

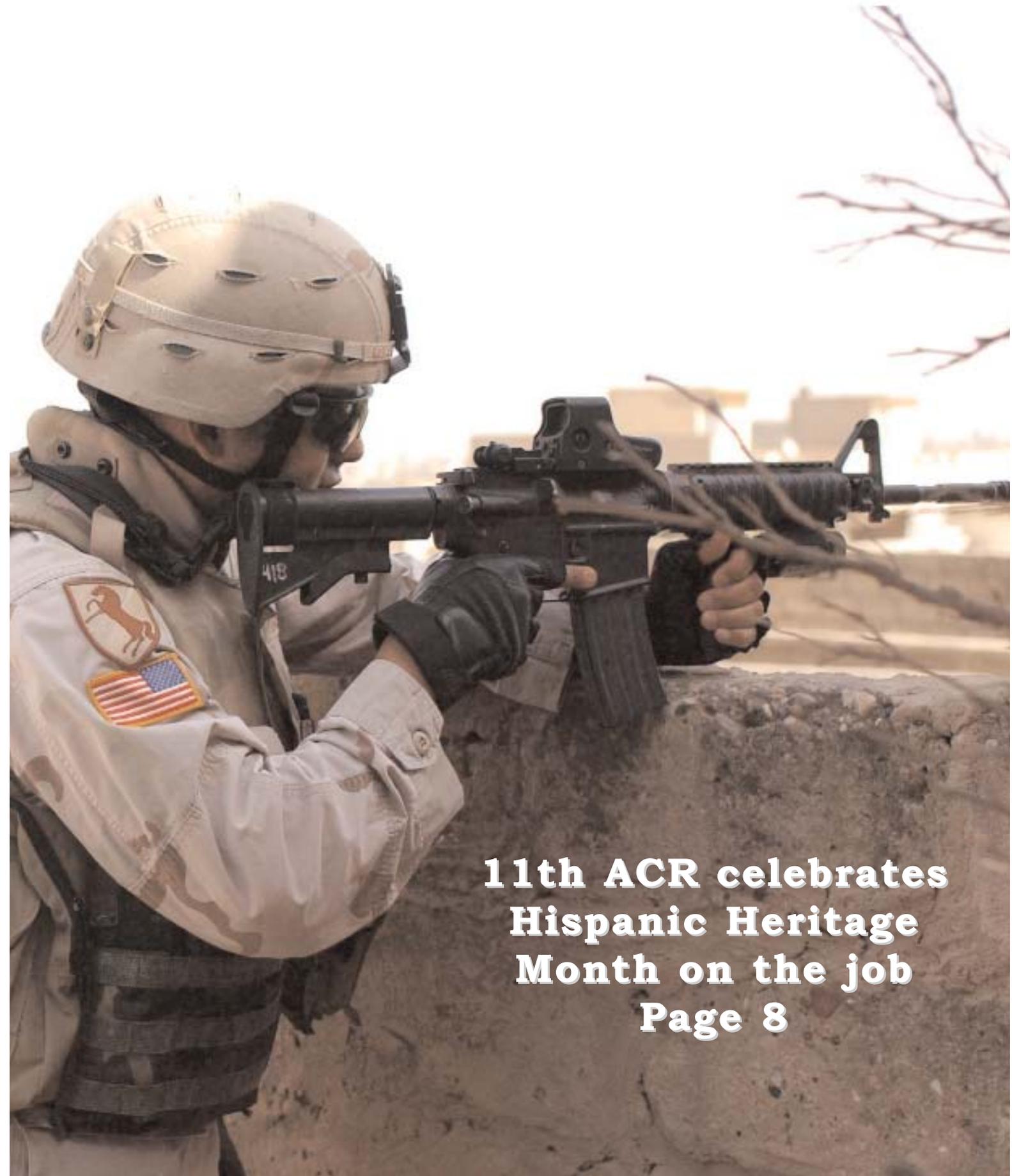
# *The Freedom Post*

*Published for Task Force Freedom Soldiers Serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom III*

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Volume 2: Issue 23



**11th ACR celebrates  
Hispanic Heritage  
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## Dear Stallion Fans

Recently we have had numerous inquiries from our loyal listeners as to why the Stallion 107.3 Radio station has not been in service. Due to transmitter difficulties, we are temporarily no longer able to broadcast. We offer our sincerest apologies to all Stallion fans and are currently working towards a solution.

*Sincerely Yours,*

# The Stallion Staff

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# Tae Bo Comes to Mosul

Story and Photos by Sgt. John H. Franzen



**Blanks works with TFF Soldier on his jab.**

**L**SA DIAMONDBACK, Iraq - What looked like a basic training "smoke" session was actually a group of Soldiers who voluntarily partook in the grueling exercise routine that is Billy Blanks' Tae Bo. Blanks and his daughter, Shellie Blanks Cimarosti, lead three one-hour sessions of his self-made Tae Bo here on Sept. 23.

"I knew we would come out and workout," said Master Sgt. Granderson Alexander, operation room Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) for the 228th Combat Support Hospital (CSH). "I didn't expect the workout to be so intense. I got smoked today, but that's okay because I got smoked by Billy Blanks."

Tae Bo is an acronym/play on words Blanks created. Tae is a Korean word that means "foot and leg" and Bo is short for boxing. When broken down the letters of the word stand for Total Awareness Excellent Body Obedience. Blanks combined his world class martial arts and boxing skills with the rhythm of dance to create a total body exercise routine that is quite unique. What makes it so unique, according to Blanks; is the connection of mind, body, and spirit.

Blanks has accomplished a lot in his lifetime, being a multi-time world champion in karate and big-time actor. Despite that, Blanks feels Tae Bo is his greatest contribution. That was apparent in the reactions of the Soldiers in his class at Diamondback, who felt his mere presence was enough to inspire them.

"It was very uplifting [to meet Blanks]," said Capt. Shirley Daniel, a critical care nurse with the 228th CSH. "The energy that you get from Billy is

absolutely contagious. I just felt good walking in the room and being in his presence."

"I know when he gives a workout, he gives it from his heart. Just like Soldiers, they serve with their hearts," said Chief Warrant Officer Jeanette McLendon, 5th Group Special Forces. "I see him as a role model."

Considering the level of Blanks' celebrity status, Soldiers were impressed with his personality. "He's very down to earth, very approachable, and has a lot of good people skills," said Alexander. "It overwhelmed me a little bit to see how easily you could approach him."

"He is a very positive person and it's not about him," said Daniels. Following the afternoon workout, Blanks addressed his class. He spoke about the importance and significance of the troops' service in Iraq.

"There are a lot of people in the United States right? Are they here where you are?" Blanks asked rhetorically. "That should tell you there's something special about you."

"I felt Blanks' sentiments were well received," said Daniels. "He reminded us that our job and our role is important, it was very uplifting for the Soldiers."

At the end of the day, Blanks' attitude and exercise routine made for quite a test. "When I walk into this room my goal is to challenge everybody's will," Blanks said.

"I am absolutely exhausted," Daniels said about the workout. "I was in pain throughout the class, and I'm still in pain, but I feel wonderful."



**Blanks and daughter Shellie, lead Soldiers in a class of Tae Bo.**

# Ambassador Visits FOB Courage

Story and Photos by Spc. Ashly E. Mitchell

**M**OSUL, Iraq - The Iraqi Ambassador to the United States, Dr. Zalmayi Khaleel Zad visited Mosul Sept. 25 to meet with Ninewah Province Governor, Duraid Kashmoula, local Sunni leaders, and Brig. Gen. Kevin Bergner, Deputy Commanding General for Task Force Freedom (TFF).

After arriving at the Mosul Air Field (MAF) Khaleel Zad was taken to the Mosul Dam, to meet with Kashmoula and to view current reconstruction projects to see how much progress has been made. "Twenty-billion dollars have been set aside by the United States for rebuilding projects in Iraq, that is the biggest sum set aside for rebuilding in the history of the U.S. Right now there are more than 300 projects here to work on," said Khaleel Zad.

When the Ambassador was finished viewing different projects at the dam, he was then taken to MAF, where he boarded a helicopter to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Courage. Upon arrival at Courage, Khaleel Zad went to the Regional Embassy Office (REO) where he met with staff members and security members from the Blackwater Security Company.

A press briefing was held that afternoon so that the Ambassador and the Governor could announce their plans and discuss issues within the city. Some of the issues discussed were security, Iraqi Police Force, political processes, and the upcoming elections.

"We want to work with the people to build a better, united, free, and more prosperous country," said Khaleel Zad. "We need to build the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police so they can fully take care of the Iraqi citizens."

When Kashmoula spoke, he expressed thanks to Khaleel Zad for taking the time to visit with him and discuss Ninewah affairs. He also announced the importance of the constitution, upcoming elections, and the importance of the Iraqi citizens' participation in both.

"Our discussion was constructive," said Kashmoula. "We talked about the political processes, the economy and security. The enemy is trying

to destroy our political process. This land is about peace and love, so everyone should ignore the terrorists and go out to vote. We are trying to build a better future for Iraq."

After both speakers finished, Khaleel Zad answered a few questions from reporters and civilians who were present.

"Failure is not an option here," said Khaleel Zad. "We are firm in our resolve to stand with Iraqis until they can stand on their own feet. We want to send a message to the terrorists that we will not be intimidated. We will carry on until they are all eliminated."

Following the press briefing, Kashmoula and Khaleel Zad were then taken from the REO to Spearhead palace on FOB Courage to meet with Bergner about how Multi-National Forces are working with Iraq.

The Ambassador's visit concluded by meeting with local Sunni leaders at the REO. He met to listen to their needs and expectations for Ninewah. When the meeting was finished Khaleel Zad boarded a helicopter to be taken back to MAF.



# Mosul Dam Project Given Green Light

*Story and Photos by Mr. Claude D. McKinney, Gulf Region North U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*



**M**OSUL, Iraq - Twenty million dollars for urgent needs associated with the Mosul Dam was approved. This puts the Mosul Dam project back on the Iraq reconstruction list.

On account of the geologic formations where the dam sits, a continual drilling and grouting process of the subsurface materials is needed to keep the dam from catastrophic failure. Currently there are only seven of the 12 available drills in operation. The others are down due to repair part shortages. The \$20 million allocated will provide the needed repair parts and possibly the acquisition of additional drills.

The situation and conditions of the Mosul Dam have been the object of studies and fact finding initiatives at the highest levels of decision makers working on the reconstruction of Iraq. The \$20 million dollars approved will step-up the ongoing grouting procedures at the dam.

Mr. Frank Scopa, the Mosul Area Engineer, who is responsible for managing all the Corps of Engineers projects in three northern Iraq provinces, recently visited the dam. He met with the dam manager and learned of the urgent needs for continuing the drilling and grouting process. Scopa promised to see what he could do to help. Coincidentally, funding came the next day.

Scopa knows dams and is uniquely situated for this particular job. He comes to Iraq from the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District, where he is the construction project engineer for three of the dams along the Snake and Columbia Rivers.

During his visit with the Mosul dam manager, Scopa learned the political history surrounding the site selection and eventual construction of the dam. He was also briefed on the current procedures, condition, and needs to maintain the dam.

The current dam manager has been running the facility since the second year of its construction. That is, except for one short period of time when he was fired for removing Saddam's portrait from his office.

The dam is the first in a series of dams along the Tigris River. It impounds a lake 80 kilometers long currently holding 9 billion cubic meters (CM) of water. It has the capability to hold 11 billion CMs of water. The spillway has the ability to release 12 thousand CMs of water per second, currently it releases only three thousand CMs, because the water way passing the city of Mosul, just down stream, can only handle the 3 thousand CMs flow. If more water were to be released, the Tigris would overflow its banks and flood parts of the city. The hydroelectric generators in place there produce 750 MW with a capacity to peak at 1000 MW. The dam was built to accomplish three goals, produce electricity, control flooding, and provide water for agriculture.

# Before and After: New Water

Story and Photos by Sgt. Daniel W. Lucas

## Before...



**Q**-WEST BASE COMPLEX, Iraq - In the area of Teloul-Nasir, there was a water pump that could barely reach the next village. In early 2005, a \$185,000 project was started to build a bigger, better water pump that could supply water to five villages containing more than 12,000 people. It was the biggest and longest reaching water project that the 426th Civil Affairs Battalion passed onto their predecessors, the 401st Civil Affairs Battalion from New York. On Oct. 3, they saw the fruits of their labor as the ribbon was cut and the new pump went into action.

"We completed this project for five villages: Teoul-Nasir, Umil-Manasees, Al-Hadhra Al-Qadema, Hadhrat Il-Fadhel, and Al-Kechech," said Sheikh Essa Khalaf Ahmed, the Iraqi contractor for the project. "I want to thank the Multi-National Forces and all who participated in this project."

The new water pump was built beside the existing pump on the bank of the Tigris River. After the completion of the pump, all of the extra supplies were donated by the contractor to other water projects to support reconstruction in the area.

"I want to thank the U.S. Army, our friends, who always help with such useful projects," said Gen. Ali Attallah Al-Malouh, 103rd Iraqi Army Commander. "It is a great project and after the voting on Oct. 15, we will see the opening of great service projects like improving clinics, schools, paving, cleaning the streets, and other projects too."

\* \* \*

## After...



**TOP:** The old container for the refurbished water pump. It had the capability to service only one of the local towns.

**ABOVE and RIGHT:** The new container, with its' increased capacity, can supply all five of the local towns with water at the same time.

# Pump Built Near Q-West

**BELOW:** The old structure that drew water from the Tigris River. The new framework and pipes are just a few feet farther up the river.

**BOTTOM:** The old pump could supply just one town while the new pump can pull enough water for five towns simultaneously.



**Before...**



**After...**



**Before...**



**After...**

# Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrated on the Job

*Story and Photos by  
Spc. Ashly E. Mitchell*



**Spc. Benjamin Heck speaks to Sgt. 1st Class Edward Huizar on a matters of security.**

**M**OSUL, Iraq - Hispanic Heritage Month begins on Sept. 15, the anniversary for five Latin American countries' independence; Costa

Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico's independence day was declared on Sept. 16, and Chile on Sept. 18.

The term Hispanic, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, refers to Spanish-speaking people in the United States of any race. On the 2000 Census form, people of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin could identify themselves as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino". More than 35 million people identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino on the 2000 Census.

More than half of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's Personal Security Detail (PSD) Platoon is of Hispanic



**Sgt. Corona and Sgt. Hurtado swear in during their reenlistment.**

or of Latino Heritage. In this issue of the Freedom Post, we will spotlight a few of these Soldiers for their outstanding service in the U.S. Army.

Sgt. Rudy Corona, PSD 3rd squad, (Trojan) has served in the Army for over five years as an Air Defense Specialist. Corona's main mission with Trojan is to make sure the Task Force Freedom (TFF) Command Sergeant Major is safe while out on missions.

"Since I was a kid, my dad tried to convince my brothers and I to join the military," said Corona. "It's an honorable thing to do."

Corona's family moved to the U.S. from Mexico. He was the first member of his family to be born in the U.S.

"This has been a good experience. Our squad has been able to go out into the city and see what happens first hand," said Corona. "We've also had countless engagements with the enemy."

According to Corona, Trojan was there to help with the January elections, where they also captured two Insurgents. Ten Soldiers from Trojan were awarded the Combat Action Badge on Oct. 2.

SpC. Benjamin Heck, PSD 2nd squad, has served in the Army for three-and-a-half years as an Air Defense Specialist. His main mission here is to help protect the Commanding General of TFF. Heck's mother was from Mexico, and he grew up in Azusa, Calif.

On Aug. 25, 2nd squad (Workhorse) received small arms fire while convoying to Provincial Hall. Heck was manning the M-240 machine gun in the third vehicle when he identified three insurgents firing from a moving vehicle. He fired on the vehicle until it was out of sight.

"I thought I was hit," said Heck. "I thought I was done for, it's just too bad we couldn't turn around and go after them."

During the fire fight, a bullet hit his turret splitting into three pieces and hitting his face shield, Kevlar, and body armor. Thanks to his protective gear, he was unharmed. According to Heck, the vehicle was found later by Soldiers from the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, with one dead and two critically wounded insurgents. The wounded insurgents died days later at the 228th Combat Support Hospital on Logistics Support Area Diamondback.

"Being out here has been a learning experience," said Heck. "Working with different people from different places, you can learn a

lot."

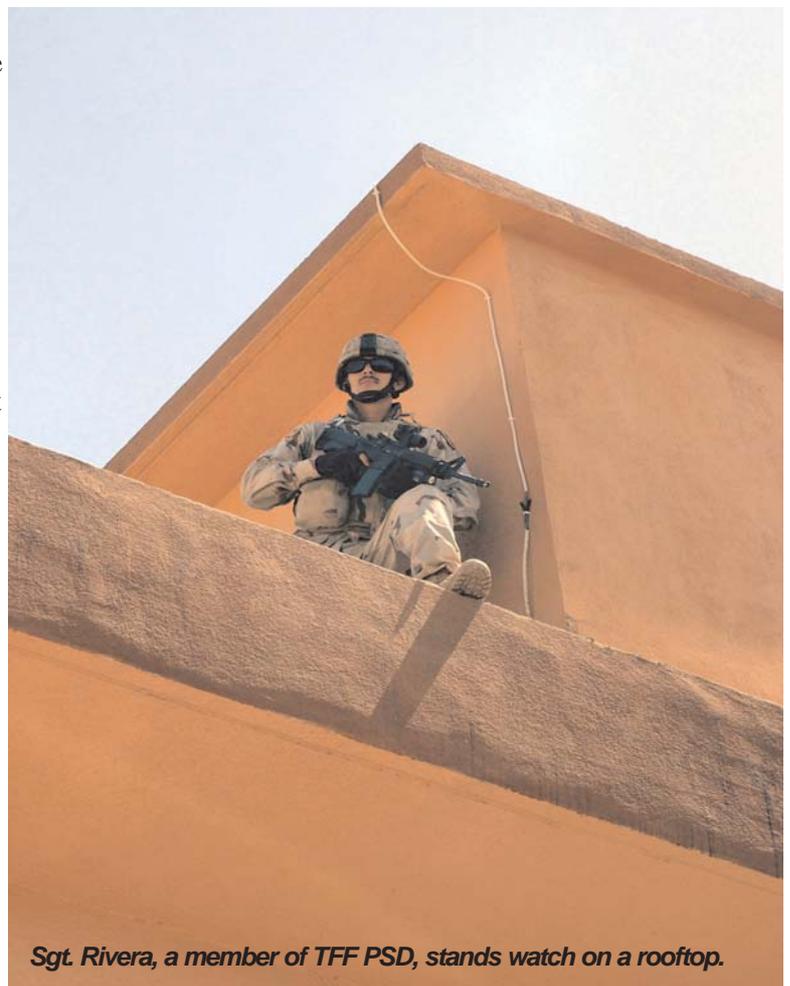
One thing that is very important for any platoon or squad that goes out on convoys regularly, is communication, using radios to reach each vehicle.

Sgt. Reynaldo Jimenez, PSD 2nd squad, has served in the Army for seven years as a Signal Support Specialist. According to Jimenez, his main mission here is driving the Commanding General's vehicle or pulling air guard security, depending on what type of vehicle the squad is using for the mission.

Both of Jimenez's parents are of Hispanic and Mexican decent even though they are both citizens of the U.S.

"I joined the Army so that I could travel and acquire more experiences in life," said Jimenez. Jimenez is in charge of a few Soldiers within the squad and also provides communication assistance for 1st and 2nd squad. As a driver, he has been involved in several attacks from insurgents.

The U.S. Army is very diverse; it includes Soldiers from various heritages. Sometimes, it is these differences that help people learn from each other and help them work together as a team.



*Sgt. Rivera, a member of TFF PSD, stands watch on a rooftop.*

# Progress Seen, Rewards Felt

Story and Photos by Mr. Claude D. McKinney, Gulf Region North U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

MOSUL, Iraq - See the progress. Feel the reward. A tour of schools and health clinics in the northern Iraqi province of Dahuk shows why the U.S. is expending and dedicating resources toward the reconstruction of Iraq. A two-day tour, driving several hundred miles (some on unimproved roads) peeled back the current veneer to the real spirit and soul of Iraq.

There was no imminent threat of a car bomb, Improvised Explosive Device (IED), or some other incident of terror. The local security forces are well organized. Working in conjunction with other Iraqi agencies, they have set in place a series of checkpoints and a presence of guards on the streets. These measures, together with a sense of community pride, has created an atmosphere in which there has been only one insurgent incident reported in the last year.

Regardless of the war that has ravaged this region, peace and prosperity are evident all around. New businesses are being privately built, which supports the Coalition Force's agenda of rebuilding projects such as schools, and health clinics. The streets are teeming with the business of life. Shops are full of goods, and shoppers are buying those goods.

Several of the schools and all the health clinics are still in the construction phase. The projected completion of all the schools is the end of November, sometime later for the clinics. The sites and sounds of busy building greeted the team of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who visited the Bahdeen Health Clinic. There, a concrete floor was being placed.

Farther down the road, a second floor concrete slab and adjoining wall supports were being flooded with cooling water to stabilize its curing. At another location, plaster was being hand applied to become the exterior cover of the concrete post and lintel cin-



der-block clinic. Moving along again to a different location, this time a school, the interior plaster is going up on the same traditional block construction.

As the trip progressed, visits were made to several remote village schools, which had been completed. The recently remodeled and freshly painted classrooms, new restrooms, and playgrounds were outshone by the faces of the students. At one junior high, the response to the engineer's unannounced arrival was moving to say the least. As the six visitors and the two school administrators moved onto the playing field, the students poured from their classes to surround each visitor. This experience was comparable to a traditional high school pep rally, just before a big

homecoming game, with one big difference: there was no pep band or cheer leaders to coax the students into cheers, and applause to their presence.

Words can not express the

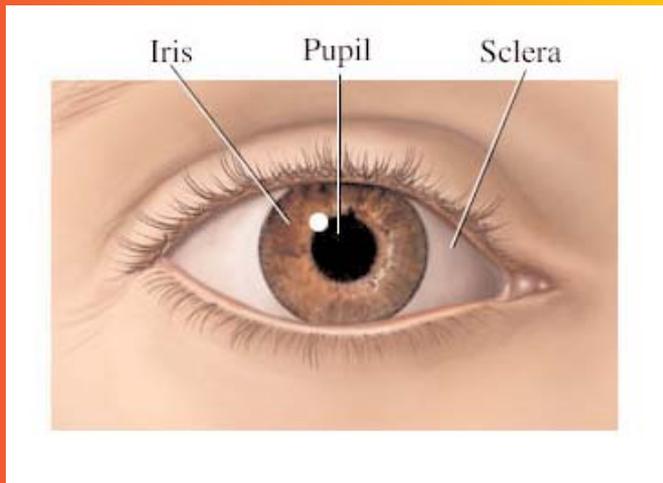
warmth and swelling within each engineer during their visit. The engineers saw the progress they helped create. They felt the reward of a job well done.



# Medical Matters: **EYE SAFETY**

*Story and Photos courtesy of Capt. James D. McGinn Jr., 228th CSH*

**E**ye injuries of all types occur at a rate of more than 2,000 per day. An estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur daily in the American workplace alone, according to the Federal Occupational Health and Safety Association. The best ways to prevent injury to the eye is to always wear the appropriate eye protection. It is thought that wearing the correct



protective eyewear could prevent or reduce severity of injuries by 90%.

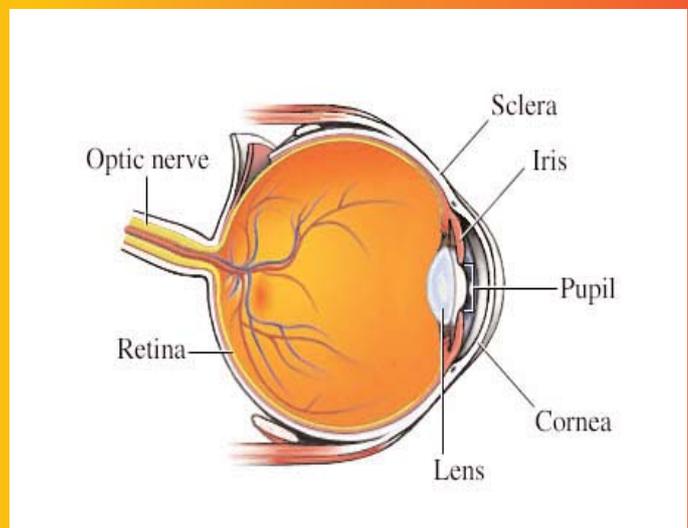
I am Capt. McGinn and I work on the Intermediate Care Ward (ICW) at the 228th Combat Support Hospital (CSH). Recently, a Soldier was admitted to the hospital for injuries to both eyes. He was required to cover both eyes during his hospitalization in order to prevent further injury to his eyes. This type of injury is not relatively common for the CSH so I made an effort to find out how this Soldier was injured in order to help others prevent similar types of injuries.

Apparently, this Soldier was wearing his eye protective goggles right up until he was about 100 yards from the front gate of the Forward Operating Base. Because he was near the entrance, he removed his goggles. Immediately thereafter, an improvised explosive device detonated just a few yards from the front gate. I am unsure if this Soldier's injuries are permanent, but there is little doubt that his injuries would have been lessened or even prevented if he had kept his goggles in place.

There are many reasons to wear protective goggles in the work environment. Protective goggles reduce potential damage caused by the sun and foreign objects such as sand. They also reduce damage caused by chemical burns, such as diesel fuel or battery acid, splashing into your eyes. Finally and most important, protective goggles reduce eye strain, which conserves your energy, allowing you to be a more efficient and effective Soldier.

The cornea is responsible for directing light rays into the eye and helps focus them on the light-sensitive retina at the back of the eye, providing sharp, clear vision. Objects may scratch the surface or become stuck on the eye. If the cornea is scratched, it can be hard to tell whether the object has been removed. A scratched cornea may feel painful as though something is still in the eye.

Eye injuries can be prevented by using protective eyewear. Wear safety glasses, goggles, or face shields when in your work environment. Injuries from ultraviolet light can be prevented by wearing sunglasses that block ultraviolet rays and by wearing broad-brimmed hats, such as the boonie. Ultimately, the key to preventing eye injuries begins with you and your responsibility to take a more pro-active approach to maintaining and sustaining healthy vision.





Front and Back page photos by Sgt. Daniel W. Lucas