



Vol. 1, Issue 13

*Published for the Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division
and Task Force Band of Brothers*

Nov. 24, 2005

INSIDE:

*FOB Gabe
Force
Protection*
Pg. 3

*Badger Makes
an Impression*
Pg. 6

*'Battle Strong'
Georgians*
Pg. 9

*Hammer
Holiday
Greetings*
Pgs. 13-16

*Sledgehammer
Veteran's Day*
Pgs. 18-19

*The Purrfect
Angelz Visit
FOB Warhorse*
Pg. 20



**2-34 Armor 'Dreadnaughts'
visit orphaned iraqi children, pg. 2**

2-34 Armor, Iraqi forces provide gifts to war orphans

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

KAN'AN, Iraq – Families of 25 Iraq army soldiers piled into the small conference room at the IA Headquarters in Kan'an, Iraq, Nov. 7, and seated themselves across from 6 boxes overflowing with a rainbow of presents.

The multicolored toys and shoes in the boxes were dim compared to the smiles on the children's faces as they sat in anticipation of what the American Soldiers had brought them.

The majority of the families attending the event were representing one of the 14 IA soldiers who were killed in an attack on a traffic checkpoint within the city limits in January. The remaining were families of soldiers who were killed in action in various incidents around the Kan'an area.

Capt. Salman Hasonay Abdulla, from the Iraq army, and Nasir Ridha Majeed Aswad, a leader in the Kan'an community, faced the crowd as Lt. Col. Richard Creed, operations officer for 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, offered words of support for the families losses.

"This can, in no way make up for the hurt and pain you suffer," he said. "We are here to help your army and families for a better future."

One by one, names were called out to the crowd and family members and children made their way to the tables.

Family members explained how many children in the family had been left behind and received age appropriate gifts for their family.

The majority of the gifts came from Creed's mother and church group but Capt. Cullum Green, fire support officer for 2-34 Armor, said there has been a constant supply of donations from the Soldiers families and friends.

"Most of the families are happy and very motivated to give what they can to the Iraqi people we work with," Green said. "We send photos home so they can see where their items go."

Just as families of the Dreadnaught Soldier lend their helping hand from more than 6000 miles away, the Soldiers themselves are assuring the advancement of their IA brothers.

1st Lt. Jeremy Mueller, fire support operator for Company A, said the 2-34 Armor has supplied the IA in the Dreadnaught area of operation with boots, uniforms, area maps, training, and improvement in security.

The 2-34 Soldiers agree, children in the area can be an annoyance when conducting patrols, but it is rewarding

to see the appreciation on their faces after receiving gifts they know their American Soldiers bring.

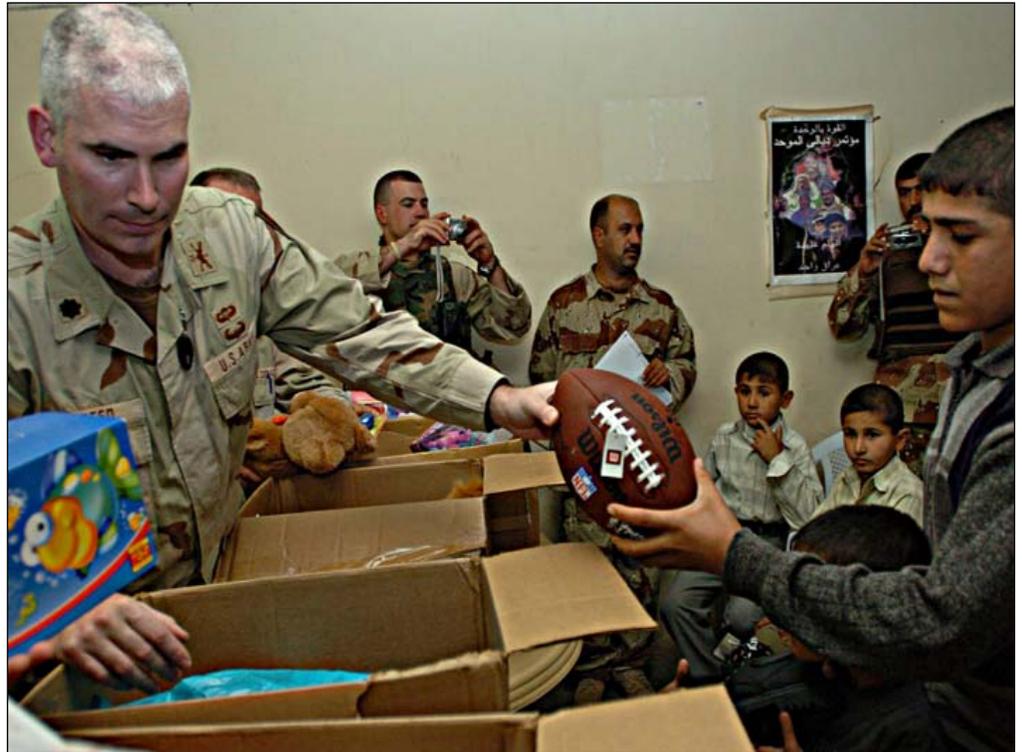
After the gift handout, the families, IA and Coalition Forces gathered outside to take pictures and socialize. The children were eager to get home to play with their new presents.

"There is nothing we can receive for what was lost," said Samir, a local citizen who lost his brother in a car bomb explosion.

"But the children are happy." He walked away. In one arm he struggled to carry a rainbow of toys, in the other arm, he carried his nephew, the son of his brother. ☑

"This can, in no way make up for the hurt and pain you suffer. We are here to help your army and families for a better future."

– Lt. Col. Richard Creed
2-34 Armor operations officer



Lt. Col. Richard Creed, the 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment operations officer, hands a brand-new football to an eager Iraqi teen at the Iraqi Army Headquarters in Kan'an, Nov. 6. The 2-34 'Dreadnaughts', along with their Iraqi Army counterparts, distributed the donated gifts to the children of 25 IA soldiers who were killed in action when their traffic checkpoint was attacked by insurgents.

The *Hammer Times* is published in the interest of the servicemembers of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and Task Force Band of Brothers. The *Hammer Times* is an Army-funded newsletter authorized for members of the U.S. Army, under the provision of AR 360-1. Contents of the *Hammer Times* are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or Department of the Army. ☑

3rd BCT Commander
Col. Steven Salazar

3rd BCT PAO
Maj. Steve Warren
steven.warren@us.army.mil

3rd BCT PAO NCOIC
Sgt. 1st Class Victor Fermin
vr.fermin@us.army.mil

3rd BCT PAO Editor, *Hammer Times*
Sgt. Sean Riley
sean.riley@us.army.mil

3rd BCT PAO Staff Writer
Spc. Natalie Loucks
natalie.loucks@us.army.mil

3rd BCT PAO Staff Broadcaster
Spc. Samantha Spurlock
samantha.may.spurlock@us.army.mil

Force protection Soldiers keep watch at FOB Gabe

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

FOB GABE, Iraq – Most Soldiers dread the duty of pulling gate and tower guard, but Soldiers of the Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery force protection platoon take pride in what they do.

For the duration of the Sledgehammer Brigade's deployment to Iraq, the force protection platoon has held the safety and security of Forward Operating Base Gabe in their hands.

"Our job is to report any suspicious activity and suspected car bombs," said Spc. John Jefferson, a force protection Soldier posted at the Headhunter gate.

For hours a day, these guardians vigilantly stand in high towers, well armed with an arsenal of weapons and the skills to use them.

From any of the several towers and gates surrounding the base, the force protection platoon keeps a close eye on the nearby town of Tahrir and quickly reports any potential threat.

"If we see anything, we have to call it in and monitor the action," said Spc. Gary Freis, a guardian posted at tower four.

According to Sgt. 1st Class James Cole, the force protection platoon sergeant, tower guards have seen everything from tracers and gunfire to explosions, like roadside and car bombs.

While the tower guards provide over watch, Soldiers posted at the gate search vehicles and citizens who need

to enter the base, looking for anything that may pose a threat to the security of the FOB. The gate guards are equipped with a list of insurgents targeted as high valued individuals and vehicles that are recognized as being familiar to the base.

In order to communicate with visitors, the force protection platoon works closely with Iraqi translators like Samer Ibrahim Muhammed.

"My job is to question the visitors why they want to enter FOB Gabe," said Samer, a translator who has worked at the base for over two years.

"I also help to make sure the visitors are able to talk to the person they came to visit."

Whether they are pulling guard at the Headhunters entry point or a guard tower over watch, the same hardships apply to each Soldier.

"The hardest part of pulling guard is the summer heat," said Spc. Darnell Brown, a guardian posted at tower five. "I can't wait until the weather starts to cool down."

Most of the guards agreed, the summer brings flies and mosquitoes. There are stoves placed in each of the towers that provide heat for the cold winter months.

"Sometimes we cook, food like cans of soup, on the stoves," Private 1st Class Justin Simmons of tower two.

When they are not providing security to FOB Gabe, the Soldiers of the Headhunters force protection platoon spend their time off sleeping, conducting physical training or using the Morale, Welfare and Recreation program the base offers.

"They play a big role in the safety and security of the base," said Cole "They are the first line of defense." ▣



Spc. Darnell Brown calls over the radio after hearing small arms fire in the distance while pulling guard on tower 4, Nov. 8, at Forward Operating Base Gabe, Iraq.

Titanic or Carpathia; it's never too late to change

BY Chaplain (Capt.) Bryan Smith
3rd Brigade Troops Battalion Chaplain

Just imagine with me for a moment that the ocean represents the sea of life and every man and woman, whether young or old, or rich or poor, is a passenger on that sea in one of four ships. Each one of these ships represents mankind's attitude towards God and his fellow man. Which ship would you be on? The most famous of the four ships I'm going to talk to you about is the RMS Titanic. Famous not because of any great exploits she did but because she sank on her maiden voyage with great loss of life. There were also three other ships within 58 nautical miles of the Titanic the night she sank. The closest ship was the Samson, only eight miles away. As women and children boarded the life boats of the sinking ship they were told to row towards the running lights of the ship you see in the distance. But the Samson did not respond to the distress signals of the Titanic. The more the passengers rowed the further the Samson got away; until it disappeared over the horizon.

It would be 40 years before the truth was known.

At a congressional hearing Capt. Heinrich Laze testified that most of the crew of the Samson was asleep but he and other sailors saw the flares. Congress then asked "Did you know what the flares meant?" Heinrich said, "Yes, I knew it was the international distress signal." Congress, "My God in heaven man why didn't you tell somebody?" To this Heinrich replied, "We couldn't, we had illegal cargo on board. We were carrying baby seal carcasses. We knew if we stopped to help we would get caught."

One thousand five hundred people drowned because they were carrying illegal cargo.

My friends are you carrying illegal cargo today? Can you not help those in distress, those surrounded by problems, drowning in a sea of despair because you know if they get to close they may find that you are carrying illegal cargo? Are you sailing

on the Samson?

There was another ship present that night, the Californian, only 18 miles away. It too could have saved both passengers and crew of the Titanic but it too sailed away. At the congressional hearing Seaman Earnest Gill was asked what he was doing the night the Titanic sank. He told them had been working down in the boiler room that night. Congress asked, "Did you see the flares?" Mr. Gill, "Yes, I saw the flares when I took my break on deck." Congress, "Did you understand what they meant?" Mr. Gill, "Yes, it is the universal signal that a ship is in distress." Congress, "why didn't you tell somebody?"

Mr. Gill, "Well, I stood there a while then I flipped my cigarette into the ocean and went back down below. I didn't figure it was any of my business."

One thousand five hundred people drowned because he didn't figure it was any of his business.

Others on the California saw the flares too and they went back to bed.

My friends are you more concerned about your plans, your job, your friends, your entertainment and your comfort than you are about the plight of those who are perishing around you? Do you figure it is just none of your business? Then you are sailing on the Californian.

Another ship saw the flares that night it was called the Carpathia. Most the crew was asleep but one young officer on deck saw the flares on the horizon a full 58 miles away.

He spun on his heels ran across the deck down the stair wells through the galley and straight to the captain's quarters. He burst into Captain Author Rossin's stateroom.

Rossin thought, "Who is this insolent officer who comes into my room uninvited?" The young officer said to his captain, "Captain, Captain, there is a ship in distress, I saw the flares, it is over 50 miles away!" Before Captain Rossin warm feet hit the cold floor he was barking out orders. "Wake up the Quartermaster! Tell him to get warm clothing ready". Wake up the cook; tell him to prepare

coffee, soup and food for the survivors. Wake up the doctors; tell them to set up in the ballroom and galley. Be ready to treat the survivors.

"Wake up the wireless operator, tell him to tell the ship we are coming at full speed," was his final order for the young officer.

It was only then they found out it was the Titanic. Mr. James Basset was at the well that night. Congress asked him, "Sir, Didn't you realize you were sailing into dangerous waters?" To which Basset replied, "Yes I did, I knew that any iceberg that could sink the Titanic could make splinters out of us." Congress asked, "How did you manage to keep your courage?" Basset said, "My hands were sweaty and my heart was racing, but I looked over at Captain Rossin and I saw his head bowed and lips moving. I knew that he was praying to God, the great Captain of the Sea, my heart slowed down, my hands dried out and I took courage."

Friends do you pray to the great Captain of the Sea in your time of need? If you do you can take heart, He will give you courage. It is a dangerous thing to rescue the perishing. But the Carpathia sailed on rescuing 705 people. They were willing to risk it all even their lives to help those in need. What are you willing to risk to help those around you?

The fourth ship on the sea that night was the Titanic itself. The Titanic was 11 stories high and one sixth of a mile long. At the time of its construction, it was the largest ship ever built. It was the first ocean liner to have to a pool and gymnasium on board. It had 15 water tight compartments. The Titanic represented the very best man had to offer, the best engineering and design. The nautical journals and papers of its day said it was unsinkable. An employee of the White Star Line was quoted as saying, "Not even God could sink this ship!" How many of you know that was a foolish thing to say? Don't thing that God can not sink your ship. He can. The Titanic was not only structurally safe but it was also socially safe. On



SMITH
3rd BTB Chaplain

In the sea of life, which ship do you captain?

Continued from Pg. 4

board were 30 millionaires. The Fortune 500 of their day was on board. This included Col. John Jacob Astor, the richest man in the world. His fortune then in 1912 was worth over \$100 million. But his money did not save him.

Four days later he would perish also.

So, the Titanic set sail on its maiden Atlantic crossing, April, 10 1912. The largest and safest ship ever built. No one would have dreamed that the Titanic would rest on the bottom of the ocean four days later. When the Titanic was out of port on the first day it received a distress call from a German vessel, "Our rudder is broken can you help us?" The Titanic answered, "No, we can not help you." They left the German ship stranded in the ocean and sailed on. The Bible says "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the crying of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard." Proverbs 21:15. And again; "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even also to them." Matthew 7:12.

Yet, the Titanic sailed on. They received a total of six warnings that there were icebergs in their path but they ignored them all. Still, they sailed on. The last warning came from the wireless operator on board the Californian on April, 14 at 10:30 p.m. One hour and 10 minutes before Titanic was to hit the iceberg. The message was, "You are sailing in dangerous waters. There are icebergs." The wireless operator on the Titanic responded, "Shut up, I 'm busy." The response was so loud and rude; that the wireless operator from the Californian took off his head set threw them to the ground, turned off the equipment and went to bed. It turns out the wireless operator on

board the Titanic was using the wireless to send messages for rich passengers and making big prophet for himself. A little more than an hour from disaster and he said, "Shut up, I'm busy." They ignored every warning. They thought they were safe, but at 11:40 p.m., on April 14, 1912 the Titanic struck an iceberg. They found out they were not safe, and for many, it would be too late.

Two hours and 40 minutes later, the Titanic was gone. In their panic the crew sent away the life boats only half full. One thousand five hundred people drowned or froze to death.

It all could have been avoided if they would have listened to the warnings. Friends, which ship are you on? Are you on the Samson, carrying illegal cargo which will keep you helping others out of fear of being caught? Are you on the Californian? Do you have you're your plans, your career and your friends? Do you just figure it is none of your business? Or are you on the Carpathian? Are you willing to risk all to help others? Finally, are you on the Titanic? Do you feel safe and secure without God in your life? Do you not realize that you are heading for disaster? "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 14:12. It also says, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:15.

But you don't have to perish in eternity. It's not too late for you. The Bible says, "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21. Call upon Jesus Christ. Don't wait another moment and He will rescue your soul from the angry sea. ☒

Members of the Coalition:

On October 15, 2005 millions of Iraqis took another step toward democracy by participating in the country's first Constitutional Referendum. Your efforts, in concert with our Iraqi Security Force counterparts, to provide a secure environment for the registration and the voting ensured that the voice of the Iraqi people could be heard.

Every Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine and civilian in the Multi-National Force can be justifiably proud of being part of such a significant event that advances democracy over the tyranny of terrorism. The successful conduct of the referendum has sent a clear message to every terrorist – you cannot stop the democratic process.

The referendum is a single step, but it is a significant one, and I am confident that working alongside our Iraqi partners you will succeed in your efforts to establish a free and democratic Iraq.

Thank you for a job well done.

Sincerely,



George W. Casey, Jr.
 George W. Casey, Jr.
 General, United States Army
 Commanding

Task Force leaves imprint on Khalis

Leaders tout projects, successful transitioning to Iraqi Security Forces

By Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

FOB WARHORSE, Iraq – The 3rd Brigade Combat Team is entering its 11th month of serving in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

During that time, the brigade has helped Iraq swell with hope and independence and progress towards self-reliance.

Each unit of the “Sledgehammer” Brigade has imprinted themselves into the development of Iraq by assuming responsibilities in various areas of operation.

Soldiers of Task Force Badger of the 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 3rd BCT have taken on the city of Khalis, Iraq.

Their accomplishments will lead them to become the second unit in Iraq to have a transfer of authority of an entire qadah, similar to a county in the U.S., from the control of Coalition Forces to a completely autonomous district said Capt. Alex Perez-Cruz, executive officer for Task Force Badger.

Perez-Cruz said the Iraqi army’s 5th Division, 2nd Brigade, 1st Battalion, located in Khalis, is already in the advanced stages of independence, conducting their own operations using minimal sup-



Photo by Capt. Alex Perez-Cruz

Members of Task Force Badger stand with their Iraqi Army counterparts at Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

port from the Coalition Forces.

“They ran the security for the elections with very little help from Task Force Badger,” he said. “The soldiers are very confident.”

Soldiers of TF Badger, comprised of Company C, 2-69 Armor, the 11th Georgian Infantry Battalion, and the TF Badger Military Transition Team, have formed partnerships with leaders of the Iraqi security forces and political leaders directing them to be able to lead their own.

Together they have over \$2 million in projects pending to improve the region.

These projects include establishing water treatment facilities, improving area schools, paving and reconstructing roads, building a new firing range in Galabiyah, and rebuilding the Khalis IA Headquarters’ dining facility that

was destroyed by a suicide bomber.

Like any movement toward the advancement in Iraq, there will be those who disagree and will try to hinder improvement.

In addition to the suicide bomber who destroyed the dining facility in Khalis, incidents such as a local check point attacks occur, however, Perez-Cruz does not see the violence as an obstruction to the progress the area is showing.

“There is always going to be people who don’t like what we are doing,” Perez-Cruz said. “Security is improving and with this, I can see the attacks becoming less and less.”

TF Badger has made an enormous impression on the area of Khalis and will be able to look back on their time in Iraq as a growing experience, not only for themselves but for the citizens of the nation. Their impact will not soon be forgotten. ▣



STAY ALIVE

Stop and Think!

IEDs are deadly killers.

Conduct 5 and 25 meter checks around your position.

Fitness Center Dedicated to 'Can Do' Hero



Photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks

Sgt. Johnathan Davis, a team leader for 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, gives a speech Oct. 29 at the gym dedication for 1st Lt. Michael Fasnacht, 2nd platoon leader, at Forward Operating Base Wilson in Ad Dawr, Iraq. Soldiers from the 1-15 Inf. came up with the plan to dedicate the gym after visiting the Salie Fitness Center at FOB Warhorse which was dedicated to Sgt. 1st Class David Salie, a platoon sergeant with the 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment who died on Feb. 14. With the help of local workers from Kellogg, Brown and Root, the idea came to life. Fasnacht, loved by all his troops, had a passion for physical fitness and was usually found working out in the gym when not on patrol. The unit plans to bring the "Iron Mike" gym sign back to the states when they redeploy.

Prestigious Campbell Cavalry Squadron takes over Caldwell

By Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

FOB CALDWELL, Iraq – The 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment, from Fort Campbell, Ky. came into Iraq Sept. 24 to take over authority of Forward Operating Base Caldwell in Kirkush, Iraq and FOB Cobra in Abu Ghurayb to secure the eastern side of the Diyala Province.

According to Lt. Col. Arthur Kandarian, commander for 1-32 Cav., the unit has been training since January, attending various training exercises including the Joint Readiness Training Center, individual and collective training and they have conducted live fire exercises.

Their mission is to train and conduct combined operations with the Iraqi security forces in the units area of operation.

"The mission is to effectively train the Iraqi army and police so they can grow and build as a nation," said Command Sgt. Maj. Felipe Paul, the command sergeant major for 1-32 Cav. "We want them to be able to make their own choices and join the rest of the world."

The unit served in Operation Iraqi Freedom I and this is the second time they have been to Iraq.

The 1-32 Cav. is a unit rich with history. As the U.S prepared for the Second World War, 1-32 Cav. was organized into the regular Army Jan. 13, 1941.

Throughout history, the company has taken part many impor-

tant battles and wars.

1-32 Cav. participated in the Allied attack against German forces in France, as one of the leading elements of the breakout into German controlled territory.

The unit participated in exploitation across France ending in sharp combat at Leige, Belgium and breaching the Siegfried Line at Rotgen.

Following these intense actions, the unit was moved to Bastogne to reinforce the 101st Airborne Division during the German siege on the town.

For its actions, the company was cited with the Belgian Army Order of the Day as well as receiving five campaign streamers, the Belgian Fourragere, two Belgian Army Order of the Day Citations, and a Presidential Unit Citation.

In 1991, the battalion let 1st Cavalry Division's frontal attack into Iraq. It fought admirably at Wadi-al-Batin, where it engaged "Saddam's Own" – elite elements of the Iraqi Republican Guard and Regular Army forces. For its service to the nation, the regiment concluded the war with the addition of three more campaign streamers and a Valorous Unit Citation for actions during the First Gulf War.

"This is the third trip for some of our Soldiers," Paul said. "They are just hoping they don't have to come back."

Kandarian, who is spending his third time deployed, said the mission will continue until the Iraqi security forces have taken over security in their AO. 

Soldiers gather for gospel service in Iraq

Story and photos by Andrew Tilghman
Stars and Stripes

FOB WARHORSE, Iraq — They were raised in Protestant churches in places like Chicago and New York and Miami, small towns across the South and even as far away as Trinidad.

But on this Sunday, near Baquba, Iraq, dozens of soldiers came together, laid down their weapons in makeshift pews, and settled in for a two-hour gospel service that offered a rare break from their daily duties in the battle-scarred and sun-baked desert.

Sgt. Courtney Black, 23, of Columbia, S.C., led the choir in an opening song: "I came here to clap my hands — I came here to stomp my feet — I came here to shout for joy."

Moments later, Capt. Tommie Pickens stepped up to the plywood pulpit and welcomed soldiers to the service.

"I don't know what you came here to do, but if you came here to praise the Lord, you've come to the right place," said Pickens, a 43-year-old chaplain and native of Chicago.

Like at many bases in Iraq, Sunday gospel services see by far the largest turnout among the weekly religious programs. More than 70 people turned out for the nearly two-hour service at Camp Warhorse, compared to roughly a dozen for the two other Protestant services and about 20 for the Catholic services.

Many soldiers say they attend church downrange for a sense of normalcy. At the same time, however, the testimonials rendered here clearly reflected life in a war zone.

"I was injured in a bomb explosion a few weeks ago," Staff Sgt. Antwan Austin, 26, of Miami, Fla., told the room of soldiers. "I was able to make a quick recovery and I made it back to Warhorse last night and I'd like to praise God."

The left side of Austin's body was showered with shrapnel on Aug. 23

when a suicide bomber struck an Iraqi dining facility in the nearby city of Al-Khalis.

Maj. Keith Hayes of Columbia, S.C., recalled his frustration when an Iraqi contractor he works with was kidnapped.

"I was kind of mad and upset, wondering if he was going to be returned, or be in a video getting his head chopped off," Hayes stood up and told the other soldiers.

"And I prayed and I thought 'It's in God's hands now. He'll return when God is ready for him to return,'" Hayes said.

"And a couple of days later, he returned — a little beat up, but he's OK," Hayes said, followed by a round of applause.

Spc. Diana Layne, a 24-year-old native of Trinidad who later moved to Brooklyn, N.Y., stood up and talked about how her faith recently helped her through trying times.

"The last couple weeks have been real rough. My grandfather died on my birthday. He raised me and he was like the only father figure in my life," she said, her voice cracking as she spoke to the congregation.

For Layne, enemy fire finally prompted her to take up a friend's suggestion that she began each day by reading Psalm 23.

"Last Sunday, that's when they had those mortar rounds, and that was when I started reading Psalm 23. Now I'm just thankful for those people

that God put in my direction," she said.

Turnout for the Gospel service began to top 100 people shortly after the 3rd Infantry Division soldiers arrived in January from Fort Benning, Ga. The crowd quickly overflowed the chapel here and the service was moved to the base's movie theater, a plywood structure that seats up to 150.

— Sgt. Courtney Black
3rd BCT

For many soldiers, the daily threats of life in Iraq lend a new urgency to developing their faith.

"You kind of think, 'I need to get myself straight, right, because that mortar just hit a 100 feet away,'" said Spc. Dondelyn Davis-McQueen, 21, of Yonkers, N.Y.

For some, deployment in Iraq has sparked a new commitment to attending church.

"When I was growing up, I went to church all the time. But then I started hanging with the wrong crowd," said Sgt. Gregory Davis, 25, from Tifton, Ga.

A friend here in the Army encouraged David to start coming to the gospel service several months ago, and he believes it has made him more patient in his daily work.

"Everybody here gets a little antsy, they get quick-tempered. This helps keep me calm," Davis said.

For 1st Sgt. Ray Daniels, 37, from Americas, Ga., church here is the same as it is back home, except here

he attends without his wife, his 4-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter.

Spc. Natasha David who grew up in Brownville, N.Y., said going to church helps her to dismiss any fears about the dangers of living in a combat zone.

"I have faith, so I know that nothing is going to happen to me," David said. ▣



Soldiers sing a closing hymn at the end of the gospel service.



Spc. Natasha David of Brooklyn, N.Y., lowers her head in prayer at FOB Warhorse.

'Battle Strong' Georgian Army soldiers provide support to 3rd Brigade team

By Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

FOB WARHORSE, Iraq – In the past 10 months the Diyala Province has made an incredible turn around from government to security issues. Insurgency in the Baquba and surrounding areas has taken a back seat to a new self-reliant Iraqi nation.

The 3rd Brigade Combat Team, has been in the Diyala Province for approximately 10 months and has ensured the positive forward movement of this great nation. However, they have not been alone.

Soldiers of the 11th Light Infantry Battalion, 1st Infantry Brigade, Georgian Army have walked alongside the U.S. in an effort to rebuild the country of Iraq.

The unit has been in the Diyala Province for six of their seven month tour, residing at Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

One of the missions of the Georgian army in Baquba, Iraq, is to provide force protection to FOB Warhorse by performing tower over watch duties and security of the traffic entry points to the base.

The force protection duties involve long, tedious hours of standing and watching the same scene closely for hours on end. Both Georgian and U.S. Army Soldiers work together in the towers.

Living and working with the U.S. Army has been exciting and valuable to the almost 300 Georgian soldiers residing on FOB Warhorse according to 1st Lt. Tornike Asatiani, liaison to the 11th Inf. Bat.

"We are excited to have the opportunity to work with one of the best armies in the world," Asatiani said.

Capt. Mamuka Magradze, commander for the 11th Inf. Bat., said things couldn't be better with their American brothers and sisters. The relationship is perfect with no misunderstandings, he said.

Not only are language lessons being exchanged

between Coalition Forces, Asatiani said cultural and military differences are being taught.

"We know each others weapons systems, rules, cultural traditions and traditions of the military and army structure," Asatiani said.

Another mission of the 11th Inf. Bat. is to provide traffic control and security to two key bridges in Diyala.

Operations are held 24 hours a day, seven days a week at both the Diyala Bridge, located south of FOB Warhorse, and the Balad Bridge that is a very important link between the eastern and western banks of the Tigris River.

According to Asatiani, the Diyala Bridge is an important channel for transportation into the city of Baquba for the Diyala community.

Due to the close proximity of the bridge to FOB Warhorse, the Georgian soldiers on guard are relieved after their shifts and brought back to the base.

The Balad Bridge is somewhat further so a small living out post is provided where the Georgian soldiers can bring all essentials for living during their shift.

"Security to the bridge is important, dangerous and demanding, especially in the summer time with the heat," Asatiani said.

On each bridge, the mission is similar. The Georgian soldiers try to control traffic over the bridge making it easier for the local population and military convoys to cross the bridge.

The Georgian soldiers who are stationed at the Diyala and Balad bridges must also secure the sites against attack, not only to the passageways themselves but to the key areas which the bridges lead.

The soldiers stationed at the bridges must conduct vehicle and personnel searches looking for any kind of weapon that might be a threat to the city or the citizens of Baquba or Coalition Forces.

Asatiani said his troops are "battle strong" and the deployment to Baquba has only made them stronger. ▣



Georgian Army soldiers "stand-to" during Guard Mount prior to starting their day shift at the Diyala Bridge.

Photo by US Air Force Airman 1st Class Ave Pele

Commentary: Remember our Soldiers

By Sgt. Ken Hall
Army News Service

America's hall of military heroes grows with the passing days, weeks and months of the War on Terror. For some, there is no more they can give than their very lives in America's defense.

Stories of heroism will be told by the generations of America's future in books, in movies and in stories by fireside chats and at family reunions by our children's grandchildren. It will be this way for the family of Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn C. Cashe, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Audie Murphy battalion," 3rd Infantry Division. Cashe died Nov. 8 from wounds suffered in a terrorist improvised explosive device (IED) attack, Oct. 17, in Iraq's Sunni Triangle.

A day on duty for peace

While on patrol in Samarra, Iraq, a blast from a terrorist IED ripped through Cashe's Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV). It was then, in a moment of complete selflessness, Cashe would define how he lived his life. His team's BFV had become an IED's flaming inferno, yet Cashe, already burned from the initial explosion, fought back all fears, quickly moving inside, holding sanity and fortunes that were the lives of his injured men by a thread.

"The crew was forced to escape through a much smaller hatch in the top of the vehicle," said Dr. (Maj.) Mark Rasnake, the intensive care unit director at the Balad hospital where the IED victims were initially sent. "Specialist Darren Howe, himself burning in the driver's seat with second and third degree burns after piloting the BFV away from the kill zone, went to the escape hatch of their burning vehicle to pull his buddies out. He helped get almost everyone out. Six members of Cashe's squad were burned badly, and one was still trapped inside."

As seconds turned into lifetimes, Cashe made his way through the BFV escape hatch to rescue one last Soldier that had become trapped inside behind a jammed loading ramp, ignoring and enduring second and third-degree burns over 70 percent of his body, then lifted and pushed his last man, Army medic

Sgt. Michael 'Doc Rob' Robertson up and through the small escape hatch.

"Six of his buddies came to us with severe burns," said Rasnake. "He (Cashe) came to us with burns over most of his body, the most severely injured of the group."

A desperate fight for survival

"The surgeons worked for hours on his wounds and we worked for hours in the intensive care unit to stabilize him for transport. In the end, damage to his lungs made him too sick to be safely transported by plane to our hospital in Germany and then on to a burn center at Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio.

"The ventilators we use for transport simply could not deliver the amount of oxygen he needed. If he stayed here in Iraq he would have died of his wounds. We simply cannot care for such severe burns here. Only a handful of hospitals back in the U.S. can. Knowing this, our air evacuation team loaded him into the plane for the six-hour flight to Germany."

Cashe and his men made it home to America

Of Cashe's eight-man team, the driver, Spc. Darren D. Howe, 21 of Beatrice, Neb.; Staff Sgt. George Alexander, 34, of Killeen, Texas; and the man Cashe died trying to save, Sgt. Robertson, 28, of Houston died of their wounds at Brooke Army

Medical Center. Specialists Ray Salerno and Gary Mills are still being treated there. The others were treated and released.

For three weeks after the IED attack, Cashe lay dying, fighting for his life while his family held vigil at his bedside. Before he died, his doctors allowed him to come off his life-supporting ventilator for just awhile. In those few moments of independent life, he told his family "I would never leave one of my men behind in combat." His family added how he still wanted to complete the final three years of his 20-year service to the Army.

His family knew his courage long before Oct 17. And like so many families before them, they now reel from the pain of the loss of the man they loved as son, as husband, as father, as brother, as hero.

In giving his life, Cashe held the course that forever changed the lives of so many that Oct. 17 day in a far away place known as "the Sunni Triangle."

Now and in the future, Americans will recall among so many names "Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn C. Cashe" with pride and for just a moment, remember what he felt it meant to be an American Soldier. ☑

(Editor's note: Information contained in this story contributed in part by the Orlando Sentinel and Air Force Press Network.)



Photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks

Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team's 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, render honors at the Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe and Capt. Joel Cahill Veteran's Day memorial ceremony at Forward Operating Base Wilson.

'Battle Boars' holding down an old fortress

Story and photos by Andrew Tilghman
Stars and Stripes

FOB NORMANDY, Iraq — On top of a nearby rocky cliff, the crumbling remains of a 19th century Turkish fort overlooks the U.S. Army post here.

Buried beneath the hard-packed dust, a British general was laid to rest in the 1920s, during the 14 years when Iraq was under direct British colonial occupation.

Under Saddam Hussein's regime, the sprawling base about 40 miles from the Iranian border was home to an entire corps, where a former soldier recalls bad food, low morale and physical abuse from Iraqi officers.

"This was the most bad three months of my life," said 28-year-old Salam Farhan, an Iraqi native and translator here who attended basic training at the base with Saddam's army in 2001.

Farhan recalled children as young as 13 and 14 forced into army training. Wealthy and politically connected families often bribed army officials to release their children from service.

The roughly 700 U.S. troops stationed here are the latest in a long series of soldiers to set up camp outside the city of Muqadiyah. The base's history offers a window on the history of the entire country: its periodic wars, occupations and efforts to gain independence.

Unlike many U.S. bases in Iraq, Forward Operating Base Normandy has few prefabricated tents and containerized housing units. Instead, Soldiers here are housed in old masonry-constructed barracks, many built by the British in the early 1950s. The headquarters building for the U.S. Army's Task Force 1-30 has an Islamic-style design with tile floors and elaborate moldings. The adjacent chapel, a large dome top, was once used as a mosque.

The base, situated on an old trading route that led merchants and smugglers from Baghdad through Baquba and into Iran, is an obvious location for a military outpost.

Just outside the area's main city, the base is buffered by the Hamrin Mountains to the east and by the Diyala River to the north and west.

"In the military, we look to nature, and here nature helps us," said Col. Thea Ismael Abid Al-Tamimi, commander of the Iraqi army battalion garrisoned on the base adjacent to American forces.

The former Turkish base used by the Ottoman government that controlled Mesopotamia before World War I lies just outside the base and has been mostly destroyed.

A sign chiseled in one mountainside reads: "106th Hazara Pioneers, 1918," referring to a British colonial regiment of central Asian soldiers from the Hazara tribe that was stationed here during World War I.

Under the mountaintops, the British hollowed out more than a dozen large weapons stores. In recent decades, Saddam stockpiled ammunition there.

The brick-walled caverns are currently empty and in good condition.

When U.S. soldiers re-enter the front gate after daily patrols, they pass a graveyard of rusty British-made Chieftain tanks and Russian-made T-55 tanks seized from Iran during the eight-year war between Iran and Iraq.

About 50 years ago, the base was a headquarters for then-brigade Commander Abd al-Karim Qasim, who later led the revolutionary forces that killed the Iraqi king and declared a republic in 1958.

Early in Saddam's regime, the base here was well-maintained, with running water, air conditioning and several large factories, said Sgt. Abid Ali, a 48-year-old Muqadiyah native who serves in



The remains of a monument built over the grave of a British general overlook the U.S. and Iraqi troops stationed at FOB Normandy.



A Soldier clears his weapon outside the building used as the headquarters for TF 1-30 at FOB Normandy. Locals say the building was built by British troops more than 50 years ago.

the Iraqi army.

After the fall of Saddam, the base was virtually destroyed during the month-long power vacuum between the regime's collapse and the arrival of the first Coalition Forces.

Locals looted the furniture and other supplies, while an Iranian militia carted off truckloads of heavy artillery, rocket-propelled grenades and other ammunition stored here, Ali said.

U.S. money is now rebuilding the base with training facilities for Iraqi army soldiers and local police.

Coincidentally, Farhan, the former Iraqi soldier, now works here as a translator and lives in the same barracks building he was assigned to during basic training four years ago. The son of a Kurdish mother and Arab father from northern Iraq, Farhan said life on the base now — with good food, good pay and friendly Soldiers — is better than he could have imagined several years ago.

"This is the high life right here," he said. ☑



Markings on a mountain pass on FOB Normandy recall the Hazara soldiers, who were among the British troops who occupied the base during the First World War.

1... 2... 3... Pull!

Photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks

Members of the Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Troops Battalion, pull a 14-ton, uparmored M1114 humvee during the truck pull competition on the Organizational Day, Nov. 21 at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq.



Joint IA, Task Force Operation

Photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks



Operation Penetrator II began early morning, Nov. 10, when elements from 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery, including Automatic, Bayonet and Outlaw companies, and an air weapons team from the 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry, made their way to palm groves surrounding the Tigris River in search of insurgents and weapons caches. Forces from the Iraqi Army's 4th Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 5th Division and Iraqi Police forces joined the fight along with support from the US Air Force providing an F-15 to fly over the target sites. The driving force for the operation was when Task Force 1-10 FA received reports there were insurgents living in the area where anti-Iraqi forces and weapons caches were previously found. OP Penetrator II produced four suspected insurgents and further refined TF 1-10's tactical training procedures operating with the Iraqi Army and Police, according to Maj. Scott Quagliata, executive officer for 1-10 FA.

HAMMER Holiday Greetings!

Special holiday messages from Task Force Sledgehammer

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Katy back in Columbus. I love you and miss you and I'll be home soon. I still want to see that Ice Cream dance when I get home...



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

1st Lt. Jeremy Martin
HHC, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy anniversary to my wife Annette and Happy Holidays to my family back home in Columbus. I miss you guys and hope to see you soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. 1st Class Willie Green
HHC, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Liz. I love you and I miss you. Don't worry, I'll fix the car as soon as I get back.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Capt. Mike Babiak
HHC, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Jordan. I love you and I miss you and I'll see you soon...



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

1st Lt. DeWitt Revels
Company A, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Robin and son Bryce. I'll see you soon.
Love,
Daddy



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Brad Kettler
Company E, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

For my family all at home, Sorry Daddy left you alone. Have a safe and Happy Holiday. Daddy love you forever and always.
Love,
Daddy & Husband



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Jimmy Oates
Company E, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Amy, Lexi and Jack,
Happy Holidays to all three of you! We don't have long now. See you soon.
I love and miss you all,
Daddy



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Brian Adkins
Company C, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my beautiful wife Nikki and our son, Caleb. I miss you all and can't wait to get home.
I love you both,
Daddy



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. Levi Troxell
Company F, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my beautiful wife and son. I miss you and love you both. I love you Pete.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. James Givens
Company F, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife and 2-year-old baby. Happy New Year's and I love you and I'll see you soon.
Love,
Time



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Timothy Humble
Company F, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my loving Holly and my wonderful family. I will be home soon.
Love you all,
Ed



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Pfc. Edward Sheets
Company F, 1-15 Infantry
FOB McKenzie, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my family, my wife Jeannie and my sons, Hunter and Brenden,
Happy Holidays! I will be home soon!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Jim Verschueren
HHC, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife, Tisha. I love you, miss you and will see you shortly.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Capt. Josh Snyder
H7AB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to you Malik, Marquis and Makayla. I love you all!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Samuel Chance
Company B, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Hello my Angels!
I just want to say Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! Tell the rest of the family that I said have a blessed holiday season. I love you all.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. 1st Class Freddie Threatt
Company B, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS STAMP MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Denise and my kids, Arionna and DeMarco. I'll see you soon. I miss you. I can't wait to go to Barbados with you!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Jaheme Sealy
FSB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays! I love you both, Lawanda and Lakera. I will be home soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. Kero Early
HAB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to Shanita and Tabren. I love you and will see you guys soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Robert Wallace
HAB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Tasha and kids. I miss you and love you.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Lee Wagner
HAB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

I'd like to say Happy Holidays to my beautiful wife Venus and my two wonderful kids, Karyn and Jemella. I hope you are doing well while I'm gone. I miss you. I'll see you soon. "Mahal Kita"



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Michael Murphy
Company C, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wonderful wife Keiko and my kids, Jennifer and Justin. Our vacation is going to be great. I love you and miss you.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Deitrich Cerna
HHC, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Emily and my boys, Adam and Nicholas. I love you and miss you guys so much. I can't wait to come home again.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. Victor Illescas
Company A, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays! I miss you all; Ginger, Donovan and Zoeyanna. I can't wait to come home.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Private Jacob Langdon
HHC, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Hi baby! I love you and I miss you. I'll see you very soon!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Bobby Smith
HHC, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Karen,
I love you so much. Happy Anniversary! I can't wait to see you and Joey when I get home. You're the best!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

1st Lt. Nick Clemente
Company A, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To Erica and Teresa,
I love you and I miss you both. I can't wait for the cruise. Get my Matthew's warmed up...
Love,
Cliff



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Bell
HHC, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Elizabeth,
Thank you for being such an amazing wife throughout this deployment. I love you and I'll be home soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. William Fox
HHC, 2-34 Armor
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To Jen, Drew, Nate and Hannah,
I love and miss you. Happy Holidays! Thanks for all the pictures and stuff. I will be home before you know it.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Maj. Matt Bendele
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays, Happy New Year and 24th wedding anniversary. I'll get you on the second honeymoon on our 25th!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Maj. Tom Burton
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

I want to wish a Happy Holiday to my family. I love you. I'll be home soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Dwayne Gray
HAB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to my wife Ashley, my daughters, Noelle and Katlyn, and my son, Kristopher Jr. I'll be home real soon!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Kristopher Lisowski
HAB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my loving wife,
I hope you have a happy holiday season. I love you and I'll be home soon!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Michael Bryant
Company A, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year's to my wife Aubrie and my daughter, Kennedei. I'll be home soon, I miss you.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Carl Orton
HAB, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Gabe, Iraq

THIS PHOTO MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my beautiful wife and daughter,
I want to wish you a Happy Holidays and I will be home soon! I love you with all my heart and I can't wait to see you.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Johnathan McCall
Company B, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my family and friends back home,
I just want to say hi and I miss you all. I would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays. God bless and take care.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Ronald Cabatan
Company B, 1-10 Field Artillery
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Love to everyone back home. Happy Holidays!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. Nicholas Thompson
Company C, 1-30 Infantry
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

I love you... I wish I was there.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. David Sinclair
Company C, 1-30 Infantry
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Hi, I want to say Happy Holidays to my mom and my brother Ryan. And to all of my friends in Columbus, and back home in Peachtree City, Georgia.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Matthew Rusk
Company A, 1-30 Infantry
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Hi to my wife and kids. I love you, I miss you and I will see you soon!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. James Walker
Company C, 1-30 Infantry
FOB Normandy, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Wish you were here, but I will be there soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Anthony Rayner
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas to the Smith family. I miss you all and I'll be home soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Rodney Smith
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to everyone back home... Hope to see ya'll soon!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. Travis Ogletree
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to all my family and friends. I love you and will see you soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. Tony Manning
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wonderful ad loving family, Rodney Sr., Rashonda and Rodney Jr.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. 1st Class Denise Ross
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Paul and Connor,
Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas, I love you very much and I'll see you soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Capt. Stephanie Stroik-Ramones
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my husband Sgt. 1st Class Jerry Randolph and everyone at Wynnnton Road Cogie. Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas, I love you. See you soon!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Sgt. Freda Randolph
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to our rear-detachment. Especially the doc and medics on Kelly Hill. Thanks for all you work! We can't wait to come home and see you!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Maj. Andrew Magnel
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my wife Amber and my mother Magen,
I would like to wish you a Happy Holiday... See you soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Cpl. Jason Vaughn
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my soon to be wife Teresa, Happy Holidays! I will be home soon. Te amo para siempre... Rub the baby for me!!!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Spc. Nickgene Rios-Rodriguez
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my wife Brandi, and my daughter, Cloe Isabella Garcia,
I'd like to wish you all Happy Holidays!! See you very soon!!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Joe Garcia
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

Hello to my family, Happy Holidays!



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE 09336

Staff Sgt. Rob Hardwick
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR MESSAGE

POST CARD

To my wife Nicole, daughters Darrien and Ashton, and my son Brayden,
You all mean the world to me. I love you all. Happy Holidays, I'll be home soon.
Love, Forever & Always,
Sean



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. Sean Riley
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

I miss you guys at home. Can't wait to come home for the holidays. Keep up the good work.
Love,
Brandon



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. Brandon Kilbane
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

I want to wish a Happy Holidays to my wife Melissa, and my two awesome daughters, Haylee and Kira. I love you and miss you very much and I hope to see you soon.
Love,
J.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Jones
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to the Lopez family, Ester Lopez and George Ocaranza.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Spc. Frank Lopez
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Lauren and my baby girl, Emily. I will be home soon. I love you both with all my heart.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Staff Sgt. James Stoy
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Sheila, and my 'pumpkinhead', Shelby. I love y'all and have a Merry Christmas.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Staff Sgt. Michael Stacher
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my wife Carol, and my daughter Alyssa, and father-in-law, J.T. I love you guys and enjoy your freedom.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. Dennis Castellini
Company A, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my family. I love you all very much. I'll be home soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. Rich Coriell
Company A, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

I would like to say Happy Holidays to my wife Stacy, sons Jacob and Kyle, and Daughter Lauren. I love you and miss you. See you soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. Travis Richardson
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

I would like to say Happy Holidays to my wonderful family. To my beautiful wife Lisa, and my lovely daughters, Erin and Brittany. All of my love to you three. I will see you soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. 1st Class Blake Beasley
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

I'd like to wish a Happy Turkeyday and that Santa Claus will be good to you all. All of my love to my wife, daughters and nephew. I will be home soon.
Love ya',
Bud



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Staff Sgt. Bud Shaver
HHC, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

I'd like to wish a Happy Holidays to my wife Pamela, my kids, Ray, Anna and Jaylen, and my mother Annie. I love you all and will see you soon.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

1st Sgt. Ray Daniels
Company B, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

To everyone stateside,
Have a wonderful holiday season.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Staff Sgt. Thomas Burton
Company B, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my beautiful wife Kris, my wonderful sons, J.J., Alex and Andrew. I'll be home, so don't peek at the presents.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Capt. Jose Gonzalez
MI Company, 3rd BCT
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays to my son, Jaylin Williams. I miss you and I love you.
Love,
Mommy



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. Jashynn Scarver
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays and God bless to LJP Ministries and Misoshi Salim.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Staff Sgt. Adrienne Barnes
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas! I love always Pamela and JB.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Sgt. 1st Class John Butler
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

POST CARD

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas! I love you guys, Jeremy Jackson, Nelson and Venis Oritz.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
NOV 24 2005
APO AE W9336

Staff Sgt. Kakeishia Austin
HHC, 203rd FSB
FOB Warhorse, Iraq

DROP THE HAMMER

What will you be doing back in the rear?

“I plan on going on a vacation to Hawaii with my wife. I’m going to see my kids first, then when I visit my parents, I’m going to leave my kids with them to go on vacation.”



– Sgt. Thomas McDaniel
HHC, 2-34 Armor

“When I redeploy, I am going to visit my family and friends.”



– Spc. Christopher Prance
B Btry, 1-10 Field Artillery

“I’m going to hang out with my family. I might buy a new car... and I’m gonna get a girlfriend.”



– Pfc. Kareem Wilson
E Co., 1-15 Infantry

“I will do everything that I love doing with my wife and kid that I missed out on this year. I’m going to spend as much time as I can with them.”



– Pfc. Juan Landron
C Co., 1-15 Infantry

“I will ETS in Oct., 2006, so when I get back, I’m going to look for a great place to live near a great school.”



– Spc. Christopher Lizardo
HHC, 1-10 Field Artillery

“I plan of ETSing and going to school for a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering at the University of Central Florida.”



– Cpl. Chad Bauch
HHC, 1-10 Field Artillery

“I plan to spend time with my family. They say just seeing me is vacation enough for them. Really, I’m just going to kick back, relax and take a personal vacation.”



– Spc. Gregory Kowal
HHC, 2-34 Armor

“I’m going to take a vacation to see my mother-in-law in New Hampshire. My wife and I are going to renew our vows.”



– Spc. Tim Morris
HHB, 1-10 Field Artillery

“I’m going to go on vacation to Maine and go to a ski resort. I’ll also go to see my parents in Florida.”



– Spc. Aaron Marcus
HHC, 2-34 Armor

Hammer Times will accept your stories and photos! Send your submissions digitally by e-mailing 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 with all submissions. ☑



Task Force SLEDGEHAMMER

honors those who've served, Veteran's Day, 2005

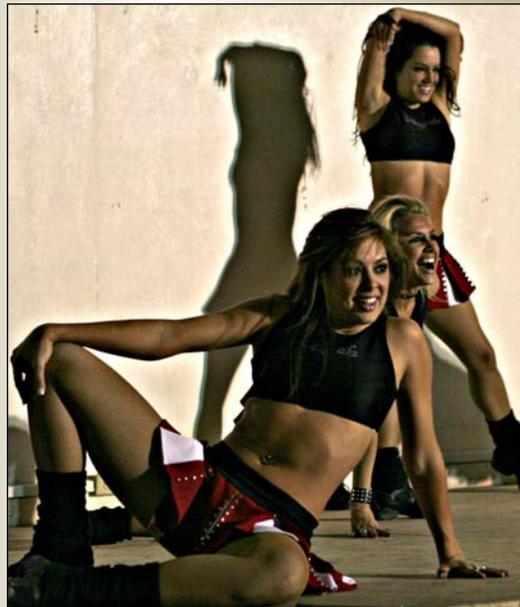
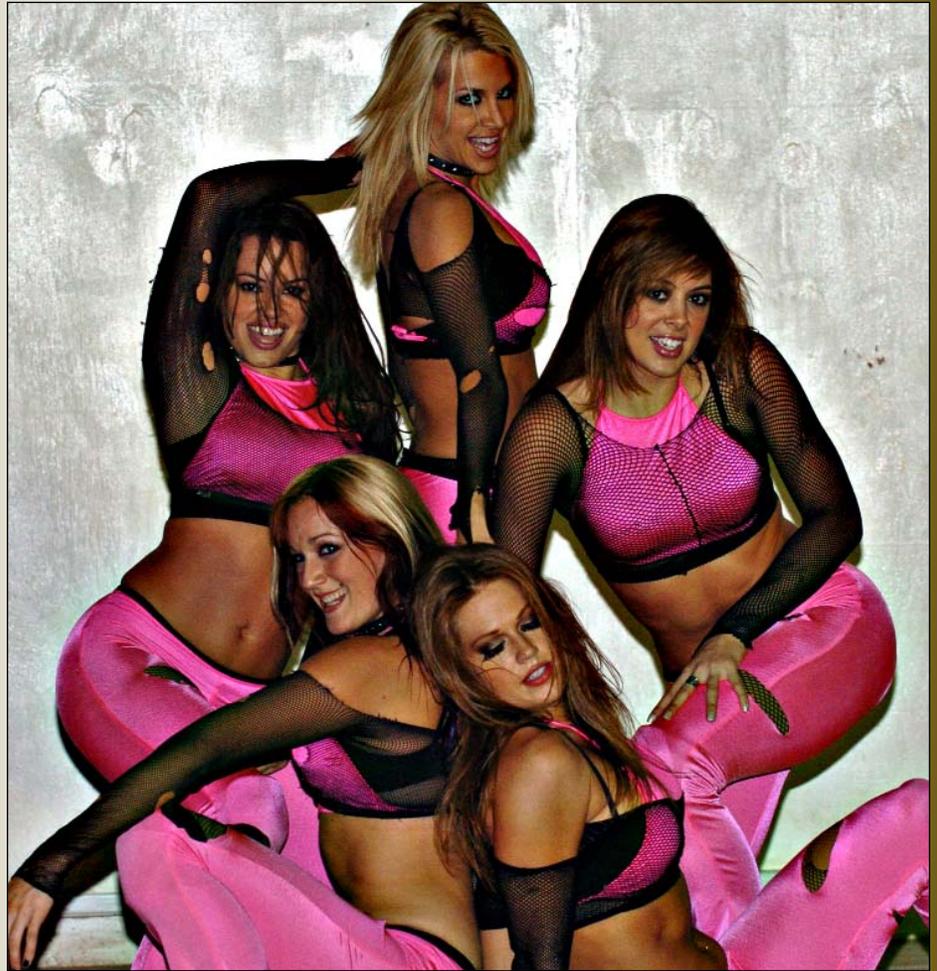
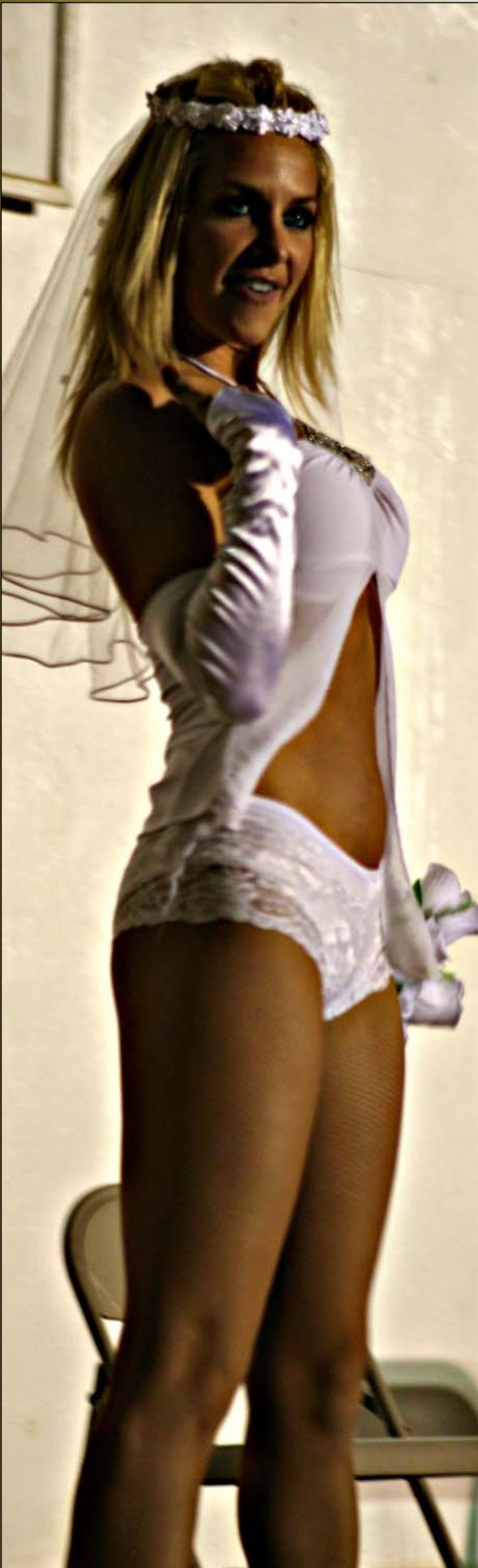


Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Victor Fermin
and Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

The Soldiers of Task Force Sledgehammer and civilians of Forward Operating Base Warhorse took time to Never Forget those US Military personnel and their sacrifices made in service to their country. TF Sledgehammer Commander, Col. Steven Salazar, presided over the event held at the Never Forger Garden Memorial, which included the ringing of a hammer striking steel as the members of the combat team who have fallen during Operation Iraqi Freedom III were named. The somber event concluded with a day-long cookout at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation hanger. Soldiers and guests of the Sledgehammer team enjoyed camaraderie and a taste of home in the form of grilled steaks and barbecue provided by Kellogg, Brown and Root.



A 'Purrfectly' Good Show



Photos by Sgt. Sean Riley
The Purrfect Angelz, a Los Angeles based dance troupe, graced the Morale, Welfare and Recreation hanger on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Nov. 12. The five-woman troupe performed high-energy dance routines to the delight of the Soldiers and civilians of the FOB.