

The Marne Express

"Mission, Soldiers, Teamwork"

Volume 2, Issue 18

Serving the Soldiers of Task Force Baghdad

October 23, 2005

In this week's edition of *The Marne Express*



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Maj. Russ Goemaere

An Iraqi man beams with victory moments after voting in the Oct. 15 Constitutional Referendum in the Tissa Nissan district of Baghdad.

Referendum draws steady crowd

Spc. Jennifer D. Atkinson
Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – On a sunny day in Baghdad, children kicked soccer balls back-and-forth in games that stretched along streets empty

of automobile traffic. However, thousands of men and women, some in traditional garb and some in more secular dress, walked from homes and offices to vote in the historic Iraqi constitutional referendum.

In the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division area of operations there was a steady flow of voters on the streets going to or from one of the 63 polling stations spread throughout almost 900 square miles, said Lt. Col. Mike

Pappal, the brigade's deputy commanding officer.

"It was like a big holiday," said Pappal, "People were wearing their best clothes to go vote."

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Courtesy Photo

As dawn breaks, Task Force Baghdad Soldiers prepare for combat operations in an east Baghdad neighborhood Oct. 11.

Joint effort traps 5 terror suspects

Maj. Russ Goemaere
2nd BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Police joined forces with members of Task Force Baghdad to capture five suspected terrorists in east Baghdad Oct. 11.

This is the second mission in the last few days where intelligence from the community led directly to the capture of suspected terrorists. On Oct. 8, the same unit detained five other terror suspects.

"We learned a lot about other terrorists' cells from them. We then talked to people in the community to help us pinpoint their locations. Those are the terrorists we went after today," said Capt. Jason Pelletier, A Battery, 1st

Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

Intelligence reports and tips from local residents indicated that the suspects detained were involved in roadside bombings.

The detainees were found with machine guns, Iraqi Army uniforms, cell phones and other electrical components which could be used in roadside bomb construction.

Pfc. Afhafiz Karteran was the first U.S. Soldier in the door at two of the targeted homes. "You never know what to expect when you go through the door," he said. "We go in fast and expect the bad guy knows we are coming."

In this case, the terrorists were

See TRAPS, page 18

m7 sends

A healthy mind, a healthy body

Command Sgt. Maj. Grant
3rd Inf. Div. command sergeant major

The 3rd Infantry Division has crossed another mile-marker in this journey through Iraq's freedom and democracy, the vote on the Constitutional Referendum. Soldiers, both U.S. and Iraqi, have worked hard to ensure the safety of the citizens as well as the safety of each other. There are many things Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 will be remembered for; freedom of a country and its citizens to develop and vote for their constitution and a government easily come to mind.

Progress, especially in a war-torn country, comes at a price, however. We know what is at stake every time we leave the protection of our camps. Soldiers will never forget the threat of improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne explosive devices while they were out on patrol.

Few will argue that serving in the military is not stressful in a combat zone. There are times when the daily exposure to this stress seems cumulative and adds-up beyond our capability to cope with it. There's nothing wrong with feeling fear or anxiety when dealing with missions that take you to the streets. Anxiety is normal. It's once you stop worrying or caring about your safety that you, and your team members, are in real danger.

If you are feeling overwhelmed by events or a situation is difficult to sort out, talk to your friends, teammates, a supervisor, a chaplain, mental health or Combat Stress Team to help you sort through your dilemma. You'll most likely find that someone can relate to what you are going through. Talking things over really helps you gain a broader perspective of your situation.

Some of us relieve the stress easier than others. Hopefully, sooner or later, we will be able to simply share our feelings with our fellow Soldiers and are comfortable doing so. Stress is exhausting and our body needs to recuperate. Getting enough sleep and rest helps our concentration and allows for clear thinking as well as a quick-reaction time. We should learn to use time to our advantage. As I've said before, learn to manage your time and use it wisely. Rest when you can.

We are aware of the benefits of a physical fitness training program. Participation in a regular PT program is just as good for our mind as it is for our body. Many of us use our running session to sort out options and decisions, others run to just escape the stress of our days. It doesn't matter why you choose to run, keep it up and stay physically and mentally fit.

Statistics show that service members often experience more stress during the two-to three-

months before their redeployment. As we look forward to additional free-time, we cannot become complacent or dwell on what we cannot control.

When there are significant issues at home, spending too much time on the phone or e-mail escalates the issue. Think through each issue and the possible effects of offering advice, your opinions, or giving directions. Nobody likes a back-seat driver! Tempers often flare in the heat of the confrontation, so "Take 5" and think before you "uncork" on your family.

Watch for mood changes in your fellow Soldiers such as withdrawing or becoming more aggressive. Overwhelming stress can sometimes lead to misconduct such as drinking or drug use, fighting with team members or insubordination.

When people are under a lot of stress they may have shorter tempers, lack concentration on their tasks, daydream, or develop a "don't care" attitude about themselves or others.

We have endured our hardships and stepped up to the challenge with remarkable success. We are stronger for it, and so is Iraq. Keep an eye and ear tuned-in to your buddies, and glance in the mirror every now and then. What you see, may or may not be the same person others see!

Stay strong, stay vigilant, and let's stand together as the "A" team, the Marne team!

Keep your exposure to a minimum in the turret. Stay low.



If you can see it, it can see you.



STAY ALIVE

0011

IEDs KILL

The Word on the Street

What was your favorite Halloween costume?

"I cammoed up my face and had a fake knife. I went dressed like Rambo. Everyone thought it was great."



Sgt. Richard Cochea
4/48 CA Bn.
Philadelphia

"I've had a lot of good costumes. A cute one was when I dressed up as a ballerina."



Spc. Sandy Wilson
HHSC STB
Moreno Valley, Calif.

"I put on tie dyed clothes and wore a wig dressed up as a hippie."



Pfc. Manuel Torregroza
HHC 10th BSB
New York City

"I dressed up as a Playboy photographer. I wore a t-shirt and had my camera. It was a fun night."



Spc. Reese Wade
4/48 CA Bn.
Aberdeen, Wash.

"I was Mike Myers from the Halloween movies. I had the mask on, painted my eyes black and had on boots and coversals. It was great I was scaring everybody."



Spc. Bryan Bellamy
HSC 92nd Eng.
Brownwood Texas

The Marne Express

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Commentary

Optimism will counter unfair treatment

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
100th MPAD

As we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel for this deployment, it marks the time when our hard work and perseverance is recognized. However, with the shower of Army Commendation, Meritorious Service Medals, and Bronze Stars "awarded" at the end of the deployment, there are going to be some Soldiers who feel slighted with what they receive.

Do you think you will be fairly recognized for all that you have done?

Whatever your answer is to this question, it is not unheard of to feel that during military or civilian life we, at one point or another, felt we have been treated unfairly. There are going to be times when a

person feels they got the short end of the deal, whether it was in grade school, when little Johnny got the gold star even though you saw him cheating, or if someone else was promoted when you felt more deserving.

Sometimes a person's convictions are so strong that the impression a person has of you will stick forever, no matter how much you feel you have done to prove yourself. Unfortunately, these instances are just "one of those things" that happen in life. Sometimes, it is because standards are not the same for everyone.

So, how do we avoid this situation?

There is no definite answer. We can gripe and complain all we want, but wherever you are on the career-ladder, there

will always be someone above you, especially, if you are a regular Joe.

For example, let's take Pfc. Schmo who played solitaire during his entire deployment while you worked your butt off. Surprisingly, you both are receiving the Army Commendation Medal. There is only one aspect of this situation you can control. And, it falls on you.

One of the great human characteristics we possess is the freedom to choose.

No matter how much others try to pull us down, it is ultimately up to us to choose our own feelings. It is up to us to determine our mindset in situations like this.

As a result of his experiences in a concentration camp during World War II, Victor Frankl wrote his autobiography,

"Man's Search for Meaning." The Nazis took away his family and his free will, but they could never take away how he felt about himself.

Frankl truly took lemons and made lemonade.

During his time of extreme struggle, he never lost faith in himself and he remained optimistic, no matter how hopeless things became.

Even in this day and age, Frankl's example of perseverance still holds meaning and demonstrates man's will to value self-worth.

How we react to what life has dealt us is ultimately up to us. We can choose to give up or we can choose to stand up with dignity and drive on. People may try to overshadow our optimism, but they cannot choose how we feel about ourselves.

So maybe what matters during these times is how you feel about yourself and what you felt you accomplished during your time here.

Will others ever know the impact you made during your time here? Will you be properly recognized?

Maybe, or maybe not, but it probably doesn't even matter.

Recognition is more than just a colorful ribbon or a certificate with words. I believe hard work comes full circle. You might not be acknowledged for your work today, but you will in the future. If you are proud of yourself, it will show, and you will be rewarded — maybe not by a medal or certificate or even a hand shake — but with a feeling of self-worth, which surpasses any recognition others could give you.

To be back in Iraq after time away: A vacationers perspective

Spc. Jeremy D. Crisp
MNC - I PAO

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq — It was the end of my two weeks of bliss that the military calls Rest & Relaxation, and as I boarded that big flight heading back to Iraq, I pondered on the thoughts I heard from many Soldiers about their return from R&R: They were less motivated; sad to be back in Iraq; their vacation wasn't long enough, etc...

I asked myself, "Will I feel that way?"

My response to me was "I hope not." A sergeant major asked me upon my return from R&R, "You depressed to be back?"

My response was, "No way sergeant major!"

"Well, you will be," he replied.

For some reason, I don't see it happening. Sure, another cold frosty beer, another juicy steak from The Outback Steakhouse and a little more time with my friends and family would be nice, but

it's just those among other things that bring me back to this country with a sense of vigor.

I'm reminded more now of just how good we have it in the United States. When I see a shoeless Iraqi child, or fly over Baghdad rooftops and see people sleeping on their roofs because it's too hot inside at night because of the lack of electricity, it hits me that we have so much to take for granted back home. It also hits me that, "this is why we're here." We are all playing a part in giving the people of Iraq something they've never had before, and something we have the luxury of — freedom.

I'd like to look down the line about ten years and see happy Iraqis eating their own version of juicy steak from their own version of a corporate restaurant named after the desert region of another country.

I'd like to see electricity in every Iraqi home — 24 hours a day. Clean water to drink, and no threats of suicide bombers.

In my line of work, I have the oppor-

tunity of traveling across this country, writing stories about the great things Soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines do on a daily basis. If doing my small piece of the job helps to get some of these things done for the people of Iraq, then no, I am not and will not be depressed — very much — to be back here.

I've seen the positive attitudes in service members, along with positive changes in Iraq since January. I marvel at the resiliency of the Iraqi people.

I have had the pleasure of writing about the work our service members do, and in turn, they have astounded me with their professionalism, heart, dedication and motivation to help each other and the country of Iraq. I count my blessings to have the ability to tell their stories and to be able to continue doing what I do here and seeing what I see here. For that, I am not and will not be depressed to be back here.

In the months left of my deployment, I look forward to seeing more of the things — that in my eyes — have made

fighting for Iraq worthwhile. I am heartened with every high-five I get from an Iraqi child, for every thumbs-up I see a battle-hardened infantryman give a fellow Iraq Soldier, and for every civil-military operation I see come to fruition. For all of that, in a way, I'm kind of happy to be back.

For those troopers coming back from R&R with a less optimistic attitude than me, maybe look at it this way:

It was only a few hundred years ago that repressed, impoverished citizens sought to better their standing in life by seeking out a new world with the inherent rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in mind. If in a way, the descendants of those same people, i.e. you and me, might be able to help another group of citizens an ocean away who, much like our forefathers wish for the same liberties, then let us do it with pride and be able to look back and see that we had a hand in making history for a nation that will be talked about for centuries to come.

Unsung Heroes

Command Sgt. Maj. Grant
3rd Inf. Div. command sergeant major

You don't have to go far to see the handiwork of this week's unsung heroes: our electricians and carpenters in uniform.

All around the camp we see projects and improvements that require the skill and professionalism that most of us only imagine we have.

At one time or another, we have all had an issue that required an electrician or a carpenter. Most of us look at the problem, scratch our head, and say, "Oh, I can fix that" only to later utter the words "call the repairman" under our breath!

Truth be told, most of us get the "heebie jeebies" when it comes to electrical work. Just the thought of getting shocked or to a greater degree, electrocuted, is enough to send chills up our spine. Not so with the electricians, these Soldiers walk into our offices, not only with a rifle, but with a black bag containing their meters, gizmos, and a spool or two of wire and solve our problems pronto!

And, let's also give it up for the carpenters. I don't know how they do

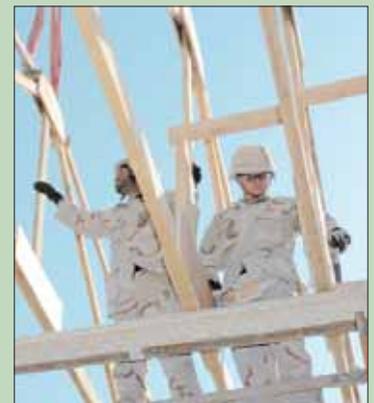
it, but every time I have a hammer in one hand and a board in the other I get a splinter. We might think, "oh, anybody can cut a board in-two," but to cut the board so it fits perfectly without a gap is often another issue. In just a few weeks these guys are building and raising the walls of yet another building. Most of us bend more nails than we actually drive into a board, not to mention wacking our thumb once or twice.

We are lucky and proud to have a group of Soldiers as professional as our electricians and carpenters on our Mame team.

It's a welcomed sight when these Soldiers, our unsung heroes, walk in the door with their bag of tools. These aren't imaginary ghost-busters on a movie screen, these are the real deal, problem-busters who have come to fix our problems and make our work environment and living conditions the best that they can be.

I salute you and the 3rd Infantry Division salutes you!

Well done Soldiers!
Rock of the Marne!



Photos by Spc. Derek Del Rosario
(above) Philadelphia native Sgt. Rabiell Rudd (left) and Olyphant, Pa., native Jared Kavalow, both of C Co. 365th Engineering Combat Battalion, prepare to put a truss on the roof of a warehouse structure on Sept. 19.
(left) Spc. Robert Astrella, an electrician with C Company, 365th Engineer Battalion, wires a light fixture in a medical logistics warehouse being built here. Astrella is from Newville, Pa.

Iraqi women learn about constitution

Spc. Dan Balda
4th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – On Oct. 15, Iraqis voted on their constitution, it was one of the most important days in the budding democracy's history. For its historical scope to be fully realized, a large percentage of Iraqis needed to make their voices heard through their newfound freedom to choose their future.

With this in mind, the Al-Rashid District Council, along with a women's group, held a conference to promote greater understanding of constitutions and to encourage dialogue on the constitutional drafting process in Iraq.

Task Force Baghdad Soldiers helped organize the conference and were also on-hand to observe the proceedings.

"Back home, we have sections we vote on, and if you don't read it right, 'no' means 'yes' and 'yes' means 'no,'" said Sgt. Maj. Tammara Wipf, A Company, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion and a liaison with the group. "They wanted information on this constitution so they would know how to vote."

Khazal Chassib Augla, a lawyer who works for a non-governmental organization called Civic Dialogue Group, sees it as his mission to explain the sometimes baffling language to various groups. He has spoken to doctors, sports teams, young adults and teachers about

the constitution.

"I'd love to see a very active role (for women) in the government because women represent the mother, the professor and the lawyer in our society so we would like to see the role enhanced," he said.

The women who attended the conference hold influential positions — teachers, administrators and members of their neighborhood councils. The women's group does many positive things for the Al-Rashid area. They assist widows of the war by helping them with clothing, food and personal items. They provide diapers, baby formula and other infant items to needy women.

And now, as they gain a working understanding of the constitution, they can bring their new knowledge to their jobs, families and friends to make the constitutional process more accessible to everyone.

Wipf believes the women showed up because information is power and she wants to provide as much "power" to these women as possible.

Wipf said she feels a certain kinship with the women.

"I do like working with these women," she said. "They are going through a lot of struggles that we in the United States went through 50 years ago, so I want to help them. That would be my small contribution to this process,



Spc. Dan Balda

Khazal Chassib Augla, a lawyer who works for a non-governmental organization called Civic Dialogue Group, speaks to a women's group about the constitutional process at the Al-Rashid District Council Oct. 3.

but it would mean a lot to me."

After learning such facets of the constitution like who should participate in the process and whose rights should be protected by the document, Augla held a mock-drafting to show the women how difficult it can be to make sure all groups are represented

fairly and equally.

"Hopefully in a couple of years, when everything is settled down and Iraq is safe and flourishing, these women will feel like they played a very important part in one of the most pivotal moments in their country's history," Wipf said.

IWCD ready to 'open doors' for women's opportunities

Spc. Brian P. Henretta
100th MPAD

CAMP FALCON, Iraq – In a house which once stood as a symbol of the former regime, a new hope will arise for women throughout Baghdad.

The Iraqi Women's Center for Development is establishing a women's center in the former palace of Saddam Hussein's daughter in the Al Rashid district of Baghdad.

Pascale Isho, president of the women's group, toured the near-empty palace recently to get a firsthand look at the condition of the building as well as see how much furniture and supplies will be needed to make the women's center a success.

The IWCD's mission is to provide women with the resources to improve their lives on their own in a male dominated society, said Pascale.

The group accomplishes this through educational, technical, political and various other programs.

"We want to help their lives by allowing them to find work," Pascale said, "and we can do this at the new center by teaching skills. We will teach women how to sew, use computers and other job skills."

Another occupational goal of the IWCD is to get women hired to work at schools, a line of work that is typically male dominated in Iraq, said Sgt. Maj. Tammara Wipf, Alpha Company, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion first sergeant, who works closely with Pascale to provide programs for women and facilitate the location for the new center.

"(The IWCD) holds discussions on getting women hired as school security guards, and there are many school principals and teachers in the group who really want to see more women fill

teaching jobs as well," said Wipf.

In order for women to become more involved in the Iraqi workplace, they need to become more politically active, and that is another goal of the women's center.

"We hold women's political workshops, like the upcoming Iraqi Constitution workshop," said Pascale.

The constitutional workshop will discuss what a "yes" or "no" vote will mean for the country, without putting any pressure on attendees to vote either way. It is merely a way to inform interested Iraqi women on the subject, Pascale said. The group often holds discussions on democracy, voting, human rights and women's rights.

There have been challenges in getting women a voice in the political process. For many women it is a difficult balancing act to stay true to their faith and more traditional customs, yet at the same time is progressive enough to be heard, said Wipf.

Another challenge has been gathering enough resources to make the women's center operational.

"We have been working with the Iraqi government to have the palace donated and changed from a government building to the headquarters of a non-governmental organization," said Pascale. "They have been very helpful and the process is going along well but now the challenge is getting money to fill the building."

The IWCD is attempting to raise money from dona-

tions by other NGOs, American charitable organizations and Iraqi contributions. The problem with raising funds is that the women in charge of raising the money are often very underprivileged themselves and don't have any of their own money to give, Pascale said.

"Women are the poorest section of the population, but we try very hard to raise money to operate. More support is always needed," said Pascale.

Other objectives of the IWCD include providing food and clothing to widows of men killed in the war, legal guidance, top medical and dental care, teaching those with disabilities, providing children's day care so women can go to work, and help to build a strong community. Pascale feels that the women's center could lead to a decrease in the level of violence in the city.

"We will have daily activities that will allow women from all backgrounds to come together for a common cause. It will create good community relationships, and that is one way of creating security," Pascale said.

Pascale plans to have the women's center operational by sometime in October, depending on how the fundraising goes. She is overjoyed at the beauty of the palace of Saddam's daughter and says she is very thankful that her women's group is being given the opportunity to use it for the betterment of women throughout Iraq.

"We want to help their lives by allowing them to find work. And we can do this at the new center by teaching skills."

Pascale Isho
IWCD president

**No
Soldier
left
behind**

Sgt. Matthew Maupin
"I will not leave a fallen comrade"

These well known words from the Warrior Ethos ring true for

Sgt. Matt Maupin.

Maupin is an Army Reserve Soldier from 724th Transportation Company who was captured April 9, 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2.

Sgt. Maupin – we are still looking for you and we will find you.

You have not been forgotten.





Spc. Dan Balda

(above) The silhouette of three Soldiers from B Troop, 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment prior to a night mission searching for suspected terrorists. Soldiers assigned to B Troop, 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, perform a cordon-and-search mission in the Al-Dora district Oct. 7 to ensure the streets are safe prior to the Oct. 15 Constitutional Referendum.



4th BCT patrols streets prior to referendum vote

Spc. Dan Balda
4th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – For the majority of Soldiers who spent a year deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2, the most memorable moment was the election Jan. 31. Newscasts showed Iraqis citizens defying death threats and joyously brandishing their newly ink-stained fingers after voting.

Many OIF 3 Soldiers of the 4th Brigade Combat Team looked forward to the Oct. 15 Constitutional Referendum with the same amount of optimism. Before Iraqi citizens voted on the new constitution, Soldiers made sure the streets were safe and that terrorists were not using hideouts to manufacture explosives.

The Soldiers of B Troop, 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment executed a late night cordon and search Oct. 7 to make sure known terrorists of Al-Dora did not return to their homes.

“All the targets are tied to insurgent cells,” said Capt. Timon Groves, B Troop commander.

He explained that many of the terrorists were known for making and placing improvised explo-

sive devices around the Al-Dora area. Some of their houses had previously been raided and materials used in making IED and car bombs were found during the searches.

Groves said he hasn't really seen anything that would point to a raised danger level in his sector due mostly to his unit's presence there as well as the presence of the Iraqi Public Order Brigade.

“We've got 24-hour operations in the area,” Groves said. “We've got guys maintaining their presence, doing mounted and dismounted patrols and the POB has many checkpoints throughout the area 24 hours a day.”

The POB and B Troop go out on joint missions frequently, but on this particular moonless night, B Troop completed the mission solo. During the course of the evening, no terror suspects were actually detained but that was not necessarily the intent, said Capt. Mike Martin, the troop executive officer.

The only nail-biting moment of the night was when one keen-eyed Soldier noticed what appeared to be an AK-47 in the window of one of the homes. The Soldiers investigated, and it turned out to be a toy left in the window, much to his father's chagrin.

Martin knocked on the door and through an interpreter asked the owner of the house what the weapon was doing in his window. It was important for Martin to check out the potential threat, but to do it as politely as he could.

“If we don't think that it's going to be that big of a deal, we bring the man outside and have him walk us through the house,” he said. “In this case, there were women and children in the house trying to sleep, so you want to check it out, but you don't want to disturb them too much. Be as polite as you can be, but still do your job.”

Even though the raid did not catch any terrorists, Martin was glad he and his Soldiers were able to do their part to make sure the referendum vote was as safe as possible.

“I think (the referendum) is a huge thing for this country,” he said. “It's something that is so big. Most people won't realize what impact it has on their future, we are going to see a huge change in the country,” Martin remarked. “It's good that we are going to see this country set-up right and we are not going to leave until we see that done and done right.”

DoD Announces Issuance of Reimbursement Policy

DOD Release

Special to The Marne Express

The Department of Defense announced today the issuance of a policy and procedures for reimbursing members of the armed forces for privately purchase protective, safety or health equipment for Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom as required by Public Law 108-375, section 351.

According to this policy, the individual services shall reimburse members of the armed forces for the cost, including shipping, of any protective, safety or health equipment that was purchased by

either the member or by another person for the member's personal use in these operations.

There are certain requirements for this reimbursement. First, the equipment must be included on a list of shortage equipment that certifies the items were critical to the protection, safety or health of its members. The Department of Defense has already certified a basic list that includes ballistic vests, components of ballistic vests, helmets, ballistic eye protection and hydration systems. The services can request that additional items be certified for reimbursement.

The service member must complete a

Department of Defense Form 2902, “Claim for Reimbursement for Privately Purchased Protective, Safety or Health Equipment used in Combat” form, which must be submitted to his or her chain of command. Former members, who have separated from the service, may submit this form to an authorizing official designated by their former service at an address on the form. All claims must be submitted by Oct. 3, 2006. Forms will be available at: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eform/s/dd2902.pdf>.

The protective, safety or health equipment must have been purchased after Sept. 10, 2001, and before Aug. 1, 2004.

Congress may decide to extend this statutory deadline.

Reimbursement for any one item is limited to the actual purchase price and shipping cost, supported by receipts, which cannot exceed \$1,100. If service members do not have receipts, they will be reimbursed a standard estimated cost for each item, as provided on the list of certified items.

All reimbursed items become property of the U. S. government and must be turned in to the unit logistics officer or as otherwise directed by service instruction, unless they were destroyed in combat or are otherwise no longer available for good reason.

Negligent discharge can be prevented by proper clearing-barrel procedures!

(right) 2nd Lt. Kyle Hemminger, a tank platoon leader with A Troop, 3/7 Cav., searches an abandoned building in Baghdad for signs of terrorist activity Sept. 23. Hemminger is from Port Clinton, Ohio.



Task Force Baghdad scouts secure, rebuild Baghdad

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – Even though Task Force Baghdad Soldiers continue to conduct a range of operations in east Baghdad from refurbishing local schools to chasing terrorists who place improvised explosive devices on roadways, Soldiers say they are ready for the task at hand.

“We’re hunting the bad guys every night, every day,” said Spc. Dwayne Jackson, a driver with A Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. “Everything comes naturally to us now.”

Jackson said they have spent one year training specifically for these types of missions before arriving in Iraq.

On the night of Sept. 22, Jackson’s unit set up several observation points on a major roadway in its sector looking for signs of terrorist activity. At one observation point Soldiers painted over inflammatory graffiti on a brick wall near the highway.

“We’re painting over it to send a message that terrorists aren’t welcome here,” said Sgt. Matt Parker, 301st Psychological Operations Company, operating in support of 3/7 Cav.

Parker hung posters at several locations advertising the Baghdad Tips Hotline, a telephone number and e-mail address where Baghdad residents can call or e-mail to report criminal activity.

“The program has been increasing in effectiveness,” said Parker, who hails from San Diego. “The locals are interested in getting terrorists out of their country.”

“We’ve seen IED and rocket attacks decrease since we took over the sector,” said 1st Sgt. John Campbell, the A Troop, 3/7 Cav., first sergeant. “Since we’ve been running with the increased presence, attacks have sharply dropped off. We’re out every night in force, showing people we’re keeping them safe.”

The squadron is involved in numerous projects helping to rebuild infrastructure neglected under Saddam Hussein’s regime.

Recently, civil military operations officers from 3/7 Cav. inspected project sites in Jisr-Diyala and Medain to assess their secu-

rity and progress.

“We’re focused on schools, water, electricity, sewers and government sites,” said 1st Lt. Richard Paco, 3/7 Cav., assistant CMO officer. “These have a great impact on the economy; in the short term by providing jobs and in the long term by creating a healthy infrastructure.”

Paco recently inspected a generator at an elementary school in Jisr-Diyala. Many new desks and repairs were purchased by the squadron commander’s emergency relief program. CERP provides funds for battalion-sized units to contract for improvements on local infrastructure in their areas.

Paco said work is prioritized according to need. Outlying villages tend to need improved water and electric service the most.

“The kids love school projects,” Paco said. “One of our contractors paints pictures of soccer players on the walls. The children like that guy a lot!”

School guard Majeed Mohammed Jassim described the condition of the school two years ago as he reviewed the improvements.

“There were no lights, the walls were broken, big holes (were) in the ceiling and the bathroom didn’t work,” Jassim said. “The repair is good for the children, they are happy to come to school now.”

Further down the road local government is operating out of a refurbished District Advisory Council hall.

“The DAC building is a big improvement over the youth center they used as temporary offices,” Paco said. “It is dedicated for their exclusive use, they can provide their own security and it gives the council members a sense of ownership.”

From the DAC hall, one can see signs that the local government is providing essential services to its citizens such as new power lines and garbage collection at a nearby market.

“We had nothing to do with some of the projects we see, which is a good sign,” Paco said. “People’s confidence in their government is growing because of these projects, and the huge turnout during voter registration reflects that.”



Photos by Spc. Ben Brody

Soldiers of 3/7 Cav. enter an abandoned building in eastern Baghdad during a mission .



(above) 2nd Lt. Kyle Hemminger, Staff Sgt. Chris Sherlock and Spc. John Murphy, all of A Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, search an abandoned building. Murphy is from Monroe, La.; Hemminger is from Port Clinton, Ohio; and Sherlock is from Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

(right) Sgt. Matt Parker, 301st PSYOPS Co., paints over terrorist graffiti during a night patrol in Baghdad Sept. 22.





Photos by 1st Lt. Adam Harris

(above) Soldiers from C Troop, 3/7 Cav., and Iraqi Security Forces from the 3rd Public Order Brigade visit students at the Gilgamish Primary Girls School in Al-Doria 2 to pass out school supplies.

(right) Children from the Gilgamish Primary Girls School in al-Doria 2 proudly show off their new backpacks. Soldiers from C Troop, 3/7 Cav. Regiment and Iraqi Security Forces from the 3rd Public Order Brigade gave bags filled with crayons, pencils, writing tablets, and other school necessities to 280 students at the school.



Iraqi, U.S. Forces distribute school supplies to Iraqi kids

1st Lt. Adam Harris
3/7 Cav.

BAGHDAD – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers and Iraqi Security Forces teamed up to conduct a school supply drop in a village near the Salman Pak district in east Baghdad Sept. 21.

Soldiers from C Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, and ISF Soldiers from the 3rd Public Order Brigade talked with the students and gave the children school bags filled with crayons, pencils, writing tablets, and other school necessities donated by the Poland Ohio School District in Youngstown, Ohio.

“The main purpose of this school drop is to provide

basic school necessities for the local village children, while improving relations with the residents of Al-Doria 2,” said Capt. Mike Burgoyne, the 3/7 Cavalry Regt. commander. “It’s an opportunity for the residents to see Coalition Forces and the Public Order Brigade working together to improve conditions.”

The school drop was held at Gilgamish Primary Girls School in Al-Doria 2, located about a mile outside Salman Pak. Although at first the majority of students seemed hesitant, several students thanked the CF and POB forces for what they were doing.

“I have three brothers and we do not have enough paper and pencils,” said Hanna Aiad al-Shamari, a 10-year-old student. “Now I have enough to share with my brothers.”

“Although our assets and time are consumed with patrol and operational missions, the Soldiers feel good about being able to help out the children in this area,” said Staff Sgt. Thomas Wyatt, a mortar section sergeant.

By the time the visit ended, 280 students received bags of school supplies and 10 boxes of teacher supplies were donated so each instructor would have enough to begin the school year.

“I want to thank the people in Ohio and the American and Iraqi Soldiers for helping out the girls,” said Bushara Mahidi al-Jabori, headmaster at Gilgamish Primary Girls School. “Although our school needs a lot of repairs, things are getting better for everyone.”

POB conducts first mission without coalition oversight

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – In the dead of night on Sept. 24, troops from Iraqi Police’s 2nd Public Order Brigade conducted a historic mission – their first raid without oversight by Coalition Forces.

The mission targeted members of terrorist groups and criminal gangs in Medain, a district south of Baghdad.

The 2nd POB detained 20 suspects and confiscated several AK-47 assault rifles.

“Medain is a very important area for us to secure. Many people suspected of terrorism live in that region,” said Brig. Gen. Hamed Abraham, 2nd POB commander. “Our brigade is conducting qualitative operations, not quantitative, and it has resulted in a safer Baghdad.”

“This is the first joint mission, planned and led by the 2nd Public Order Brigade. The Iraqis are out front,” said Maj. Rick Ackerman, Special Police Transition Team. “There was no American intervention. The 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry

provided an outer cordon and the Special Police Transition Team provided a liaison between Coalition Forces and the Public Order Brigade.”

The SPTT is a Fort Drum, N.Y., based unit that specializes in training and advising military personnel in combat. They have worked extensively with the 2nd POB in Baghdad for the past six months.

“The Public Order Brigade will be instrumental in keeping Baghdad safe,” said Maj. John Hinrichs, a SPTT member from Gouverneur, N.Y. “They are critical to security in the city.”

The POB is a paramilitary wing of the Iraqi Police, designed to provide large-scale law enforcement operations in Baghdad in order to avoid using Iraqi Army troops in dense civilian populations.

According to Ackerman, from Jamestown, N.D., the next step is to repeat this type of mission to establish a pattern of competence that will help the SPTT assess the POB’s readiness.

“The Public Order Brigade will continue doing what they demonstrated today – taking the lead in every aspect of



Spc. Ben Brody

Public Order Brigade troops proudly display their Iraqi flag after their first raid conducted without U.S. oversight in Baghdad Sept. 24.

the mission, while they further refine their planning,” Ackerman said. “We’re moving towards a point where the Public Order Brigade won’t need us – our job is put ourselves out of a job. As the Public Order Brigade stands up, we stand down.”

“Conducting joint operations helps both the U.S. and Iraqi units,” said Lt.

Col. Robert Kerecz, the SPTT commander. “The more we understand and appreciate each other’s capabilities, the more effective team we are.”

“We will hunt terrorists wherever they dwell,” Abraham said after the mission. “We give the Iraqi people hope as we develop our army, and make it more advanced, so we may live in peace.”

“The Public Order Brigade will continue doing what they demonstrated today - taking the lead in every aspect of the mission.”

Maj. Rick Ackerman
Special Police Transition Team

Support specialists keep aviators flying high

Spc. Jennifer D. Atkinson
Avn. Bde. PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PROSPERITY, Iraq – Aviation support in the form of air assaults, raids, security and reconnaissance can make a huge difference in the day-to-day operations of Task Force Baghdad Soldiers.

These missions don't just appear out of thin air. The missions are planned and executed with the help of a special group of Soldiers known as the Brigade Aviation Element.

The BAE is a new concept in supporting maneuver brigades. In years past, an aviation officer, often a junior officer, acted as a liaison to a ground unit. Because there was no requirement to permanently assign an aviator to do this mission, liaisons changed frequently, resulting in little to no continuity from mission to mission. Thus, a long-term relationship between the ground forces and the aviation unit didn't exist.

A new BAE program was developed to serve both the aviation community and the ground forces. The program permanently assigns an aviator and team of aviation operations specialists to the ground maneuver unit to integrate and work directly with the brigade staff.

The BAE team trains and deploys with the unit, working

to coordinate all aviation requests and acting as the aviation subject matter expert for the ground brigade commander.

"Some days, missions come fast and furious; other days are more relaxed. It all depends on the day and the mission," said Spc. Danielle S. Navarro, an aviation operations specialist.

Navarro keeps track of everything from coordinating travel on the "Marne Express" helicopter shuttle to submitting aviation movement requests and coordinating attack helicopter assets in support of ongoing operations.

Navarro's job is a bit different from what her counterparts in the 3rd Infantry Division's Aviation Brigade do on a daily basis. If she were assigned to an aviation battalion, she would manage flight records for the pilots, track flights and maintain a mission log. In this combat theater of operations, Navarro and the other aviation specialists in the BAE are responsible for making sure missions are coordinated properly and the manifests are correct and routed to the correct destinations.

"We work hand in hand with the division, the ground units and the aviation brigade," Navarro said.

The BAE team started training with 3rd Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Learning how the ground units worked was critical to accomplishing the mission.

The training that the BAE and 4th BCT conducted at Fort Stewart helped to integrate the BAE into the brigade, said Maj. Ross Coffman, 4th BCT executive officer.

"The BAE has been nothing but an asset," Coffman said, "since it takes more effort and resources when you don't know what's right."

"It was all on-the-job training," said Maj. Patrick T.O. Wright, an aviation officer with the BAE. "We trained each other to understand aviation operations."

Having the BAE integrated into the maneuver brigade enhances the information flow between the aviation units and the ground forces, Wright said.

"I make sure that (the request) is clear and concise and that it makes sense to me as an aviator before I send it on."

Being able to speak the language and communicate clearly with the aviation units has been a huge advantage, Coffman added. "They provide a subject matter expert from the planning to the execution on every operation."

Having a dedicated section to coordinate aviation support has taken an extra task off the shoulders of battle captains, Coffman said. "The BAE is a dynamite force multiplier."



Spc. Jennifer D. Atkinson

Spc. Danielle S. Navarro, aviation operations specialist, manifests a passenger on a flight in theater. Navarro and other members of the Brigade Aviation Element, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, coordinate aviation assets and ground maneuver units.

Here comes the 'BOOM!'



Courtesy Photo

Soldiers from A Battery, 3rd Battalion, 6th Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division conduct a calibration exercise Oct. 1.

FY05 re-enlistments exceed expectations

Spc. Maria Mengrone
100th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — Soldiers assigned to Task Force Baghdad are answering their nation's call to "stay Army" by ending Fiscal Year 2005 with more than 4,000 reenlistments.

In return for their continued service, they're also earning a combined total of more than \$42 million in tax-free re-enlistment bonuses.

"All reenlistment goals set by the Department of the Army for FY05 have been met with overwhelming success," said Sgt. Maj. Craig T. Lott, Multi-National Division-Baghdad retention sergeant major, and a member of Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division.

"The Army gives us a target percentage of what we need to obtain, for example it may be a goal to retain 20 to 25 percent of our initial-term Soldiers and 40 percent of our mid-term Soldiers ... so what-

ever percentage we're given is how we drive our goals," Lott said.

End-of-year calculations show

reenlistment success in all three major categories of service members. Re-enlistments of initial-term Soldiers (those with less than six years in service) were at 127 percent of the targeted goal; mid-career Soldiers (six to 10 years) were at 134 percent; and career Soldiers (more than 10 years) were at 165 percent.

Master Sgt. Harl A. Marzan, senior retention career counselor from STB, said in the past eight months the National Guard component alone has reenlisted more than 145 Soldiers who have received nearly \$2 million in tax-free bonuses.

Marzan said although the

Army National Guard will probably not meet its recruiting goal for FY05, the retention reenlistments have been very successful.

Remarkably, most of the reenlistment achievements of FY05 have been met in the last nine months. Many of the Soldiers were preoccupied with preparations for the deployment to Iraq during the beginning of the fiscal year.

"At first the mission seemed unattainable, but a lot of hard work and the bonus amounts have helped out," said Sgt. 1st Class Matt J. Wickham, 3rd Inf. Div. retention operations non-commissioned officer-in-charge. "The success of the fiscal year does not go to one person; instead, it's a combination of hard work from unit commanders, first sergeants, NCOs, officers and everyone involved in the retention mission."

"A lot of soldiers feel we withhold options, but that's simply not true," he added.

"There is no reason for us to do that. I want to see them get every option for which they are entitled. We are

always going to err on the side of the Soldier. We are always going to try to get them what they want whenever possible."

Although FY05 has ended with positive results for all personnel involved in the retention process, leaders must now ensure that Soldiers who have already reenlisted receive everything they were promised on their contracts.

Lott said it is important to take care of the more than 4,000 Soldiers who reenlisted the past year.

"If we made a commitment to them we need to make sure it's honored and that the Soldier receives what he or she was promised," he said.



Capt. Dan Cummings

An Iraqi Army platoon attends a class conducted by members of the Military Training Team, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment and a specially-trained Iraqi strike platoon. Training includes physical fitness training, first aid, marksmanship and tactical training.

Iraqi, U.S. Soldiers team up to teach leadership basics

Capt. Dan Cummings
1/64 Armor

BAGHDAD — There's a proverb that says early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy and wise. All Soldiers have had the requirement at one time or another to get up early, and if they were smart, they went to bed early.

The lives of Soldiers often constitutes a daily routine of waking up early in the morning, participating in physical fitness training, taking a break for hygiene, and heading off for a full day of training, or here in Iraq, combat missions. This routine is familiar to most American Soldiers supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom 3.

But, that's not necessarily the case for many Iraqi Soldiers.

Soldiers of the Military Training Team from 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team recently teamed up with an Iraqi strike platoon to work with other Iraqi platoons of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

According to one of the MiTT trainers, Staff Sgt. Luis Coriano, one platoon rotates out of the operational patrol schedule to receive training each week ensuring all platoons have the opportunity to train.

"We use four instructors from the ISP to conduct training in Arabic," said Coriano.

On a recent Saturday evening, the platoons' leadership was directed to the MiTT to receive a schedule and overview of the week's activities.

Although it appeared to be just an administrative task, Coriano said the meeting was also an evaluation of the platoon's leadership. Simply observing which members attended the meeting offered an insight into how the platoon is led and who is doing most of the work.

A recurring theme at MiTT training is encouraging the development of the Iraqi non-commissioned officers. Coriano said it is important for the platoon leader to use his NCOs to help run the platoon.

"A good platoon will have leadership

involvement up and down the chain of command," he said. "The platoon leader must lead through his NCOs and the NCOs must be counted on to execute the mission to success. Mission accomplishment depends on the ability of the leadership to form a cohesive and responsive team."

Early the next morning, the platoon training began with organized physical training. Iraqi Soldiers were sweating side-by-side with their American instructors as they participated in the drills. Coriano said the regimen of calisthenics and short runs was not overly strenuous.

The goal is to instill the importance of physical training in the platoons and foster the notion of officers and NCOs leading by example in all things as opposed to achieving peak physical fitness in just one week.

After a short break for hygiene and breakfast, tactical training became the focus. One primary topic of instruction was rifle marksmanship. Coriano said once the Iraqi Soldiers properly zeroed their weapons, the Soldiers fired from different positions, working up to basic reflexive firing techniques and drills.

MiTT medical NCO, Staff Sgt. Dexter Drayton, 1st Bn., 2nd IA Bde., is the primarily instructor for first aid. Like the other areas of the training course, instruction in first aid is a shared effort.

"Medical training went well," said Drayton, from Brooklyn, N.Y. "Considering the Iraqi Soldiers had minimal knowledge of the subject area, they displayed great desire to learn and train to manage on their own."

"Training is going great," Coriano added. "The Iraqis put a lot of effort into it, and the four instructors from the strike platoon are disciplined and very professional."

Capt. Mike Dick, the 1/2 IA MiTT commander, believes the week of training will pay dividends long after it is over.

"In addition to the actual training the platoons received, they will also identify individuals in their organization who are skilled enough to teach new Iraqi Soldiers," he said. "Ultimately, achieving self-sustaining Iraqi formations is what we're trying to achieve."

"Today we can smile and enjoy the success, but we have to know that tomorrow it starts all over again. We look forward to the start of FY06."

Sgt. Maj. Craig T. Lott
MND-B retention sergeant major

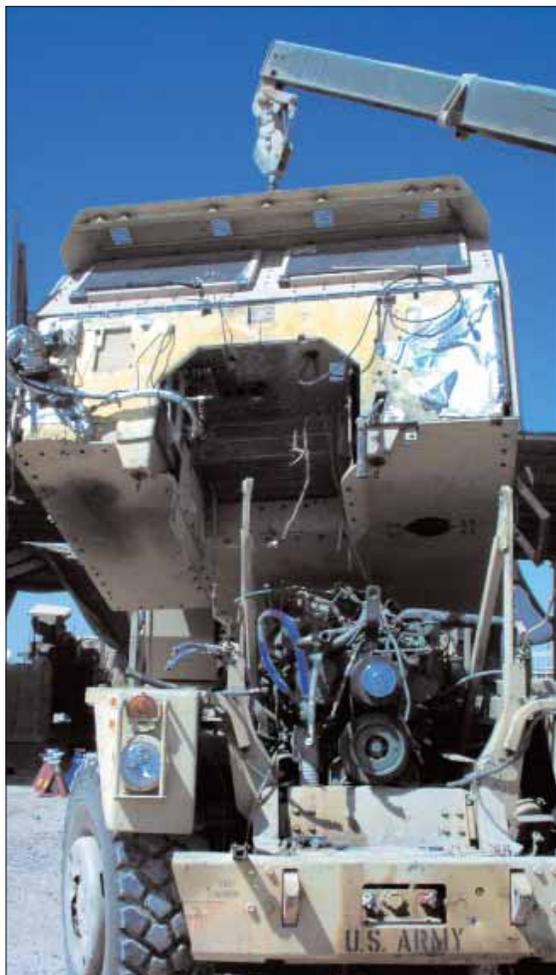
"Training is going great. The Iraqis put a lot of effort into it, and the four instructors from the Strike Platoon are disciplined and very professional."

Staff Sgt. Luis Coriano
1st Bn., 64th Armor

**Attention Soldiers!
Don't let the cooler weather fool you.
It's still important to Drink Water!**

48th Brigade mechanics prove naysayers wrong

Staff Sgt Jerry Love, Sgt David Bill
48th BCT PAO



Sgt. David Bill

Mechanics from 48th Brigade Combat Team lift off the cab of the Heavy Equipment Transporter Tractor, revealing an engine that needed to be replaced.

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – They said it couldn't be done, but Task Force Baghdad Soldiers certainly proved the naysayers wrong.

Mechanics from 48th Brigade Combat Team replaced the engine in a Heavy Equipment Transporter Tractor in seven days, a task they were told would take civilian contractors four weeks to accomplish.

Staff Sgt. Jerry Love, of B Company, 148th Support Battalion, was told the vehicle needed to be shipped to either Camp Anaconda near Balad, Iraq, or sent to Kuwait in order to replace the HETT's engine.

"We were told we did not have the right equipment, personnel, or training to do this task. Even the active duty units said to ship it off to the civilians," Love said.

"We had more 'donts' than do's' when we looked at the job," he added. "But I knew the team could get it done if we worked together."

This job was critical since A Company, 148th Support Bn. needed the large transport trucks to sustain the support they provide to the 48th BCT. The mechanics quickly realized they would be working many extra hours if they were to finish on time.

"The best thing about the HETT job was that we had a good team," said Spc. Oscar Luis Garcia of New York City.

Love gathered five Soldiers with different elements of expertise: heavy equipment, hydraulics, wiring, and wrecker operation.

The task was almost overwhelming. Unlike the M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank which is designed to have the "pack" removed with relatively less difficulty, the HETT's entire cab must be removed before mechanics have access to the engine and transmission.

Mechanics were forced to squeeze in between the cab and the engine to disconnect all the wires and hoses.

"It would have been easier had there been an access panel in the armor so we could get to the wires and air lines," Spc. Ignacio Mendez said.

"Even though it is a huge truck, the hardest part about the HETT job was some of the tasks required us to squeeze into very tight areas for long periods of time," Spc. Bryan Urquart said.

First, the wires and hoses were all disconnected and then the cab was unbolted. The process of lifting the entire piece off the vehicle frame was the challenge the team was told they were not equipped to handle. To overcome the problem, they designed a rig to hold the cab while the engine was being replaced.

The crew worked nonstop on the project. Once the original engine was disconnected from the transmission and removed, the process of installing the new engine began. The replacement presented several challenges;

"We were told we did not have the right equipment, personnel, or training to do this task. Even the active duty units said to ship it off to the civilians."

Staff Sgt. Jerry Love
148th Support Battalion

however, the mechanics solved all problems with discussions and teamwork as if they were surgeons.

Seven days after they accepted the job, all doubt was removed as the mechanics picked up their tools and stepped back with anticipation. Just as they worked together as a team, they stood as a team and listened as the replacement engine was

started. The mechanics who challenged themselves, as well as the clock, succeeded.

"I really enjoyed hearing the HETT start-up and watching it roll out after all of our hard work," said Spc. Antonio Williams of Hampton, Ga.

"This was a good experience," said Spc. Robert Powell, of Lovejoy, Ga. "We accomplished something that none of us had ever done before, and may never ever do again. No one can ever take that away from us."

Iraqi Army, Coalition NCOs share ideas on leadership

Sgt David Bill
48th BCT PAO

CAMP STRYKER, Iraq – Twenty-six senior non-commissioned officers from the 48th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, with over 800 years of military experience between them met with nine counterparts from the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army on 19 Sept to exchange ideas and experiences.

"We wanted to facilitate an initial familiarization and enhance the teamwork between the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces with respect to the senior enlisted leaders," said the event's organizer, Command Sgt. Maj. James Nelson, 48th BCT.

The NCOs engaged a lively discussion on improving their organizations and how NCOs should continue building strong leadership to form a cohesive team. Other topics discussed ranged from the basic enlisted rank structure

to the relationship of officers and NCOs.

"We wanted to provide them with tools they could take back with them and share with their soldiers" said Sgt. Maj. Joseph Recker, 48th BCT, who facilitated the discussions. "We gave them NCO Leader Books, Common Task Test books translated into Arabic, and a CD with all the materials discussed today."

"What we learned here will help refresh our memories and will help us bring things together" said 4th Brigade's Command Sgt. Maj. Nama Abdulah Arkane. "We appreciate the 48th BCT and extend our thanks to them for what they have done for us."

"It was fun, very interactive and we learned a lot from each other," Nelson said. "We wanted to put together a meaningful class and hope it helps in the team building between the Iraqi Army and the Coalition Forces. I hope



Sgt. David Bill

Command Sgts. Major Nama Abdulah Arkane of the 4th Bde. Iraqi Army and James Nelson of the 48th BCT after conducting a Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development class to their senior NCOs as a way to build teamwork between the two units.

this becomes a tradition and continues long after the 48th BCT returns home."

Estonian Prime Minister visits Soldiers in Iraq

Sgt. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Seeing visitors in a combat zone is always a special occasion, especially when they have traveled far through dangerous countryside.

In most combat zones Soldiers rarely have the opportunity to meet such a distinguished visitor as their countries' Prime Minister.

Estonian troops stood in tight formation during a special visit Sept. 18 from their country's Prime Minister, Andrus Ansip.

The Prime Minister spoke to the Soldiers and presented each one with a personalized, multi-purpose knife.

Ansip toured the Estonian barracks, inspected their vehicles and ate a meal with the Soldiers at the dining facility.

"For our troops, the visit means support. Our country supports us here," said Capt. Sergei Guselnikov, a Tartu, Estonia, native and commander of Estonian Platoon 11.

Guselnikov's unit works with 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division northwest of Baghdad, and is the 11th platoon-sized element Estonia has contributed to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Iraq Department of Border Enforcement ready to control Borders

Polli Keller
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

MOSUL, Iraq – The Department of Border Enforcement Academy is now complete and ready for the business of training Iraqi guards to protect their country's borders.

Working together, the Iraqi Province of Sulaymaniyah, Ministry of Interior, an Iraqi construction company, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have finished the \$17.2 million facility. Officials turned over the academy to the Iraqi government in July, so they could start training the border guards. It is now fully completed.

The construction and renovations of this facility include classrooms, administrative facilities, barracks, dining and maintenance facilities along with complete water, sewer and electrical systems. It is the only facility of its type in the province with potable running water and a state-of-the-art dining facility.

According to Col. Richard Jenkins, USACE Gulf Region North commander, the Sulaymaniyah DBE Academy is one of three academies operated by the

MOI for the principal purpose of training recruits and serving members of the Iraqi border police. The other two academies are located in Wasit Province (in Al Kut) and in Basrah Province (in Shaibah). The objective of these academies is to train sufficient new recruits to reach the DBE staffing goal of more than 28,000. At present, the total DBE strength stands at more than 17,000.

This academy will generate new jobs for the local economy. The facility

will employ numerous officers, teachers, more than 800 trainees, and several civilians working as cooks and maintenance personnel. The American

"The schedule was very aggressive and presented the biggest challenge, but for the most part, it was met and the academy opened for business July 17, 2005."

Dave Varner
USACE project manager

company, ECC International, and an Iraqi subcontractor worked together to build this facility. During the construction, more than three hundred local workers were employed.

General George Casey, the commanding general of the Multi-National Forces-Iraq considers effectively controlling the borders of the nation of Iraq to be his top priority.

"The importance of the Academy," said Jenkins, "are the recruits that this academy trains. They are critical to the

accomplishment of CG MNF-I's top priority, that of border security."

Accomplishing the DBE staffing goal, along with the construction and equipping of 254 new border forts and fielding an effective, nationwide command and control system, will substantially help to carry out this goal.

Dave Varner, USACE project manager, addressed the biggest challenge in the project. "The schedule was very aggressive and presented the biggest challenge, but for the most part, it was met and the academy opened for business July 17, 2005."

"I thought the project went very well," Varner said. "Both ECCI and the Iraqi company were great to work with and were very accommodating to solving problems."

The USACE Sulaymaniyah resident office manages construction and renovation of several primary and secondary schools, clinics, and electrical substations. Currently, there are 49 new constructions and 12 renovation projects ongoing in the region.



Photos by Jim Gordon

(above) U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Soldiers along with plant employees test the deep well.

(right) South Kufa Water Treatment Facility, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineer new-construction site outside in Najaf. The water purification project, managed and quality controlled by the Engineers is one of 152 water treatment sites that are being built or rehabilitated throughout Iraq.

Potable water systems will benefit 31,000 people

Lt. Col. Stan Heath
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BAGHDAD – More than 31,000 Iraqi citizens in the Ninewa and Basrah Governorates are expected to benefit from the construction of four potable water projects. These compact potable water treatment plants and the installation of deep wells, pumps and distribution networks in Ninewa and Basrah were identified by Provincial Regional Development Committees and local authorities in conjunction with the Ministry of Municipality and Public Works.

Three projects to construct wells, pumps, and distribution networks will supply potable water to about 25,000 residents throughout Ninewa. These projects should deliver potable water in Dec. 2005.

A 200 cubic-meter-per-hour potable water

treatment plant with reverse osmosis (a technique used to remove impurities from water) will supply potable water to 6,000 people living in the Basrah area. The treatment plant is estimated to be completed in April 2006.

The estimated cost for the four water projects is \$1.7 million. The awarding of these contracts is imminent and will provide jobs for local companies with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division.

The Ninewa projects will provide work for approximately 100 workers during the construction and for more than 30 workers for the projects' maintenance and continued operation. Construction of the Basrah treatment plant will employ about 20- to 25-workers and the operation of the plant will employ about 14 Iraqi workers. The Basrah work will also train local operators on site in the technology and maintenance of the compact unit.



U.S. Soldiers increase security around voting sites

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – Task Force Baghdad erected concrete barriers around Baghdad polling sites Sept. 21 as part of an ongoing effort to keep Iraqi citizens safe during the Oct. 15 referendum.

The Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 64th Armor and 26th Forward Support Battalion transported barriers to three Al Ameen and Paladiat schools.

Schools are commonly used as voting locations in Baghdad because of their relative security and central locations.

“This will help Iraqis vote in safety, which is crucial in a democracy,” said Cpl. Luis Corea, a driver with A Co., 26th FSB.

Using a forklift, Corea, Spc. Jason Bishop, also of A Co., transferred the huge barriers from their transport vehicle into position.

The barriers will likely remain in place until the Dec. 15 governmental elections are complete.

At an Al Ameen polling place, school guard Ali Khalid came out to see what the commotion outside his school was. He emerged to find a large assortment of military vehicles and Soldiers working in the street.

“It is a very good thing for us to work with the U.S.,” Khalid said. “We get the security, and people will come to vote.”

Despite the late hour, residents gathered and watched Soldiers set up the barriers. Some offered tea, and many wanted their photographs taken with U.S. troops.

“People around here are pretty friendly with us. We haven’t had too many problems,” said Spc. Marcos Perez, a D Company, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment tank driver. “We come around sometimes giving out food, water, candy and shoes for kids. They’re decent people.”



Spc. Jason Bishop and Cpl. Luis Corea, both of A Co., 26th FSB, loads concrete barriers Sept. 21 that will be used to protect Iraqi

Spc. Ben Brody

“We’ve put barriers at seven locations so far – the total will be about 20,” said Capt. Scott Stine, a civil affairs officer with D Co., 1/64 Armor. “The guards appreciate it, but most people don’t see us putting them up. We’re like the barrier fairy.”

After completing the night’s work, the convoy snaked through side roads back to Camp

Rustamiyah, the home of both units. Stine said the barriers demonstrate to local citizens that Coalition Forces are looking out for them. “It’s a good project to make a visible difference in our sector,” Stine said. “People see it and know we’re concerned, and know we’re here to help. We demonstrate that every chance we get.”



Spc. Kris Davis and Sgt. Gregory Certain, both of A Company, 26th Forward Support Battalion, transfer fuel from their tanker to a stationary tanker Sept. 19.

Spc. Ben Brody

Aiding the people

Iraqi, U.S. forces aid hundreds with medical project

Spc. Christopher Mallard
425th CA Bn.

BAGHDAD – Operation Thunder Care rolled into the town of Horajeb, Iraq providing free medical care to local residents who lined the street and waited patiently to receive medical attention from U.S. Soldiers.

Sept. 16 was the third Medical Civil Assistance Program visit of the year for Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, who worked along with elements from the 425th Civil Affairs Battalion and Iraqi forces from the 4th Public Order Brigade.

American forces joined their Iraqi counterparts to set up a temporary clinic at a school near the town center. The Army took the opportunity to evaluate community health conditions while giving residents a chance to receive a basic health check.

Operation Thunder Care was designed to show the citizens a measure of goodwill by treating minor medical problems and ailments. Four medical-aid stations were organized to provide care in a timely manner with as little disruption to town activities as possible. By the early-morning hours, scores of women, children, and elderly were lined up outside the school entrance in a staging area waiting to be seen.

The mid-September morning was already heating up as Soldiers began to broadcast a message over huge loudspeakers mounted on their vehicles explaining in Arabic that Soldiers had come to the village to help them and inviting the people of Horajeb to visit the school.

To show his appreciation and thanks, a baker brought kahi — warm fried dough — over to the school for Soldiers to eat before

they began to admit the first group of patients.

“We can’t provide extensive services today but we can leave the poorest among them with something more than they came with,” said 1st Lt. Loren Thomson, civil-military operations with 1/184th, as he handed a care package to an elderly woman and her granddaughter.

“I helped to organize the sundry packs and humanitarian assistance rations,” Thomson said. “I’m finding out kids like beanie babies almost as much as they do the soccer balls.”

Staff Sgt. Ronald Diez, a medic serving with A Company, 1/184th, has assisted in MEDCAPs in Albania and Rwanda. He’s a big believer in the healing that mercy and compassion bring to the poor and disadvantaged. Diez stocked his aid-station with everything from Motrin and antacid, to personal hygiene products.

Unit officials at the MEDCAP said they’re making strides in their efforts to empower local leaders. Civil affairs Soldiers said a little

care goes a long way in building trust, which in turn provides hope in these smaller, out-of-the-way communities.

“A MEDCAP traditionally provides an opportunity for people who would not normally have access to medical care, to seek out a physician for minor aches and pains,” said Sgt. Maj. Tamara Wipf, of A Co., 425th CA Bn.

“A MEDCAP traditionally provides an opportunity for people ... to seek out a physician for minor aches and pains.”

Sgt. Maj. Tamara Wipf
425th CA Bn.

“The medical care we were able to provide the community today was simple and straightforward,” said Dr. (Maj.) Ernesto Quinto, the 1/184 Inf. acting battalion surgeon.

While taking a break in the shaded area of the school’s courtyard, he continued, “I am very impressed and think it goes a long way in showing the true heart of American Soldiers to leave their comfort zone by coming over here and helping those who are less fortunate.”



Sgt. Maj. Tamara Wipf, A Company, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion, lets an Iraqi girl try out her stethoscope during a MEDCAP in Horajeb Sept. 16.

2nd BCT ‘Spartan Happenings’

Iraqi, U.S. raids catch most-wanted terrorists

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Army Soldiers in east Baghdad coordinated and executed a large-scale operation to capture suspected terrorists Oct. 8.

During the operation, three Iraqi Army battalions attacked numerous targets simultaneously and detained 12 individuals.

The suspected terrorists are thought to be responsible for a minimum of 15 separate deadly attacks on schools, Iraqi Police stations, government officials and Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces convoys. They are suspected of using small arms, rocket-propelled grenades, mortars, roadside bombs and grenades against civilians, Iraqi and CFs.

“The 2nd Iraqi Brigade continues to disrupt the enemy in its area, severely hindering the terrorists’ abilities to influence the elections, terrorize Iraqi citizens, and prevent a free and stable Iraq,” said Capt. Chris Harris, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team. Harris is assigned to the Military Transition Team working with the 2nd Iraqi Army Brigade.

In another part of east Baghdad, CFs detained five wanted terrorists during an early-morning raid. The suspects are members of a terrorist group responsible for attacks against CF and Iraqi civilians.

Soldiers raided the suspects’ residences and then conducted a cordon-and-knock in the surrounding neighborhoods.

“After we didn’t find our suspects initially, we moved out into the neighborhood to search other homes,” said Capt. Sam Allen, a platoon leader with 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team. “In one house, the noncommissioned officers thought one guy was acting suspiciously. The neighbors, after seeing that we were there to help, told us that he was lying about his name, and it turned out that he was on the brigade’s most-wanted list.”

Since local residents cooperated with Soldiers, force was not necessary in apprehending the suspect, Allen said.

“It had already been a long day when we found the suspect — we had searched about 50 homes — and that speaks volumes of our Soldiers’ work ethic and dedication,” Allen said. “They always put 100 percent into every mission and it pays off every day.”

Iraqi Soldiers launch successful raid

SADR CITY, Iraq – In a lightning-fast, pre-dawn raid, Iraqi Army Soldiers raided the homes of two notorious terrorists in Sadr City Oct. 6.

An elite Iraqi Army strike platoon took the lead during the operation while other IA Soldiers set up an outer cordon, preventing terrorists from reaching their targets and ensuring terrorists could not escape.

One suspected terrorist known for emplacing roadside bombs and conducting rocket-propelled grenade attacks on Coalition Forces, reportedly received a car for shooting down a U.S. Army helicopter last year.

The other suspected terrorist was known as “The Engineer” for his expertise in manufacturing and emplacing bombs. A cache of bomb-triggering devices was uncovered at the terrorist’s residence.

“The raid shows the capability of the Iraqi Army Battalion to plan and execute a complex mission,” said Capt. Zan Hornbuckle, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, who works with the Iraqi Army. “They’re totally competent at the squad and platoon levels, and getting better at the company level.”

“They did a great job, everything went really smoothly,” Hornbuckle added. “It gives the Iraqi Soldiers confidence in their capabilities to pull off such a complex mission flawlessly.”

U.S. Soldiers test mortars before operations

BAGHDAD – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers fired several 120 mm mortar rounds into an unpopulated area south of Baghdad to calibrate their weapons Oct. 1.

From the ruins of a concrete bunker, artillery officers from 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team observed the rounds’ impact and radioed to the mortar teams to adjust fire when necessary.

“It’s important to calibrate our mortars so we’re as accurate as possible in a combat situation,” said 1st Lt. Richard Paco, 3/7 assistant civil military operations officer. “When we shoot, we want to minimize the risk of civilian casualties or unnecessary property damage.”

Terrorists commonly fire mortars at civilian and Coalition targets, but they are notoriously inaccurate, Paco said.

“We can tell where enemy mortars are fired from — we shoot back quickly, and with effect,” he added.

According to 2nd BCT spokesman Maj. Russ Goemaere, the exercise represented a stark contrast between Coalition tactics and terrorist tactics with the same weapon system.

“Terrorists fire mortar rounds indiscriminately, often killing innocent civilians and starting fires,” Goemaere said. “The Soldiers of 2nd BCT are prepared to counter this threat effectively, without putting civilians in harm’s way.”



Sgt. Matthew Wester

Sgt. Ricky V. Fields, a Savannah, Ga., native and section chief for A Battery, 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery Regiment, 48th Brigade Combat Team, Georgia National Guard, monitors a convoy entering Camp Taji.

U.S., Iraqi Soldiers guard crucial entry, exit points

Sgt. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

TAJI, Iraq – Every time Soldiers leave Camp Taji and every time they come back in, they see a group of their comrades, patrolling the gates and keeping things safe.

Soldiers of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division and supporting units are responsible for guarding the entry and exit points on post. They brave long hours and searing heat, while monitoring the gates day-in and day-out.

“We maintain security,” said Sgt. Ricky V. Fields, section chief for A Battery, 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery Regiment, 48th Brigade Combat Team. “We keep the bad stuff and the bad people out.”

Keeping them out requires constant vigilance by the guards from the Georgia National Guardsman unit who are supporting 3rd Bde.

“Our job at the gate is to... provide security to ensure we aren't being attacked,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Bakie, food service specialist for 3rd Brigade's Service Battery, 4th Battalion, 1st Field Artillery Regiment.

Bakie said situational awareness is always on his mind when he is manning the gate, and reminds his Soldiers to stay alert.

Not all of the Soldiers securing the sun-baked guard stations are in the U.S. Army. Iraqi Army Soldiers also help man the gate alongside their American counterparts, working the same long hours and sharing responsibility for the safety of the post.

“Communication is a challenge (with the IA Soldiers),” Fields said. “It's a good experience, though.”

Spc. Prince Yohannes, an artilleryman with 4/1 FA, helps bridge that communication gap while on guard duty. His mother is Muslim and he is very familiar with Arabic.

“I can understand (Arabic) and I can communicate with the Iraqi guys out here,” Yohannes said. “It helps the other Soldiers around here and me a lot.”

Yohannes relays instructions from the American sergeant-of-the-guard to the Iraqi Soldiers, making the gate-guard team more effective.

He also gave the American guards tips on how to communicate with the Iraqis.

“Use a lot of hand gestures,” he told one of his fellow guards. “When they reply to you, you have to listen closely to the words, and look at their eyes because they are usually looking at what they are trying to tell you about.”

By guarding the gate together, the Soldiers have gained insight about different cultures.

“We learn about their culture. They learn about our culture,” Fields said.

“They want to talk to you, you want to talk to them, and we learn a little bit about each other,” Bakie said.

Yohannes said he liked working with the Iraqi troops, and it gave him the feeling that the Iraqis are getting closer to securing their own country.

The Soldiers understand the importance of their mission out at the gate.

“There are Soldiers in their room right now sleeping. We're at the perimeter making sure those sleeping Soldiers are safe,” Yohannes said. “While we're out here protecting the perimeter, they can go about their business on the camp, doing their jobs.”

Iraqi Police kill would-be car bombers

Maj. Russ Goemaere
2nd BCT PAO

RUSAF, Iraq – Iraqi Police killed two terrorists before they could detonate a car bomb in east Baghdad Oct. 6.

Three IP officers were on patrol when they noticed a car stopped on the side of the road. The vehicle's driver was sitting behind the steering wheel while the passenger was standing up outside the car and talking on a cell phone.

The terrorists, believed to be from the town of Ar Rumadi, pulled their weapons and fired at the IP officers after the officers identified themselves and asked questions about what they were doing.

“When the terrorists fired at us, all three of us took cover and immediately fired back. They hit one of us in the arm,” said Dafer, of the El Wea Police Department.

Within seconds, the three IP officers killed the two terrorists and provided first-aid to their wounded comrade.

“We called for backup. They noticed there were many missiles and containers of propane gas, so we called our

explosive ordnance disposal team,” Col. Tharer said.

An IP EOD team responded quickly to the scene, deactivated the car bomb and hauled the explosives away to a safe location.

Some children heard the gunfight and came out of their school to investigate.

“When the school kids saw what happened they broke out in applause for us. They were applauding the Iraqi Police; they were applauding us for killing the terrorists. It made me feel very good,” Dafer said.

The station commander explained through an interpreter, what he thought of his police officer's performance.

“They are brave men with good training. They are very heroic. We are very good at fighting the terrorists and keeping the people safe,” said Tharer.

The IPs are proactive in searching out the terrorists in their area of operations.

“I am ready to do anything for my family, for my kids, for my government and the people of Iraq,” said Alli, an IP officer.

“They are brave men with good training. They are very heroic. We are very good at fighting the terrorists and keeping the people safe.”

Tharer
IP station commander

Attention Soldiers! Notify Iraqi citizens about the Baghdad Tips Hotline to ensure potential terrorists, and accidents, are stopped before they can happen.

Junkyard search turns up unexploded ordnance

Maj. Russ Goemaere
2nd BCT PAO

BAGHDAD – Soldiers from Task Force Baghdad continued to deny terrorists access to unexploded ordnance during operations Oct. 9.

In a sweep of a junkyard in Jisr Diyala, Soldiers from 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team collected more than 135 rounds of unexploded ordnance ranging in size from small mortars to heavy artillery shells.

“We have conducted five of these junkyard sweeps in the last two months and have collected about 1,500 rounds,” said Pfc. Brandon Hoffpauir, with the 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division.

Missions to clear areas of unexploded ordnance are often based on information gained through interac-

tion with the local population.

“The Iraqi people are very good about providing us information,” said Hoffpauir. “In one case, they told us about an area where insurgents had buried some munitions. When we dug up the site, we found 130 57-millimeter rockets still in their original box.”

As the Soldiers haul away the ordnance, they also believe they are winning the hearts and minds of the local population.

“We have very good relationships with the community,” said Spc. Michael Darby a medic with the unit. “I treat the kids and adults and the people get to know me and seek me out every time I come by.”

“The people like us,” Hoffpauir added. “We help them with water and food whenever we can. They trust us.”



Courtesy Photo

More than 135 rounds of unexploded ordnance discovered by Soldiers from 3/7 Cav., 2nd BCT during an Oct. 9 operation in Jisr Diyala.

Maintenance Soldiers overcome challenging turret with pride

Sgt. Matthew Wester
3/1 AD PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – An M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank's turret is the source of the vehicle's deadly force – the strong arm of one of the most powerful weapon systems in the Army.

For a group of maintenance Soldiers at Camp Taji, the turret is merely another part that can be removed, replaced or repaired.

The Soldiers of the Maintenance Support Team, assigned to 1st Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, recently performed heavy-duty maintenance on an M1A1 tank, proving that even in a combat zone, they can perform complicated and challenging repair missions.

Soldiers of B Company, 125th Forward Support Battalion, and 1st Bn., 13th Armored Reg., removed the tank's turret to repair a crucial part of the tank's nuclear, biological, and chemical systems.

To say it was a big task, is an understatement. "This doesn't happen often ... that we pull turrets," said Staff Sgt. Geoffrey Peterson, noncommissioned officer in charge of 1/13 MST.

"It's up to my (sergeant) and his Soldiers to jump in the tank, make sure everything is disconnected from the slip-ring, and then manually traverse the turret, removing the bolts," he added.

"There are 48 bolts that run around the turret's

ring. We had to take each bolt out, one at a time," said Sgt. Adam M. Gervais, shop foreman for the MST.

Peterson said this tank had stubborn bolts because the turret had never been removed.

After applying a little mechanical know-how, and with the help of civilian crane operators, the team finally separated the turret from the hull, giving them access to the damaged components.

The team members were concerned about safety throughout the procedure. They know how heavy and powerful the tank components are.

"You always have to be extremely careful when you're doing this," Peterson said. "A turret weighs over 20 tons."

The Soldiers on the maintenance team are proud they can offer their armored battalion a full range of repair services, including large-scale jobs like the turret pull.

Gervais said his Soldiers are able to perform the same maintenance tasks here that they could at their home station in Kansas.

"When we deploy as a Maintenance Support Team, we try to bring as much lift capability as we can," Peterson said.

He emphasized the importance of a maintenance team to an armored battalion.

"If the tanks won't roll, they're stuck," he said. "I'm supporting two companies in the battalion with dual fleets, tanks and humvees. It makes for a pretty big mission at times."



Photos by Sgt. Matthew Wester

(above) Civilian workers use a crane to move a M1A1 tank turret onto a stand at Camp Taji Sept. 13. Members of Maintenance Support Team, 1st Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division remove the turret to work on a piece of equipment welded to the tank's interior. (left) Soldiers of A Battery, 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery Regiment, Georgia National Guard, fire an M109A6 Paladin self-propelled howitzer during a fire mission at Camp Taji Sept. 14. The unit supports 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division.



48th BCT prepares security at polling sites for Constitutional Referendum

Sgt David Bill
48th BCT PAO

RADWINIYAH, Iraq – As Iraqi citizens vote on the Oct. 15 Constitutional Referendum, they'll do so with a better sense of security, thanks to 48th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers.

One of the brigade's top priorities is to assisting Iraqi Security Forces in securing the polling sites in neighborhoods around southwest Baghdad. Brigade Soldiers have been busy placing concrete barriers around those sites.

The focus of the barrier movement plan is to limit the disruption to daily activities of the local population, so the major effort of emplacing the barriers is performed during non-peak hours in the city.

"We don't want to interfere with commerce," said Lt. Col. Jeff Edge, commander of the 148th Support Battalion which is responsible for transporting the concrete barriers to the various polling sites for emplacement around the area of operations. "We want the emplacements to go quickly with the least impact on the civilian population as possible."

The brigade ordered approximately

1,400 barriers for the effort. The planning began more than 60 days ago when officials ordered the materials from a concrete plant near Baghdad International Airport.

Iraqi Army Soldiers provided security with an outer cordon while the concrete barriers and concertina wire were put into place by several battalions from 48th BCT.

"No one company or battalion could have accomplished this mission alone," said Maj. John Davis, operations officer for the 648th Engineer Battalion. "The synchronization and cooperation between all the units allowed the mission to be completed ahead of schedule with a minimum of disruption to the local population."

With a mostly Sunni population in the 48th's area of operation, the goal is that everyone will have the opportunity to cast a vote for Iraq's future.

"If we get something good from (the referendum), it will be better for everyone," said Hassan Abdulah a local Sunni farmer who watching barriers being placed around an elementary school in his neighborhood.

"We need peace and security," Abdulah said. "They (Coalition



Sgt. David Bill

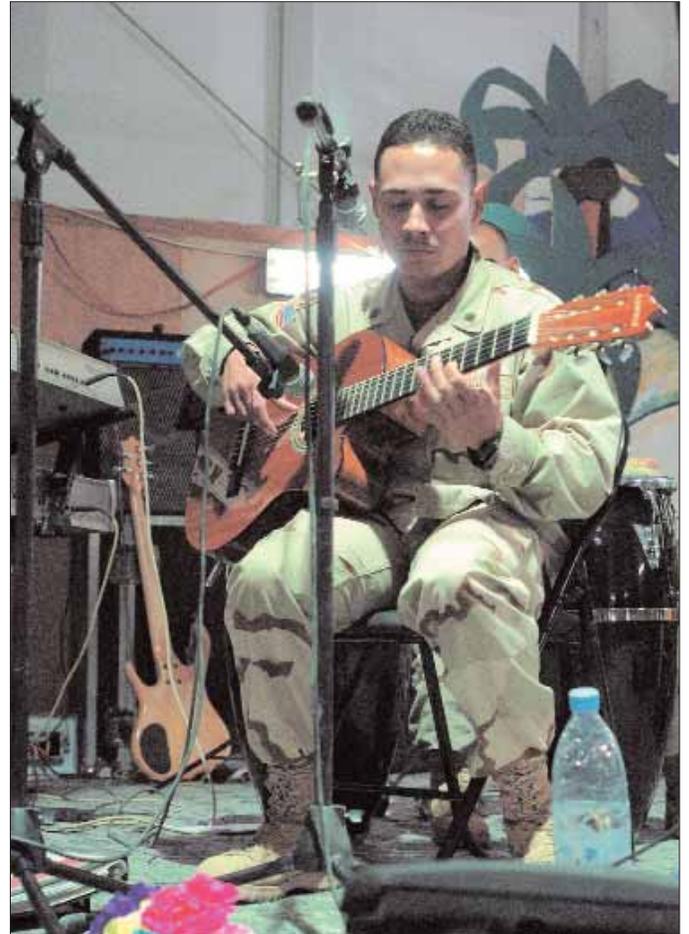
Ready to move. Low boy haulers from 148th Support Battalion, 48th BCT are loaded with concrete barriers to be emplaced around polling places.

Forces) do a good job for us here." Within the brigade's area of operation, there are 24 prospective polling sites which the 48th BCT units have made more secure for the referendum

vote. "Our Soldiers recognize that they are not here to influence the election, but they are here to allow the Iraqi people the opportunity to vote," Edge said.



Soldiers attending the Hispanic Heritage Observance enjoy Mexican food at the MWR facility Sept. 30.



Photos by Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Spc. Angel Gonzalez, Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Special Troops Battalion, and Salinas, Puerto Rico native, plays "Boricua en la Luna" in celebration of Hispanic heritage at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility Sept. 30.

Division Celebrates Diversity

Soldiers recognize latin culture during Hispanic Heritage Observance

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
100th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Soldiers twisted, spun and shook their hips to the rhythms of salsa music during the Hispanic Heritage Observance at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Facility Sept. 30. Participants celebrated Hispanic culture with speeches, music, food and a dance demonstration.

Maj. Richard Santiago, 3rd Finance Company commander and guest speaker, took the opportunity to address the importance of Hispanic culture. Santiago pointed out that Hispanics are the fastest growing minority in the U.S., and described their continual impact on the nation's schools and economy.

"It was a great honor to be the guest speaker. I felt as a Hispanic American, it was my opportunity to promote cultural awareness about Hispanics and our integration into the American culture," Santiago said. "It is important that Hispanics continue to play an active role on integrating the Hispanic culture into the American fabric."

Master Sgt. Silvia Marchan, the 3rd Infantry Division Equal Opportunity noncommissioned officer in charge, helped organize the event. She said the Hispanic Heritage Observance is one of eight observances that are mandated

and conducted by the 3rd Inf. Div. E. O. office throughout the year.

"As with all observances, the goal is to enhance cross-cultural awareness among Soldiers and civilian employees, and to recognize achievements and contributions made by the members of the specific group," Marchan said. "Hosting the observances in Iraq is unique because we capture a larger spectrum of diverse groups who are always fascinated by some of the historical data that is presented during the programs. It truly becomes a positive multi-cultural event."

The observance featured dances such as the salsa, meringue and bachata, which all originated from Hispanic countries. Spc. Carina Rodriguez volunteered to be one of the dancers, something she feels brought her closer to home.

"I practiced everyday for two weeks. Being part of the observance helped me to not be so home sick. It was a reminder of my culture," Rodriguez said. "It's also a great way

to show people the different cultures that are out there that make up our country."

While watching the dances provided entertainment for those who attended, Marchan also felt that incorporating dances into the program was a reflection of Hispanic culture.

"The Hispanic culture is so vibrant in all aspects of life. I recall having food and music at special events and gatherings during my childhood," Marchan said.

"The Hispanic culture is so vibrant in all aspects of life. I recall having food and music at special events and gatherings during my childhood."

Master Sgt. Silvia Marchan
3rd Inf. Div., EO NOIC

"Tonight, we incorporated three dances with background information to the origin of the music and quick demonstration of the dance steps.

The dance demonstrations and speeches were followed by a song and guitar performance of "Boricua en la Luna" by Spc. Angel Gonzalez, Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Special Troops Battalion. The program closed with the music of the 3rd Inf. Div. Band of "Fuega Latina."

According to Santiago, it was an

enjoyable night for those in attendance, but it was also important because it stressed diversity in the military.

"Understanding (diversity) is important if we want to remain effective on integrating Hispanics into the Armed Forces," Santiago said.

Marchan agrees that diversity is important in organizations and society, and being able to promote the diversity of the military was what made the observance most meaningful to her.

"Hispanic heritage is a time to promote my ethnic group and the many contributions it has made to the success of our great nation. It doesn't mean one group is better than another, it simply is an opportunity to raise awareness that we are all part of a team," she said. "It is a time to educate individuals of all groups to include Hispanics who might not have otherwise known about Hispanics' role in American history."

For Rodriguez, the observance was not only a time to enjoy herself, but also a chance to express her identity, an identity she has relied on to give her strength and pride, especially while in the military.

"My Hispanic culture identifies me and always reminds me how far I can go," Rodriguez said. "My heritage gives me confidence and always reminds me that we are all Americans made up of all different cultures and backgrounds."

Apaches find, destroy ambush sites

Spc. Jennifer D. Atkinson
Avn. Bde. PAO

BAGHDAD – Prowling through the inky darkness of the early morning, two AH-64 Apache helicopters from C Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Brigade (Attack Reconnaissance) circled high above a Task Force Baghdad convoy moving along the Tigris River on the morning of Oct. 11.

Apache helicopters from the 3rd Infantry Division Aviation Brigade routinely provide security and reconnaissance for ground forces patrolling in the Baghdad area. Soldiers from the 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and the Iraqi Army were performing another cordon and search mission: an aviation cat-and-mouse game.

During sweeps of the convoy route, the sharp-eyed aviators identified several armed men standing watch while another man was digging holes along the side of the road. Two of the men had rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

After coordinating with the ground unit and confirming that the men below were indeed Anti-Iraq Forces, the Apache's descended to get a better view of the scene. Quickly, the men began to scatter, so the pilots engaged the terrorists.

Continuing their combat air patrols

along the convoy route, the pilots came across another group of approximately 10 men emplacing Improvised Explosive Devices. Again, after confirming with the ground commander that there were no Iraqi Police, Iraqi Army or other Coalition Forces in the area, the pilots engaged the terrorists.

The operation continued for several hours, into the early morning. Two additional Apaches from C Co., 1/3 ARB relieved the first two aircraft at dawn as the convoy moved closer to the cordon and search target.

"The team before us really set the pace," said Capt. C.J. Jacobs, commander, C Co., 1/3 ARB, one of the replacement Apache pilots, "and we just picked up where they left off."

Continuing the mission of security and reconnaissance for the convoy, Jacobs and the other pilots responded to reports of sporadic enemy contact along the convoy route, and in the cordon and search area.

Unfortunately, by the time the Apaches reached several of the reported contact sites, the enemy had scattered into the scrubby treeline or shallow canals.

"These guys always hide," said Jacobs, "they run and they never show themselves."

During on-going surveillance of the convoy route, the pilots identified approximately six more insurgents setting up another ambush site. To



Two AH-64 Apache attack helicopters, similar to the helicopters on patrol in south Baghdad on Oct. 11, depart the Forward Arming Refueling Point on Camp Taji to continue a mission.

Spc. Jennifer D. Atkinson

Trying to engage an enemy that runs and hides can be very frustrating. So being able to identify a legitimate target "is a great feeling."

Capt. C.J. Jacobs
C Co., 1/3 ARB

prevent the terrorists from completing the ambush preparations, the ground commander asked the Apache pilots to engage and destroy the enemy.

The enemy "went to ground" as the Apaches maneuvered into position, Jacobs said. "They dove into bushes and a ditch along the road, and we lost sight of them."

After coordinating with the ground commander, Jacobs and his team continued to attack the last known location of the insurgents.

They stayed on station until the middle of the morning, keeping an eye out for threats to the ground troops. Approximately 60 possible insurgents were detained and IED making materials were confiscated during the cordon and search.

Although there were more reports of small arms fire and light enemy contact, the Apaches did not engage in any further action against the enemy.

Trying to engage an enemy that runs and hides can be very frustrating, said Jacobs, so being able to identify a legitimate target "is a great feeling."

While not being able to confirm the reaction by the Soldiers on the ground to the assistance that the Apaches provided; with approximately 22 insurgents killed and three ambushes aborted, and no injuries due to enemy fire reported, Jacobs can say with confidence that "the Soldiers on the ground were very satisfied with the aviation support they received," he said. "I have no doubt we saved Soldiers' lives today."



Photos by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

A 6th Iraqi Army Division tank rolls through as part of a parade during the transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 3.



(left to right) Lt. Gen. John Vines, 18th Airborne Corps commander, Iraqi Army Lt. Gen. Daham Lasal, advisor to the minister of defense, Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Mahmoud Mohammad Khalaf, 6th Iraqi Army Division commander, and Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Task Force Baghdad commander, applaud marching Iraqi Army platoons during a transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 3.

Iraqi Army takes control of four Baghdad districts

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
100th MPAD

BAGHDAD – The Iraqi Army reached another historic milestone when the 6th Iraqi Army Division took over authority of the Kharkh, Rusafa, Thawra and Adhamiyah districts of Baghdad from Task Force Baghdad during a ceremony at the Muthana Airfield Oct. 3.

Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Mahmoud Mohammad Khalaf al-Shumali, 6th IA Div. commander, raised the division's flag up the pole, signifying the assumption of authority and another step toward taking control of their own country.

During his speech, Mahmoud expressed confidence in his division and its ability to secure the Baghdad area.

"It is a great opportunity and a great event that we have been given the honor to receive responsibility of our units in these areas," he said. "Our beloved Baghdad and its people should feel safe with our units responsible for their safety. We pledge to do our best to serve

our people and to reconstruct our country."

Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Task Force Baghdad and 3rd Infantry Division commander, also participated in the ceremony and said he feels the transfer marks a significant chapter in the future of Iraq.

"Today is a great day for the Iraqi Army as the Baghdad Division assumes control of two

of its brigades and begins to transition the security of Baghdad," Webster said. "It signals that eventually the Iraqi Army will once again control the security of their country."

The assumption of authority observance included several drill and ceremony demonstrations by the 6th IA Div., where IA Soldiers marched past their division commander on the

"You can see it in their eyes the pride that swells as these men take security of their own city."

Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.
Task Force Baghdad commander

reviewing stand.

"You can see in their eyes the pride that swells as these men take security of their own city," Webster said. "We have been working hard to this day so the Iraqi Army can take control of this part of Baghdad. It's a great step and will only strengthen the relationship between us."

CROWD, continued from page 1

The city was quiet on a day expected to be interrupted by terrorist attacks meant to derail the referendum and reduce confidence in the Iraqi Security Forces. In light of those concerns, the Iraqi Police and the Iraqi Army worked closely together on a clear security plan.

"The IPs and the IA had a good plan," Pappal said. "They were attentive; watching the sites to make sure everything was orderly. They wanted this to go well."

Although the 3rd Bde. tactical operations center kept an eye on the placement of security measures, the ISF occupation of the polling centers and the dismantling of the security measures after the vote was an ISF responsibility, said Sgt. 1st Class Carlos L. Manigault.

"It went more smoothly than we expected," he said. Manigault kept up with the movement of search teams, barrier placement and general security measures throughout the day.

Although Coalition Forces were out in the city today, said Command Sgt. Maj. Philip F. Johndrow, the Soldiers stayed away from the polling sites. Passing out toys and backpacks to local children, the Soldiers were comfortable with the ISF security plan, said Johndrow.

After all the apprehension, and expecting the worst, Maj. Scott E. Sill, the brigade civil affairs officer was optimistic. In the neighborhood of Saba al Bor, residents were interacting and joking with Iraqi forces guarding the polling sites, he said.

Being proactive and highly visible helped the ISF connect to the communities they're responsible for, said Sill, adding "I think there's a stronger belief in their own security forces."

3rd BCT commander, Col. David Bishop, said "The Iraqi Security Forces stepped up to the plate for their nation and did exactly what their people needed them to do."



Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

Iraqi citizens come out to vote on the constitutional referendum near a Baghdad polling station Oct 15.



Courtesy Photos

(above) An Iraqi Police officer reassures a young child during a search for terrorists in east Baghdad Oct. 11. Five terrorists were detained during the operations involving IPs and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers.

(right) As dawn breaks, Task Force Baghdad Soldiers prepare for combat operations in an east Baghdad neighborhood Oct. 11.

TRAPS, continued from page 1

taken totally by surprise.

"We found seven men at the house where one of the suspects was staying," Karteran said. "We quickly did our job and secured the target - and identified another man who was wanted for questioning."

After 10 minutes in the home, the mission was complete. The five suspects were detained and are being processed in the Iraqi judicial system.

Approximately 25 IP officers joined the U.S. Soldiers on the mission.

"Working with the Iraqi Security Forces is mutually beneficial for both us and the ISF," Pelletier said. "The people like seeing Iraqis in uniform, and they have faith

in us to always do the right thing. The Iraqi Security Forces continue to demonstrate their commitment to protecting the Iraqi people. Their capability impresses me more and more each day."

"The people want us in their communities looking for the bad guys. The people work with us — they often tell us where we can find suspected terrorists."

Pfc. Afhafiz Karteran
1st Bn., 9th FA

Offensive operations throughout the area are designed to improve the chances of a peaceful referendum vote. The U.S. Soldiers said the stepped-up operations are appreciated by the local populace.

"The people want us in their communities looking for the bad guys," Karteran said. "The people work with us and the Iraqi Police. They often tell us where we can find the suspected terrorists."



The Local Beat:

Task Force Baghdad News Briefs

Task Force Baghdad engineers find weapons cache

TAJI, Iraq – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers searching near previous weapons cache sites unearthed a new cache containing rockets, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and materials often used to make improvised explosive devices.

The 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division Soldiers continued to uncover munitions in the weapons cache discovered on the afternoon of Sept. 28. Since the 70th Engineer Battalion started excavating, they have unearthed more than 700 mortar rounds ranging from 60-millimeter to 120-millimeter, 700 rocket-propelled grenades, 100 rockets, and 51,000 rounds of anti-aircraft ammunition.

The Soldiers also found several mortar tubes, various explosives, small arms, homemade rocket launchers, wires and timing devices.

The Soldiers secured the site, about 30 kilometers northwest of Baghdad, and consolidated the caches for destruction. They continue to search the site in an ongoing effort to keep weapons out of terrorists' hands.

10th Mountain Soldiers see progress with Iraqi forces

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – A month after they took over operations in western Baghdad, Soldiers from 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division found themselves playing a critical role in history.

The Fort Drum, N.Y. based Soldiers assisted the Iraqi Army in providing security during the nation's historic Constitutional Referendum Oct. 15.

"A lot of things went right," said 2nd Lt. David Strickler of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment. "The Iraqi Army did an excellent job, and I was impressed."

"I totally believe in what we are doing here," said Sgt. 1st Class Daniel

Dennison, of C Company, 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment. "We worked hard in preparation for the Referendum. It has been awesome conducting operations with the Iraqi Army."

Iraqi Security Forces conducted security operations at the polling sites while 1st BCT Soldiers played a supporting role away from the voting areas.

Iraqi citizens want the Iraqi Security Forces to take over, Dennison said. "We need to let the people and the Iraqi Army take on greater responsibility. The more people see the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police taking on greater responsibility, the more confident they will be in them."

"All the effort over the last several weeks to prepare for the election was way more exciting than working in a factory at home," said Pvt. Devin Hamilton, C Co., 1/87th Inf. "Hopefully, this election will be a good step in getting Iraq squared away."

The BCT "has done a great job integrating with the Iraqi Army," said Strickler. "They have come a long way since we have started working with them only six weeks ago."

Iraqi, U.S. forces raid terrorist suspects' homes

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Police and U.S. Soldiers conducted a series of raids Oct. 3 in the vicinity of Jisr Diyala in order to detain and question suspected terrorists in the area.

"This was the first combined operation the squadron has conducted with Iraqi Police," said Capt. Onni Hynninen of 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

More than 50 IPs searched target houses and questioned the residents of the local seat of government of the Mada' in region southeast of Baghdad. Useful intelligence was gathered and illegal weapons were confiscated from enemy hands, Hynninen said.

The milestone operation displayed the success of the efforts of the squadron to train Iraqi Security Forces

south of Baghdad. It also highlighted the growing strength and capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces. Future combined operations are being planned to bring more security and facilitate the democratic process in the region.

U.S. forces raid terrorist safe house in Rashid

BAGHDAD – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers detained four terror suspects during a series of raids in southern Baghdad Oct. 7.

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment captured two suspected terrorists and recovered contraband during a raid of a terrorist safe house in west Al-Rashid.

Items found during the cordon and search included an electronic timer and initiation device, rolls of wire, one pair of binoculars, one AK-47 assault rifle, two 9-millimeter pistols and 10 cell phones.

Earlier that evening, Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment captured two suspected terrorists in Al-Dora. The men were suspected of assassinating Iraqis in the area.

Task Force Baghdad Soldiers strike back at terrorists

BAGHDAD – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers struck terrorist forces after a series of small-arms and roadside bomb attacks Oct. 7 southwest of Baghdad.

Ground forces from 48th Brigade Combat Team and helicopters from Task Force Baghdad successfully repelled the attacks with no injuries to U.S. Soldiers.

After Soldiers received small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire, four improvised explosive devices detonated near their location. The Soldiers established security at the site and searched several houses in the area for Anti-Iraqi Forces and detained one terrorist suspect.

About an hour later, Soldiers in the

area found an IED consisting of a 155 mm round with detonation cord. The patrol secured the area and called in an explosive ordnance disposal team to destroy the bomb.

The patrol later found a cache of rocket-propelled grenades, which was also destroyed by the EOD team.

"We've expected these attacks based on the terrorist's history of coordinated attacks," said Lt. Col. Mark London, 48th BCT operations officer. "We were prepared for previous attacks and we're prepared for these."

Leaders break ground on Husseinia courthouse

HUSSEINIYA, Iraq – Local residents and leaders gathered for a groundbreaking ceremony for a new courthouse Oct. 2.

A large crowd gathered around a square marked off by stakes and ribbon as Sheik Mohan Al Amiri and Judge Abdul Hussain Jabar Mohamed dug into the earth, symbolically starting construction on the courthouse project.

Mohamed said the new building will accommodate a civil court that will deal with marriages, wills and other matters.

The facility will make these services more convenient for the residents of Husseinia, who previously had to travel into Baghdad to resolve these legal issues.

"This is important for the law and justice in this area," Mohamed said. "With all our elements, we are going to secure this area."

"This is going to be the seed for great things to come," he added.

Iraqi contractors and construction workers will build the courthouse in the city northwest of Baghdad.

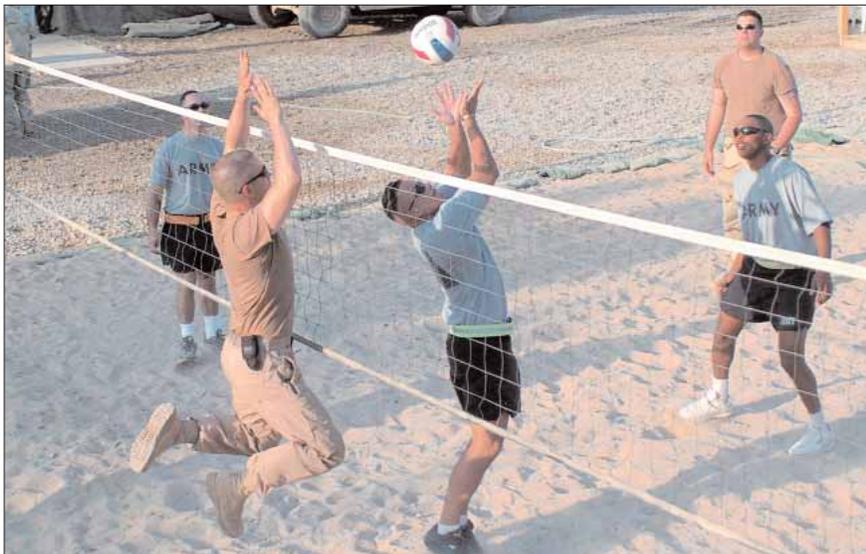
Al Amiri sees the courthouse as a resource for the surrounding area.

"We hope that we'll reach the other areas too, because the other areas need this also," he said

Courtesy Photo
Pfc. Benjamin Rice and Sgt. Benjamin Cronon, both of 3rd Battalion, 6th Field Artillery, were assigned to the same unit for eight months before discovering they were distant cousins. The two are now serving in Task Force Baghdad, and helping bring security and stability to the streets of the Abu Ghraib district. Other Soldiers in their unit often hear these two Dixie boys talking with a deep Southern drawl, calling each other "Cuz" and "kin." Talk (or "jawing" as they call it) often consists of fishing stories, pickup trucks, Conway Twitty. The two are inseparable-unless, that is, Alabama Crimson Tide is playing the Georgia Bull Dawgs.



Pfc. Laura M. Bigenho
Spc. Nikole Neuharth, 411th Military Police Company, Fort Hood, Texas, receives a purple heart from Col. Richard Swengros, commander, 42nd MP Brigade during an awards ceremony at Forward Operating Base Shield near Baghdad. Neuharth was injured while performing her duties as a gunner when her convoy was struck by an improvised explosive device.



Spc. Jennifer D. Atkinson
A group of Task Force Baghdad Soldiers enjoy a game of volleyball.

Faces and Places

Pfc. Laura M. Bigenho
Maj. Andrew Sullivan answers a telephone while Sgt. 1st Class James Hackney trains Sgt. Thomas Collins on how to track police movement. Sullivan and Hackney both from 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga., were operating a joint coordination center between 3ID and Baghdad Police Headquarters during the Oct. 15 referendum.



Marne Medical Mentor ... a prescription for good health from your Docs in the Rock

Be prepared for upcoming flu season

Maj. Christopher Littell
3rd Inf. Div. Preventive Medicine

Well it's that time of year again. It's time to roll up your sleeve for a "flu" shot!

Each winter in the U.S. anywhere from 5 percent to 20 percent of people are infected by the influenza virus, otherwise known as the flu.

The influenza infection in healthy people lasts for three to seven days and requires only symptomatic treatment. It is characterized by some combination of fever, headache, cough, sore throat, fatigue, and muscle aches, which could also represent any number of other viral respiratory infections prevalent during the "cough, cold, and flu season."

The very young, the elderly, and people with specific medical conditions are at higher risk for more severe cases of the flu and certain complications. Bacterial pneumonia is an example of an influenza related complication which can lead to hospitalization and even death. As many as 200,000 hospital admissions and 36,000 deaths are associated with influenza infections in the U.S. each year.

To avoid getting respiratory viruses like influenza during the fall and winter, wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth to reduce the risk that something you touched will make you sick. Beyond these basic precautions, immunization is

the primary method for preventing severe illness and complications from influenza infection.

Influenza immunization is mandatory for U.S. Army personnel, and Soldiers can expect to receive other routine immunizations that are due at the time of influenza immunization. Only the inactivated form of the influenza vaccine will be available in theater, and it by definition cannot give you the flu. Soreness at the immunization site lasting less than 2 days is the most common side-effect of immunization, and protection from the influenza infection is present in approximately two weeks.

Soldiers with a documented history of a severe reaction to the influenza vaccine or specific food allergy should discuss these with a healthcare provider before receiving the shot. Further guidance on when and where influenza immunizations will be available should be forthcoming from your aid-station.

Epidemics of influenza are actually caused by different strains of the virus that continue to change, often rendering the vaccination ineffective the following winter. Three times in the past century this change was profound enough to cause an influenza pandemic; each resulting in significant disease and loss of life particularly among young healthy people in many locations around the globe.

An emerging concern today is the pos-



Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Spc. Alfredo C. Chiquito, a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Service Company, 3rd Infantry Division, gives Maj. Gen. William Webster, 3rd Inf. Div. commanding general his annual flu shot Oct. 6 at Camp Liberty. The shot kicked off the division's flu immunization program, which aims to treat all 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers with the flu vaccine.

sibility of another influenza pandemic, the potential threat this time coming from a change in the influenza virus that infects birds (avian). Humans have little or no immunity to this particular virus, and cases of avian influenza from infected birds reported in Southeast Asia were usually serious and often fatal.

If the bird flu virus develops the ability to easily infect humans, and then begins to spread quickly from person to person, the next great influenza pandemic may have already begun. At the present time there is no widely available vaccine to protect humans from avian influenza.

Cartoon Corner

★ OPERATION ELUSIVE CONCEPT ★



Have something you'd like to contribute to the bi-weekly comic strip? Contact ricardo.branch@d3.army.mil.

Last Week's Crossword Answers

H	L	E	A	G	U	E	O	F	N	A	T	I	O	N	S						
A		Y							T	E					A						
M	K	U	W	A	I	T	T	B	A	G	H	D	A	D							
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Religious Service and Prayer Schedule for Camp Liberty

Division Chapel

Mon. – Fri.
12 p.m. Catholic

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 (noninstrumental)
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. – 2:30 p.m. Latter Day Saints
7 p.m. Traditional Protestant

Riva Ridge Chapel

Wednesday
7:30 p.m. Wicca Circle – briefing tent

Wed & 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

DESERT JUSTICE Soldiers are eligible for U.S. Citizenship

Maj. Joe Marshall
Chief, Client Services, SJA

Individuals who enlist in the U.S. military are eligible for citizenship much faster than other U.S. applicants. In order to enlist, a non-citizen Soldier must have a permanent resident or "green card holder." Normally, such permanent residents have a waiting period of five years before eligibility for citizenship. Enlisting has always reduced this waiting period from five years to three years. However by Presidential order, the entire waiting period is waived for enlisted Soldiers on active duty during the current "period of conflict." Soldiers also must pass an interview demonstrating proficiency in English, government, and U.S. history.

The old Immigration and Naturalization Service is now the Citizenship and Immigration Services within the Department of Homeland Security. The CIS's Web site is: <http://www.uscis.gov>.

Soldiers who want to apply for U.S. Citizenship will need to complete forms N-400, N-426, and G-325. The \$320 application fee is waived for the military. Applicants will need a copy of their I-155 "green card" as well as fingerprints and photograph — fees are also waived for these requirements.

Soldiers assigned to Multi-National Division-Baghdad can start the process through their Personnel Services Battalion where they fill out and submit the forms free of fees and have their fingerprints done. They can obtain a photograph at the Camp Liberty Post Exchange photo processing lab.

Once Soldiers submit the application, they will receive confirmation that CIS has a file started. Normally, they would receive a date for interview and potential swearing-in. If another ceremony is scheduled before redeployment, those seeking citizenship must request their file be transferred

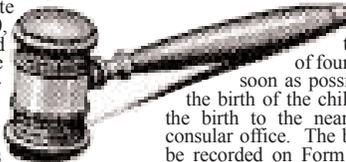
from the office in the U.S. to the Rome, Italy office. Check with your unit personnel section for any such citizenship ceremony date that gets established. Soldiers who receive notice that their interview date is scheduled before redeployment should contact their office to notify them of the required delay until they return.

Family Members Immigrating to the U.S.

Some servicemembers marry a foreign citizen. The spouse and other family members may want to immigrate to the U.S. and seek U.S. citizenship.

A child born in the U.S. is a U.S. citizen. A child born outside the U.S. with both parents U.S. citizens is also a U.S. citizen if one parent has ever lived in the U.S.

If a U.S. citizen servicemember has a child born outside of the U.S. to a non-citizen spouse, then the child can still be a U.S. citizen if the citizen parent lived in the U.S. for at least five years, two years of



the age of fourteen. As soon as possible after the birth of the child, report the birth to the nearest U.S. consular office. The birth will be recorded on Form FS-240, Consular Report of Birth. This form will be used much as a birth certificate in the U.S. for all future actions regarding the child.

All other non-citizen family members will need a visa to live in the U.S. The citizen family member will file a Form I-130 as well as I-864 Affidavit of Support, showing the proof of relationship with marriage or birth certificate. A non-citizen who enters the U.S. as a spouse must remain married for two years in order to remain a lawful permanent resident. After three years, a spouse may apply for citizenship. All other family members have a five year residency requirement before citizenship.

Contact your unit legal office for any additional assistance with immigration cases.

Chaplain's Corner Making the most of our time

Chaplain (Maj.) Bill Kilmer
4-3 AVN Bde.

Can you see the "light at the end of the tunnel" for this deployment?

Be careful, it is either an opening at the end of a tunnel, or the light of an on-coming train.

You may not be looking for the light yet, or you may be solely focused on "one day at a time." Either way, we need to endure to the end!

Here's an example.
A couple liked to go on long distance hikes. They liked to spend the time outdoors and cover as much ground each day as they could. The husband would always lead because in the words of his wife, "I'm a heel-watcher."

As they hiked, she could go all day if all she had to do was watch his heels and follow where he was leading. As long as he kept going, she kept going. When he stopped, she stopped.

Whether you are a leader or a "heel-watcher," keep going, endure to the end.

"Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us," *Hebrews 12:1-3*. The writer of the book of Hebrews in the Bible tells us that we are to run with endurance or determination or perseverance.

This deployment is not a sprint but a long, drawn-out, daily, long-distance run. We need to keep running a good race, doing the right things, taking care of one another.

Our families back home are striving to run the same race as we who are deployed. Their's too is a long, drawn-out, daily, long-distance run. We all need encouragement as we "run the race" together.

Another biblical writer suggested we, "walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called."

The 3rd Infantry Division has a long, glorious and storied history. As members of the "Rock of the Marne" we have joined that distinguished lineage and answered the call of our country when we were called to serve and deploy. Enduring to the end of the deployment and beyond includes "walking in a manner worthy of the calling with which we have been called."

We represent not just ourselves, our unit or our country, we also represent that long, glorious and storied history of the Soldiers and families of the Rock Of The Marne Division.

Look around you – the folks you work with,

spend time with, go on missions with, eat at the Dining Facility with, workout at the gym with, shop at the Post Exchange with, fly in helicopters with, they are running the same "race" you are running.

They are working daily to finish strong and return to their homes and families. They too are trying to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which (they) have been called."

How do we do it?

In another translation of the same verse, a biblical writer gives us direction and says, "I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing with one another in love."

That is how we do it.
That is how we endure to the end, how we "run with endurance the race that is set before us." That is how we "walk in a manner worthy of the calling we have received."

By being patient, we treat each other with respect.

By being patient, we bear with one another. Being patient means we exercise selflessness by putting the welfare of the nation, the Army, and our subordinates before our own. Be patient by being loyal to each other, to the nation and its heritage.

Demonstrate patience by doing your duty and fulfilling our obligations. Be patient by respecting each other by knowing that how we consider others reflects upon each of us, both personally and as a professional organization.

Be willing to do what is right even when one is looking by having integrity.

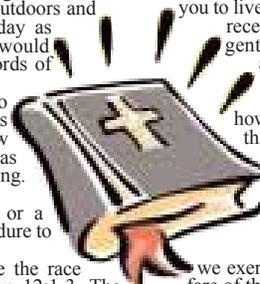
We must endure in our ability to face fear, danger, or adversity. By being patient, we're honoring each other, our families and our commitments.

When I first arrived at Fort Stewart, I was told, "Welcome to the Marne Express ... it is rolling and you better climb on board."

"Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people, but as wise. Making the most of the time..." This Iraq deployment is long and it is not over yet.

There is much to be accomplished before we are "mission complete." We will "finish the race" the same way we started, with each other, supporting each other, being patient with one another.

Grace and Peace.
Chaplain Bill Kilmer



**LEGAL PROBLEMS?
CONTACT YOUR
UNIT'S
SJA FOR
GUIDANCE**

In Memory of ...

*Cpl. Joshua J. Kynoch, 2/7 Inf.
Staff Sgt. Jens E. Schelbert, 2/69 Armor
Sgt. 1st Class Brandon K. Sneed, 1/30 Inf.
Sgt. Leon M. Johnson, 1/30 Inf.*

*You may be gone,
but you're not forgotten.
We will continue the fight.*

RUNNING FOR THE GLORY

Camp Liberty runners pound pavement in MND-B 10-Miler race



Spc. Derek Del Rosario

More than 450 Task Force Baghdad Soldiers "take-off" from the starting line during the MND-B 10-Miler race at Camp Liberty Oct. 2.

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
100th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – As 20,000 runners ran through the streets of Washington, in the Army Ten-Miler race, more than 450 Soldiers and civilians from Camp Victory and Camp Liberty raced a similar event in Baghdad Oct. 2.

The siren of a fire-truck signified the start of the Multi-National Division - Baghdad 10-Miler race where participants ran a course which curved and snaked through the Camp Victory complex.

The course gave runners a scenic, yet challenging route that curved around lakes, over bridges and past the Al-Faw palace before circling back to the finish line on Strawberry Hill Road.

Prizes were awarded to the top three male and female finishers, as well as the best five-person team with the best average time. Each team had to have at least one female runner, and nine teams participated.

The top three male finishers in the MND-B 10-Miler were 2nd Lt. Jamie Carmichael, 546th Area Support Medical Company, with a time of 53 minutes, 42 seconds; Staff Sgt. David Bice, 18th Military Police Brigade Team, at 54 minutes, 4 seconds; and civilian Damien Gonzales at 56 minutes, 30 seconds.

The top three female finishers were: Sgt. 1st Class Delia McKalpain, 35th Signal Brigade, with a time of 66 minutes, 5 seconds; Sgt. Trista Neimast, Central Criminal Court of Iraq, at 69 minutes, 20 seconds; and Kellie Robinson, Australian Army Headquarters, at 69 minutes, 35 seconds.

The winner of the team competition was the 18th Military Police Brigade, made up of Chaplain (Col.) Donald Holdridge, Master Sgt. Don Vasher, Staff Sgt. David Bice, Sgt. John Gossett and Sgt. Nicole Eckert with an average time of 62 minutes, 11 seconds.

The MND-B 10-Miler drew almost 400 more participants than the previous Camp Liberty run, a 5-kilometer run at the beginning of August. Thanks to the planning and preparation by Sgt. 1st Class Belinda Rhanes, noncommissioned officer in charge of 3rd Infantry Division, Morale, Welfare and Recreation office this race was a huge success.

"We had two initial planning rehearsals that included Army and Air Force Exchange Service and MWR representatives, traffic control, and medics from both camps," Rhanes said. "This was a much larger event that included both South Victory and Camp Liberty."

The top overall finisher, Carmichael ran in track-and-field events at college and currently logs up to 60-miles a week. He said he was pleased with his top finish and felt that the MND-B 10-Miler had something to offer every participant.

"I feel I put forth a solid, hard effort, and I'm definitely happy with my run," he said. "I think races like the Army Ten-Miler are a good morale booster. I think just by finishing the race, people felt like they accomplished something."

McKalpain came out to enjoy a morning run with her comrades, but ended up finishing at the top of the female contestants.

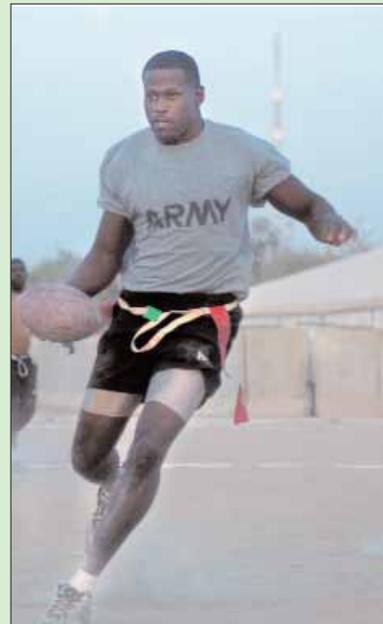
"I just wanted to run and represent my unit," McKalpain said. "I participated for the enjoyment and because I like running. Being out here though, you can see a lot of these people are really motivated and competitive."

Gossett finished with a time of 62 minutes, 22 seconds and helped secure the win for the 18th MP Brigade in the team competition. He trained by running up to six miles a day and 12 miles on weekends a month prior to the race.

"I came out to have fun, try to set my own personal best record and do my best to help the team win," he said. "It was a good course to run on — nice and flat with the exception of the bridges and you could see someone at every turn. It feels good to say we ran the MND-B 10-Miler in Iraq, even if we couldn't run the Army Ten-Miler in Washington."

"I feel I put forth a solid, hard effort, and I'm definitely happy with my run. I think races like the Army Ten-Miler are a good morale boost."

2nd Lt. Jamie Carmichael
546th Area Support Med. Co.



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner

(above) Pfc. Yoturri Wright, of the Detachment 1, 3rd Signal Company 'Hurricanes' runs for the end zone while Sgt. Roy Dixon (far right), of Det. 3, 3rd Sig. Co., hopes to chase him down.
(right) Staff Sgt. Marcus James, of the hurricanes contemplates his next move as the 'Bladerunners' defense closes in. The 'Bladerunners' efforts earned their fourth place in the 3rd Infantry Division MWR sponsored flag football tournament Oct. 8-10 on Camp Liberty.



In the Movies



Here's something for you to get 'Lost' in

Sp. Adam Musil
2nd BCT PAO

Hello again fellow movie and TV fans. For this entry about the world of celluloid we are going to take a detour from films and take a gander at the world of television.

First, let me state that I don't like most television shows, but I do appreciate "The Sopranos" and "Curb Your Enthusiasm" both of which are on HBO; a network that has the budget and talent to create television that transcends the stigma that film is art and TV is lowbrow entertainment.

I am also a fan of "Smallville," but I don't honestly think that is a very good show. It's more of a guilty pleasure for those who have grown up zealously reading comics and who are now well past the age that any normal human being would be seen toting their comic books around in public.

Seeing how I usually try to avoid TV dramas, I figured there was no chance I was ever going to watch "Lost." Not only was it on the boob-tube, but it was showing on a major network.

Well, after some encouragement from my wife I decided to give it a chance.

What I found was surprisingly amazing. "Lost" is the brainchild of three men, most notably J.J. Abrams, who many of you may recognize as the creator of "Alias," another popular TV show. Think of the "Lord of the Flies" meeting "The Twilight Zone" and you have the premise for "Lost."

As the dramatic story unfolds, we find Jack, portrayed by former "Party of Five" star Mathew Fox, on his back in the middle of a jungle. After orienting himself, Jack moves from the dense foliage to a beach. It is here when one realizes this is not your regular television show. On the beach, people scurry for cover as a grounded airplane slowly explodes around them. Not knowing what to do, Jack's instincts kick in (he's a doctor) and he begins moving people away from the wreckage and treating

their injuries. As he does this, he enlists the help of other poor souls who ironically form the main cast of the show.

This opening scene is graphic and realistic. At one point a man is sucked up into the engine of the plane causing it to explode. The engine explodes like an engine should - with indiscriminate blazing shrapnel spraying across the beach. If any of you have been unlucky enough, or lucky if you are into scoring combat badges, to see a vehicle borne improvised explosive device explode here in Iraq, you will consider this scene a realistic one.

Once the initial threat of the exploding plane passes, everyone forms into a group and begins searching the island.

These scenes are inter-cut with back stories of the characters. The writers did an excellent job with this story-telling device, giving away only small amounts of information to keep you guessing.

As everyone begins to settle into their new roles within the group, various items such as handcuffs, guns and a wheelchair are found strewn about. All of these objects keep the passengers guessing about the true nature of their new peers.

The majority of the episodes follow a similar story thread.

Each episode focuses on a different character, giving insight into their sordid past and the motivations for their actions, all while pushing along the two main plot points; getting off the island, and discovering its mystical aspects.

This description may give the impression that "Lost" is just a run-of-the-mill action show it isn't.

The show works because of the complex human aspects of the characters. From a heroin addict, to a prisoner on the run, to an Iraqi soldier and a doctor with daddy issues, each of the characters have enough personal drama to warrant their own spin-offs.

Once you watch one episode, you will find that you can't wait to watch the next.



Sayid, played by Naveen Andrews, marches off into the jungle after doing something he swore to never do again.

Once you start following the series, you'll feel like you know these characters better than you know your own battle buddy.

You won't think of the implausibility of a person being chased by a giant polar bear in the woods. You will just want him to escape with his life. After all, that is just about all he has left anyway.

"Lost" is an example of what television can be in the right artistic hands. The series gives us interesting characters who simply can't be understood in a matter of hours. It gives us a storyline that constantly keeps us wanting more.

I suggest you pick up season one from the internet or at your camp from a buddy who is already hooked. Also, most of the DVD movie shops here have box sets of the entire season.

Season two has recently premiered on TV. I look forward to watching it when I myself am finally rescued from this place.

Thrills, Chills, and Spills

Test your horror knowledge by taking our quiz now!

1 The line 'They all float down here' is from which of the following movies?

- A) 'The Silence of the Lambs'
- B) 'It'
- C) 'The Shining'
- D) 'The Langoliers'

2 The quote 'Monster stay out of Tad's room, you have business here' is from which of the following movies?

- A) 'Cujo'
- B) 'Ghoulies'
- C) 'Puppet Master'
- D) 'Gremlins'

3 'A lot of these kids are going to get slaughtered tonight' comes from which of these classic horror movies?

- A) 'Halloween II'
- B) 'Friday the 13th'
- C) 'Halloween'
- D) 'Friday the 13th: Part IV'

4 The following quote, 'Hey boy' is a quote from which of these movies?

- A) 'Phantoms'
- B) 'Phantasm'
- C) 'The Shining'
- D) 'Silver Bullet'

5 'And, oh, are you ever his taste.' is a line from which movie?

(five words)

6 Which of the following movies contains the line 'You wouldn't have liked it here anyways'?

- A) 'Nightmare on Elm Street'
- B) 'Scream'
- C) 'The Stand'
- D) 'The Faculty'

7 It's better than perfect ... it's divine' is from which movie?

- A) 'It'
- B) 'Misery'
- C) 'The Silence of the Lambs'
- D) 'Urban Legends'

8 Which of the following characters said, 'This is the test.'?

- A) Mr. Tate
- B) Ms. Drake
- C) Mr. Furlong
- D) Ms. Harper

9 From which movie is the line, 'These are Estee Lauder lips, they take 72 minutes to apply.'?

- A) 'Urban Legends'
- B) 'The Faculty'
- C) 'Scream'
- D) 'Scream 2'

10 'Lunch boy' becomes the nickname for a character in which movie?

- A) 'Disturbing Behavior'
- B) 'Child's Play 3'
- C) 'Urban Legend'
- D) 'Final Destination'

Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 A, 4 B, 5 'The Silence of the Lambs', 6 D, 7 B, 8 A, 9 B, 10 A