

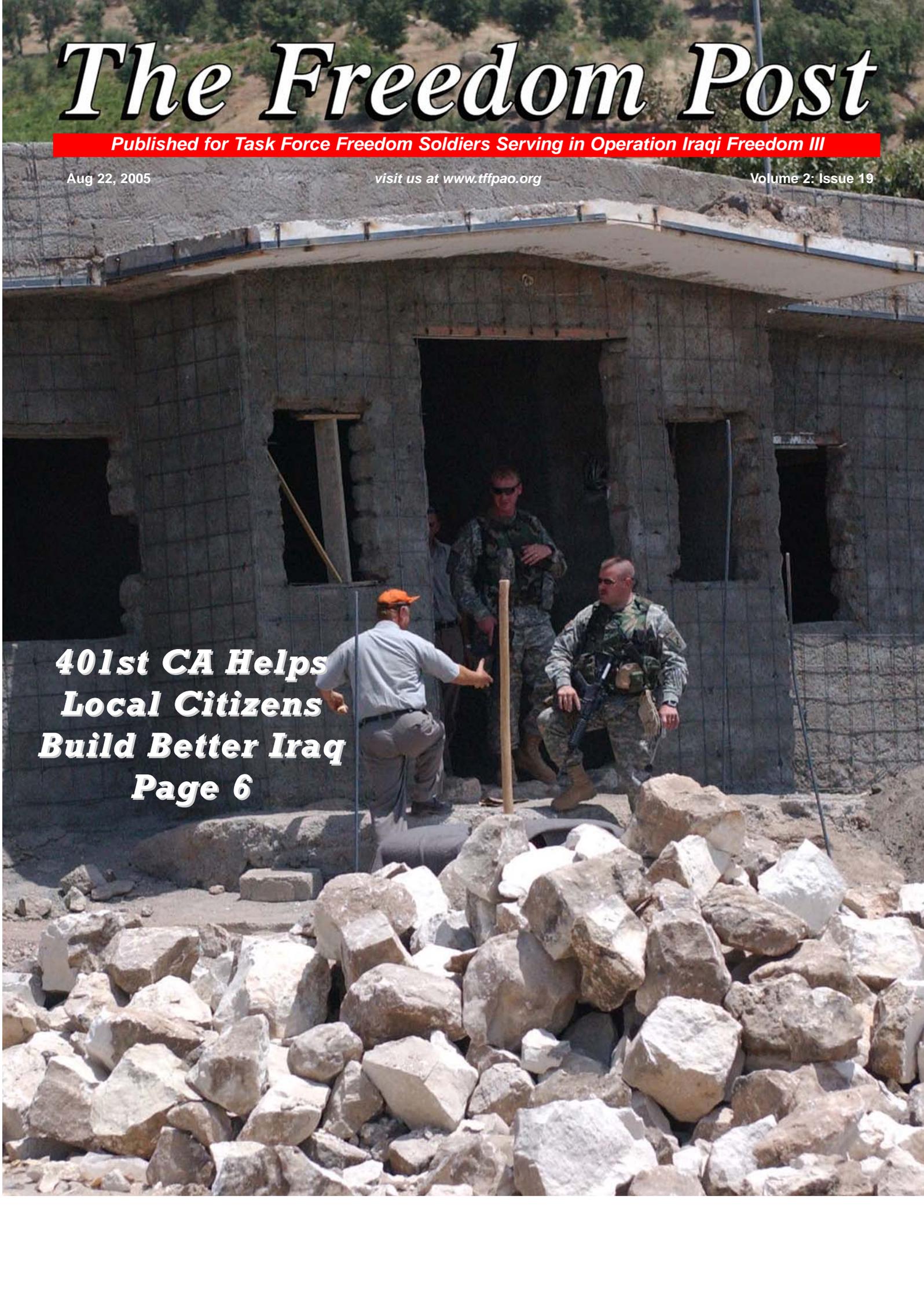
The Freedom Post

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**401st CA Helps
Local Citizens
Build Better Iraq
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A Soldier You Should Know

By Rachael Van Horn

KBR LNO

Qayyarah, Iraq - Every day, he walks through the 107th Amored Regiment Headquarters office in Q-West Base Complex and does the same thing. He stops abruptly in front of my office, tilts his head in his comical way and chirps, "Hello Rachael!" He does it for everyone, every day, and I know he means it.

There it is, Capt. Rick Basting has set the tone in the office. He sets it every day. He doesn't have any idea of his impact and probably no one has ever told him. Even if it is not his lane, he will try and help, which he is the first to admit, gets him in trouble some times.

What is the magic behind someone who chooses to be upbeat and validating every single day in a war zone? "I was raised in a bar, or I should say bars," said Basting. "My mother was a bartender my whole life, she was also an alcoholic." Bastings father, a professional boxer, was also a drinker and was absent from his life until he was a teen, when Basting began to reestablish a relationship with the elder Basting.

I stared in disbelief at the man I know to be a talented signal officer, an ordained licensed United Methodist minister, a faithful husband and a father who can't stop appreciating his children. My assumption of his childhood had involved white picket fences.

Basting recalls growing up without friends his own age. He spent days twirling on a bar-stool making friends with the regulars that shuffled in. He speaks of yearning for attention and being his happiest when the women who worked at the bar made him special non-alcoholic drinks called Suicides and Shirley Temples. It was at these times they talked to him while they wiped down the long wooden counter tops. He enjoyed washing the glasses and looked forward to the weekly visits of the billiards collector and the juke box service man.

There were many other memories; human behavior at its most basic. The smell of stale smoke and vomit when someone had overindulged, violence that creeps into personalities when a child least expects it, that play in his mind.

When asked of his brightest moments, he speaks easily of his renewed relationship with his father, who once boxed the famous Sugar Ray Robison. Most of all, he points to his faith and his time with his wife and children as his best life moments. So what was the single factor that seemed to point away from every wrong path for this soldier? "The church was just around the corner from the bar, they picked me up and let me be part of them," he said.

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CDF Receives New Fire Engines

Story by Staff Sgt. Michele Uitermarkt



The local firefighters test drive their new, smaller trucks.

MOSUL, Iraq – As the city of Mosul builds their police force and the ability to defend from insurgents, they have also increased the Civil Defense Force’s ability to fight fires.

Staff Sgt. John Meyer, Government Transition Team member for the Department of Public Safety from the 401st Civil Affairs, spearheaded a one million dollar project to purchase four fully equipped fire trucks for the City of Mosul.

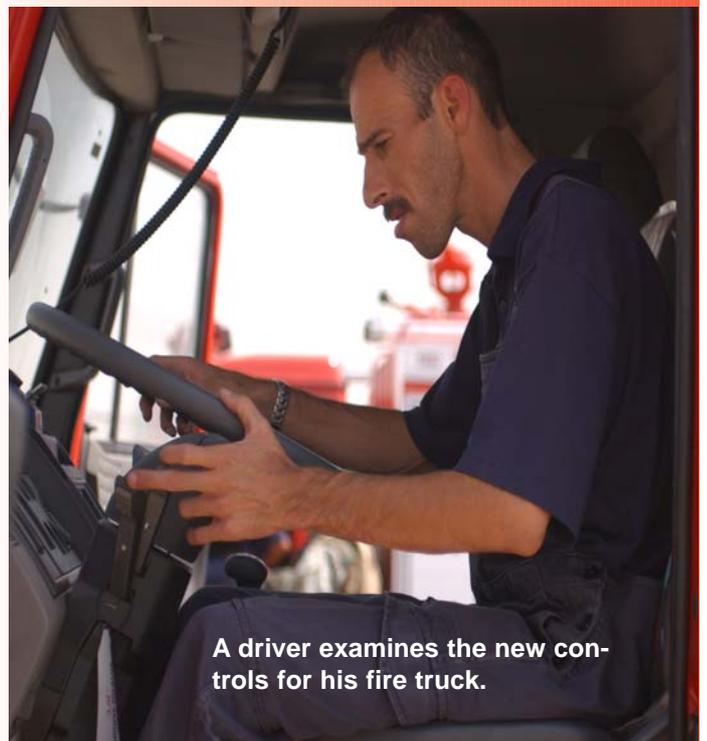
“The Ninewa Civil Defense Force lacked the capability to respond to fires or other emergencies within the area surrounding the Ras Alijada and the Ibn-Alather fire stations,” said Meyer. “All of their previous fire trucks were too big to navigate through the narrow streets of the old city.” The shortcoming was noted in the assessment of the fire protection for the city and the surrounding area.

“With the expansion of the fire department for the city of Mosul and the training of the fire personnel, the only thing they were short of was the appropriate equipment to do the job,” said Meyer, a 14-year veteran firefighter and paramedic from Columbus, Ohio.

The smaller trucks were delivered to the Civil Defense Force July 25. Each truck is equipped with the specifications needed to travel down the narrow streets and pump the amount of foam or water needed. The new trucks come with new personal protec-

tive equipment necessary for the firefighters to enter burning buildings.

According to Meyer, since the firefighters are already trained, they will be able to use the trucks to respond to emergencies immediately, helping the Coalition Forces in rapid response to bombs and fires. “The new trucks will save lives,” said Meyer.



A driver examines the new controls for his fire truck.

New Commander Proud of CPATT Accomplishments

Story and Photos by Spc. Ashly A. Mitchell



Maj. Gen. Peterson speaks with local leaders about the work the CPATT has accomplished.

MOSUL, Iraq - Iraqi Police (IP) in the area have made great improvements over the last few months, according to Maj. Gen. Joe Peterson, the new commander of the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT). Peterson will be replacing the previous commander, Maj. Gen. Joe Fil, later this year.

The CPATT works with IP forces to help train them to be more effective, according to Peterson.

During Peterson's visit with Maj. Gen. David M.



Maj. Gen Peterson receives a brief on CPATT projects.

Rodriguez, Task Force Freedom commander, he was able to meet and talk with Iraqi Army Gen. Sadoon Akmed. Akmed explained to Peterson and Rodriguez the progress Iraqi policemen have made in the past few months. They have worked hard to seek out more terrorists and find

more caches. "We have a great bunch of Soldiers who do an excellent job," said Akmed.

Akmed also discussed the rebuilding of the IP forces and the progress they have made with their security operations. "Everything is under control thanks to Iraqi and Coalition Forces, except for a small area of Tal Afar which should be under control soon," said Akmed.

After visiting with the IPs, Peterson and Rodriguez were given a tour by Lt. Col. Alan Neidermyer, CPATT Regional Academies Liaison Officer, of the facilities that will soon be available for training the IPs

"We have classrooms set up for training and I'll also show you the barracks as well," said Neidermyer. "As soon as we get the footlockers that were ordered, these barracks should be ready for use." Neidermyer also showed Peterson and Rodriguez the mess hall, rifle range and gym areas. "The gym is still waiting to be filled with equipment. We will also set up processing stations to make registering new recruits quick and easy," said Neidermyer.

"I very much respect the hard work of the Iraqi Forces, they've made a difference," said Peterson. "I look forward to working with them."

Operation Enduring Love

BRINGS SOLDIERS CLOSER TO THEIR FAMILIES

Story by Staff Sgt. Ray Calef, Photo by Sgt. Rick W. Way

MOSUL, Iraq - The days and nights can be lonely in Iraq, and Soldiers do many things to help pass the time; hanging with friends, playing video games, or watching movies.

One company has found an innovative way to help close the distance for Soldiers and their families. HomeMovies.com Corporation had the original idea

for Operation Enduring Love (OEL), which edits movies shot from home and uploads them on their website, allowing military members to see their families and messages they send.

John Larsen, CEO of HomeMovie.com, said the original idea for OEL was

envisioned by his wife, Michelle Larsen. "She was moved by the story on the evening news about a new mother who was deploying to Iraq and would be missing important milestones in her baby's life."

Christopher Jenkins, a former paratrooper who served eight years with the 82nd Airborne Division, coined the name and spearheaded the project which Michelle had envisioned. "My ongoing correspondence with friends serving overseas makes me keenly aware of the value of staying connected to the home front during times like these," said Jenkins.

That connection was realized recently by Staff Sgt. Mark Mulvaney, who watched a video of his three daughters: Ashley, 14, Samantha, 8, and Jordan, 3, and his wife Michelle, through tearful eyes and hearty laughter.

His kids sang, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star," and his youngest, Jordan, decided to snack on a few bubbles during bath time. The video also included a

heartfelt message from Michelle after the kids went to bed. She explained how tough the deployment was on her and how much she loved her husband.

Mulvaney was excited when he finished viewing the video. "I will recommend this to everyone I know. I think it's just great, it really gave me a sense of being home and made me feel as if I was not missing

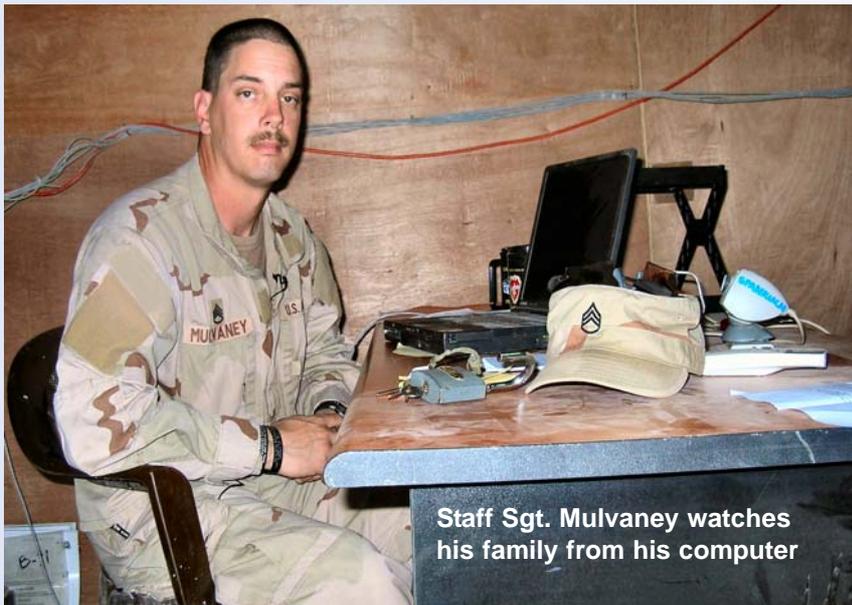
out on everything. I plan on watching it a number of times during the rest of my stay here."

The videos taken by family members are posted on a secure website (HomeMovie.com) where they are viewable for one year while the service member is deployed. DVD's are also available to order from the website.

"Operation Enduring

Love is a unique way to help connect our service members overseas with their families," said U.S. Senator Patty Murray (Wash.). "It is a touching example of how technology can bridge the distance and help unite the many families who are sacrificing for our country."

"I want to thank [OEL] so much for what everyone involved is doing," said Mulvaney. "I can't put into words how much it means to me. It was great to be able to see and hear my wife and children. It truly is the best time I've had in almost six months. Thank you a million times."



Staff Sgt. Mulvaney watches his family from his computer



401st Civil Affairs Builds

Story and Photos by Maj. James A. Street

DAHUK, Iraq - Soldiers of the 401st Civil Affairs (CA), based in Dahuk, have the mission of developing positive relations between the Iraqi people and the Coalition Forces, ensuring the future success for this region's infrastructure with humanitarian projects.

"We are concentrating on four major districts in Northern Iraq: Dahuk, Zakho, Semel and Amedi," said Maj. Calvin Robinson, Civil Affairs Team (CAT) B leader. "We work with the local government, assess projects on the scope of work to be done, and oversee their development, pro-



Sgt. Robert Osborne, a Soldier of the CAT A, with children outside the new Kasara Health Center in Dahuk.

duction, and manage the funds of those projects."

There are two CATs, and a security team lead by Staff Sgt. John Tyvela who works with police and border patrols, in Dahuk.

Capt. Steven Hayden, CAT A leader and project officer, takes his team to oversee the reconstruction of humanitarian projects for the people in this region.

"What we are doing for the Iraqi people is: overseeing the development of health center renovations, school renovations, and water projects," said Hayden. "We work with the local government to ensure that the project is on schedule and it is being performed to specifications."

No challenge seems too large for this small group as they meet with contractors or make payments on projects. The 401st CA is helping renovate schools, food storage and care facilities. They deliver medical supplies and educate Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs), on simple sanitation methods and offer other needed supplies.

"In some of these IDP villages there can be as many as 400 people that had their homes destroyed during Saddam's reign," said Hayden. "Because they get their drinking water from the river, we explained to them how to boil water to lessen disease, and other basic sanitation practices. There is a need for



A Team members oversee construction of the Barberi well site.

Foundation For Iraq

all the water projects we do."

"Another upcoming IDP project, that costs close to half a million dollars, is a winterization project," said Hayden. "We purchased mattresses, covers, blankets, heaters, fuel cans, and lanterns for over 180,000 IDPs in this region. This project alone will affect a large number of lives this winter."

The buildings and projects need the staffing and training to make them functional. Soldiers like Sgt. Dana Kurt Hellen, a CA specialist and medic with the 401st provides that instruction.

"We assess the health care and clinics in our local area and supervise the construction of those clinics. I facilitate with the training of the medical personnel and help coordinate supplies," said Hellen

Hellen has treated IDPs who have been bitten by venomous snakes, examined hundreds of IDP children, and completed follow-up treatment on other IDPs.

The goal of the 401st is to assist the region in building and expansion. Yet another undertaking, is to "enterprise" the people of this region. The fable about giving a person a fish for one day's food or teaching them how to fish so they have food for life strikes so true with the 401st.



Sgt. Robert Osborne and Sgt. Dana Kurt Hellen inspect the outside of the Hassen Perka Health Center with local contractors.

"One of the key points that we all consider is to empower the citizens to be able support themselves. One way to do that is to get them motivated to start their own businesses by creating income generating projects," said Robinson.

While traveling and meeting numerous Iraqis, their resounding message is; they are grateful to the Coalition Forces for everything that they have done here.

Coalition Forces Help Clean

Story and Photos by Sgt. David J. Nunn

Q-WEST BASE COMPLEX, Iraq - In early 2004, the water treatment facilities and pumping station of the Q-West Base Complex were refurbished after falling into disrepair during the last years of Saddam's reign. It was discovered that the untreated system was being illegally tapped by local farmers to supply their homes and livestock in the desert climate; a lifeline that was the difference between life and death.

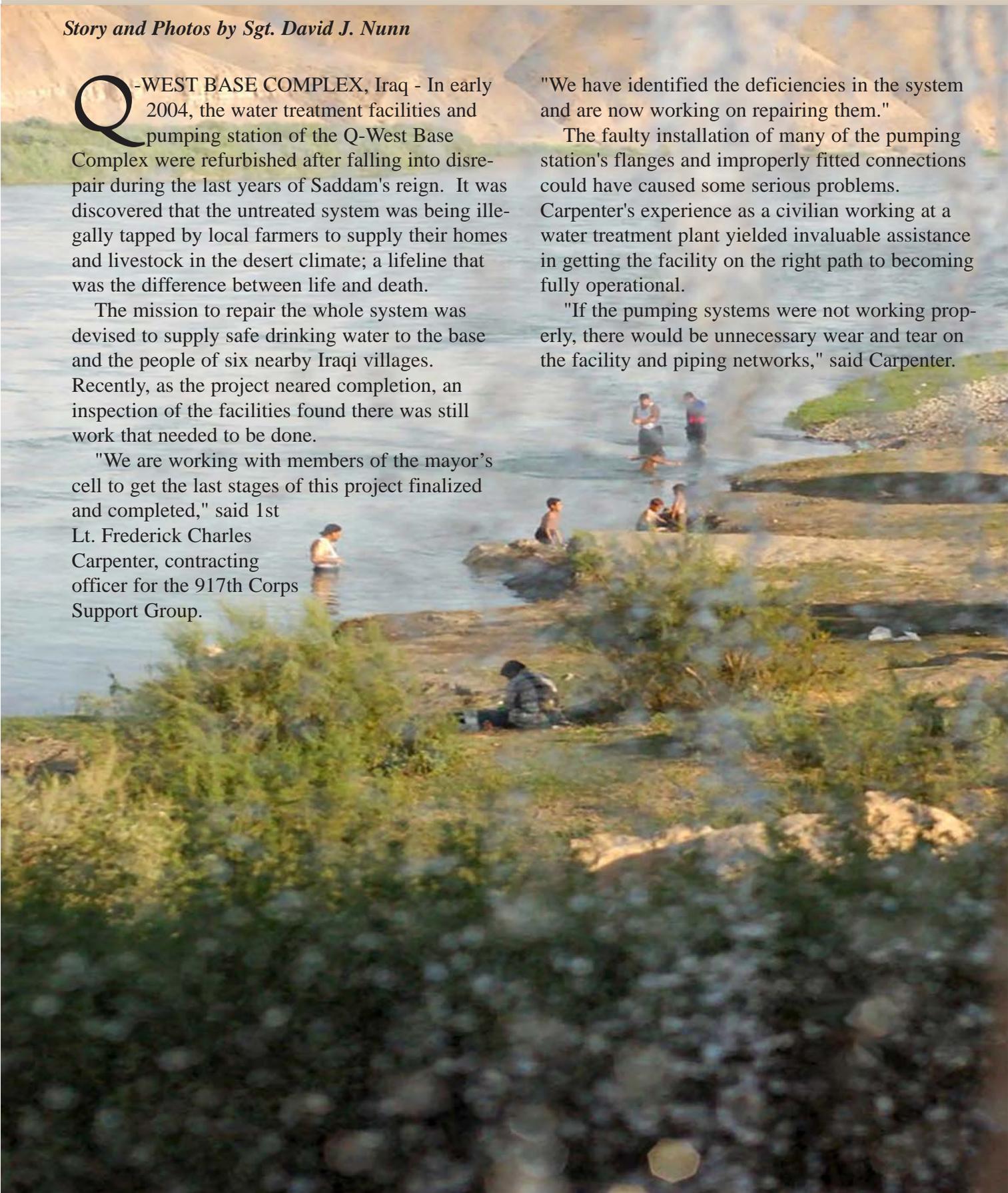
The mission to repair the whole system was devised to supply safe drinking water to the base and the people of six nearby Iraqi villages. Recently, as the project neared completion, an inspection of the facilities found there was still work that needed to be done.

"We are working with members of the mayor's cell to get the last stages of this project finalized and completed," said 1st Lt. Frederick Charles Carpenter, contracting officer for the 917th Corps Support Group.

"We have identified the deficiencies in the system and are now working on repairing them."

The faulty installation of many of the pumping station's flanges and improperly fitted connections could have caused some serious problems. Carpenter's experience as a civilian working at a water treatment plant yielded invaluable assistance in getting the facility on the right path to becoming fully operational.

"If the pumping systems were not working properly, there would be unnecessary wear and tear on the facility and piping networks," said Carpenter.



Up Water in Q-West



Soldiers gather information about the pumping station from locals.

"In the event that the system had come apart, there was a chance of electrocution to any individuals working here. We want to make sure the immediate area is safe before we turn our attention to purifying the untreated water system."

The system is not ready for human consumption because of the lack of a chlorination treatment system.

The water from the pumping station is currently used for Q-West resident's showers and toilets.

Drinking water is still supplied exclusively through bottled water, according to Carpenter.

This project, slated to be completed by the end of 2006, is just one more way of proving our resolve and commitment to the mission of improving the living conditions and overall life of the Iraqi people.

"We continue to fund these projects to further

improve this country," said Lt. Col. Richard Curry, commander of 1st Brigade, 107th Cavalry Regiment. "We are teaching the Iraqis the proper maintenance of this water treatment plant, so that they can continue to supply their people well after we leave."

"Now, they have the peace of mind that having access to safe drinking water provides," said Carpenter. "[The Iraqis] no longer need to worry about the constant struggle of drought and supplying water for their families."



Coalition, Iraqi Forces Build Lasting Friendship

Story and Photos by Sgt. David J. Nunn



Soldiers from 2-8 enjoy a joint barbeque, hosted by Maj. Gen. Malowh.

Q-WEST BASE COMPLEX, Iraq - The citizens of Iraq have enjoyed an increasingly safe and secure environment since the successful free elections in January, thanks to the joint efforts of the Iraqi people and the Coalition Forces. The cooperation between these groups is working towards achieving the goal of rebuilding this country.

One example of the Coalition Forces working selflessly to further develop this partnership into a friendship are the Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery (FA) and the 3rd Battalion Iraqi Army (IA).

This friendship was strengthened as members of each Army gathered together to enjoy a barbeque hosted by Maj. Gen. Ali Atala Malowh, commander of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 2nd Division IA, at his home in Qarrayah.

"Since November, I have worked with the Coalition Forces. We are one team, like brothers," said Ali during the barbeque. "Together we have captured a lot of bad guys and uncovered many terrorist cells that worked in this area. Through our teamwork we brought them to justice. It is proof of our success we can all be here today and enjoy the food and be



Maj. Gen. Malowh brings out a platter of food for his guests during the barbeque.

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safe."

Together, the two Armies have been models for the rest of the country. They have been very successful in their area of operation and are constantly making great strides in the continued training of the new IA.

"The people here have a positive opinion of [Coalition Forces]. When my Soldiers enter a village they go in with the idea of how many friends they are going to make," said Lt. Col. Bradley A. Becker, commander of the 2-8 FA. "They have developed a great rapport with the people. Their perception of the Coalition Forces is we are here to help."

According to Becker, people [in the U.S.] are surprised by how the Iraqis are just like [Americans], they just want security and to be safe. The people back home think the Iraqis don't like Americans and just want us to go home, but most of the people here genuinely appreciate our work and frequently invite us into their homes.

"This level of success demands a lot of trust to include the [IA] in joint operations," said Command Sgt. Maj. Victor Martinez, 2-8 FA command sergeant major. "We eat together, live together, and plan missions together. I think the trusting relationship we have with our counterparts really defines our success."

This combined effort to transform the IA into a disciplined unit of fighting men brings us one step closer to leaving the responsibility of protecting the Iraqi people solely in the hands of Iraqis. The 2-8 FA has succeeded in aiding the development of the IA by helping create institutions that are the foundation of a developing Army, welcoming their comrades into their families and thus strengthening the bond between our two nations.

"I think the greatest events are ones like this. When I tell people back home and show pictures of what is happening, people have no idea things like this occur. They look at the news and see negative stories about the war," said Martinez. "They don't see the uplifting events like picnics and barbecues at an Iraqi home."

* * *

Dr. T's Medical Matters

MALARIA – What you need to know

If you have not noticed yet, we are not taking medication for the prevention (prophylaxis) of malaria this year. In this edition of Medical Matters we'll discuss the above, review what you need to know and understand about malaria and how to protect yourself from getting this disease.

The incubation period for *P. vivax* is an average of 14 days but with a range from 12 days to 10 months before showing symptoms. The symptoms begin abruptly with a shaking chill, followed by fever and sweats with irregular remittent fever. You may also experience a period of malaise or headache before the initial fever. The symptoms can last from one to eight hours then subside and you feel normal. The cycle repeats itself every 48 hours. Diagnosis is made by examining your blood under a microscope looking for the parasite.

Most cases resolve spontaneously but treatment will resolve the symptoms more quickly and prevent potential complications of this disease.

So why am I telling you all this good stuff about malaria. During Desert Shield/Storm, OIF-I and OIF-II, Soldiers took mefloquine ("mefloquine Monday's") weekly from April until November. Due to the low compliance and subsequent low incidence in US Soldiers, it was MNC-I's policy that chemoprophylaxis not be initiated for OIF-III. Does this mean that there is no risk? Absolutely not! This is a risk (be it small) of acquiring malaria during your deployment. To decrease your risk, you should be wearing a permethrine treated uniform and applying DEET in the evening, night and early morning hours. If you are sleeping in an area with a lot of mosquitoes, the use of permethrine treated bed netting is recommended.

We protect ourselves daily by wearing our IBA. There is an environmental risk in the form of a mosquito that you need to protect yourself from. Treat your DCUs with permethrine and treat yourself with DEET as needed. If you have any concerns or unexplained fevers, please see your health care professional for advice.

Front Cover by Maj. James A. Street, Back Cover by Sgt. David J. Nunn

