



Welcome to the
Motor Pool.
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Happy
Holidays!



101st BTB inducts
NCOs into Corps.
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LIFELINER **WEST**

"If you want it done, call the 101!"

Volume 2, No. 7 *Deployment Edition*

Q-WEST BASE COMPLEX, IRAQ

January 1, 2006



Photo by Sgt. Ashly N. Rice

Trainees battle in the pugil pit Dec. 8.

Q-West NCOA graduates BCT

By Sgt. Ashly N. Rice
Staff Reporter

Fifty-four trainees graduated from the Iraqi Basic Combat Training program in a ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Theater Dec. 16 here.

"The graduated class, 05-06, was the first class to end with all of its original soldiers who attended," said Sgt. Maj. Walter Murrell, Noncommissioned Officer Academy commandant, of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team from Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

Abdulaziz Ahmed Ali, the distinguished honor graduate, received a survival knife, a set of tactical gloves, a Spec Ops rigger belt, flashlight, knee pads and a gift from 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division, Iraqi army.

"I have high spirits," said Abdulaziz through an interpreter. "I am happy and proud of the good training from American instructors, because the U.S. Army has the best instructors."

The 30-day basic combat training program, taught by Soldiers from the 172nd SBCT and other units, covers 28 subject areas. These include physical fitness, personnel searches, first aid, marksmanship and enemy tactics.

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Ops set stage for TRV elections

By Sgt. Rachel A. Brune
Editor

From preparing security at polling sites to conducting combined operations in the Tigris River Valley, U.S. and Iraqi forces worked together to prepare the region for the Dec. 15 election.

In the days leading up to the election, 4th Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, known as Task Force Thunder, conducted a cordon-and-search combined operation with Iraqi army 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division.

The five-day mission, which concluded Dec. 9, netted five cell leaders of anti-Iraqi forces in the region of the village of Aitha.

"That's pretty significant – taking out five cell leaders in a week," said Lt. Col. Scott Wuestner, Task Force Thunder commander. "I don't know of anyone else who can claim that kind of success."

One of the most important aspects of the mission is the lead the Iraqi forces are starting to take when it comes to enforcing their own security, according to Sgt. 1st Class Steven Stites, 4-11th FA S-2 NCOIC, from Howell, Mich.

"We're starting to stand behind [the Iraqi forces] now," said Stites.

In addition to the cordon-and-search mission, Task Force Thunder teams patrolled villages and polling sites, providing security and dropping off supplies such as food and water, said Sgt. Jeffrey O'Dell, team leader, Battery C, 4-11th FA, from Martinsville, Va.

"It gives you a feeling you can't get in the civilian world, knowing you're actually making a difference," said O'Dell.

"We're just trying to stay focused on the mission," said Spc. Jason Laguatan, Battery C gunner, from Nanakuli, Hawaii. "I hope everything goes [well] for this country."

Outside a large warehouse situated on Q-West, some Iraqi soldiers

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Photo by Sgt. Rachel A. Brune

An Iraqi army patrol passes through the town of Aitha as Task Force Thunder and Iraqi forces conduct a combined cordon-and-search operation Dec. 9.



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Elections

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played an improvised game of volleyball with wooden planks for a net, while others guarded long rows of pallets containing various election materiel.

Achmed Fadal Ali provided direction to a mixed force of troops from 2nd Division, Iraqi army, private security personnel and a labor force of about 20 local nationals. About six feet tall, wearing a beat-up leather jacket, Ali is a security official for the provincial governor's office.

During the elections, Ali served the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, running the warehouse operations to guard and sort the materiel, which went to polling sites in the Tigris River Valley. After the elections, his team collected the materiel back to the warehouse.

The security situation for the December elections improved since the first free elections in January, according to Ali.

"It was quite a challenge last year," said Ali, through an interpreter. During those elections, the anti-Iraqi forces threatened Ali, listing his name in the marketplace in Mosul and hanging it in a mosque to name him as a collaborator with coalition forces.

The threats left Ali undeterred, he said. His hope was that the democratic elections would be the same as those in the United States.

"This era of democracy in Iraq is something new to regular citizens," said Ali through an interpreter. "I hope the new political parties will go by what they have sworn to do."

Ali also thanked coalition forces for their help in providing assistance to the election process, especially Sgt. 1st Class Jason Arneson, 4-11th battalion fire support NCO, who acted as the coalition forces representative.



Photo by Sgt. Rachel A. Brune

An Iraqi troop watches village children while maintaining a security position during an operation Dec. 9

Task Force Thunder was responsible for providing logistics and support to approximately 57 polling sites throughout the Tigris River Valley.

"My expectation is that in the near future [the Iraqis] will be able to do this on their own," said Arneson, who is from Chicago, Ill., in an e-mail interview. "This time, we tried to let them run the show."

Logistics units under the 101st Sustainment Brigade also worked behind-the-scenes to assist the Iraqi Army and Police to ensure the security and integrity of polling sites in the Iraq cities of Rabiah, Tal Afar, Sinjar, Qayyarah and Mosul.

The 109th Transportation Company, 71st Corps Support Battalion, traveled out to these sites to emplace almost 3,000 tall concrete barriers for security. After the elections concluded, the troops stayed to pick them up again.

TRV voters turn out in force to make their mark at the polls

By Sgt. 1st Class Jason Arneson
Staff Reporter

AL QAYYARAH, Iraq – The voters of Iraq turned out at the polls Dec. 15 to elect a permanent government.

The vote decided the make-up of the new 275-seat Iraqi National Assembly, which will hold office for the next four years.

Voters turned out early and in larger numbers than expected with polls opening at 8 a.m. Some sites ran out of ballots before noon.

By that time, more than 56,000 people had voted in the Tigris River Valley, the region surrounding Q-West.

Overall turnout was expected to crest the 70 percent mark of registered voters. With preliminary results from Baghdad still more than a week away, the initial enthusiasm over the vote was evident in the smiles of voters who showed off their ink-stained fingers.

This election marked a turn-around from previous elections, in that the local Sunni population came out in large numbers to vote.

The increased cooperation among the various groups was highlighted by a gathering of both Arab and Kurdish leaders in Makhmur, followed by a parade to celebrate the election.

Engineer team puts array of skills to work for QBC, TRV



Photo by Sgt. Ashly N. Rice

By Sgt. Ashly N. Rice
Staff Reporter

Armed with hard hats, interacting with local villages or inspecting the buildings of Q-West Base Complex, Soldiers of Facility Engineer Team 22 are happy to lend a helping hand.

FET Team 22 is a Reserve unit out of Fort Devens, Mass., comprised of 35 teams of seven personnel from different states across the United States. Two noncommissioned officers and five officers with expertise in environmental, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering use their skills to construct a better quality of life at Q-West and surrounding towns.

Located in what the team refers to as "the nicest building on post," Lt. Col. Dan Gregory, team commander, of Lowell, Mass., oversees the environmental, horizontal construction, electrical, utilities and vertical construction sections.

"[We] touch every piece of engineering on base when we do something. It has been enjoyable to be able to interact with local villages," said Gregory.

Since arriving in Q-West in July 2005, master planning for all logistics and support buildings serves is FET 22's main mission. The unit's services bring improvements to the area.

"The work is rewarding," said Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Stepp, of Harrisburg, Pa., FET 22 construction inspector.

"We are providing jobs for half a dozen contractors on base, upgrading skill levels [to] how things are done in this industry in the states," said Capt. Richard Long, of Sellersville, Pa., FET 22 utilities and vertical construction OIC.

"Environmental baseline studies are conducted through every building on base to ensure when we leave, nothing left behind is our fault, saving taxpayers potentially millions," said Gregory.

FET 22 reviews all construction on Q-West and developed construction codes based on international standards with the 557th Expeditionary Red Horse Squadron, a unit of Air Force engineers.

"[We] develop statements of work to

oversee the water tower, pumps and storage, [and] we're designing water storage lagoons for 9 million gallons of water for the base," said Long. "We oversee base infrastructure and fiber-optic installation, prime power, water and sewer systems."

Twice a month, FET 22 travels to Qayyarah, a town outside of the base where the Tigris River Pump Station is located. This pump station supplies local villages and the base with water.

During the utilities and vertical construction section visits, the engineers fix damage to the pumps and find and stop illegal taps into the water system.

"The biggest issue is the water situation between here and the pumping station," said Stepp.

The team looks forward to helping out, but not only in the field of engineering. Stacks of boxes with supplies and toys fill the team commander's office.

"Whoever needs help, come on over," said Gregory. "Anyone who wants to distribute boxes, come on by and grab some."

Staff Sgt. Gabriel Faulkner, of Blackfoot, Idaho, senior power plant operator of 249th Engineers explains water operations to Spc. Aaron Palmer, of Wells, Minn., truck driver, 109th Transportation Company, at the Tigris Pump Station in Qayyarah, Iraq.

NCOs cross into time-honored corps

By Sgt. Rachel Brune
Editor

The 101st Brigade Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, inducted noncommissioned officers from each of its subordinate units into the NCO Corps Dec. 16 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Theater here.

The ceremony included skits illustrating the "Warrior Ethos" and the "NCO Charge," or the responsibilities of NCOs to their subordinate Soldiers.

"Never compromise your integrity and always be the standard bearer," said keynote speaker Command Sgt. Maj. James Spencer, 71st Corps Support Battalion, giving advice to the NCOs, many of whom were recently promoted to the ranks of the Corps.

The 101st Airborne Division, under which the 101st Sust. Bde. falls at its home station of Fort Campbell, Ky., has a long history, as does the NCO Corps, said Spencer.

Although NCO Induction Ceremonies consist of different elements, each includes a moment when the NCOs must step across a line to take their places in the Corps, said Spencer. Later in the ceremony, Spencer helped present plaques and leadership books to the inductees who crossed that line.

"Our names are now among the long line of heroes who have served before



Photo by Sgt. Rachel A. Brune

NCOs of the 101st Brigade Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, stand before their fellow troops after induction into the NCO Corps.

us," said Spc. Kadija Kamara, Company B, 101st BTB, optical fabricator. "We are here in ... the fight against terror. We are here to give the Iraqi people a chance at a life filled with religious, personal and social freedoms."

Kamara, from Jersey City, N.J., was the 101st BTB Soldier of the Month for October 2005.

Sgt. Cynthia Taylor, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st

BTB mechanic, attained the rank of sergeant Dec. 1. She enlisted in the Army at the rank of private first class a little more than two years ago and is now on her first overseas deployment.

"It feels really good," said Taylor, who resides with her family in Oak Grove, Ky. "I feel honored and privileged to be inducted."

When asked if she had anything to say to her fellow inductees, Taylor said: "Now get back to work!"



Photo by Sgt. Ashly N. Rice

Students practice takedowns with an instructor during combatives.

BCT grads

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These skills and others are developed to assist the soldiers in peace- and wartime situations.

"[The Iraqi soldiers'] attitude improves after days like today," said Staff Sgt. Alvin Cates, from Livingston, Tenn., 4th Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, during a combatives class Dec. 8. A pugil class followed next day.

A sandpit, which Cates implemented, serves as the arena for combatives and pugil training. Techniques such as punching, kicking and the use of elbows are including in the training.

"It is a mixture of combatives, take downs and other hands-on fighting techniques, modified to help them understand and accomplish," said Cates. "They learn fast."

Soria group, coalition build better future

By Sgt. Ashly N. Rice
Staff Reporter

SORIA, Iraq – All of the focus of rebuilding Iraq is towards helping the country establish itself. Organizations such as Ava, meaning "to build" in Kurdish, are helping to build a better future for the children of Iraq.

The main goal that Ava strives for is the protection of children's rights. Sharim Saleh, a Kurdish woman who was born and raised in Iran, founded Ava in July 2005.

When Sharim moved to Iraq, she approached Capt. Loren Rodan, of Gates County, N.C., commander of 627th Movement Control Team, 27th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), about a project that focused on children's education, rights and future.

Rodan currently works in Habur Gate, Iraq, at the Convoy Operations Center.

Rodan and her fellow Center personnel created a Web site and brochure to inform surrounding towns and government officials about Ava and assisted the organization to buy a computer.

Nechervan Ahmed, governor of Duhok Province sponsored a fundraising dinner. American and Iraqi military members, American and Turkish contractors, local politicians, customs officials and others attended the fundraiser.

Ava provides books for school, assists poor families so their children can go to school and gives food, clothing and other items to families as well. Parenting seminars focusing on children's rights; education and workshops to help better their lives are also available.

Teachers receive training in discipline techniques and guidance to motivate children to want to learn.

Ava hopes to provide boys' and girls' clubs, orphanages and assistance for disabled children in the near future. Homes for handicapped individuals and the creation of women's groups are areas the group would like to explore as well.



Photo sent courtesy of Capt. Loren Rodan

Local children entertain at an Ava organization fundraising event Nov. 17.

Since the Lifeliner West visited the small Kurdish village of Soria, Iraq, residents of Soria with the assistance of various groups have made improvements and their efforts are paying off.

"The children of Soria are now able to attend school," said Rodan via e-mail. "The city of Zahko is providing a teacher for the renovated school, even though Soria does not fall directly under the city."

7th Corps Support Group Family Readiness Group, of Wiesbaden, Germany gave monetary donations and clothes. Titan Linguists, of the Titan Corporation in San Diego, Calif., provided a swing set and teeter-totter for the children.

Troops of 394th Operational Detachment Alpha (Air Force), Soldiers of 101st Sustainment Brigade, of Fort Campbell, Ky., and the Convoy Operations Center donated school supplies to the village.

Ismail Transportation Company, a local group, provided the school with desks. 394th ODA donated mattresses, chalk boards, water tanks and chairs.

Rodan's future plans include a kerosene heater for the school and the gravel for the two-mile dirt road to Soria to make traveling easier for the residents.

NCO Corps goes digital

A new Internet resource is now available to help Army noncommissioned officers develop as leaders and warriors.

NCO Net is a Web-based forum for NCOs to discuss issues concerning professional development, Soldier development, leadership and lessons learned, according to the Web site.

In addition, through posting on the various forums available, NCOs can connect to peers to solicit feedback to solve problems and face issues.

The Web site is still in the developmental stages, and the developers are seeking feedback on the site and its features. NCOs can view the site at: <https://nconet.bcks.army.mil>.

The site requires users to register to use all of the site capabilities. For more information, contact Joe Pearson: joe.c.pearson@us.army.mil or Neil Stenzel: neil.o.stenzel@us.army.mil.



Photo by 1st Lt. Michelle Menges

No more wobbly one!

Chief Warrant Officer (2) Regina S. Molano, 584th Maintenance Company, SSA Tech, gets a couple of cold ones in celebration of her promotion. The 584th, from Fort Campbell, Ky., is currently deployed to FOB Speicher under the 561st Corps Support Battalion in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom

TMC treats troops, QBC residents

Spc. Jeremy D. Crisp

Multinational Coalition – Iraq PAO

Whether it's a cough, a toothache or massive trauma, top-notch medical care for troops in Iraq is never far away.

Soldiers, airmen and non-military personnel stationed at Q-West Base Complex have to look no further than Building L37 to cure anything that ails.

"We provide level one and level two medical care for most anyone on the complex," said Maj. David S. Cobb, Troop Medical Clinic officer-in-charge and doctor from Company B, 101st Brigade Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, Fort Campbell, Ky. "If level three care is needed, it's just a 15-minute flight away to Mosul by [medical evacuation]."

The different levels are types of care available, explained Cobb.

Level one consists of doctors and medics and provides basic care ranging from stitches to minor surgeries. Level two offers different specialties and services, and level three consists of major surgeries.

"As a level two facility, we can provide X-rays and offer behavioral health, pharmacy and lab services," Cobb said.

Working in a deployed environment offers many challenges, but it enables the medics and doctors to get experience they wouldn't normally get back in the States.

"Medics stateside may not work in a hospital and be able to get hands-on patient and trauma experience as they do here," Cobb said. "Since we ... don't have an X-ray technician, two of our medics were able to cross-train to do X-ray. A lot of these experiences aren't offered to them stateside."

Not only do the medics gain experience in a deployed environment, the head doctor in the shop does as well. As a family practice doctor, Cobb sees things at the TMC that he wouldn't normally see at his practice at Madagan Army Medical Center in Ft. Lewis, Wash.

"If someone is in a car wreck stateside, they go to the emergency room, not the family practice doctor," he said. "Here, when something like that happens, that is something I may have to work with. We've seen gunshot wounds, cuts, breaks and various other things that a family practice doctor doesn't get to see."

Although taking care of injured troops is what the Soldier medics are tasked with, anyone on the complex will be seen in the case of an emergency.



Photo by Spc. Jeremy D. Crisp

Pfc. Karsten Johnstone, a medic with Company B, 101st Brigade Troops Battalion, takes an X-ray of the injured hand of Spc. Geof W. Mitcheltree, Nov. 16 at the Q-West Troop Medical Clinic. Mitcheltree, with the 828th Quartermaster Co., Greenville, Pa., injured his hand during vehicle maintenance.

"If anyone on the complex runs the risk of losing life, limb or eyesight, we will take care of them," Cobb said.

That includes civilians, third country and local nationals and the Iraqi army if the situation warrants it.

If a situation does arise, the troops are on call 24 hours to handle any situation.

"We have two medics on staff at night, and all of our sleeping areas are right next to the clinic," said Staff Sgt. Keith R. Gensamer, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the TMC. "If an emergency arises in the middle of the night, we are two minutes away."

The medics provide full ambulatory care to the complex as well, and whether it's a medical emergency or a simple toothache, the clinic can handle it.

Taking care of the latter is another group of specially-trained Soldiers.

The 502nd Dental Company from Fort Hood, Texas, offers comprehensive dental care to all military personnel on the complex. This includes teeth cleaning, extractions, crowns and basically any type of oral care a dentist might offer in the states.

For dental care, troops need to come in on a walk-in basis.

For sick call, the sign-in hours at the TMC are from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The phone number in case of emergencies is VOIP: 243-5137.

Leave It Better

By Tech Sgt. Sean E. Risner

1058th Gun Truck Detachment

FOB SPEICHER, Iraq — Personnel of the Air Force 1058th Gun Truck Detachment are more than willing to do their part in maintaining and improving their living facility.

Through teamwork and dedication, the airmen who call Building 2507 home have made many improvements to enhance their quality of life.

Members of the 557th Expeditionary Red Horse Squadron assisted with improvements to the 1058th facility as well. The Red Horse Team is made up of more than 200 Ohio and Pennsylvania Air National Guard engineers who travel all over theater building and improving facilities for all units in need.

The engineers include technicians from many specialties such as electricians, plumbers and carpenters. The improvements include upgrading three fully-functional latrines and showers and installing a totally new septic system, as well as upgrading the electrical wiring and replacing the breaker box in the building, ensuring a safe and stable power supply.

The team provided shelter and new fluorescent lighting over the armory, supply, and communications deck. Unit members use the deck area to repair and service weapons.

One of the key personnel required to accomplish all this work is Tech Sgt. Anthony Williams, unit mission support NCOIC, stationed at Bolling Air Force Base, Md. Williams is the point of contact for all matters concerning the living facility for 1058th personnel.

After planning out everything and receiving the supplies, the plumbers started demolishing the latrines and shower areas to start from scratch.

The carpenters began constructing a roof over the deck area. In a matter of days they completed the project.

"I was really amazed at how quickly they got the job done," said Staff Sgt. Randy Kukurlo, unit armorer, stationed at Creech Air Force Base, Nev.

"The sound of pounding nails and buzzing saws is a beautiful thing," said Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth Campbell, first sergeant, stationed at Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D.

The units that move into this building after the airmen leave will be very happy, said Campbell: "There aren't too many buildings with operational plumbing on the FOB."

Keep it rolling: HHC mechanics sustain the force

By Sgt. Patricia Tso

Brigade Multimedia Illustrator

Monday is the typical day for Soldiers in garrison to conduct weekly primary maintenance checks and services, or PMCS, to ensure their vehicles and equipments are functioning properly.

For mechanics of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st Sustainment Brigade, their mission and daily routine gives them a challenge while deployed at Q-West Base Complex in Iraq.

"We have over 200 vehicles and [pieces of] equipment to include vehicles, forklifts, generators, air conditioning units and trailers," said Staff Sgt. Ronald Malone, motor pool supervisor, from Russellville, Ala.

Malone is in charge of more than 30 Soldiers, who are spread out to accommodate the work load the mechanics face everyday. Some mechanics are responsible for maintenance at the

motor pool, and some ensure that the generators are operating to provide the power source needed.

A selected few play an important role on the convoy support team. The convoy support team provides security for the brigade commander and the 101st Brigade Troops Battalion commander when ground missions are scheduled.

Among the Soldiers at the motor pool, Spc. Alvaro Nino, an experienced mechanic from Miami, Fla., is training on the electronic technical manual, a program designed to find parts which need to be ordered when a vehicle is found to have a deficiency.

"I'm always learning something," said Nino.

Soldiers at the motor pool are often seen with their uniforms covered in dirt or drenched in grease.

"This week I gather oil, I dump the old oil and supply new oil," said Pfc. Sean Donnelly, who is from Buffalo,

N.Y. "Next week I will be ordering parts."

Other mechanics such as Spc. Cody Stafford, from Baton Rouge, La., and Pfc. Paul Molan from Chardon, Ohio, are utilities equipment repairers.

"I've been deployed before, and this is the first time I get to do my job," said Stafford. "I get to fix air conditioning units."

Stafford and Molan are responsible for ensuring the heating and air conditioning units in the brigade and battalion buildings are functional.

For generator mechanics at the motor pool, the primary job is to make certain the generators provide power for all communications within the 101st BTB.

Pfc. Axel Arriaga, a generator mechanic from Los Angeles, Calif., is eager to become more efficient in his skills.

"You have to know the equipment," said Arriaga.



Photo by Sgt. Patricia Tso

Pfc. Felix Cedano, HHC 101st Sustainment Brigade mechanic, from New York, N.Y., checks the oil on a Humvee during PMCS at the motor pool Dec. 19.



By Pfc. Rachel "Mo-town" Moore, 101st Sustainment Bde.

Artillerymen celebrate tradition in Iraq

Sgt. 1st Class Jason Arneson
4-11th FA Regiment

Army Combat Uniforms, Desert Camouflage Uniforms and even the distinctive desert pattern of the Iraqi army replaced dress blues and formal attire as members of 4th Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment celebrated their annual Saint Barbara's Day Ball Dec. 19 at the dining facility here.

Brig. Gen. Ali Atullah Mullah, Lt. Col. Ra'ad Naif Haroosh, and Lt. Col. Hogar Salahaddin Abdul, commanders, respectively of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division, entered the Honorable Order of St. Barbara for their work with the artillery battalions throughout the last two-and-a-half years.

All three commanders endured numerous attacks on themselves and their families while working to defeat the anti-Iraqi forces.

After the posting of the colors and an invocation Lt. Col. Scott G. Wuestner, commander, 4-11th FA, opened the ceremony by asking all present "to charge their glasses" and initiating the traditional toasts.

This time, there was no wine present due to General Order No. 1, so Welch's



Photo courtesy of 4-11th FA Regiment.

Maj. Sean Bateman, 4-11th Field Artillery Regiment operations officer, unveils the punch bowl.

grape juice had to do.

After the toasts, guest speaker Brig. Gen. Kevin J. Bergner, deputy commander, Task Force Freedom addressed all present. He commented on how many St. Barbara's ceremonies abroad and in a war zone he has attended throughout his career.

After Bergner's remarks, Wuestner asked all first-time attendees to raise their right hand and swear to secrecy that they would not reveal the contents of the Artillery Punch. The traditional crystal punch bowl itself was replaced by one of Kellogg, Brown & Root's finest toilet bowls.

After the mixing of the punch, various Artillery-

men volunteered to test it. The final help came from Ali, who helped certify it as ready with the addition of a key Iraqi element, chai tea.

All new inductees received a glass of punch to signify their initiation into the brotherhood of Stonehurlers, Archers, Catapulters, Rocketeers and Gunners.

When asked about the experience of being inducted by their American counterparts, all the Iraqi Commanders replied they were honored to be included in this unique field artillery tradition.

The ceremony concluded with the retiring of the colors.

Safety: Mental Discipline Keeps You Safe

By James Fraser Jennings
Brigade Safety Officer

Anyone out there really want to be in Iraq right now?

How 'bout in Iraq during the holidays? Anyone?

Didn't think so. And I'll bet your mind is finding other places to be as well, such as at home with the family. (And "home" is not a FOB!)

It might be with friends back in your hometown, or relaxing around a Christmas tree.

In fact, mental health professionals say that some daydreaming is healthy. However, you can't mentally leave Iraq all the time.

We've still got a job to do. There are still people outside the wire who want to kill us.

Continual vigilance is not an option, it's a mission-critical task. In order to maximize your survivability and that of your fellow Soldiers, you must leave the yearning for home behind when you go to work.

To quote a line from the classic movie "Cool Hand Luke:" "You've got to get your mind right."

Work might be a patrol, cordon and search, or convoy escort. It might be fixing vehicles in the motor pool. Or it could be an administrative function in



an office.

One thing is certain: You must exercise mental discipline during the holiday season to focus on the task at hand. If you take a daydream break while performing a task, you become a hazard to yourself and your fellow Soldiers.



Chaplain's Corner

By Capt. Albert Vasquez
Chaplain

A Christmas Story

Once upon a time in the year 1920, in the countryside of West Virginia, a man died leaving a wife and three children: a boy 10 years old and two girls, ages eight and six. The family, being a lower- to middle-income family, had nothing to depend on.

The boy felt, at the young age of 10, that he must be the man, and stand in behalf of his father who died.

The boy planted and sold strawberries door to door in his neighborhood and gave his earnings to his mother. He worked at his entrepreneurial task on the weekends and went to school weekdays.

One day in December, a nice day for business, the boy had a good income. It was already dark and freezing, when he was on his way home. The boy felt so tired, cold and hungry that night.

Thinking that he still had one more mile to walk, he decided to rest awhile outside a nearby house. The lady who owned the house, took notice of the boy outside and opened the door to welcome him saying, "Boy! You look so awful. Please come inside and stay near the fire to warm yourself."

The lady then offered the boy one glass of warm milk.

The boy felt so relieved not only from cold because of the fire, not only from hunger because of the milk, but most especially by the warm welcome of that lady. The boy went home that night, his

heart full with joy and amazement.

The boy continued his business eight years. He did not know his mother saved all his income so he could go to college when the time came.

Ten more years passed, and a certain lady in her mid-60s lost consciousness inside a grocery store. She was brought to the hospital in time, where she received an emergency heart operation.

The surgery was so successful that after three days, the lady felt like nothing had happened to her at all.

However, the lady began to worry, knowing her hospital bill amounted to thousands of dollars.

"Where in the world can I find that huge amount of money?" she asked.

On that day, the doctor who performed the surgery came to visit her.

"Lady! You look so awful," said the doctor. "Are you not happy that your heart is now completely back to normal?"

"I am worried because I have no means to pay my hospital bill," said the lady.

The doctor said: "By no means must you worry, because by one glass of milk you already paid in full!"

-Author Unknown

We receive God's gift of love through Jesus. We do not deserve it, but this gift is so precious that we cannot do without it.

May you continue to choose the path of His love. Merry Christmas to all the Soldiers!



The night before...

Sgt. Maj. Marty Mieras
71st Corps Support Battalion S-3
Hometown: Grand Rapids, Michigan

T'was the night before Christmas and all through the land, not a creature was stirring through the silent, blowing sand.



As I start to get ready, with a pistol on my hip, the convoy prepares for a long evening trip. The word of the day is "Christmas" you see, but for us on this night, no presents or glee. Our stockings are hung by the chimney at home, mine wrapped with a yellow ribbon, looking so alone. From the rear of the convoy there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my seat to see what was the matter. As I reached for the door, I paused to reflect, on a hometown Christmas I had come to expect. No frosted panes, no men made of snow, no homes decorated with lights all a-glow. Instead of trips to the store for dinner items forgot, the Army now serves up our chow and what not. No hand-carved turkey, no hot pumpkin pie, no homemade goodies stacked to the sky. Christmas at home with its twelve shopping days, lights line the streets for all to amaze. These are some things that run through my head, replacing this Christmas Eve's feelings of dread. My convoy waits as my mind reminisces, mistletoe, eggnog and Mom's hugs and kisses. We all volunteered to support and defend, and to serve our nation to the very end. Our journey brought us here, to a nation oppressed, away from those held dear, with freedom our quest. So our Christmas is different in a land far away, our family, friends, and loved ones pray for us this day. They pray for our return as they sit down to eat, while we work and wait to hear "mission complete." The Soldiers of the convoy were huddled in the rear, silently waiting as I wandered near. As we knelt in the sand to pray and give thanks, all of us equal regardless of rank, We too give thanks on this Christmas day, each of us in our own special way. Then we climbed back on the trucks with a mission to do, the Commander nodded his head, our mission we knew. And I heard him whisper as we rode out of sight, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a safe night!"

Eagle XMas *Holiday Wishes from the Top*

Originally published in the "Fort Campbell Courier"

Dear family and friends of the 101st Airborne Division, on behalf of all the Screaming Eagles in Iraq, we would like to wish each of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Throughout our history, the men and women of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) have spent many holidays far from loved ones, serving to defend the ideals of freedom and liberty we hold so dear. Like the Screaming Eagles who spent the historical Christmas of 1944 at the crossroads of Bastogne, your Screaming Eagles are making history and will forever be remembered for the role they played in creating a stable environment and facilitating the first democratic government in Iraq's history.

While it's never easy to be away from your loved ones, your sacrifice comes at a critical time in our history. America and the people of Iraq are grateful for your tremendous sacrifice and you should be justifiably proud of your Screaming Eagles. We are truly grateful for your support and service. As you celebrate this holiday season, know that our thoughts are with you.

We wish you and your families a joyous and safe holiday season, and a Happy New Year.

Maj. Gen. Thomas R. Turner, 101st Airborne Division commander

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe, Division command sergeant major

Hometown supporters send holiday gifts

A Prince George, Va., couple adopted all 44 single Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st Sustainment Brigade, for Christmas.

Butch and Carolyn Sanford mailed individual packages of treats, as well as larger packages with decorations and other holiday surprises to make sure each Soldier received something from home.

The Sanfords met Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hemphill, operations NCO, when he was

leading a child safety seat clinic and mentioned he would soon deploy, according to Carolyn Sanford. They approached him and asked if there was something they could do for Soldiers in Iraq.

"Time and time again, [the Sanfords] have sent care packages over for Soldiers they don't even know," said Hemphill, who called the Sanfords "great Americans."

"We are thinking and praying for your safe return," said Carolyn Sanford.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Step Aerobics 2000 Checkers Tourney 2000	3 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 8-Ball Tourney 2000 Open Court Basketball	4 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Guitar Lessons 2000 Step Aerobics 2000	5 Domino Tourney 2000 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Open Court Volleyball	6 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Texas Hold 'Em 2000 Step Aerobics 2000	7 Step Aerobics 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Flea Market 0800-1600 Open Court Dodgeball Hip Hop Night 2100
8 3-Point Shoot Out 1800 MOVIE MARATHON QBC Unplugged Coffeehouse 2000	9 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Step Aerobics 2000 BB League 1900 Chess Tourney 2000	10 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Madden Tourney 1900 Acting Class 2000 Open Court Basketball	11 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Salsa Lessons 1900 Guitar Lessons 2000 Step Aerobics 2000 BB League 1900	12 Spades Tournament 2000 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Open Court Volleyball	13 Abs & Conditioning 0530 BB League 1900 Texas Hold 'Em 2000 Step Aerobics 2000	14 Noche Caliente 2100 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Flea Market 0800-1600 Step Aerobics 2000 Open Court Dodgeball
15 Free Throw Contest 1800 MOVIE MARATHON QBC Unplugged Coffeehouse 2000	16 Crickett Darts Tourney 1900 Abs & Conditioning 0530 BB League 1900 Step Aerobics 2000	17 Domino Tourney 2000 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Acting Class 2000 Open Court Basketball	18 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Salsa Lessons 1900 Guitar Lessons 2000 BB League 1900 Bullseye Billiards 2000 Step Aerobics 2000	19 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Open Court Volleyball 9 Ball Tourney 2000	20 Abs & Conditioning 0530 BB League 1900 Texas Hold 'Em 2000 Step Aerobics 2000	21 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Step Aerobics 2000 Flea Market 0800-1600 Country Night 2100 Open Court Dodgeball
22 Aerobics Marathon 1200 MOVIE MARATHON QBC Unplugged Coffeehouse 2000 Bowling Contest 1900	23 Ping Pong Tourney 1900 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Step Aerobics 2000 BB League 1900 Salsa Lessons 1900	24 Spades Tourney 2000 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Acting Class 2000 Open Court Basketball	25 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Salsa Lessons 1900 Guitar Lessons 2000 BB League 1900 Step Aerobics 2000	26 Photo, Poetry, Art Contest Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 8-Ball Tourney 2000 Open Court Volleyball	27 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Texas Hold 'Em 2000 Step Aerobics 2000 BB League 1900	28 Karaoke Night 2100 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Flea Market 0800-1600 Step Aerobics 2000 Open Court Dodgeball
29 BENCH PRESS COMPETITION 1800 MOVIE MARATHON QBC Unplugged Coffeehouse 2000 **All open court games: 1900-2300**	30 Putting Contest 1900 Abs & Conditioning 0530 Salsa Lessons 1900 BB League 1900 Step Aerobics 2000	31 Halo 2 Tourney 2000 Abs & Glutes 1800 & 2000 Yoga/Pilates 1900 Spinning Class 2000 Acting Class 2000 Open Court Basketball Happy New Year from Q-West Base Complex, Iraq!	<h1>January MWR</h1> 			



Q-West Worship

Prayer, Service, Study

Worship Service	Day	Hour	Chapel
Catholic Mass	Sat	1800	Oasis
	Sun	0700	Oasis
Contemporary Protestant	Sun	1100	Oasis
Inspirational Gospel	Sun	0900	MWR
Lutheran	Sun	0930	Oasis
Charismatic Evangelical	Sun	0800	Oasis
Contemporary Protestant	Sun	1800	Oasis
Latter Day Saints	Sun	1900	Oasis
Prayer Services	Day	Hour	Location
Noon Prayers (Communion on Wednesday)	M Sat	Noon	Oasis
Prayer Warriors	M Sat	0600	MWR
Islamic	Contact your unit chaplain.		

COB Q-West Unit Ministry Teams

Unit	Chaplain	Assistant
101st SBDE	CH Turner	SSG Jackson
101st BTB	CH Mosteller	PFC Patton
4-11th FA	CH Dabek	SGT Shaw
2-101 AVN	CH Dillard	SPC Garrett
Catholic	CH Vasquez	SGT Ugarte
1-10 AVN	CH Ball	PV2 Alvarado
71st CSB	CH Gesch	PFC Boatright
3-13 FAMLRS	CH Hart	SPC Gore
577th ERHS	CH Moermond	



IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT
COB Q-West (101st SBDE TOC): 318-243-5777

Q-West council addresses post policy

By Sgt. Ashly N. Rice
Staff Reporter

New plans to increase safety awareness, lost and stolen items as well as reinforcement and reminders of established containerized housing unit, or CHU, policies were the main topics on the agenda for the Mayor Cell meeting Dec. 21.

All Soldiers need to stay vigilant about negligent discharge. The Mayor Cell believes that moving the sign displaying the number of days since the last negligent discharge over the clearing barrels will help keep the thought foremost in Soldiers' minds.

Soldiers need to utilize the buddy system when walking around Q-West at night. A reflective belt, a flashlight or both must be carried or worn when moving around post during hours of low visibility.

Speeding is a recurring problem on post. The posted maximum speed limit is 35 miles per hour. Other areas are posted at lower speeds.

If Soldiers speed in the fuel farm, they will be turned around.

Kevlars and body armor continue to be stolen from vehicles that are presumably locked. Do not keep kevlar and interceptor body armor in vehicles. Ensure that Soldiers have someone

watching their gear at all times.

If lost items are found, they should be turned into the Mayor Cell and not to BDOC. Report lost sensitive items to the BDOC.

Soldiers must ensure only non-hazardous items are placed in the trash pit. Chemicals and ammunition do not belong in the pit.

For units requesting CHUs for their Soldiers, a memorandum must be turned into housing and the Mayor Cell. The memorandum must contain the total number of Soldiers, rank and gender. Keys will not be passed between outgoing and incoming Soldiers and units.

Topics also on the meeting agenda:

Please help keep the phone center and CHU areas clear of debris.

Soldiers who lose their keys and request to have a new one cut must have a new key memorandum signed by the first sergeant and commander.

Units with Non-tactical vehicles, or NTVs, are to give the Vehicle Identification Numbers, or VINs, to the Mayor Cell for accountability.

If one is trying to sell items, bring a list to the Mayor Cell and it will be posted for others to see.

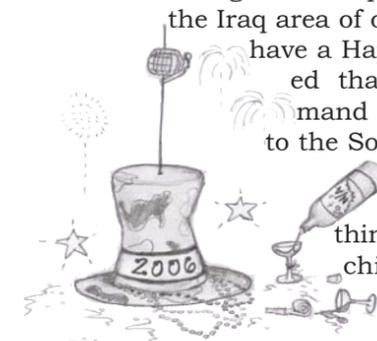
Got News? Get in touch with
the Lifeliner West!

Contact:
rachel.brune@us.army.mil
for your 15 minutes of fame.

FRAGO 060101: Have a Happy New Year!

In a late-breaking communique from 101st Sustainment Brigade headquarters, all Soldiers within the Iraq area of operations are requested to have a Happy New Year. It is expected that each subordinate command will disseminate this order to the Soldiers within the unit.

In case partying with the near beer is not your thing, have a handful of corn chips, call the family and hang in there for the "Mission Complete."



OFF THE WIRE: News from the American Forces Press Service

Army chef receives Bronze Star for courage under fire

Army News Service

Chief Warrant Officer 3 David J. Longstaff, manager of the U.S. Army culinary team, was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor Dec. 16 for rescuing five Soldiers pinned down in an ambush.

Longstaff was serving as Division Support Command food service technician for the 1st Armored Division, when he went on a procurement mission in the Al Rasheed district of Baghdad on Aug. 7, 2003.

It was early afternoon with temperatures reaching 113 degrees Fahrenheit. During his first five months in Iraq, Longstaff had participated in more than 150 convoys into Baghdad. This particular mission had proceeded as normal, but while driving through a shopping district along the route back to camp, he spotted a burning Humvee in the center medium.

"The Humvee was hit by an RPG and an ambush was in progress," said Longstaff. "We just happened to be

coming down the road, so we got in there and supported them."

Longstaff's convoy included two Humvees and a 5-ton truck. Longstaff ordered two vehicles to secure the rear as the other vehicle, driven by Sgt. 1st Class Richard Bryant, 1st Armored Division, proceeded to assist the five ambushed Soldiers trapped behind a civilian vehicle.

Longstaff provided covering fire toward a building where most of the incoming rounds were shot from. With hostile fire coming from buildings on the north and south sides of the street, he continued engaging the enemy with suppressive fire for 10 minutes, and helped evacuate the casualties away from the area.

"I stayed behind our Humvee, walking as we maneuvered across the street," said Longstaff. "Once we laid down suppressive fire, they were able to run across the two sections of the street and get back into their area."

Longstaff also engaged enemy fire from the rear flank with 2nd Lt. Juan Florez, assistant DISCOM S-4.

Longstaff's quick reaction to the situation allowed the ambushed Soldiers to move out of the kill zone without further injury, according to Bryant. Longstaff volunteered as rear security on the convoy out of the area and the injured Soldiers were evacuated for medical treatment. Longstaff's team had no injuries.

"His actions are nothing short of heroic and are a true testament of his technical and tactical expertise," said Bryant.

"I was intrigued that as a cook, I found myself in the middle of Baghdad taking fire," said Longstaff. "It just goes to show what you can do when put into any situation. So you should just be prepared."

"Regardless of where you compete in the world of chefs," Longstaff said, "we are warriors first, and that's important."

It's X-Mas Time!



Photo by Sgt. Rachel A. Brune

101st Brigade Troops Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade staff serve up dessert on Christmas at the Q-West Dining Facility.



Photo by Spc. Wayne D. Haley 133rd MPAD

Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen D. Blake, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, sings "Sweet Home Alabama" at the 626th's Christmas party.



AMERICAN FORCES INFORMATION SERVICE

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Alabama grandmother likes helping Iraqi people attain better life

By Norris Jones

Army Corp of Engineers

BAGHDAD (Army News Service, Nov. 29, 2005) --

Although she qualified for full retirement in October with nearly a quarter-century of government service, Dorothy Ivey opted for duty in Iraq.

She serves as a Construction Representative at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Gulf Region Central's remote Al Asad office, west of Baghdad. She arrived in September on six-month orders.

"I'm just not the retiree-type person right now," the grandmother of three says. "My husband is retired and he's great at it. I'm sure it's nice, but I really don't intend to do it anytime soon."

Keeping track of everything

Prior to deploying to Iraq, Ivey worked in the USACE Latin America Area Office, in Mobile, Ala., inputting data in both the Resident Management System and the financial management system on construction projects the office oversees.

She is involved in similar work in Al Asad keeping track of construction progress on schools, medical clinics, and a hospital benefiting the Iraqi people there.

She is also the USACE representative at several construction sites on the base.

Ivey believes in the Iraq mission. "I think these people wanted freedom and what we're doing is helping provide that," says Ivey. "Some never had a say in the direction their country was taking.

Considering the recent vote on the constitution, now they do. Can you imagine living without having these rights? I definitely wanted to get involved and do my share."

Much family left behind

She says her family is somewhat concerned about where she is working but very supportive. And it's her family she misses most, including her husband Bill, their three adult sons, and especially her grandchildren – a 12-year-old granddaughter and a 10-year-old and six-year-old grandson.

Ivey works on the second largest air base in Iraq. "I'm so proud of seeing our troops and admire every one of them for what they're doing and the courage they show every day as they head out the gate. They've got a great attitude."

Ivey knows something about living overseas in general and the Middle East in particular. She lived in Iran from 1974-75 and worked in Honduras from 2000-2001.

She says the one difference between those places and her current assignment is that she never had to fear an incoming mortar round. She also finds herself being cautious when she's driving around.

"I try to stay in someone else's tire tracks when I'm on a dusty road," said Ivey. "I think about the possibility of improvised explosive devices and I believe it's a good idea to be careful."

She says she can see herself returning for another tour in Iraq after she completes this one. "I would-



Construction Representative Dorothy Ivey.

n't hesitate," says Ivey.

One of Ivey's favorite activities with the Al Asad staff is Friday evening's "luau" when they grill hamburgers and hot dogs, watch a movie, and enjoy some camaraderie.

"Our Officer in Charge is Navy Lt. Cmdr. Nickolas Florez, whose last duty station was Hawaii," said Ivey. "It brings a touch of home and offers a great time to relax and enjoy."

Editor's note:

Norris Jones serves with the Gulf Region Central District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.