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# SUSTAINER

*Minute*

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 3RD CORPS SUPPORT COMMAND



Photos by Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

Soldiers from the 223rd Maintenance Company work together to fabricate bumpers for servicemembers. Taking pride in their work, the 90th Reserve Support Center's "Tough Ombres" personalize vehicles they work on with their unit's emblem, an interlaced 'T' and 'O'. The symbol, shown in the photos above, is on military vehicles throughout Iraq and represents the quality of work put in to each product.

## 223rd's quality welding impacts lives

By Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

The 223rd Maintenance Shop in Taji, Iraq is set up to do repairs but it has become more of a fabrication shop, said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Clark T. Keeler, a supervisor and truck armor designer with the 223rd Maintenance Company, a Reserve unit based out of Grand Prairie, Texas (attached to 3rd Corps Support Command while in theater). When we [223rd Maint.Co.] arrived here in Taji Feb. 2, said Keeler, we received the mission to uparmor vehicles.

We had to sit down in the shop and come up with a design for truck armor, gun boxes to suit the needs of the Iraqi national guard vehicles and push bumpers to enhance the capabilities of humvees for American servicemembers, said Keeler.

Most of the truck armor we fabricate is used to uparmor

vehicles for the Iraqi National Guard, said Keeler.

We design and make a plywood pattern used to cut out metal doors and shields for the front of [Iraqi National Guard] vehicles, said Staff Sgt. Samuel J. Anaya, a certified welder specializing in fusion and pipeline welding and a welder with the 223rd Maint. Co.

"It is a great mission," said Keeler. "We are able to help out the Iraqi National Guard and further their mission."

"I am not sure of any guidelines for uparmoring vehicles for the Iraqi National Guard, but we have a standard," he added. "It takes us about four days to uparmor a vehicle depending on what is needed."

"We strive to do no less for them than we would do for

-cont. pg. 2-



A Latvian soldier replaces a gun box on a military vehicle at Camp Charlie, Iraq Nov. 10. The soldier works with U.S. Soldiers and coalition forces on camp.

Photo by Spc. Spencer Case, 207th MPAD

**- 223rd Maint. Co. welding cont.**

American [servicemember's] vehicles," said Maj. Alfredo Garcia, Jr., the 223rd Maint. Co. commander.

"We incorporate many [features] that will improve on the design for uparmored vehicles," said Keeler.

However, for reasons regarding operational security, he did not describe the newest designs.

In addition to truck armor, the maintenance shop equips the Iraqi National Guard with gun boxes.

"We weld a metal box onto green Mercedes trucks, the Iraqi [Guard's]

version of the light medium tactical vehicles, to provide protection for their troops," said Anaya.

"It gives them armored protection out on the road," said Keeler. The truck armor and gun box, fabricated for Iraqi

National Guard troops, has been tested and appears to provide adequate protection for their troops.

In early-October, a 5-ton gun truck donning our fabricated armor was hit by an improvised explosive device, said Garcia. Everyone survived.

It tested and proved the quality of our workmanship and the strength of our truck armor, said Garcia.

Aside from truck armor and gun boxes, the push bumper, designed for humvees, is another product that is in high demand at the maintenance shop and is provided for

the servicemember, said Anaya.

"People [servicemembers] have come from all over to request our bumper," said Keeler.

"Our best customer is the coalition military assistance team," said Anaya. The push bumper is a necessity for them because they are always out on the main supply route.

Terrorists will try to trap military vehicles, said Anaya. When this happens, humvees without bumpers may need to be damaged in order to continue the mission. "The bumper compensates for that," he added. "It is like a weapon for the

humvee."

"The frame on a humvee will bend before the bumper will," boasts Anaya. Our most popular bumper models are the 'sledgehammer' and the 'sickle.' They were given these names because of their shape and ability. Both

bumpers are strong, he added.

Moreover, the strength of each product made by the 223rd Maint. Co. is a direct reflection of the strength of a team dedicated to their mission.

"For most of us, welding is our profession in the civilian world," said Anaya. The shop wouldn't be what it is without each of us.

Together we have uparmored countless vehicles and fashioned 155 to 160 push bumpers since we arrived in theater. "We take pride in our work," said Anaya.

We like to place our symbol, the

combined 'T' and 'O' representing the 90th Reserve Support Center's 'Tough Ombre's, on all our vehicles, said Anaya. The symbol has come to be associated with quality.

"We will continue to do everything we can to uparmor the vehicles and help while we can," said Keeler. "It is what we are here for."

## Anaconda Updates

### Thanksgiving VTC

A Thanksgiving video teleconference is scheduled Nov. 24, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. to allow deployed 3rd COSCOM Soldiers to communicate with their families. Use your company-level chain of command to find out more information about the VTC and future FRG related activities.

### Dec. 5-17 EO training

A two-week Equal Opportunity training course, authorized only during deployments, is available to Soldiers Dec. 5 - 17. Contact your unit's EOA for more info.

### Spanish; LDS services

Two new services are scheduled to take place at the westside Freedom Chapel Nov. 27. Spanish speaking worship service: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. ; Latter Day Saints: 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

## 529th's Veterans Day departure honors nation's heroes

By Spc. Mary E. Ferguson

Soldiers from 3rd Corps Support Command's 529th Ordnance Company honored our nation's veterans in a truly patriotic manner as the 7th Corps Support Group unit departed for Iraq Nov. 11, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07.

Families and friends gathered in front of the 18th Corps Support Battalion headquarters building in Vilseck, Germany, where they said their final goodbyes as the 529th "Ammo Dawgs" loaded their bags and boarded the buses for the first part of their journey.

The Veterans Day departure marked the beginning of a second OIF deployment for many Soldiers.

For others, the year ahead will be their first contribution to the

forward fight against global terrorism.

We are ready and well trained for this deployment, said Staff Sgt. Kenneth Person, a deploying 529th Ord. Co. Soldier.

**"We are prepared to take good care of our 529th Ord. Co. families – they are a high priority to us."**

-1st Lt. Megan McCormack,-  
529th Ord. Co. rear detachment commander

The unit is prepared to assist Soldiers and family members with obstacles that may accompany a yearlong separation.

"We are prepared to take good care of our 529th Ord. Co. families – they are a high priority to us," said 1st Lt. Megan McCormack, the company's rear detachment commander.

As 529th Ord. Co. Soldiers join fellow COSCOM units in supporting coalition

forces; they reflect our nation's tradition of patriotic sacrifice. They are honoring those who wore the Army uniform before them, while paving the way for future Soldiers.

## More COSCOM units support OIF 05-07 Deploying 7th CSG family, friends offer consoling advice

By Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

Soldiers with the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 18th Corps Support Battalion, the 529th Ordnance Company, the 11th Heavy Transportation Company and 41st Transportation Company participated in their deployment ceremony Oct. 27 in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

This marks the second deployment for 18th CSB units that deployed in 2003. These units, deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07, are scheduled to join fellow 11th HET and 41st Trans. Co. Soldiers who deployed earlier this year.

"Soldiers deploying will provide multifunctional logistical support for the troops in Iraq," said Staff Sgt. David Rawlings, HHD 18th CSB.

"I know what a difficult time this can be for family members," said Col. Catherine G. Haight, 7th Corps Support Group Commander and speaker at the ceremony whose husband is currently stationed in Kuwait.

"Be around other people with experience going through deployments," advises Nicole Barnard, wife of deploying unit member, Capt. Jay Barnard, and soon to be mother of two.

"Get involved with Family Readiness Groups," said Barnard. "You need to get involved in the community so you don't

feel alone."

Despite difficulties of separation, deploying unit members remain positive about their current mission.

"When you're down range, the biggest reason to fight is the Soldier to your left and the Soldier to your right," said Lt. Col. David J. Luders, the event's final speaker.

Training in convoy live fire exercises, advanced rifle marksmanship and small arms master marksman courses have all contributed to the Soldiers' readiness, said Staff Sgt. Chesley Baird an HHD, 18th CSB, Soldier who has deployed to Iraq twice.

"We are more than prepared," he said.



Photos by Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

Col. Patrick Dardis, reaches for paperwork to present to a major in the Iraqi army Nov. 17. The documentation, which authorized the transfer of property in Vanguard from the US Army to the Iraqi army, was later signed by their battalion commander.

# Soldiers participate in three-day truck rodeo



By Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux, 207th MPAD

Soldiers assigned to 3rd Corps Support Command's 142nd Corps Support Battalion competed in a Truck Rodeo at Logistical Support Area Diamondback from Oct. 27 to Oct. 30.

Several different units sent representatives to the event. The vehicles included M915 tractors with M872 trailers, M931 tractors and M1088 tractors both with M871 trailers and M1075, Palletized Loading Systems with trailers.

The events tested the driver's ability to make left and right turns, driving into an offset alley and parking their trailers within two-feet of a dock in an alley. There was also a course where drivers had to slalom through forward and than in reverse.

Before moving onto the course, Soldiers were challenged with a 50-question written test, explained 1st Lt. Dwayne M. Terry, from the 494th Transportation Company out of Fort Campbell, Ky., who was the officer in charge of the rodeo.

Lt. Col. Ron Green, the commander of the 142nd CSB, said he personally chose the 494th Trans. Co. to run the events. The 494th Trans. Co. is nearing the end of its second rotation in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and its Soldiers have a lot of trucking and transportation experience, Green said.

Participants had the opportunity to collect a total of 250 points during the three days. Appointed judges made sure the competition was clear, and recommended point deductions for mistakes.

Drivers had to wear their body armor and helmet as they drove through the course, and they were not allowed to use a ground guide, or open their doors or windows. They relied solely on their mirrors and skill.

"I think that the left and right turns and the alley docking are the most challenging, because you have to be one with your

trailer," said Spc. Kimber Tolson, a construction equipment repairer from the Army Reserve's 872nd Maintenance Company.

Tolson, a long haul truck driver on the civilian side, was the only female participant in the event.

A fellow Soldier, Sgt. Andrew C. Orton, a heavy wheel mechanic also from the 872nd found the slalom and the written test the most challenging. Participants were given a study guide and the description of the events prior to the competition.

"I practiced a lot, anything I could think of that we may do," said Pfc. Tristan Knouse, a truck driver from B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery. His battery chose him to participate in the event.

As a final incentive, one of the company commanders challenged the drivers to park one of their tires over a \$100 bill. The one who conducted the task with the most precision got to keep the money.

At the end of the third day, Sgt. James Daughdrill from the 494th placed first, Sgt. Everet Getchel also from the 494th placed second and Orton from the 872nd placed third in the rodeo.

The winners received trophies, medals and certificates of achievement.

**"It never ceases to astound me how Soldiers will step up and go well above the call of duty."**

- Lt. Col. Ron Green  
142 CSB commander

The battalion commander also gave out tickets to an upcoming Aaron Tippin concert.

Green was very proud of the achievements of the Soldiers assigned to his battalion.

"I have been in the army

for 18 years," Green said. "It never ceases to astound me how Soldiers will step up and go well above the call of duty."

"You see an E-3 acting like an E-6 . . . It is just very warming," he added. "If you look at it, there are over 290 million people in the United States, and only about half a million are serving in uniform."



Photo By Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux

Judges race past participants' vehicles to ensure they have the best view of the course during the truck rodeo on LSA Diamondback Oct. 28.



16th Corps Support Group commander, Col. Victor Maccagnan, Jr., and Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Driskell uncasing their unit's colors Nov. 1.



The 16th Corps Support Command color guard raises the unit's colors signifying the Nov.1 TOA.

## 16th CSG uncases colors

By Spc. Mary E. Ferguson / Photos courtesy of 16th CSG

3rd Corps Support Command's 16th Corps Support Group uncased its colors during a Nov. 1 Transfer of Authority ceremony on Logistical Support Area Adder, Talil, Iraq.

Following the casing of the 122nd Corps Support Group's colors, 16th CSG commander, Col. Victor Maccagnan, Jr., joined the unit's command sergeant major, Ricky Driskell in uncasing their unit's colors, signifying the official acceptance of command authority.

The 16th CSG originally cased its colors during the 3rd COSCOM deployment ceremony Sept. 15 on the Wiesbaden Army Airfield, Germany.

## 317th Maint. Co. adapts, overcomes predeployment strain

By Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation," said Capt. Wayne Vornholt, the 317th Maintenance Company commander, quoting the late Sen. Robert Kennedy.

More than 200 Soldiers from the 71st Corps Support Battalion's 317th Maint. Co. were prepared to 'change a small portion of events' as they gathered at the battalion headquarters building to depart to Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany, Oct. 28.

The Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom - many of them for the second time.

Adapting to change is challenging, said Staff Sgt. Frankie Nickerson a deploying 317th Maint. Co. Soldier who returned from a previous deployment in March 2004. The most challenging aspect of the deployment is the different environment. "I just take it one day at a time," said Nickerson.

After drawing weapons and loading bags on buses, Soldiers and family members to overcome issues that arise during deployment.

It's tough, said Sgt. Rachel Coats, a food service worker with the 317th Maint. Co. who is deploying for the second time. "I am a real 'socializer' and [I] know a lot of people here."

"We have to be there for each other," said Lori Hoskins, wife of deploying 317th Maint. Co. Sgt. Eric Hoskins.

Help educate those who are less experienced with deployments during these long months ahead, said Hoskins. "That's just what you do."

Above a sea of faces, a giggling young one was raised into the air. A Soldier's smile could be seen - cheeks shiny with tears. Family members reached for one another. Hugs replaced words.

Soldiers continued their goodbyes until time urged 317th Maint. Co. Soldiers onward to embark on their newest mission in support of OIF 05-07.

# Sister Soldiers



Photo by Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

Pfc. Courtney J. Bittick and Pfc. Amanda J. Thrap face their deployment to Iraq together.

## Long-time friends face deployment together

By Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

Two reserve Soldiers from the 3rd Corps Support Command's CONUS Augmentation were battle buddies long before the Army became a part of their lives, and they face this deployment to Iraq as they have other obstacles in their past ... together!

Pfc. Amanda J. Thrap and Pfc. Courtney J. Bittick are reservists and close friends from Des Moines, Iowa, who are deployed with the 3rd COSCOM's CONUS Augmentation in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07.

"Courtney and I have been friends for the past nine years," said Thrap.

"I joined the military my senior year in High School. After I completed basic training, Courtney came to visit me. I told her about the military and what it was like," said Thrap.

"After I spoke with Amanda about

joining, I found out from the recruiter that I was able to join the same unit, the 19th Theater Support Command," said Bittick. "It seemed like it was meant to be."

Two years later both Soldiers were called up to active duty and cross-lev-eled from the 19th TSC to the 3rd COSCOM CONUS Augmentation for their first deployment.

"I was the first to find out about the deployment," said Bittick. "I called Amanda as soon I could. Our families are very close knit so it is hard to leave them, but on the other hand, deploying together ... is like bringing a piece of home with me."

"We will have hard times and get sick of each other on this deployment but in the end we will have one more experience to share between us," agreed Pfc. Amanda J. Thrap and Pfc. Courtney J. Bittick.

# SDP offers uncomparable rates

By Sgt. Judith D. DaCosta

Money. In America, it is a green certificate, a symbol of one's worldly success. Coming from this world, one that thrives on competition in a free market, even the un-savvy Soldier can understand the importance of an extra dollar earned. However, Soldiers have the opportunity to make one thousand times that amount without breaking a sweat and few seem to be taking advantage of the opportunity.

Last week 67 individuals deposited money into the Savings Deposit Program and in the week prior only 44 SDP deposits were made, said Capt. Carmen J. Iglesias, commander for the C-39th 8th Finance Battalion Detachment. This is the most business I have seen for the savings deposit program while in country, she added.

Still, more Soldiers can take advantage of the program.

Once a Soldier has been in country for 30 days or has served one day in a designated combat zone for three consecutive months, it is possible for them to apply for the SDP, said Iglesias.

The SDP program, unlike the thrift savings program (a retirement fund), has a 10 percent annual interest rate compounded quarterly on amounts up to \$10,000, said Iglesias.

The annual interest rate for civilian banks can hardly compare to rates available through the SDP.

For example, Wachovia, a well-known bank that caters to the Soldier, offers 'competitive' interest rates, according to the bank's website.

This translates into a 0.15 percent variable interest rate on accounts not over \$10,000 as of Nov. 11, said a Wachovia customer service representative.

At this rate, if a Soldier were to deposit \$10,000 into a Wachovia savings account, disregarding fluctuating interest rates, they would be fortunate to make 100 dollars over the course of a year.

If a Soldier deposits \$10,000 into the SDP before their 3rd month in country, they can potentially earn \$1,000 during a yearlong deployment to a combat zone, said Iglesias.

The SDP program is a more lucrative option designed for Soldiers, said Iglesias, as opposed to civilian savings programs. "It is a good program and it is easy to begin," she added.

At the Logistical Support Area Anaconda Main Finance Office, we have an information sheet, available

electronically, with basic information about the SDP. Such as how to make a deposit and how to withdraw money, said Iglesias.

One can establish their SDP account by making a deposit at any military finance office in country by cash, check or money order. Deposits can also be made through an allotment option available to Active Duty Uniform Service Members, according to information posted in the finance building here.

Unit members in the finance office offered helpful advice for Soldiers intending to open an SDP account.

Units in the rear should be informed to bring their check books when deploying to a combat zone such as this where Automated Teller Machine's are sparse and cash is hard to obtain, said Corporal Lan Lieng, a customer service representative with the at the finance building here and a member of the C-39th 8th Finance Battalion Detachment.

This information is more important for the Reservist

who under the current pay system is not allowed to make allotments due to potential inconsistencies in pay totals from month to month, said Lieng.

Money may be withdrawn from the savings account once a Soldier has redeployed out of the combat zone, said Iglesias.

"It is very easy," said Iglesias. You can call us or fill out a withdrawal form available in the finance here.

Money may also be withdrawn from the SDP account before the year is complete but only in emergency circumstances or situations, said Iglesias.

"But, you don't necessarily have to take your money out after the year is up, said Iglesias. "Soldiers need to know that they can still earn interest on their account 90 days after redeployment. They still have another quarter to earn interest."

The SDP is available and the finance building here has the resources to assist anyone with questions about the program.

"Do not miss out on the opportunity to invest due to a lack of information," urged Iglesias. If anyone has any questions please see any one of us in Bldg. 4139 or contact a customer service representative at 829-1759/1762 or view the SDP information page at [www.dod.mil/dfas/money/milpay/savingsdeposit.htm](http://www.dod.mil/dfas/money/milpay/savingsdeposit.htm).



# The power of a simple smile

By Spc. Mary E. Ferguson

They don't wear white coats or carry stethoscopes and clipboards, but that's not stopping several 3rd Corps Support Command Soldiers from offering the most available and inexpensive form of medicine to patients in Life Support Area Anaconda's hospital.

Chaplain (Capt.) Raymond Folsom and 1st Lt. Janet Buchanan, both from the 27th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) are handing out warrior-sized doses of smiles to Soldiers and local nationals during their hospital visits.

"If I walk up to a smiling person and ask, 'why are you smiling?' and they answer, 'because you are smiling,'

I think, what power ... what a positive impact we can have on others with just a smile," said Folsom, the 27th Trans. Bn. (MC) chaplain.

"When I make my weekly rounds at the hospital, it does not matter what their

injuries are ... I want them to know God loves and cares for them," he said. "We all feel better with a smile."

When 1st Lt. Janet Buchanan asked if she could come along on a hospital visit, I was elated, said Folsom.

During one of their visits, Buchanan and Folsom had the opportunity to meet Soldiers and local nationals who were recovering from injuries caused by im-

proved explosive devices and other incidents.

"It is tough for many of the Soldiers who are recovering from injuries, because many lost friends in the same incident they survived," said Folsom.

As they were leaving the hospital, Buchanan spotted a child in orange pajamas sitting with his father. She made an immediate detour away from the exit and towards the chance to share more smiles.

We could not say much to each other

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***"When I make my weekly rounds at the hospital, it does not matter what their injuries are ... I want them to know God loves and cares for them."***

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~ Chaplain (Capt.) Raymond Folsom ~



Photo by Chaplain (Capt.) Raymond Folsom  
**1st Lt. Janet Buchanan shares a smile with a young local national and his father.**

because of the language barrier, but the communication of our smiles worked just fine, said Buchanan.

The little things, like a simple smile, can make a big impression on everyone around us, whether they are strangers who speak a different language, friends or fellow Soldiers, Folsom explained.

Anyone can practice the form of medicine that Folsom and Buchanan prescribe. Caring is the only prerequisite.

The world is a hospital full of patients who can always benefit from a smile, so join in the healing.



Photo by Spc. Mary E. Ferguson

3rd Corps Support Command vehicles pull away from the 27th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) headquarters on Life Support Area Anaconda. The mosque in the background over looks the parking lot where 27th Trans. Bn. (MC) vehicles rest their wheels.

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