

Medics to the rescue , Page 4



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.

Spc. Ryan Crabtree of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment, Company A, creates rapport with local shop owners while conducting a patrol in Mosul, Iraq, Nov. 3, in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Bush: America will not back down in war on terror

By Sgt. Sara Wood
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — America faces a dangerous enemy in the radical terrorists who are fighting democracy in the Middle East, and the only strategy to win is to remain on the offensive and to accept nothing less than total victory, President Bush said Monday at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska.

Speaking to a crowd of service members and families from military installations in Alaska, Bush said that the terrorists had the wrong idea that the United States would run after being attacked on Sept. 11, 2001.

“The terrorists are mistaken,” he said. “America will never run; we will stand, we will fight and we will win the war on terror.”

The terrorists are driven by a violent political vision to establish a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedoms, Bush said. For a time in Afghanistan,

the terrorists succeeded in establishing a launching pad for their attacks and their violent agenda, he said. After the United States routed them out, they set their sights on Iraq.

“The terrorists regard Iraq as the central front in their war against humanity, and we must recognize Iraq as the central front in the war on terror,” he said.

The war on terror is a vital mission for the armed forces, one that must be won to secure the freedom and safety of

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Rice stands up first Provincial Reconstruction Team in Iraq

Story and photo by Polli Keller
Army News Service

MOSUL, Iraq — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made a surprise appearance at the inauguration of the Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team.

Rice established Iraq's first Provincial Reconstruction Team on Veterans Day,

along with Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, Deputy Regional Coordinator Clarence Hudson and Director of the National Coordination Team Greg Bates.

The ceremony took place on Forward Operating Base Courage in Mosul, Iraq, one day after the Ninewa PRT completed its initial training. This effort was led by Bates and certified by Maj. Gen. Robert Heine,

Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office deputy director for operations.

Three of 15 PRTs to begin this month

The ceremony inaugurated the first of 15 PRTs that will deploy across Iraq by next summer, officials said. They said two more PRTs are being fielded in November to demonstrate a "proof of principle" and provide lessons for further implementation.

The remaining 12 PRTs and one Regional Reconstruction Team, or RRT, are scheduled for implementation by July, officials said.

The PRTs are designed to help build capability and sustainability within Iraq's provincial governments, eventually allowing them to function without Coalition assistance, officials said. They said this transition to Iraqi leadership will be achieved by developing a transparent and sustained capability to govern, increasing security and assuring rule of law, promoting political and economic development, and by providing provincial administration necessary to meet the basic needs of the population.

These efforts are essential to a stable democracy evolving in Iraq and increased stability spreading throughout the Middle East, officials said.

Rebuilding essential to stability

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is fundamental to the success of the PRT in building

capable and sustainable institutions for Iraq's local and provincial governments," said Col. Richard Jenkins, USACE Gulf Region North commander.

Maj. Mike Farrell is the USACE engineer officer assigned to the Ninewa PRT. When asked what was most significant to him personally, he said, "As a U.S. Army officer, I swore to support and defend the U.S. Constitution. Now, I have the opportunity to help implement a constitution and mentor fellow engineers on providing for their citizens' basic needs."

"The USACE has been fundamental in executing the Iraqi reconstruction program," said Farrell. "Now, through PRT, we will be instrumental in helping the Iraqis learn to do it for themselves."

Iraqis have first say in projects

The Iraqis are first in the planning and implementation of reconstruction efforts because it is their future and they have both the responsibility and the capability to make it work, Jenkins said.

The reconstruction program has become the front line in Iraq, Jenkins said. Although insurgents have caused delays and damage — both in lives and increased costs for the reconstruction effort — the U.S. and Iraqi governments remain steadfast in their joint efforts to help rebuild Iraq, he said.

The PRT will help develop effective solutions to some of the challenges facing Iraq. This is an important step, officials said, as Iraqis take the lead in addressing their problems with the U.S. serving as a true partner.



Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made a surprise appearance at the inauguration of the Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team. Rice established Iraq's first PRT on Veterans Day, along with Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, Deputy Regional Coordinator Clarence Hudson and Director of the National Coordination Team Greg Bates.

Terror

from Page 1

the Middle East and the rest of the world, Bush said.

"We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with confidence and with a comprehensive strategy to win this war," he said.

America is committed to prevent terrorist attacks, to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes, to deny radical groups that support and provide sanctuary to outlaw regimes, to prevent the terrorists from gaining control of any country to use as a staging area for attacks, and to deny the terrorists future recruits, Bush said.

The Coalition has stayed on the offensive against terror, killing or capturing terrorist operatives and leaders in countries around the world, Bush said. U.S. and Coalition Forces will keep pressure on terrorist networks until the networks are broken and the leaders are held accountable

for their murders, he said.

The best way to prevent terrorists from gaining new recruits is to replace hatred and resentment with democracy and freedom, Bush said, because the value of free societies has been proven by history.

"If the peoples of that region are permitted to choose their own destiny and advance by their own energy and participation as free men and free women, then the extremists will be marginalized and the flow of radical extremism to the rest of the world will slow and eventually end," he said.

The work ahead in the war on terror involves great risk, Bush said, adding that some of America's best men and women have already been lost. However, the best way to honor their sacrifices is to complete the mission and protect the freedom of Americans now and in the future, he said.

"By advancing the hope of freedom and democracy for others, we make our own freedom more secure," he said.



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PERSPECTIVES

Learning history through 'The Grand Old Man of the Army'

By Staff Sgt. Nick Minecci
214th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

I have a group of friends who share my passion for history, and we e-mail daily discussing historical figures and events, and seeing how the events of today fit in with the past.

I have had a long love of history, and being in Iraq has been a magnificent chance to visit one of the most important places in human history.

Recently, one of the members sent the old standby to the group, "If you could meet anyone in history, who would it be?"

When I think about the person in history I would like to meet, I always think of Winfield Scott.

I usually get a lot of blank stares when I say his name as people do not know about the man called "The Grand Old Man of the Army" and "Old Fuss and Feathers" by his troops.

Winfield Scott was born on June 13, 1786, in Petersburg, Va. After graduating from The College of William and Mary, he worked as a lawyer and was a corporal in the Virginia militia cavalry before he received a commission as a captain in 1808 in the artillery.

His career did not get off to a great start. He was suspended for a year from his military duties after a court martial for insubordination. Following his punishment, Scott would rise to the rank of colonel and be captured by British troops during the Battle of Queenston Heights in the War of 1812. During his captivity he befriended several British officers, and those bonds would prove valuable later in his career.

In 1839 tensions between the state of Maine and the British Canadian government in New Brunswick were growing, and war clouds were rumbling when Scott was dispatched to see if war could be averted. Using his personal charm, Scott defused the situation, earning praise from both sides.

In 1841, he was promoted to the rank of general-in-chief, a rank he would hold until 1861. During the mid-1800s he would serve his nation during the Nullification Crisis, enforcing the removal of the Cherokee Indians from Georgia (known as the Trail of Tears), in the Black Hawk Wars and the Second Seminole War.

It was during the Mexican-American War that Scott's teaching and leadership would reach its pinnacle. Commanding and mentoring young officers with names that would go down in history — Ulysses S. Grant, Ambrose Burnside, Stonewall Jackson, George Meade, and Robert E. Lee — Scott would lead the army to an amphibious landing at Vera Cruz.

Following the successful capture of Mexico City, the Whig Party put forth Scott as their candidate for president in 1852, over the incumbent Millard Fillmore!

At the start of the Civil War, Scott knew he at age 70 he could not command in the field, and offered the command to Robert E. Lee, but Lee chose to fight for Virginia. Scott came up with a plan to defeat the Confederacy, known as the Anaconda Plan, that was torn apart in the press and by political rivals. It was a long-term plan that called for the occupation of key terrain such as the Mississippi River and key ports on the Atlantic Coast and the Gulf of Mexico and then moving on Atlanta.

This strategy was used by the Union Army, particularly in the Western Theater and in the successful naval blockade of Confederate ports. In 1864 it was continued by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and executed by Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman in his Atlanta Campaign and March to the Sea.

Scott saw the Union defeat the Confederates, but not in uniform. He was forced through political pressure from Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan to resign as general-in-chief on Nov. 1, 1861. Scott would die at West Point, N.Y., on May 29, 1866.

He had amazing compassion for the enlisted men in his care; in fact, he founded what was then called the "Old Soldiers Home" in Washington, D.C., for retired enlisted men. It still thrives as the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

I would love to meet him, talk about the events he saw unfold in front of his eyes — the men he taught and his feelings about many of them fighting for the South. Scott was a man of vision, a diplomat and Soldier. I have heard him described as the George S. Patton of the 19th century. No, Patton was the Scott of the 20th century, a man whose accomplishments are eclipsed by his students because of the Civil War.

Winfield Scott, the man I would most like to meet.

Scimitar Pulse

If you could be any one famous person, who would it be? Why?

"I'd be Princess Diana — the fabulous clothes and the good lifestyle. She got a lot of love and a lot of respect."

Army Capt. Jennifer Powell
Joint Area Support Group - Central



"I would want to be Condoleeza Rice; she is a very good leader and she's a black female."

Siza Ahmed
U.S. Embassy

"I would be president of the United States of America, because the U.S. is having a very big role against the war on terrorism, and it is a tough job to be such a big democratic country in the world."

Kennedy Robinson
Kellogg Brown and Root



"I would be my father; he embedded military traditions in me like discipline and courage. He was a very strong person."

Army Spc. Clarence Williams
37th Infantry

Targeting freedom ...

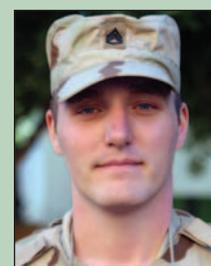


U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Neill A. Sevelius

An Iraqi Soldier sights in on a possible enemy location during Operation Steel Curtain recently. Iraqi Soldiers and U.S. Marines, Sailors and Soldiers with Regimental Combat Team-2 are restoring Iraqi sovereign control along the Iraqi-Syrian border and destroying the al Qaeda in Iraq terrorists throughout the al Qa'im region.

"I'd be Spider-Man or Venom, because they tear things up and get the job done."

Army Pfc. Jason Darling
122nd Field Artillery



"Steven Spielberg, because he's doing what I want to do — make movies!"

Army Staff Sgt. Erick O. Ritterby
Armed Forces Network - Iraq

"Lord Nelson, who was a man that changed the course of history, but in many ways is very human. Without him we would all be speaking French."

British Army Maj. Jeff R. Weighell
Civilian Police Assistance
Training Team



AAV mechanics keep tracks rolling throughout Iraq

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn
Scimitar Staff

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq — Sandstorms, improvised explosives and terrorist attacks cannot keep the Marines from 2nd Platoon, Company B, Amphibian Assault Battalion, 2nd Marine Division and their armored assault vehicles out of the fight.

“The work flow can be strenuous,” said Gunnery Sgt. Alvin Beard. “At any given time, we can work 18- to 20-hour days. A normal AAV rotation or hours/miles on these vehicles are 400 to 450 miles in five years; we did that in about 60 days.” The average for the company has been about 832 miles for the first month and 897 for the following months.

Beard is one of the senior noncommissioned officers for 2nd Plt., B Co. He ensures his mechanics keep B Co.’s AAVs combat ready.

Keeping the AAVs combat ready has come with a price. The company had lost one of its mechanic brothers. On June 6, Lance Cpl. Jonathan L. Smith was bringing hot chow to the field when the AAV he was in hit an improvised explosive device.

“[Terrorists] are getting smarter, bigger mines and bigger IEDs,” Beard said. “The repairs are getting more intensive. In the last two weeks, we repaired six tracks and 12 in the last month,” said Beard.

Referring to an AAV nicknamed “Diablo 4” being repaired, Beard pointed to where a rocket-propelled grenade went through the rear ramp window. “Two Marines were wounded when that happened,” he said. Looking at the window, Beard said “it was miraculous that no one was killed, and it is still [in operation].”

Not only do they repair the tracks, the mechanics also have to assist B Co. with a myriad of duties. “We are tasked with convoy operations, patrolling, security and stability operations,” said Beard.

Additionally, they attach a mechanic plus one communications operator or radio man and a communications technician to



Marine mechanics from B Co., 2nd AAB, 2nd Marine Division remove a bad transmission from an LVT-7 AAV.

each platoon. “We are down manning strength by about a quarter,” said Beard. The company has 22 enlisted Marines and one officer; the loss of personnel has been hard.

“It has been very maintenance-intensive — pretty much non-stop since we arrived,” said Beard.

When B Co. deployed, it had three or four trained mechanics with little experience in the company, Beard explained. They received the rest of their mechanics freshly trained from school and with no real-world experience.

Sgt. Jason Groves, one of the mechanics assigned to B Co., was watching an AAV crew he was assigned to working on one of the road wheels.

“Most of the stuff I do, they already know how to do,” said Groves.

The men repairing the AAVs have not gone unnoticed. Beard said his Marines were submitted for awards ranging from the Navy Achievement Medal to letters of achievement, and he feels confident they will be recognized.

Airborne medics jump through hoops to help, save patients

Story and photos by Pfc. James Wilt
82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs

TALL AFAR, Iraq — Moaning in a small room on the outskirts of the city, a young Iraqi man lies on a stretcher, bleeding from four gunshot wounds to the body and one to the head.

All around him, men methodically examine and patch the holes the bullets left, working to keep him alive.

Soon, four men pick up the stretcher and carry him to a waiting helicopter bound for a hospital in Mosul.

The men helping the injured Iraqi man can breathe a sigh of relief; the gunshot victim is on the “bird” with a heartbeat and a breath in his lungs.

Medics with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, operate an aid station here where they provide emergency medical care to U.S. military personnel and the Iraqi populace.

“There is a guy — I can’t remember his name — he said it perfectly, ‘In a war zone, your whole mission in life is to kill the enemy and survive.’ Our enemy is death. So when we’re fighting, we’re fighting death itself,” said Sgt 1st Class Tyson E. Bubnar, a combat medic from Port Hueneme, Calif.

More than once, the medics working in the “White Falcon” aid station have been called to battle.



Pfc. Chris D. Weaver, a medic with HHC, 2nd Bn., 325th Airborne Inf. Regt., 82nd Airborne Div., checks a boy's vitals after he was shot in the foot.

“For the most part, we’re treating innocent civilians that get hurt from an IED or Iraqi Army Soldiers that come in,” said Staff Sgt. Daniel R. Eraso, a combat medic from Winterpark, Fla.

For most of the paratroopers, the hardest part of treating many of their patients is that the patients are children.

“Seeing the kids get injured is the only



Medics from the 2nd Bn., 325th Airborne Inf. Regt., 82nd Airborne Div., carry a wounded man to a waiting helicopter that is bound for Mosul.

thing that bothers me,” Eraso said.

Shortly after the aid station was set up, a young boy was brought in with second degree burns to his face and right arm. Examining the boy’s eyes, ears and mouth was a priority for the medics. With a burn to the face, they wanted to ensure he could still see, hear and talk, said Sgt. Jeremy B. Johns, a combat medic from Yorktown, Va.

After establishing there was no damage to the boy’s senses, the paratroopers began to cool the boy’s wounds down and scrub off all of the burnt skin, Johns said. The skin was removed to prevent infection.

“He was hurting pretty good,” Johns said. “That’s the one thing I noticed about a lot of kids here; they have a really high tolerance for pain. ... Which is good for us in a lot of ways, but at the same time, it’s pretty sad

kids have to be that strong that young,” he added.

The boy returned to the aid station for follow-up treatments and is on his way to a healthy recovery, Johns said.

While helping the people here, the medics are not always as successful. Some of their patients suffer from ailments paratroopers cannot cure.

“It makes it kind of hard when you know that this kid has something that really needs to be worked on, and you can’t do anything for him. All we can do is give him a [toy] and say ‘sorry,’” Johns said.

Overall, aid station medics know they are making a difference. “You come away with a sense of accomplishment, a sense of actually contributing to the reconstruction of this country,” Eraso said.

Joint efforts ensure flight line's health

Story and photos by Senior Airman Bryan Franks
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq — Balad's airfield is one of the busiest in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Keeping the airfield operational is the job of the 332nd Expeditionary Operations



Staff Sgt. Bill Hassen, 332nd ECES spall team member, removes large pieces of concrete from a spall area.

Support Squadron airfield management team and the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron airfield pavement repair or "spall" team.

"It's part of our job to ensure that there is no foreign object debris that can damage inbound and outbound aircraft or jet engines," said Tech. Sgt. Weldon Bales, 332nd EOSS deputy airfield manager. "We also check for cracked and fragmented pavement known as "spalls" that could cause damage to an aircraft's tires or get ingested into an engine's intake."

Coalition Forces damaged the airfield during first Gulf War, and little had been done to keep it maintained, until U.S. forces took command of the base, Bales said.

The airfield's pavement joint seals, which keep water from seeping underneath the runways, were in bad shape causing more debris on the runway, Bales said. Because the seals had been neglected for many years, most are cracked and brittle or non-existent. That allows pavement edges to break or rocks to collect and be pushed through the cracks when aircraft roll over them.

The airfield management operations team identifies spalls or other pavement discrepancies daily. Working with the 332nd ECES spall team, they prioritize the repairs, ensuring minimal impact to the flying mission.

"It's a total team effort," said Chief Master Sgt. Arturo Jayme, 332nd EOSS Balad airfield manager. "There is no way we could keep the runway operational without the awesome effort of our spall team, airfield management operations and air traffic control folks."



From left, Tech. Sgt. James Goetz pours concrete as Senior Airman Tad Sindelir spreads it before it sets.

The spall team has the ability to repair between two and 10 large spalls a day depending on the size. At times, it goes through 25 to 40 buckets of quick-setting concrete.

The team first cuts and jackhammers the damaged section and then removes all the loose rock so the new concrete can bond with the runway. Once the rock is removed, the team starts mixing the concrete.

"When we start mixing the concrete, we've got to work fast before the new concrete begins to set in layers," said Tech. Sgt. James Goetz, 332nd ECES construction operator and spall team leader.

After the concrete is poured, the team finishes smoothing the patch and then cleans the area, removing potential debris.

Once the spall work is complete, the airfield management team rechecks the runway for debris and then the runway is ready to resume aircraft operations.

"Airfield management is responsible to keep the airfield open so the mission can continue, and the spall team and airfield management's work ensures that we can safely launch and recover aircraft," Bales said.

Jayme said, "The Balad airfield is in a constant state of change. As we continue to make short- and long-term airfield improvements in support of our ongoing Global War on Terrorism, and airfield management's constant vigilance is the key to keep our airfield safe and operational at all times."

Infantry support battalion armors more than just Humvees, tanks

Story and photo by Pfc. Joshua R. Ford
Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

BALAD, Iraq — Since the 3rd Forward Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division mechanics have been in Iraq they have worked on everything from a basic Humvee to an M-1 Abrams tank.

When Soldiers were told that they would be armoring Iraqi Army vehicles, the mechanics didn't miss a step.

"We can fix, weld and tow anything, so we were up for the challenge," said Sgt. Shawn Landeen, auto shop foreman for the service and recovery section, Company B, 3rd FSB, 1st Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.

For the past six months, mechanics and metal workers from the 3rd FSB have been helping the Iraqi Forces uparmor their vehicles.

"The purpose of uparmoring these vehicles is to give the Iraqis added protection while conducting operations," said Maj. Phillip E. Graham, military transition team leader, 369th Armor Battalion, 1st Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.

"The Iraqi Army needs assistance uparmoring their trucks so they send the trucks here, and we armor them," said Staff Sgt. Benjamin Nicholson, machinist, B Co.

The motor pool's support operations shop pushed the mechanics to armor these vehicles so Iraqi Forces can conduct operations on their own, Nicholson said.

There are no instructions on how to armor the vehicles used by the Iraqi Army, so the mechanics came up with their own blueprints and started from scratch, said Spc.



Iraqi Army Soldiers bring two "bongo" trucks to the B Co. metal workers to be armored.

Ernesto Almazan, a metal worker with the company.

Some of the trucks the battalion mechanics have armored are Russian five-ton trucks, civilian pickup trucks and what the mechanics call civilian long bed "bongo" trucks, Nicholson said.

These trucks primarily serve as troop carriers for the Iraqi Army.

The mechanics examine the design of each vehicle before armoring them.

"After we look at the structure design, we take meas-

urements on the vehicle," Almazan said. "We take measurements of the gas tank, the bed of the truck, the cab and the sides."

The mechanics then cut the metal to the precise measurement taken.

"The floor bed is the hardest part to armor on the trucks because we have to pull the whole thing out, armor it, and then put it back in," Almazan said.

Mechanics also have to check if the vehicle is structurally sound.

"We have to make sure that the truck won't roll over easily after the armor has been put on," said Almazan.

"Once we look at that we will put an armor plate anywhere we can," said Landeen.

The 3rd FSB motor pool works on three or four trucks at a time, and each truck takes anywhere from three to four days to complete, Landeen added.

"This is really giving us the chance to do something challenging and different. It's a good change of pace," Landeen said.

The shop has received numerous coins and awards for the outstanding job done armoring the Iraqi Army's vehicles.

"This is just part of our mission here to assist the Iraqi Army by uparmoring their vehicles so they can conduct independent operations, and that brings the U.S. one step closer to pulling out of Iraq," added Landeen.

"So far these guys have done an outstanding job, and the Iraqis seem to think so as well," said Nicholson.

Coalition Corner

... highlighting countries
serving with MNF-Iraq



Norway

local name: Norge

The Kingdom of Norway is in northern Europe, bordering the North Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean and neighboring Finland, Sweden and Russia. Including its territories Bouvet Island, Jan Mayen and Svalbard, it is slightly larger than New Mexico size-wise. Almost 4.6 million people live here and use the official currency, the Norwegian Krone. Although a member of NATO, Norway is not part of the European Union like its neighbors Finland and Sweden.

Unlike many of its European neighbors, Norway does not have many historic structures such as castles and churches. However, Norway's natural scenery is among the most beautiful in Europe, making it an outdoorsman's haven. Besides being the capital, Oslo is said to be the place where the summers outwarm its rivals. Central Norway is lined with the country's highest mountains and the largest glacier. The historic city of Bergen is the main jump-off point for some of Norway's main attractions — the fjords, narrow inlets of the sea between cliffs or steep slopes perfect for those who enjoy cliff diving. Tromsø is referred to as the "Gateway to the Arctic" and is on skiers' to-do lists because of the beautiful snow-capped mountains in the backdrop. Risør has a small fishing harbor lined with a cluster of historic white houses, making it one of Norway's most picture-perfect villages and the subject of artists' creations.

In addition to breathtaking natural landscaping, Norway also has a variety of popular foods that make this country unique. Kjøttboller, which are meat cakes, are considered the national food. However, Fårikål, a Norwegian lamb and cabbage stew, is equally as popular, followed by lutefisk, which is dried codfish.

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



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Coalition Corner is compiled by Sgt. Misha King, editor, scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil.

CHAPLAIN'S TALK

Learning responsibility and accountability

By Chaplain (Maj.)
Jeffrey D. Houston
35th Signal Brigade Chaplain

I remember well my first lessons of responsibility and accountability. It was a recipe for disaster; some stolen matches, a vacant lot full of dry grass, and two mischievous 7-year-old boys. My friend Bruce and I were in way over our heads when we decided to build a

threw a look at the growing disaster I had so graciously left to my friend. He was flailing away at the fire with his shirt. As I vanished into the cornfield, I heard him yelling a lot of words that I had never heard before. (I never really understood the words until years later



Chaplain Houston

then I ran away. My friend took all the blame and was punished terribly while I was left to ponder my own painful feelings as only a 7-year-old can. I was not yet familiar with the adult words, "accountability" and

"responsibility," but the basic underlying principles were simple enough that even a scorched 7-year-old could grasp them, and an adult still remembers them:

- If you light it, you must put it out.
- If you strike a stolen match, the end result will always be bad.
- You cannot run fast enough to escape a guilty conscience.
- When you scorch a friend, you must face him sooner or later.
- Only good little boys get to ride on the fire engine.

These may sound silly, unless of course you were a 7-year-old once, but the real meat of the matter is still there:

- Take responsibility for your actions. Weigh the possible end results before you begin.
- Any endeavor lacking integrity in its conception will in time bear corruption.
- God holds us accountable for all the brushfires and stolen matches in our lives.
- Never run away from a friend in need.
- Those who sow seeds of responsibility and accountability reap a harvest of integrity.

I am convinced almost everything I needed to know about life, I learned as a 7-year-old — now if I could just put into practice about half of what I know.

"Some important lessons burned into my soul as I hid in the dark closet on that midsummer day many years ago; my guilty conscience would prove to be fertile soil for the seeds of maturity sown that day."

Chaplain Houston

I wanted to go over to Bruce's house. There was a big red fire engine that had just put out a brush fire nearby. "Maybe they'll give you a ride," she said. I told her I just was not interested, I was having too much fun in my closet rearranging my shoes. She said she just could not understand why anyone would want to play in a dark closet when they could go for a ride on a big red fire engine.

Some important lessons burned into my soul as I hid in the dark closet on that midsummer day many years ago; my guilty conscience would prove to be fertile soil for the seeds of maturity sown that day. I was responsible for the fire. I had conceived the plan, I stole the matches, I lit the fire — and



Guidons, Guidons, Guidons ...

Net Call for all Norwich University graduates in the AOR! Please contact: Lt. Col. Basheer Ilyas (NU '88) or Maj. Tom Simons (NU '92) at DSN 318-822-2160/2280 or thomas.simons@iraq.centcom.mil



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Scimitar Slapstick



Art by Jeffery Hall



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Who's your Sunday?

FREEDOM RADIO

Playing the music you want to hear!

"Today's Hits" 6-10 a.m.	Ssg Don Dees
"Classic Rock" 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	SFC Gail Anderson
"Flashback Iraq" 2-6 p.m.	SFC Marty Collins
"Urban Hits" 6-10 p.m.	SrA Chris Brewer

Frequencies	
Al Asad	107.3 FM
Ar Ramadi	107.3 FM
Baghdad	107.7 FM
Balad	107.3 FM
Fallujah	105.1 FM
Kirkuk	107.3 FM
Tikrit	107.3 FM
Mosul	105.1 FM
Q-West	93.3 FM
Taji	107.3 FM
Tallil	107.3 FM
Tallil Afar	107.3 FM
Taqadum	107.3 FM
Tikrit	100.1 FM

Worship and Prayer Schedule for the International Zone

All services at the Community Center Chapel unless otherwise noted

For more information, call DSN 318-239-8659

Sunday

- 9 a.m. — IZ Gospel Service (PCO annex classroom)
- 9:30 a.m. — Choir Rehearsal
- 10 a.m. — Catholic Mass (Camp Prosperity)
- 10:30 a.m. — General Christian Worship
- Noon — Episcopal/Lutheran/Anglican
- 2 p.m. — Latter Day Saints
- 4 p.m. — Catholic Confession
- 4:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass

Monday-Thursday

- Noon — Catholic Mass (Mon.-Thurs.)
- 6 p.m. — Catholic Adult Educaion (Tue.)
- 8 p.m. — Bible Study (Mon.-Thurs.)

Friday

- 9 a.m. — Catholic Choir Rehearsal
- 11 a.m. — Bible Study
- Noon — Catholic Communion Service
- 5:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass (FOB Steel Dragon)

- 6 p.m. — Jewish Shabbat Services
- 8 p.m. — Orthodox Fellowship
- 8 p.m. — Women's Fellowship (Chapel Classroom)

Saturday

- 9 a.m. — 7th Day Adventist School (CSH)
- 9 a.m. — 7th Day Adventist Service (CSH)
- 10 a.m. — Catholic Mass (CSH)
- 12:30 p.m. — Buddhist Prayer
- 4 p.m. — Catholic Confession

- 4:30 p.m. — Catholic Mass
- 6 p.m. — Choir Practice
- 6:30 p.m. — Community Center Service Rehearsal
- 8 p.m. — Alpha Course

Daily Islamic Prayer

See schedules posted at prayer locations.

Ironman Soldier races through Victory, challenges

Story and photos by
Sgt. Andrew Miller

Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs

CAMP LIBERTY, BAGHDAD — A Task Force Baghdad Soldier completed his own version of the renowned Ironman Triathlon in Baghdad shortly after his wife finished in the original event in Hawaii.

Capt. Christopher Harris, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, ran, cycled and swam his way through a course of his own design. The course, longer than 140 total miles, spanned several bases in the greater Camp Victory area in west Baghdad.

Harris began by swimming more than 100 laps in the Camp Victory pool. After a quick change of clothes, he was on his bike and moving hastily toward Baghdad International Airport. Racing around the airport complex until he had accumulated 112 miles, he then



Capt. Christopher Harris, of HHC, 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div. swims the first 2.4-mile leg of his version of the Ironman Triathlon. Right, Harris runs through the marathon portion of his triathlon.

changed into his running shoes.

His course took him back through Camp Victory and into the adjoining Camp Liberty.

Ironman triathletes refer to any unofficial copycat event as an iron distance triathlon. Harris calls it the ultimate personal test of physical and mental endurance.

"I was spent by the end of it all," he said. "Actually, I was spent somewhere around mile 15 of the run."

In addition to the rigors inherent in any iron distance triathlon, Harris had to cycle his way through heavy winds that eventually became a dust storm.

"Winds and dust kicked up all around, making the bike very difficult," Harris said. "It was not fun, and the exertion required on the bike just to keep it upright really hurt my legs for the run."

Harris said he was satisfied to have finished just one minute after his goal of 13 hours, although he failed to best his chief competitor, his wife Amanda.

Amanda completed the Ironman Triathlon, held annually in Kona, Hawaii, in 12 hours, 36 minutes. Her triumph crowns a perfect record of triathlon victories over her husband and friendly rival.

Amanda said her husband is the faster runner and swimmer, and that she doesn't expect to beat him forever.

"Now, on the bike, I can beat Chris. However, he wasn't that far behind me in this last race, and his conditions were much worse than mine," she said, adding that with more training, he may surpass her on the bike as well.

While his wife's reign of dominance is yet unblemished, it hardly deters the 3rd Inf. Div. officer.

"She is a tremendous athlete and the primary motivation for my performance," Harris said.

Both said their competition is a healthy one, and that it helps them deal with the long separations that come with military service.

"I strongly feel that training together during this deployment has made it go by so much faster," Amanda said. "We have been able to focus on something positive that we can do 'together.'"

Oddly enough, it was their own story that motivated the couple to become Iron people.

"In March of this year, my wife was having difficulty remaining motivated for a half-Ironman she was to race at Walt Disney World in Orlando," Harris explained. "So, to motivate her, I promised to race with her in Baghdad."

He did, and of course, she beat him. But during their training for that event, the couple's latest challenge began to develop.

"During the prep for the race, *Triathlete* magazine got wind of the story," Harris said. "They wrote an article and posted stories on the Web site."

A TV producer caught wind of the story and proposed that the Harris couple do the same for the Ironman Triathlon in Kona, Hawaii. Harris said they were left with eight weeks to prepare.

"The first race was for us to bond," he said. "This race was to see if we could rise to the challenge together."

In line with his goal to cross the finish line before his wife, Harris draws motivation from another challenge. For the last 10 years, he has endured a series of potentially crippling injuries, he said. An injury in airborne school, a car wreck and a medical evacuation from the combat zone have led to two spinal fusions and a serious neck injury.

Harris said he has had to fight to keep his place in the Army.

"When I graduated Ranger school, it was the same statement," he said. "A doctor told me on the eve of my first surgery, while sitting at his desk in front of pictures of him completing marathons, that my injury would preclude me from ever running at a competent level — that I could never join the physically demanding infantry. Is there ever any more motivation needed than that?"

Whether more motivation is needed or not, the couple is already planning the next race.

Harris said he and his wife have been invited to compete in next year's Ironman Triathlon.

"And this time I will do it in lovely Hawaii and won't have to face a dust storm," he said, with his fingers crossed.



Comics bring laughter to combat zone

By Spc. George Welcome

101st Airborne Division Public Affairs

CAMP STRYKER, BAGHDAD — If laughter is the best medicine, then Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division were given a healthy dose of good humor as comedians from the Comics on Duty World Tour visited Iraq.

The troupe began its 10-day tour to military bases in the Middle East Oct. 29. The comedians said they felt duty-bound to visit the Soldiers in the desert.

"I just wanted a chance to try and give back to the troops," said Matt Isemann, a licensed physician who gave up a career in medicine to pursue stand-up comedy. "I appreciate what they're doing — putting their lives on the line — so I figured it would be something we could do to bring them some humor."

Although the comedians all have different styles and personalities, they are united by a common thread — a desire to make the troops laugh.

"I am glad to get a chance to make people laugh," said comedian Tom Simmons. "At the end of the show when you are

shaking their hands, it's really humbling. I actually feel kind of stupid — them thanking me for coming."

Most of the comedians said they were surprised to find the Soldiers were really down-to-earth and friendly. They were also surprised at how much more built-up the camps are than what they expected.

After the two-hour show concluded, the comedians gave away two satellite radios to Soldiers in the audience.

In turn, the comedians were given brigade T-shirts and coins by Lt. Col. Richard White, the brigade's deputy commander, who told them, "You were our best show ... You were our only show."

After all the presentations had been made, the troops filed onto the stage and



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Kelly K. McDowell

Comic Jeff Capri entertains troops as part of the Comics on Duty Tour that visited Camp Stryker.

shook the comedians' hands.

The show was really entertaining, and the guys were all funny," said Pvt. Matthew Black of the 526th Brigade Support Battalion. "I think the event has boosted people's spirits. I know it did mine."

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