

HAMMER TIMES

OPERATION HAMMER FREEDOM 3.2

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May 6, 2005

Team Truck, start of Soldiers vacation

By Spc. Natalie Loucks

3rd BCT PAO

FOB WARHORSE, Iraq -- When Soldiers get the word they are going on a four-day pass or a two week rest and recovery back to the States, the first thing on their mind is what they are going to do when they get there.

More importantly and often forgotten, is not what to do on these vacations, but how to get there.

The trip to a Soldier's final destination is far from just hopping on a plane. The process could take days.

Soldiers stationed at Forward Operating Base Warhorse must make the journey out to Logistical Staging Area Anaconda before catching a flight to their destination.

Team Truck, a movement team from the 203rd Forward Support Battalion, out of FOB Warhorse, supports Soldier's transfer back and forth from

R&R and four day pass.

Command Sgt. Maj. William Grant, 3rd Infantry Division command sergeant major, had the pleasure of visiting with the team, April 17.

"At the time, I didn't even know what Team Truck was," Grant said. "It wasn't until Command Sgt. Maj. (Jesse) Andrews (3rd Brigade Combat Team command sergeant major) intro-

See DIFFERENT, Pg. 11



Photo by Sgt. Stacy Drayton

One of 203rd Forward Support Battalion's Team Truck Light Mobile Troop Vehicles waits at Forward Operating Base Warhorse to load passengers. The LMTV has been heavily modified and armored for the specific mission of Team Truck. This LMTV, and others like it, travel to and from Logistical Support Area Anaconda frequently.

Inside: ■ Reenlistment Number Are Up, Pg. 2 ■ Letters From Home, Pg. 8-9 ■ California Girls Visit Warhorse, Pg. 12

Reenlistment numbers look good for BCT

Counselors credit country, family and Army as main motivators

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Maria Hamelers
3rd BCT Senior Career Counselor

FOB WARHORSE, Iraq -- From April 1 to April 20, a total of 86 Soldiers have reenlisted across the brigade, 49 percent chose to reenlist Present Duty Assignment. Soldiers

reenlisted anywhere from three to six years, the maximum reenlistment bonus was \$15,000. Since April 1, a total of \$858,818 has been paid to Sledgehammer Soldiers.

"When soldiers are asked why they reenlist, a common answer among them is that they believe in what they are doing and that it is in the best interest of their families, our country and the Army" said Sgt. 1st Class Maria Hamelers, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty, senior career counselor.

Soldiers who are in combat support and combat service support military occupational specialties are now able to request Ranger training

through reenlistment, as long as they are eligible for reenlistment options.

Soldiers are able to reenlist outside their reenlistment window in order to receive the deployment bonus. For many of our career soldiers this deployment may be the only chance they have to receive a bonus, therefore many of them are trying to take advantage of the tax free dollars.

Soldiers are in harms way everyday, and they still make the decision to stay Army. ☑

(Editor's note: The 3rd Brigade Combat Team Retention Office is located on Forward Operating Base Warhorse next to the Teal Medical Clinic. Call DNVT 584-3011.)



Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Robert Risberg, swears in a group of 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery, 3rd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., TF Liberty, Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Gabe. The 3rd BCT has had over 80 Soldiers raise their right hands in reenlistment from April 1 to 20. Over \$850,000 has been paid out to Sledgehammer Soldiers as reenlistment incentives.

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WARHORSE CHAPEL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Friday

1 to 3 p.m.
Muslim Juma Prayer

6 to 8 p.m.
Jewish Prayer and Fellowship

Sunday

9 to 10:30 a.m.
Gospel – Chaplain (Capt.) Pickens

11 a.m. to Noon
Mid-Morning Protestant – Chaplain (Maj.) Rauch

12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
Latter Day Saints

1:45 to 2:45 p.m.
Roman Catholic

8 to 9:30 p.m.
Evening Protestant – Chaplain (Capt.) Smith

Bible Study

Tuesday:
6 to 7 p.m. at Education Center – Chaplain (Capt.) Pickens

Wednesday:
8 p.m. at Warhorse Chapel- Chaplain (Capt.) Smith

Mid-Week Service

Thursday:
7 to 8 p.m. at Warhorse Chapel – Chaplain (Capt.) Pickens

Friday:
At the MWR, 8 p.m. – Chaplain (Capt.) Smith 'Movie of the Week'

Spirituality of Olympic proportions

By Chaplain (Capt.) Derek Murray
1-10 Field Artillery

Beginning in 776 B.C., the Olympic Games were a part of life and culture every four years. That is, until Emperor Theodosius demanded that they stop in 393 A.D. When the Apostle Paul wrote in the first century to a few churches in Asia, the Olympic Games were a pretty big deal. There wasn't a man, woman, or child that did not know of the Olympic Games.

Would an Olympic athlete train to come in last place? No, a runner trains to win. Would an Olympic boxer prepare for a fight by simply shadow-boxing? No, a boxer will have quite a surprise when he steps into the ring if he has never trained with a heavy bag or a sparring partner. Training to run a mediocre race or training to fight the air doesn't win Olympic gold.

Paul wrote to a small church in

Corinth and challenged them to pursue spirituality with the same sort of training intensity of an Olympic athlete. He told the church that life is like a race and the way we run and the way we fight has lasting and eternal ramifications. However, life is not a place for proving to yourself or anyone else how strong you are. Life is a place for proving in whom your strength is found.



MURRAY
1-10 FA Chaplain

Are you pursuing spirituality with the same sort of self-control and self-discipline of an Olympic athlete? Training is hard work and requires a great deal of discipline. However, there is hope at the finish line.

Run to win and fight for the knockout. Do you still need motivation? Read I Corinthians 9:23-26. ☑

Fatal rollover takes 2-34 Armor Soldier

By Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

FOB NORMANDY, Iraq -- A memorial service was held April 30 at Forward Operating Base Normandy, for Spc. David Rice, a Fire Support Specialist assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, in support of 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty.

Rice was killed in a vehicle accident April 26 when the humvee he was serving as a gunner in, swerved to avoid a civilian vehicle and rolled over.

The 22-year-old Iowa native attended Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Sill, Okla. certifying him as a fire support specialist.

Upon completion of

AIT, Rice attended and finished Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga.

His first duty assignment was to Battery D, 3rd Battalion, 19th Field Artillery Regiment, 173rd Airborne Infantry Brigade out of Vincenza, Italy.

In March 2003, Rice deployed to Northern Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

After his 10 month deployment, Rice was reassigned to Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, 1st BCT, 1st Infantry Division, out of Fort Riley, Kan.

His awards include the Parachutist Badge, Army Service Ribbon, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal and the Bronze Star.

Fellow Soldiers,



PRIVATE 1ST CLASS DAVID RICE
HHC, 2-34 Armor

leaders and commanders who worked with Rice remember his war-veteran like attitude.

Upon his return to Iraq, his comrades said he dazzled the new Soldiers with war stories and advice on how to deal with the stresses of combat.

Attendants of the memorial service held in Rice's honor included members of the Iraqi and Georgian armies. ☑

Soldier's moral boosted by "Flipping Quarters"

Local news highlights makeover of Benning family housing unit

Story and photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

FOB WARHORSE, Iraq -- Spc. Jason Eichmann, a petroleum fuel specialist assigned to the 203rd Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty, working on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, had no idea what to expect when he walked into his Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Chuck Salvo's, office, April 24.

He knew his wife, Sarah, had won a raffle for a home makeover called "Flipping Quarters," sponsored by the Officer's Spouses Club of Fort

Benning, Ga. The makeover began as a raffle at a dinner promoting the Enlisted Spouses Club.

He also knew that his plain white walls, plain white couch and black entertainment center were in need of improvement.

What he did not know was what kind of shape, color and theme his new living room would be in.

When Eichmann walked into Salvo's office he was bombarded with posters and pictures of red couches, yellow walls and fancy artwork he had never seen before.

When the phone was handed to him, Eichmann could hear his wife on the other end. She was seeing their new living room for the first time as well.

The whole event was being captured by WTVM, Columbus, Ga.'s channel 9.

Eichmann said his moral jumped. "It turned out really well," he said. "We got all the new furniture we wanted."

Salvo explained how an event such as this really builds the moral, not

just for the individual Soldier and his family, but for everyone deployed away from home.

"It's support like this that allows us to focus on our jobs and do our mission because we know our families are taken care of back home," he said.

After Eichmann spoke to his wife back at Fort Benning through the camera, he was asked to read aloud a message his wife left on a poster in his home.

"The house makeover will be fun but, until your back, it won't be home," he read. "I love you and I miss you...Sarah."

Salvo would like to thank the sponsors of "Flipping Quarters:" The Officer's Spouses Club, The Enlisted Spouses Club, Brig. Gen. and Mrs. Benjamin Freakley, Affordable Productions, Ashley Interiors, Ronald Baxter, Amy Foss, Clark Gillenwater, Hancock Fabrics, Jamie Hempstead, Gerry Leifer, Lowes, Sherry Meeks, Nix On Time Printing, Porter Paint, The Sewing Shop, Eve Tidwell, Lynnette Waters and Donna Wilson. 



Lt. Col. Chuck Salvo, (left), the commander of 203rd Forward Support Battalion, looks on as Spc. Jason Eichmann, a petroleum fuel specialist at the helicopter refuel and resupply point on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, watches a video of his wife walking through their new living room. The Officers Spouses Club along with various groups and companies located in the Fort Benning and Tri-city area sponsored a raffle and home makeover. The sponsors donated their time, materials and services to redecorate the house.

Nutritional supplements not always better

Soldiers still using them despite physician warnings

By Dr. (Maj.) Charles Webb
OIC, 3rd BCT TMC

Americans spend billions of dollars every year on nutritional and ergogenic supplements. These powders, drinks and "magic pills" are all used in attempts to balance diet, prevent disease, increase energy levels, lose weight, gain weight, or in other ways change the way we feel about ourselves.

When looking to start a supplement, remember the S.O.L.E. acronym; Safety, Outcomes, Legal, Ethics. What are the Safety concerns about this product? Has it been proven to provide the Outcomes that it claims? Is it Legal to use? What are the regulations around using this particular product? Does using this product hold up to the Army Core Values, Ethics?

There are many reasons to use supplements. "I want to be cut. I want to lose weight. I want to gain weight." I have heard these comments while at the Post Exchange with Soldiers from units all over the world. At the same time they are in line holding chocolates, sodas, and near beer. I am going to give the bottom line here of the most common supplements used in here in Iraq: carbohydrates, creatine, proteins (amino acids), and stimu-

lants.

Carbohydrates are sugars that the body uses to produce energy. They are the main source of rapidly available energy for muscle. They are stored in the muscle as glycogen. They are used as the energy source for high intensity exercise and are used before the body converts any other fuel (fat) to energy. When doing exercise for longer than one hour, it is recommended that carbohydrates be used in hydration. These "carbs" can be acquired through Gatorade, PowerAde, etc. This is a safe and useful ergogenic aid that will decrease fatigue and increase endurance.

The reported claims for creatine are increased short term energy during bouts of high intensity exercise, increased muscle mass and size with decreased lactic acid accumulation and increased strength. The research has found that creatine supplementation may lead to increased creatine content in the muscles. However, there are multiple conflicting reports if this increase can actually increase performance in any way. It is generally accepted that creatine is a potentially useful agent to increase energy in repeated bouts of short-term, high intensity exercises. Claims of increased strength, increased muscle mass and decreased lactic acid accumulation are unsubstantiated, by medical studies.

Recently, protein drinks, powders and high protein diets have become popular. The thought process is that you can lose weight by taking in fewer calories and

gain more muscle mass by the increased protein intake. However, the research has demonstrated there is no increase in muscle strength in athletes that use Amino acids, a basic protein, in combination with proper weight training, as opposed to weight training alone. In addition, increased protein intake produces an extra burden on the kidneys, especially in the light of dehydration, even mild dehydration.

Stimulants are used in many ergogenic supplements. Some common stimulants are caffeine, Guarana root, Ephedra or ma-huang, synepherine, citrus aurantium, bitter orange, ZHISHI, octpamie, yohimbe, yohimbine, and hardeminez. All of these compounds are thought to increase endurance, and energy levels. All of these compounds can produce unwanted side effects such as rapid heart rate, elevated blood pressure, depression, agitation, increased risk of heat injury, seizures, and potentially death. These substances become even more dangerous when paired with elevated outdoor temperatures and poor fluid intake and dehydration.

The official stance on ergogenic supplementation varies on the supplement

in question and the organization. The U.S. Army cites Army Regulation 40-5, in its stance on the use of supplements. Performance enhancing supplements have demonstrated little or no proven benefit for muscular

"I encourage you to consult with a health care provider prior to purchasing or using any dietary or ergogenic supplement. If you must use something, stop by your aid station and check to make sure you know how to use it and how to prevent a trip to the hospital."

--Dr. (Maj.) Charles Webb
Officer-in-Charge, 3rd BCT,
Teal Medical Clinic

strength, endurance, or recovery. They have many side effects, including liver, kidney, heart, gastrointestinal injury, dehydration, hypertension, stroke, and death. The impact on the unit and the soldier are significant for both readiness and

wellness. The cost to soldiers is also significant, with many of these products costing over \$100 per month at the recommended doses. The Army strongly discourages their use. I encourage you to consult with a health care provider prior to purchasing or using any dietary or ergogenic supplement. If you must use something, stop by your aid station and check to make sure you know how to use it and how to prevent a trip to the hospital. Know what you are taking, how to take it and what the potential harms are. We here at Forward Operating Base Warhorse have seen four patients with health concerns that may be linked to the use of supplements, don't be number five. ☑

Hammer Times will accept your stories and photos! Send your submissions digitally by emailing the Editor at sean.riley@us.army.mil, or bring them to the Public Affairs Office next to the 3rd BCT TOC on FOB Warhorse. Submissions should be single spaced, non-tab format and are subject to editing of content by the Hammer Times staff. Ensure all identification used in stories includes rank, first name, last name, duty position, hometown and unit. When submitting photos, please include information on all people in the shot. DO NOT embed photographs into the story! Please include author's point of contact information will all submissions. ☑



Task Force 1-10 Field Artillery takes to the streets of Baquba

Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty, raid the homes of suspected insurgents and administer aid to citizens in Baquba during Operation Iraqi Freedom III.



Courtesy photos



Letters from home

The Columbus Ledger-Enquirer, a local newspaper in the Fort Benning, Ga. area, often covers stories and events concerning the 3rd Brigade Combat Team. In the local section of the Ledger-Enquirer, called "Postcards from the Ledger." It is set aside for the use of family members or anyone who cares to send a special message to servicemembers deployed abroad. Here are some submissions that have appeared in the Ledger-Enquirer given to the *Hammer Times*.

6TH-GRADER OFFERS BEST WISHES

Cassie Dahlin, a sixth-grade student at St. Luke School, writes a postcard to Soldiers in the Middle East.

Dear Soldier,

I want you to know that a lot of people are praying for you. I hope this letter will encourage you to never give up. Remember you will be back with your family very soon. Everyone is proud of you and your bravery. You made it this far; don't give up! It may seem very hard, but the USA is depending on you and the others.

Stay safe,
Cassie Dahlin
Published on 03/29/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

WIFE SENDS HUSBAND LOTS OF 'RUV'

Julie Vickery writes a postcard to her husband who is in Iraq. Her husband, Staff Sgt. Jerry Vickery, is serving with 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Battalion with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Jer-Bear,

Hey Sweet Pea! Not a moment goes by that I don't think of you and wonder how y'all are holding up. I keep you and the guys in my prayers always. Everyone is doing well, including the pups and Oliver Handsome! However, we miss you incredibly and can't wait for you to return home, so stay safe!

Always remember you have an angel watching over you, as well as many others praying for you and 2-69.

You're my hero and my best friend. I RUV you so much!

Love,
Julie Leanne
Published on 03/14/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

SON OF A SOLDIER THANKS MEMBERS OF MILITARY

Randall Stone of Columbus writes a postcard to Soldiers in the Middle East.

I'm a 52-year-old man who has always been behind the men and women in the military. All my family has been in the military as lifers. My prayer and thoughts are with all of the military men and women. I lost my father in 1979 after his retirement from the Army after 20 years.

I know it is very hard what you are doing over there, but in the long run it is the right thing to do. The world and everyone in it is safer because of the stand and commitment of all of you overseas.

Take care and God bless you all,
Randy.

Published on 04/01/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

WIFE WANTS SOLDIER TO MEET NEW BABY

Tiffany Luster writes to her husband, a member of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team in Iraq. They have a daughter, Amorie, and are expecting another child.

Dear Myron,

Hello, baby. I am sending you this card to let you know that we are all doing good. Amorie, the bun in the oven, and myself are all missing you. I want you to know that you are truly the other half of my heart, and I'm counting down the days until my heart will be whole again.

I pray that you and all of the HHC 1-30th maintenance return in good health. So stay focused and return to me and your children safely and quickly as possible. Everyone is praying for you and sends their love.

I love you so much and for so many reasons. We have so much to look forward to and I can't wait to spend the rest of my life with the best husband in the world. I will see you in a few months when you come home to see our child enter the world --- until then I love you more than any wife could love a husband.

Love, your wife and daughter,
Tiffany and Amorie
Published on 03/12/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

SIXTH-GRADER SENDS THANKS

Kaylan Kilgore, a sixth-grade student at St. Luke School, writes a postcard to Soldiers in the Middle East.

Dear Soldier,

My name is Kaylan Kilgore and I hope you are holding up out there. I'm praying as hard as I can and as much as I can for you all and all the other soldiers out there.

Thank you so much for defending our country and I love you for it.

Kaylan Kilgore

P.S. I'm counting on you.
Published on 03/27/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

Letters from home

WIFE PRAYS FOR SOLDIER

Sarah Eichmann writes her husband; Jason Eichmann is a member of A Company, 203rd Forward Support Battalion, a unit with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, in Iraq.

Dear Jason,

You are missed all day, every day. I pray for you and think of you all the time.

The dogs and I are doing fine. I really enjoy your phone calls --- hearing your voice makes my day go by faster and reassures me that you are all right.

I pray that you and all of the 3rd Brigade come home safe. I love you and miss you with all my heart.

Love always and forever,
Sarah

Published on 03/07/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

WIFE POINTS TO ANNIVERSARY

Brenda Rickels of Phenix City writes to her husband, Sgt. Ralph Rickels Jr., who's serving in Iraq with the 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Dear Lamar,

On April 13 we will be together for 32 years. I love you more today than I ever did. God be with you over there. I know he'll bring you back to me. We are all OK. Don't worry about us.

Take care of yourself and I love you with all my heart.

Love, your wife,
Brenda

Published on 03/23/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

WIFE SENDS OUT HER VALENTINE'S DAY

Elizabeth Gasper sends her husband a postcard to say thanks for the flowers and balloons he sent to her this week. Her husband, Spc. Adam Gasper, is in Iraq with the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Adam,

Hey hun! I just wanted to say hello and tell you thank you for my surprise, the flowers and balloons you sent for Valentine's Day were amazing! Even when you're thousands of miles away, you still know how to sweep me off my feet! Anyway, I just wanted to send you a little message to let you know how proud I am to be your wife and how much I admire you and all the other service members overseas for all the sacrifices they have made to keep our country safe. I pray every morning and every night for you and the guys in 1-15 to have a safe journey and to hurry home to your families. I love you Adam and can't wait for you to come back so we can start our lives together. Take care honey! I love you!

Elizabeth

Published on 03/27/2005, LEDGER-ENQUIRER

View from the Top "HELLCAT 7"

The NCO: Responsibilities extend beyond rank, position

By 1st Sgt. Michael Thompson
Special to the Hammer Times

Our Job.

It is the responsibility of the Noncommissioned Officer to ensure that all Soldiers are properly cared for and counseled as needed. I have read many Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reports and they state, "Responsible for the health and welfare of X amount of Soldiers". Too many times we assume tasks are going to be accomplished without proper guidance and supervision, but when faced with failure we are quick to blame the Soldier. There are entirely too many Soldiers that are not being counseled properly and it shows with their lack of discipline.

As we look at the condition of Forward Operating Base Warhorse, leaders can see the lack of attention that is spent with maintenance, i.e., the police call areas. I spend a lot of time redirecting Soldiers to the trash they walk over and a majority of them are leaders walking with Soldiers. Imagine if we did not have the Iraqi workers to assist us daily in our maintenance and upkeep of our living areas. Leaders are quick to flag Soldiers for being overweight but what have we done to correct the Soldiers situations?

There are NCOs who need the added attention in the same area that will be going to Primary Leadership Development Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course, or Advanced Noncommissioned Officers

Course once we return to Fort Benning, Ga.

Weapons maintenance is another area we need to concentrate on. Too many Soldiers that don't leave the FOB are walking around with dirty weapons. There is not a situation where a

personal weapon has to be dirty. We have too much time to do the right thing; this comes down to



THOMPSON
HHC 3rd BCT

proper time management. It is the responsibility of the first line leader to inspect their Soldiers daily, regardless of the shift they may be on and to visit Soldiers while they are on force protection duty.

I conduct a check daily to ensure I am tracking with my responsibilities as a First Sergeant. My job starts with Physical Training, monitoring weight control, the NCOER and who is due, quarterly TA50 inspections, tracking who is on rest and relaxation, reenlistment, monthly urinalysis, updating flags as needed, pad maintenance, vehicle maintenance, property accountability, awards, mail distribution to sections, and weapons maintenance. I also make time to see every Soldier in my company and see if they have any issues. Soldiers need to know leaders are looking out for their well being regardless of their rank. ▣

Commentary

Cuttin' it up in Qatar: a 4-day pass ends with memorable experience

Taking "rest and relaxation" has new meaning after long journey

By Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

"Loucks, you're going on pass on the 18th of April," my Noncommissioned-Officer-In-Charge told me in that matter-of-fact, oh-by-the-way manner NCOs are so fond of.

So I was going to Qatar. I had heard about it before and looked it up on the internet. It didn't sound too bad, but still, I wasn't thrilled at the prospect of going.

After spending three months in a combat zone, relaxation to me was, at best, riding in a humvee on the way to a mission. What was I going to do for all four days, by myself with nothing on my schedule and no deadlines?

The day finally arrived to begin my pilgrimage to Qatar. Little did I know, the trip there would be more than enough to qualify me for a well deserved break.

The first part of the trip was to Logistical Support Area Anaconda. Luxurious, I use the term loosely, travel accommodations provided by 203rd Forward Support Battalion's "Team Truck" got me there safely.

At Anaconda, we dropped off our weapons at the local arms room for storage. I must admit, as wonderful as it was, I was left with an empty feeling. My beloved M249, "Justin," my battle-buddy, who had been by my side everyday since January, was actually gone. That emptiness was

soon replaced with visions of me by the pool evening out my tan.

Finally, at zero-too-early in the morning, it was time for the last leg of our journey. Now, I've ridden on a C-130 Hercules before, but I was not prepared to have to use every ounce of self-control I had upon take off not to puke.

The entire crew and I arrived safely with all of our meals still in our bellies where they belonged. It wasn't until the bus ride to the USO when someone decided to lose their cookies.

So, after 24 hours of being tossed around, shoved around and shipped around with no sleep, we were ready to begin our much needed, or rather, much earned, vacations.

One word could perfectly describe how I was feeling at that point... icky. But, there was no way I was going to sleep despite how "blah" I felt. I only had four days and there was no chance I was about to waste one of those days sleeping. Sleep is overrated anyway.

I followed what seemed to be about five million other female Soldiers, into a tiny bay to stow our gear and make up our beds. Now, I'm 23 years old and have never in my life had to deal with the top bunk... until that day. And, of course, the girl who had the bunk under mine was not in the running for the nicest-girl-of-the-year award.

Over the next four days, my little ray of sunshine bunk buddy became my best friend. She and I, along with two other girls we met there, were inseparable.

The first two days, we were asked by sponsors to go off the base into Qatar. I later found out, while my girlfriends and I were out painting the town, there were more than a few males back at the camp who had been stood up on more than one occasion by their sponsors. I felt a twinge of remorse for them as I sipped my Starbucks mocha cappuccino in the air-conditioned comfort of

the four-story mall downtown.

Our days in Qatar consisted of spending money (too much), laying out by the pool (not enough) and eating (too much). I wouldn't be surprised if headlines there read: "Qatar faces food shortage, 4 females to blame."

During our nights, the girls and I would hit Club Oasis for our three drink limit and some dancing and mingling.

I could tell who made it off the base and who didn't. Those who were limited to the Post Exchange "mini-mall" all had on the same "Guess Jeans" t-shirt in various colors. I was fortunate enough to have bought something a little more original at the mall.

Our last night there, we got the word we were forming up to leave at 3 a.m. Since we had already made the decision that sleep was still overrated, we wept into our beers while putting everything we had into the "Cha-Cha Slide."

The time had come for everyone to load back on the bus to ship out to the C-130 that was waiting for us. It's funny how this time, despite leaving straight from the club for movement back to Iraq, no one got sick.

After flying back to Anaconda, the girls and I said our tearful goodbyes, exchanged email addresses and parted in our separate ways.

What I remember most of this trip to Qatar was even though we were on a military sponsored vacation on a military base with military personnel, we were all people. No one had rank; no one had age or even a last name.

Before taking this vacation, I didn't realize how much I needed to, literally, "let my hair down."

Now that I'm back to Forward Operating Base Warhorse I think I'll throw on my jeans and, yes, my "Guess Jeans" t-shirt, take my hair out of its bun, grab a near-beer and Cha-Cha Slide my bootie off.

...In the privacy of my own hooch, of course. ☑



LOUCKS
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Different MOS's meld to make Team Truck work

Continued from Pg. 1

duced me to the group of Soldiers that I learned about what they did.”

The team is constructed of many different military occupation skills including truck drivers, cooks, mechanics and more.

These Soldiers act as drivers, gunners and welders and perform many other tasks important to the operation of movement.

Two of the Soldiers received division coins from Grant for going above and beyond their MOS and acting as welders, under the supervision of professionals, to weld all of the armor used on the vehicles.

The vehicles, which are light mobile troop vehicles, have double armor capabilities.

“The trucks were taken to the range and fired at so there is no doubt the armor works,” Grant said.

Grant explained the trucks can carry a maximum capacity of persons in seats that are positioned back to back with seat belts that go across the shoulder and lap.

The LMTVs travel with gun trucks, Grant said.

So far, Grant said the team has not encountered any improvised explosive devices.

“It’s great to be able to have Soldiers on the back of a truck and make it all the way to (LSA) Anaconda without an incident,” he said. “That says a whole lot for the professionalism and capability of the Soldiers here in our Brigade.”



Photo by Sgt. Stacy Drayton
Seats to move Soldiers to and from Logistical Staging Area Anaconda are attached to the floor the vehicle and surrounded by armor.

TF 2-34 DRUM BEAT

LOO: CMO

WHO: TF 2-34 AR

WHAT: Citizens Protest Recent Terrorist Acts

WHEN: 17 April 2005

WHERE: Khan Bani Sa'ad

WHY/SIGNIFICANCE: With IA and IP providing security, the citizens of Khan Bani Sa'ad organized a demonstration to protest recent acts of violence. Men women and children marched from the site of a recent car bomb to the town center shouting that they will not tolerate violence in their community and praise for their security forces.

BULLETIZED: Khan Bani Sa'ad citizens rally in support of their security forces and to denounce violence in their community.



Each battalion submits a daily good-news story called a “Drumbeat” to the Brigade. Weekly, a distinguished panel of judges evaluates the “Drumbeat” and selects the best one, which is crowned the “Drum Major.” *Hammer Times* proudly presents the “Drum Majors” for the last two weeks.

DRUM MAJORS

TF 1-30 DAILY DRUMBEAT 26 APRIL 2005

LOO: Civil Military Operations

WHO: TF 1-30, GCC, Town of Hamrin

WHERE: Hamrin

WHAT: TF 1-30, the GCC and the Town of Hamrin celebrate the opening of a new soccer field with an inaugural game between two local teams.

WHY /SIGNIFICANCE: TF 1-30, the GCC and the Town of Hamrin celebrated the opening of a new soccer field with an inaugural game between two local teams. When Hamrin's existing soccer field flooded, the town's twelve adult soccer teams had nowhere to play. With unemployment at an estimated 60% it was vital that the men of Hamrin had somewhere to constructively spend their time. Therefore, with assistance from TF 1-30 S5, B/1-10 was able to purchase a suitable parcel of land and coordinate for it to be cleared and leveled. In addition to providing a recreation facility, this project also employed eight local men for ten days and gave American and Georgian soldiers the opportunity to interact with local Iraqi men and children in an informal setting. Moreover, unlike the old field, the new site is centrally located, thereby allowing people from all of Hamrin's tribes to utilize it.

BULLETIZED - TF 1-30, the GCC and the Town of Hamrin celebrate the opening of a new soccer field with an inaugural game between two local teams.



B/1-10 CDR stands proudly with the captains of two Hamrin soccer teams that met in the inaugural match on the new playing field.



Players from Hamrin participate in the inaugural soccer match.



TF 1-30, the GCC and Hamrin soccer players stand together proudly on the new playing field.

California Girls bring beach to Warhorse

Female band performs for Soldiers at Faulkenburg

Story and photo by
Spc. Natalie Loucks

3rd BCT PAO

FOB WARHORSE, Iraq - Soldiers stationed at Forward Operating Base Warhorse might have thought they were California dreaming when four blonde bomb shells made their appearance at numerous locations around the base.

The California Girls of Pasadena, Calif., arrived in the late morning, April 25 and wasted no time signing autographs and chit-chatting with their soon-to-be, if not, already fans.

The day began for Sandy Walker, Barbara Leoni, Lisa Haze and Max Miller with lunch at the Wood Dining Facility.

After a meal fixed by the fine workers of Kellogg, Brown & Root, the four blondes made their way to

the Faulkenburg Theater to sign autographs and hand out posters.

The girls then traveled around the base visiting attractions like the 3rd Brigade Combat Team's Tactical Operations Center, the Administrative Logistical Operations Center, and the Teal Medical Facility.

The girls made friends along the way giving out handshakes, hugs, autographs and posters.

The California Girls were shown Warhorse's newest attraction, the Green Beans Coffee Shop and enjoyed coffee with Soldiers who were taking a break from the day's work with a shop treat.

"My friend will never believe me when I tell them I spent the day with the California Girls," said Spc. Luke Buchholtz, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, who was visiting Warhorse for the day and had the opportunity to mingle with the girls.

Later that same evening, American and Georgian Soldiers gathered together to watch Miller on drums, Leoni on guitar and Walker on bass. Haze made her



Lisa Haze, lead vocals of the girl band, The California Girls, signs autographs at the Faulkenburg Theater on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, April 25.

way through the crowd, pulling Soldiers on stage to dance with her.

The band members met through a network of female bands. Six years ago, they formed a group of their own.

After traveling to many countries through the USO and other various performances including Bosnia, Macedonia, Germany and the Pacific Rim, the girls say this is their first visit to Iraq.

According to Leoni, the worst part about playing a concert in the desert is the dust.

"It's always a concern losing our voices in the dusty desert," she said.

Harsh conditions are common for the desert but that does not stop the California Girls from their

moral boosting concerts.

The band members recalled a sand storm they endured as they performed at Camp Victory, Iraq.

"We were playing in a sand storm," remembers Walker. "Lisa had a congo-line through the crowd and all we could see were the white shorts."

"The crowd just kept going and cheering and were so into it that we just kept playing," Haze said.

The best part about their job, the girls say, is the smiles, the hugs and the thank you's they receive.

For information, biographies, concert information and pictures about the California Girls visit californiagirls.com on the world wide web. [Z](#)



Members of the Command Security Detachment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty were pulled up in front of a crowd of Soldiers to dance, April 25, in the Faulkenburg Theater on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq.