

"The Club"



The Official Newsletter of the 1st Brigade Combat Team

Have a Bastogne Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is traditionally a time for friends and families to come together and reflect on the blessings and freedoms we have as Americans. As military members and families know too well, those freedoms do not come easily. Once again many of us find ourselves celebrating away from those we love.

In January 1941, with much of the world at war and the United States on the brink of entering the conflict, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt delivered his "four freedoms" speech to Congress. Declaring that "enduring peace cannot be bought at the cost of other people's freedom," Roosevelt stated that he was looking forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms:

"The first is the freedom of speech and expression...everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way...everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want...everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear...anywhere in the world."

You and I are blessed to live in a nation where the basic freedoms of which President Roosevelt spoke are secure for each and every one of its citizens.

Bastogne Soldiers are now working hand-in-hand with the brave men of the Iraqi Security Forces, helping them achieve the freedoms for every citizen of Iraq that we Americans have enjoyed for 229 years. I am pleased to report that the Iraqis have made great strides. Before Christmas, Iraqis will once again head to



1st BCT Commander:
Col. David R. Gray

the polls to vote in free elections, this time to elect national officials for their government.

As your Soldier experiences these historic events first-hand, it is my hope that you will celebrate Thanksgiving knowing that the sacrifices you make are being felt

half-a-world away.

As you sit down to Thanksgiving dinner, please give thanks for the blessing of liberty that we enjoy as Americans, and please pray for our Soldiers safe return.

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving.
God bless you and our brave Soldiers.
Bastogne!
Air Assault!
Colonel David Gray

"Balls" Medics Help Villagers through Medical Civilian Assistance Program

By: Spc. Barbara Ospina
1st BCT Public Affairs

Medics of 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment combined man power and supplies with medics from the Iraqi Army to conduct a medical civilian assistance program (Med CAP) mission for the villagers of Zagilbana on November 5.

"We must have treated over 100 people, probably more" said 2nd Lt. Brian Mason, the 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment Medical Officer.

Although the Med Cap was supported by five medics of the artillery battalion, the show was run by the Iraqi Army.

"Most of the patients were treated by the Iraqi Army medics," Mason stated. "We let them handle as much as possible."

According to Mason, most treatments consisted of cold like symptoms and they treated very few chronic issues.

Once the medics had the temporary aid station set up the battalion's psyop detachment drove onto the tallest hill within the small village and broadcasted that Coalition Forces had arrived and were providing free medical attention. Men began to bring their family members to the clinic as soon as the word reached the dirt streets.

"Within five minutes we had citizens showing up for medical

attention," said "The women formed their own line, and the men brought in their children."

The only female medic, Spc. Carmen Lozano attached from Company C, 426th Brigade Support Battalion, turned out to be one of the most valuable assets to the mission, commented Mason.

"The majority of the women patients we treated were of the Arab culture," Mason remembered. "It was only respectable to have a female treat the women." Some patients arrived with serious illnesses diagnosed to need long term care.

"When we received a patient with a chronic illness, we gave treatment for the present symptoms, but we tried to express the fact that they need to make appointments at the medical facility in Tuz," Mason said. "Even though we wanted to help them, we gave them advice and directed them to a facility that could provide long term care."

By early afternoon many villagers walked away with care and medication, and Mason stated that even the village Muktar and his sons visited the station to show their support of the operation. The mission was marked a success when the temporary aid station ran out of basic supplies and medications before noon.

426 Gets Em’ Running All Around

By: Spc. Barbara Ospina
1st BCT Public Affairs

The mechanics of Company B, 426th Brigade Support Battalion pulls the weight of a 1,000 pound truck when it comes to their duties in a deployed environment. As the primary maintenance unit for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, these Soldiers keep all mission essential equipment up and running.

“We see everything; every type of equipment,” said Staff Sgt. Travis Langley, the shop foreman, who oversees all maintenance operations. “Basically if it comes in off the road, we fix it!”

Since taking over responsibility of the maintenance shop of Forward Operating Base (FOB) Warrior, the 426 mechanics have been working around the clock.

“I have been in this shop everyday since the day the bird landed in Iraq,” reflected

Langley.

As vehicles enter the shop they are categorized by type of work and importance, similar to a hospital triage system. The highest priority vehicles are up-armored humvees. According to Langley, the shop has 24-hours to have the vehicles fixed or the parts on order.

“If it has armor on it, it’s gotta go,” Langley said. “It’s most important to get the up-armored trucks fixed, because those things truly save lives.”

Assembling the parts on a vehicle is nothing new for these mechanics, but working on up-armored equipment is. So, the Bastogne maintenance Soldiers were extremely grateful for the continuity book left by the mechanics they replaced. The book includes



Photo By: Spc. Barbara Ospina

A Soldier from the 426th, BSB maintenance company replaces an engine in an up-armored humvee.

tips on air conditioning repair, troubleshooting transmissions, and the suspension conversion.

“They left so much information for us; the book is huge and contains everything we need to know about the vehicles,” Langley said. These mechanics carry the heavy tool box not only for their battalion and not only for the 1st BCT, but for anyone who comes onto FOB Warrior needing equipment fixed.

**Find Your
Soldier’s
Holiday
Greeting
Video
on the
1st BCT
FRG
Website**

Transfer of Authority Complete

By: Spc. Barbara Ospina
1st BCT Public Affairs

With the casing of one unit’s symbolic history, the responsibility was confidently handed over to another as Regimental and Brigade Colors were proudly unfurled. The 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division (AASLT) assembled a ceremony on October 31 to formally take over responsibility of the North Central region of Iraq from combat veterans of the 116th Brigade.

Throughout the past year Soldiers and leaders of the 116th Brigade were led by Gen. Alan Gayhart in providing citizens of the Kirkuk Province stable Iraqi security forces as well as over 20 million dollars invested into clean water, sanitation capabilities, and many other improvements to the infrastructure.

“Brig. Gen. Gayhart, you, Command Sgt. Maj. Lewis, and the thousands of

Warrior Soldiers under your command, have played a significant role in the history of the Iraqi people and their emerging freedom,” commented Commanding officer for the 1st BCT, Col. David Gray during the ceremony.

Although the responsibility has been handed over, the improvements are far from over.

Gray stood in before Warrior and Bastogne Soldiers as well as Iraqi Police and Soldiers of the Iraqi Army offering his steadfast determination and the might and respect of 1st BCT Soldiers to the community in establishing a safe and secure environment for citizens of Kirkuk.

“We must help the Iraqi’s build their governments capacity and work side-by-side with the Iraqi Security Forces, we



Photo By: Spc. Barbara Ospina

Battalion Commanders of the 1st BCT unfurl their colors during the transfer of authority ceremony October 31.

must take the fight to the enemy,” Gray said. “With the help of local leaders and the proud people of this region, we will help build a nation that all Iraqi’s can be proud of.”

Gray with the vision of the present and future clear in his sight posts and a firm grasp on the pistol grip concluded the ceremony by bidding a safe farewell to Gayhart and his Soldiers.

Personal Security Expands Soldiers team up for safety

By: Spc. Barbara Ospina
1st BCT Public Affairs

Bodyguards are no longer just for the rich and famous, they're now part of everyday life for Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team. Soldiers throughout the brigade have been teamed up as Personal Security Detachments (PSD) to escort and provide security for the various groups leaving a FOB.

"Whenever the commander, deputy commander, executive officer or the Brigade Sgt. Maj. head outside the wire, we send Soldiers along," said. Sgt. Eric Wolowicz, a squad leader for the brigade's command PSD.

Wolowicz's first mission was to escort Col. David Gray, the Commanding Officer for the Bastogne Brigade, to the Kurdish Government Building in Kirkuk, Iraq.

"The traffic is a lot different from back home," Wolowicz commented. "You're driving fast and they try to give as much room by moving to one side of the road or stopping."

As a newly formed team, the command PSD is made up entirely of infantrymen from one of the Brigades front line battalions. While they have training and

experience in kicking down doors, it has taken some time to get used to this change in mission.

"The PSD is a lot like a Delta Company, with the gun trucks escorting convoys," Wolowicz explained. "The difference is the procedures for reacting to contact."

Wolowicz went on to explain that a Delta Company will fight back when they come under fire; they dismount if necessary and do whatever it takes to terminate the threat. The job of a PSD on the other hand is to protect those in the convoy, so when they come in contact with the enemy, their mission suddenly switches to getting that convoy out of the threat area, or "hot zone" as the PSD Soldiers like to call it.

These PSD teams not only provide security with gun trucks during the convoy, they also provide security at the destination point. Once the convoy arrives, Soldiers from the detachments escort their passengers to and from buildings, and stay with them throughout that particular mission.

"Most of the places we go already have security, so the threat is on the road," Wolowicz stated.

Chaplain's Corner

By: Maj. Clyde Scott
1st BCT Chaplain

The 1st Brigade Combat Team Unit Ministry Teams (UMTs) are now set with their units providing and performing religious support for soldiers and assisting commanders to help ensure soldiers free exercise rights under Title X of the United States Code.

We are currently providing comprehensive religious support which offers numerous opportunities for spiritual growth including worship services, bible studies, prayer meetings, and spiritual counseling.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving in theater be assured that despite being separated by many miles, our families and loved ones will be first and foremost in our thoughts and prayers. To help make us feel at home the DFAC will be decorated, and offer a "cornucopia" of traditional Thanksgiving delights.

This Thanksgiving let us truly give thanks for God and his many blessings. And may all of us echo the words of David who wrote: "Enter God's courts with thanksgiving, and let everything that has breath praise the Lord."

Bringing God to soldiers and soldiers to God, your 1st BCT Unit Ministry Teams.

Joint Weapons Range

Soldiers and Leaders of the B 451 Civil Affairs Battalion assembled a familiarization fire range with Soldiers of Iraqi Army 2nd Brigade at the Kirkuk Iraqi Military Training Base on Wednesday.

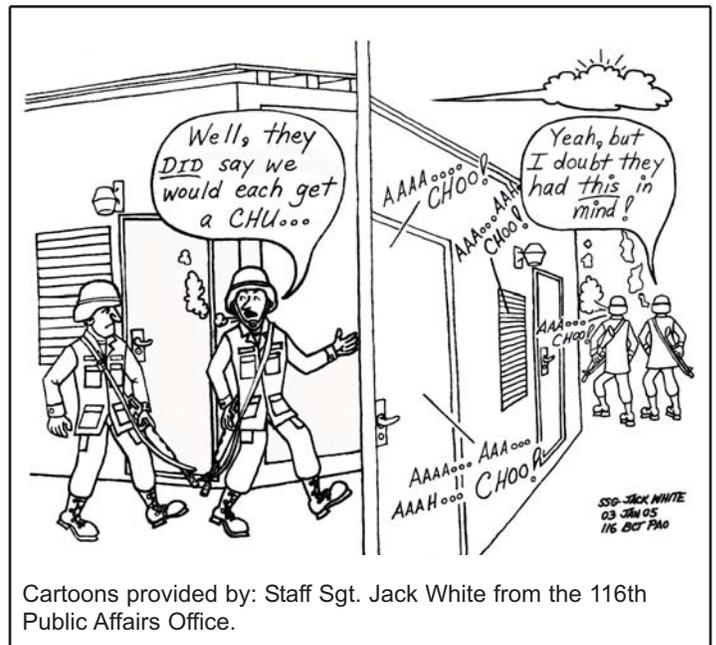
The intent of the range was to give the Civil Affairs Soldiers training on the AK 47, the most common weapon among anti-coalition forces, while building camaraderie with the Iraqi Soldiers.

"This is a good step in the right direction," said. Capt. Cole See *Weapons...Pg. 4*



Photo By: Spc. Barbara Ospina

An Iraqi Brigade Commander gives Soldiers a short class on the AK-47.



Cartoons provided by: Staff Sgt. Jack White from the 116th Public Affairs Office.

It's a Small World

By: Spc. Barbara Ospina
1st BCT Public Affairs

When Chief Warrant Officer Javier Gonzalez walked into the warrant officer advanced course during the late summer of 2004 little did he know that he would soon meet an individual who would tie his past to his future.

Half way through Gonzalez's deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom I, he was reassigned to be the Bastogne Brigade Targeting Officer. His Soldiers of the 2nd Field Artillery Detachment gave him a hand made Iraqi sign as parting gift.

“When you spend half a year with a group of guys in a war environment everyone becomes close like family,” Gonzalez remembered.

During the transfer he was told that all he could bring to the new unit was his bags. Along with the sign Gonzalez had a footlocker of personal belongings, including books and pictures of his family, but he felt confident in leaving his possessions with his comrades to bring home upon redeployment.

It was only a matter of time once Gonzalez returned back to the states that

he would link up with “the guys” from his previous unit and retrieve his possessions. When the

time came, he discovered that his footlocker and sign never made the long trip across the Atlantic Ocean.

“I was really disappointed when they didn't bring my stuff,” Gonzalez commented. “There was a lot of sentimental value left behind.”

Although disappointed about having lost personal possessions, he understood that if it could have been brought along it would have.

“My old unit was always traveling to different FOBs,” Gonzalez remembered. “They could usually only take the minimum gear, and equipment required to accomplish the mission.”

The subject settled as the Soldiers became familiar with their normal rou-



Photo By: Spc. Barbara Ospina

Chief Warrant Officer Javier Gonzalez holds up his Iraqi hand made sign.

tines back at home. After working and living in a garrison environment for a few short months, the pace of training and schools picked up.

Gonzalez like many other leaders and Soldiers began to advance in his career. During his few week course of advancement became good friends with Chief Warrant Officer Richard Woodlock.

Woodlock, assigned to 42nd Infantry Division, deployed to

Iraq soon after graduating the warrant officer course. Upon arrival he began settling into his housing unit and came across a sign that had been left behind by the Soldier before. Upon reading it he instantly knew who it belonged to.

Woodlock sent the good news through a simple email reading, “I have an artifact that belongs to you,” and a photo attachment.

Knowing he would soon be back to Iraq, Gonzalez asked him to hold onto it until he arrived in theater.

Within the first few days of his now 2nd deployment to Iraq, the sign was hand delivered to Gonzalez by Woodlock, and Gonzalez realized it's a small world after all.

Weapons

Calloway, the general support civil affairs team (CAT) A, team chief for B 451 Civil Affairs Battalion. “Instead of us versus them, we're working together.”

Nearly 9 Soldiers from the CAT attended the familiarization fire training, allowing them to gain more knowledge on the weapons systems.

“Soldiers need familiarization fire, so they know what they're up against,” Calloway stated. “The Civil Affairs Special Operations Command mobilized so fast that there just wasn't the opportunity, but now we are making the time.”

The Iraqi Soldiers provided the range but the Civil Affairs Soldiers fashioned targets from miscellaneous items they gathered from the landfill on Forward Operating Base (FOB) Warrior, making the range more realistic and enjoyable for both groups of Soldiers.

After 1,000 AK rounds, and over 500 240 machine gun rounds headed downrange through water jugs and car hoods, the day was wound up with a small firing competition between the Iraqi 2nd Bde. Commander and Calloway. With both calling it even, hands were shook and the range was cleaned.

Geese Ready to Sound Alarm

By: Anita Powell
Stars and Stripes

Meet Forward Operating Base Warrior's most unusual combat unit: the “Attack

Geese Special Expeditionary Squadron (Ground Assault),” a Kirkuk-based elite unit of six hefty grey-and-white geese



Photo By: Anita Powell
Stars and Stripes

Just call them Attack Geese Expeditionary Squadron (ground assault), based on FOB Warrior Kurkuk, Iraq. Airborne Division (Air Assault) of Fort Campbell, Ky. The squadron's area of

operations is a small area on the eastern side of the base.

On most mornings, the unit can be seen assembling in a parking lot, marching to a

honking cadence, conducting marine operations in a nearby pond and attacking anyone foolish enough to confront them.

Their rules of engagement are fair, but have teeth. After sounding a warning honk, the

See *Geese...* Pg. 6



Photo By: Spc. Barbara Ospina

426 Mans Combat Logistic Patrols

Soldiers from the 426th BSB line their trucks up in preparation of a combat logistic patrol. Soldiers of 1st Brigade Combat Team's 426th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) are keeping busy running supplies throughout the Brigade's area of operation. Once the call comes in that Soldiers need supplies, the cycle is kicked in gear and the combat logistics patrol, heads out shortly after. "Support Soldiers are the

workers behind the scene," said Command Sgt. Maj. Rory Malloy, the Command Sgt. Maj. for the 1st BCT. According to Capt. Paul White, Commander of Company A, 426th BSB, the unit rolls beyond the perimeter of the FOB a couple of times a week in support of their comrades. Every logistics pack is different but it always contains necessities. "We carry everything on supply missions from ammo, and food, to mail," White stated. Teamwork and long hours helped make the BSB more successful in their main sup-

port mission. Just like the rest of the units within the 1st BCT, Company A received the majority of their equipment upon transfer of responsibility. In doing so they adapted quickly and learned the new equipment and immediately started the process of examining it for improvement. "We are always looking to improve by refining or changing systems," White commented. The bulk of the equipment had a lot of wear and tear. The vehicles have been driven in a combat environment for nearly two years by prior units, and they needed some repairs and deep cleaning. "These vehicles have been through a lot of rough miles in

Iraq," White said. "We took the initiative of removing all the communication and air conditioning systems to change the wires and clean them." White stated that each logistics pack takes approximately 50 people to put it together and make it happen. Each mission requires the manpower to coordinate for the needed supplies, 10-20 trucks to haul and escort the supplies, and enough Soldiers to man all vehicles in the convoy. Once all supplies are loaded up and the battle drills are complete, the unit Chaplain recites a verse out of the Bible, says a small prayer, and follows it all up with his blessing for a safe mission while shaking the Soldiers' hands.

Ancient Mosque; New Rules?

By: Anita Powell
Stars and Stripes

FOB Warrior is also home to an unusual historical monument: a 300-year-old Turkoman mosque and cemetery sitting regally amid the base's nondescript trailers and warehouses.

The cemetery is the final resting place of Sultan Saqi, a distant descendant of the prophet Muhammad. Saqi was related to Imam Zainal Abdeed, who was related to the sons of Ali, who was Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law.

Both the bright green mosque and cemetery grounds are off-limits to soldiers, as per a theaterwide order that limits U.S. servicemembers' access to

mosques.

"We stay away from it to respect the cemetery," said Chaplain (Maj.) Clyde Scott.

But Scott says he wants to try to bring in a local imam to lead prayers in the mosque for the 16 Muslim soldiers in the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division.

"We've put in a request to Corps to get permission to allow Muslim soldiers to worship," he said. "The spirit of the rule should allow Muslim soldiers to go into the mosque. The loophole should be, if it's on a [forward operating base] and supervised by a local imam, why not?"



Photo By: Anita Powell
Stars and Stripes

A 300-year-old Turkoman Mosque on Forward Operating Base Warrior

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Bastogne Brigade Honors Fellow Comrades

Soldiers, Airmen, and Iraqi Security Forces stood together at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Warrior Friday, to recognize all who have served their countries past, present, and future.

"Today we celebrate the ending of a world changing event," said. Col. David Gray, Commanding Officer for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (AASLT). "Today, we remember the sacrifices of past military members and admit a new set of veterans into the annals of American history."

Leaders of the Bastogne Brigade made Veterans Day even more memorable by symbolically presenting Bastogne Brigade Soldiers with a combat patch in recognition of serving their country and fighting for freedom.

"You couldn't have a better day than Veterans Day to recognize Soldiers for serving their country," commented Command Sgt. Maj. Rory



Photo By: Spc. Barbara Ospina

Soldiers of the 1st BCT gather at a veterans day barbecue sharing the holiday and traditional grilled food with new comrades of the Iraqi Army.

Malloy, the Command Sgt. Maj. for the 1st BCT.

As the Soldiers placed combat patches on their shoulders, Gray presented the Airmen with a Bastogne Brigade coin in recognition of all the support they give the 1st BCT.

"Our Air Force brethren do not wear combat patches, and it was important to recognize their efforts," Malloy said. "By giving coins, we shared

an Army tradition that represents our unit's lineage and history, and they truly deserved it."

With Soldiers and Airmen standing with discipline on the parade field full, and the seats full of distin-

guished guests from the Iraqi Army and Police Forces the annual holiday celebration was complete.

"We wanted to show the Iraqi Soldiers that you can be honorable in your service to your country," Malloy said. "We wanted to show why we hold it so near and dear to our hearts to be an American, and want them to be just as proud to be an Iraqi."

Showing the Iraqi Security

Forces that the Bastogne Brigade stands for discipline, honor and country was only half of the day's events.

"The day's celebration provided the opportunity for us to share some of our culture with the Iraqi Security Forces," commented Malloy.

According to Malloy, the Iraqi's are always so kind to the American Soldiers.

"They invite us into their homes, their work, meetings, and events. At every function they always provide lunch, and share so much of their culture with us."

Families throughout the United States celebrate Veterans Day by having barbecues, so a good old fashioned barbecue was in order, winding the days celebration of remembrance.

"We can't bring them to the U.S., so we decided to bring a little bit of the U.S. to them," Malloy said. "We were able to give them a snapshot of the American culture."

Geese

geese deliver nasty nips to the legs and ankles of intruders.

Maj. David Shelly was attacked by the unit and lived to tell the tale. "They're all honk and no bite," he said. "I definitely got the better of that engagement."

The geese's time on the installation dates back at least a year, although officials could not say why they chose the area, where they are from or why they are here.

Soldiers play it safe by steering clear of the honk-happy unit. "Nobody here likes them," said Spc. Barbara Ospina. "They're very confident and cocky. It's like this is their territory and we're just borrowing it."

However, the foul fowls' time on base may be ending soon, she warned: "We've been thinking — goose sounds like a very good Thanksgiving dinner."

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