

“It made me forget where I was for a short time,” said Sgt. Patricia Tso, 101st Sustainment Brigade multimedia illustrator.

“Until I go home, it gives me something to do,” said Pfc. Kendel Haycock, 2nd Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, who played the character of “Beth,” the sarcastic best friend. “Otherwise I’d just sit in my trailer and watch movies I’ve seen before.”



Susan “Su-Z” Cothorn, Morale, Welfare and Recreation coordinator, supervises a drama club rehearsal of “Operation Redneck” at Q-West Base Complex Sept. 11. (This photo has been modified for security reasons.)



Spc. Brandy “Tina” Vance, 917th CSG, and 2nd Lt. Jason “JJ” Wood, 622nd MCT, strike a pose during the performance of “Operation Redneck” at the Q-West Recreation Center Theater Sept. 14.



Spc. Brandy Vance and Sgt. Michelle Allen tussle with Pfc. Kendel Haycock during drama club practice for “Operation Redneck.”

“They’re troopers in the field, and they’re troopers in here,” said Cothorn. “I have great admiration for our Soldiers.”

Soldiers on Q-West who wish to participate in future performances of the drama club as cast or crew can sign up at the MWR Recreation Center, or attend one of the meetings every Saturday at 7 p.m.

Worship and Prayer Schedule for Camp Liberty

Division Chapel

Monday - Friday
12 p.m. Catholic Mass

Saturday
10 a.m. Seventh Day Adventist

Sunday
9 a.m. Contemporary Protestant
10:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
1 p.m. Lutheran
3 p.m. Gospel Protestant
5 p.m. Church of Christ (non-instrumental)
8 p.m. Collective Protestant

Engineer Chapel

Wednesday
7 p.m. Bible Study

Friday
9 p.m. Prayer & Praise

Saturday
10 a.m. Reunion & Suicide Brief
Sunday
8:45 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
10 a.m. Traditional Protestant
12:30 p.m. Latter Day Saints
7 p.m. Traditional Protestant

Tiger Chapel

Wednesday
7:30 p.m. Wicca Circle (briefing tent)

Wed. and Sat.
10:30 a.m. Reunion & Suicide Brief

Saturday
7 p.m. Catholic Mass

Sunday
9 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Mass
1 p.m. Gospel Protestant
3 p.m. Traditional Protestant
7 p.m. Non-Denominational Christian
9:30 p.m. Evening Christian Service

Don't fall victim to an IED.

Create a safe standoff when halted.

0080 IEDs KILL

FALL BACK!

It's that time of year again — daylight-saving time! Don't forget to set your clock back an hour **Sunday** for that extra hour of sleep!

NOTE: The United States do not fall back until Oct. 30.