



SCIMITAR

MNF-I's Cutting Edge



Vol. 4, No. 4

Baghdad, Iraq

Jan. 27, 2006



U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate Airman Apprentice Nathan Laird

Back from the Danger Zone: An F-14 Tomcat prepares to make a landing on the flight deck aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt. The Roosevelt is underway on a regularly scheduled deployment conducting maritime security operations in the Persian Gulf.

V Corps takes over

Story by Cpl. Laura Ruscio
Multi-National Corps - Iraq

BAGHDAD — Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli accepted authority as the commander of the Multi-National Corps - Iraq from Lt. Gen. John R. Vines in a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Victory last week.

Vines served as the commanding general of the XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, N.C. before replacing Lt. Gen. Thomas Metz as the MNC-I commander in 2005.

Vines will return to his previous position as commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg.

Chiarelli comes to the MNC-I from his position as the Task Force Victory commander in Heidelberg, Germany.

During the ceremony, Gen. George W. Casey, commanding general, Multi-National Forces - Iraq commented on the changes in Iraq during Vines' command of the MNC-I.

"It's been a pretty amazing year for the multinational corps," said Casey. "If you think about where you were and what you were thinking about Iraq on the 19th of

January last year, I think you'll admit that the prospects of completing three national polls and building the security forces to well over 200,000 might have looked dim to you."

"But the fact of the matter is, over the course of 2005, the people of Iraq have had three national polls," he added. "And in each case, the participation has gotten greater and violence got lower."

See TOA, Page 2

TOA

from Page 1

“I attribute that, in large measure, to the spirit of teamwork and partnership between the multinational corps, multinational force, the Iraqi Security Force and the government of Iraq,” said Casey.

“To the departing Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines of the XVIII Airborne Corps - well done.”

Casey welcomed the incoming MNC-I commander and expressed his gratitude to the families of the servicemembers who were a part of the MNC-I for the past year.

“My thanks to the families of the multinational corps,” said Casey. “We couldn’t do what we do here, without your support and we thank you for your daily sacrifices in our behalf.”

“The year 2005 was a historic time in an ancient land,” said Vines during his farewell speech. “Although history is ancient here, a new history began in 2005 as Iraq chose its own government, wrote its own constitution and decided who would lead it into a new era.”

Vines also addressed the recently arrived troops who will replace the XVIII Airborne Corps.

“We will return to friends, family and loved ones,” said Vines.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Mark B. Matthews

A transfer of authority ceremony was held at the Al-Faw Palace at Camp Victory as the incoming V Corps took over for the outgoing XVIII Airborne Corps last week.

“But we will never forget you. We will never forget Iraq. We will never forget what has happened here and we will say a prayer for you, those of us that pray. We will say a prayer for your safety, peace, and success because much rides on this.”

According to Chiarelli, the transfer of authority demonstrates the commitment of the United States to our Coalition allies and to the people of Iraq as we continue to partner in every aspect and every respect of this historic mission to achieve a free,

democratic and secure Iraq.

“My Soldiers and I are honored to serve shoulder-to-shoulder with you in history in a historic land,” he added.

“In the months ahead, you will find that our Soldiers of the Victory Corps are disciplined, well trained and committed to continue the excellent work done by Lt. Gen. Vines and the Soldiers of the XVIII Airborne Corps,” said Chiarelli.

“Never again will the forces of terror and tyranny be permitted to rule in this great country.”



U.S. Army photo by Pfc Sean C. Finch

Gen. George W. Casey, right, passes the MNC-I guidon to Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli.

Are you ready for the Super Bowl?

With Super Bowl right around the corner, Armed Forces Network wants to make sure servicemembers are ready.

Televisions do not magically receive the AFN signal — satellite encryption, a decoder and people make it happen.

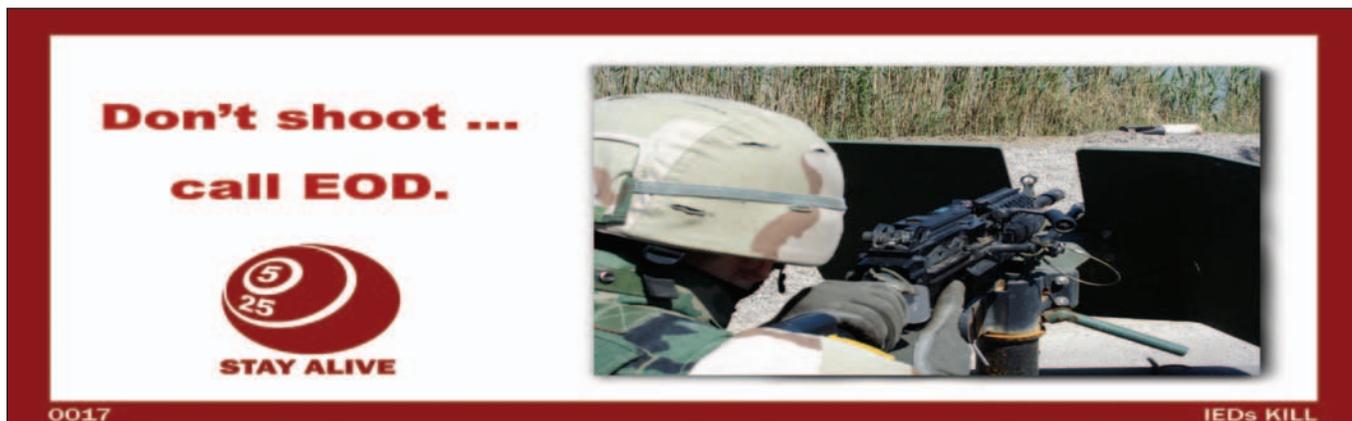
The primary protection of the AFN signal is the online decoder registration process that uses the TID and UA numbers on the back of each decoder. However, that registration doesn't last forever. If you are not sure or you've lost your paperwork, go to www.pvconnect.net and update the registration from any computer with Internet access. Only decoder owners, unit decoder managers and the military exchanges (leased equipment only) are allowed to update or register decoders.

For fast service, ensure that you enter your information correctly or your AFN service may not come back on within 24 hours. Decoders with an expired registration will be randomly turned off without notice once the registration passes due.

Questions? Contact the helpdesk anytime at DSN 312 348-1339 or Commercial 951-413-2339. Have your TID and UA numbers from the back of the decoder available. They can also be reached via e-mail at technologist@dodmedia.osd.mil

Top 10 reasons your decoder won't work after registration:

- 10) You didn't use a government e-mail address — e-mail decoders@hq.afis.osd.mil with a scanned version of your ID if you are a military retiree.
- 9) You selected the wrong “decoder category” — “individual purchase” is not the same as “leased.”
- 8) You did not provide a valid APO mailing address.
- 7) You are not an authorized viewer.
- 6) You entered your government e-mail address incorrectly.
- 5) The previous owner reported his decoder as lost or broken — **KEEP YOUR STORE RECEIPT.**
- 4) The phone number you entered is not valid.
- 3) You entered the wrong TID or UA numbers.
- 2) You are rejected twice after not providing information required — now you've raised suspicion.
- 1) You forgot to turn the power on!



PERSPECTIVES

Mind games at the cyber perimeter

Submitted by the Army Office of Information, Assurance and Compliance

Ever since you were a kid people have tried to get information out of you using many different techniques. Below are a few examples:

Forceful: Tell me or I'll hit you so hard your dog will die!

Subtle: Of course if you don't let me in, Mom might find out about that broken glass.

Emotional: That's OK Billy. Why should a mother know about her son's life, what with my high blood pressure and all?

Threatening: OK Soldier, don't give me password access to your computer. But if the major finds out you're not in compliance you'll be pulling guard duty outside of Mosul for the rest of your life.

The technique used in this month's On Cyber Patrol cartoon is common and surprisingly effective. When faced with the threat of being blamed for something or facing the anger of a superior, many people, both military and civilian, will break or bend rules to avoid blame or perceived punishment. It's often a quick decision based on an emotional reaction to staying out of trouble. What the person trying to gain access is counting on is that the victim will not take the time to think down the road to the potential damage and loss that could result from allowing a breach of security.

It's all about gaining access to information or ways of obtaining information. Though it seems easy to spot, too many people — both military and civilian — give others access to

proprietary information because of simple, yet effective, social engineering techniques. Trying the technique depicted in the graphic is just the tip of the iceberg.

Other techniques include using official looking or sounding e-mails or other communications to obtain secure information.

This technique, called phishing, is just another way enemy forces and common criminals use our fears against us.

Using social engineering is an important element in our daily lives. It is part of the convincing process. It is part of raising children. What it should not do is break down a Soldier's duty to protect critical military resources, information and lives.

Never allow unauthorized access to any computer or communication equipment. No matter what you are told, the threat to you and your fellow Soldiers for allowing unauthorized access far outweighs the risk of what is perceived to be the consequence of not divulging that information. Ensure that all personnel allowed access fully meet the clearly defined access protocols as stated in AR 25-2. Don't allow would be saboteurs to convince you that you will be held responsible for negative results if you refuse them access.

This isn't a matter of memorizing regulations. It is a matter of common sense. If you have responsibility to secure something, secure it. It's the same as standing guard at a perimeter.

Even the most innocent-seeming breach of security can result in significant damage, disruption and potential loss of life.



Correction

There was an error of attribution in the Jan. 20 Scimitar. A story entitled "The Iraqi Police Force celebrates 84th year" was written by Senior Airman Mark Woodbury of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq.



Chickenman!
The Most Fantastic Crimefighter the World Has Ever Known...
Sunday mornings @ 8:30 on 107.7 FM
Freedom Radio AFN-Iraq



Scimitar Pulse

Who do you prefer, Gilligan or the Professor?

"The Professor, absolutely. He was hot! He liked to experiment."



Renee Favors
Multi-National Corps - Iraq
Morale Welfare & Recreation
Montgomery, Ala.



"Gilligan. Just for the person that he is."

Airman 1st Class Darcy McMaster
557th Red Horse Squadron
Cheyenne, Wyo.

"The Professor, because he seemed different, unique. He has some hidden interests."



Staff Sgt. Carolyn Williams
HHC 101st Sustainment Brigade
Bennettsville, S.C.



"Gilligan."

Sgt. Denise Warner
828th Quartermaster Company,
Altoona, Pa.

"Gilligan. He was funny. The Professor couldn't be that smart if he couldn't get them off that island."



1st Lt. Maria Quinn
153rd Field Artillery Brigade
Mesa, Ariz.

Thanks to the 101st Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Office for their work on this week's Pulse



MNF-I Commanding General
Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

MNF-I PAO
Col. Dewey G. Ford

Combined Press Information Center Director
Lt. Col. Barry A. Johnson
barry.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information Chief
Capt. Bradford E. Leighton
bradford.leighton@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information NCOIC
Sgt. Jeffrey M. Lowry
jeff.lowry@iraq.centcom.mil

Editor.....Sgt. Jeffrey M. Lowry
jeff.lowry@iraq.centcom.mil

Assistant Editor.....Spc. Rick L. Rzepka
richard.rzepka@iraq.centcom.mil

Staff.....Spc. David J. Claffey
david.claffey@iraq.centcom.mil

The Scimitar is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents are not the official views of the U.S. Government or DoD.
The editorial content is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the Multi-National Force - Iraq. Stars and Stripes newspaper is not affiliated with MNF-I and acts only as a distributing source for the Scimitar. Questions and comments should be directed to the editor at scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil.

Scimitar welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from readers. Send submissions to scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil

We reserve the right to edit for propriety, clarity and space.

The Scimitar can also be viewed on the Web at http://www.mnf-iraq.com/publications_theater.htm

Iraq ripe for democracy

December parliamentary election results released, turnout strong

Story by Spc. Rick Rzepka
Scimitar Assistant Editor

BAGHDAD — The seeds of democracy have begun to sprout here as the results for the Dec. 15 Parliamentary election were announced Jan. 19.

Voter participation for the election turned out to be more robust than previously thought.

Early reports indicated that around 70 percent of eligible Iraqis voted, while official numbers show that the total number of Iraqi voters was about 12.2 million or 77 percent. Almost 4 million more Iraqis voted in the December election than in the referendum vote in January — an increase of 20 percent.

In certain areas of Iraq, the increase in voter participation was even more pronounced.

For example, more than 579,000 Iraqis in Al Anbar governate voted in December compared to only 13,000 in January. That amounts to a more than 4,000 percent increase in voter turnout.

In the Ninewa province there was more than a 350 percent increase in votes cast.

This rise in total voter participation can be credited to the

enhancing of the Iraqi Security Forces and hard work of Coalition servicemembers whose blood and sweat was necessary to allow the seeds of democracy to flourish here, said Gen. George W. Casey, MNF-I commanding general.

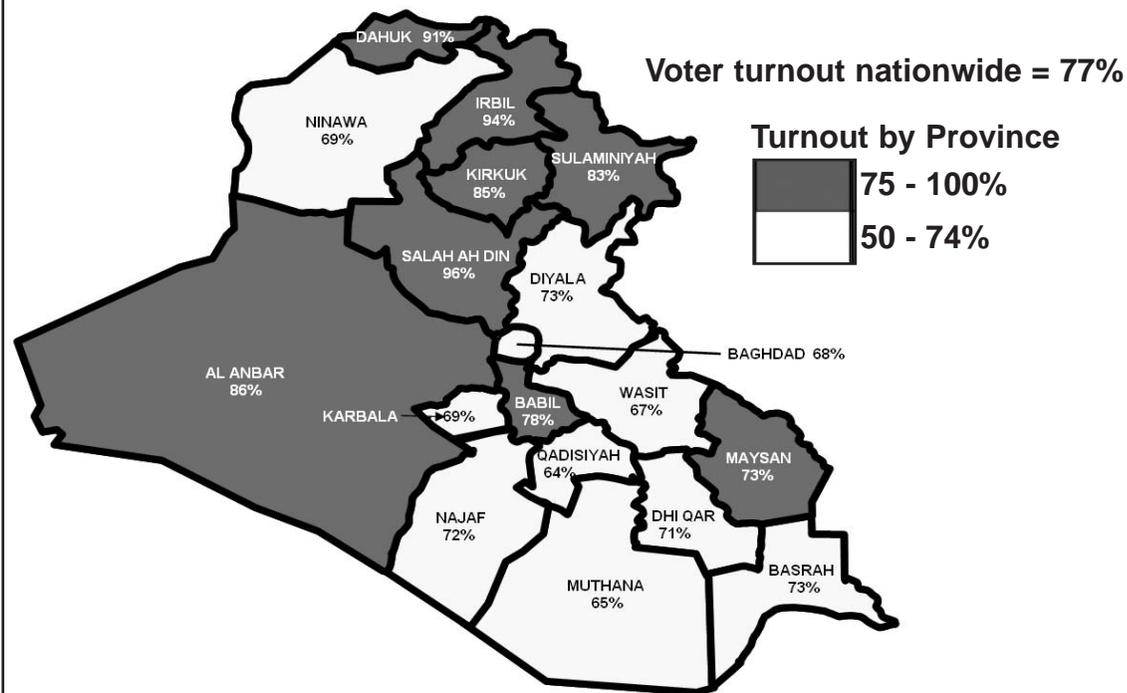
The success of the polls and the decrease in violence during the election would have not been possible without the contribution of Multi-National Force - Iraq, said Casey. The success of the elections was a combination of planning by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior and the work of Soldiers and leaders at the provincial level, he said.

Military operations in the Euphrates river valley were especially helpful in providing a stable environment for the elections.

Operation Sayaid II, a Multi-National Force - West campaign in the western Euphrates River valley, was designed to cripple the insurgency thereby stabilizing the region.

The campaign, which included operations Steel Curtain, Iron Fist, Lightning Strike, River Gate, Lion and Mountaineer, was conducted over a five-month period and established numerous forward operating bases, camps and com-

Election Turnout Percentage - uncertified



bat outposts. The operations established an enduring presence along the Syrian border and was successful in furthering the rule of law and setting the conditions for a successful parliamentary election, the general said.

Operation National Unity also made conditions significantly more stable for Iraqis to vote.

The operation, which began in September, included more than 25,000 patrols, and more than 1,000 cordons and searches resulting in a 50 percent increase in improvised explosive devices found and a 67 percent increase in the discovery of weapons caches.

The operations provided a unit-

ed front between Coalition and Iraqi forces which created a stabilizing effect on the regions and provided fertile soil in which the seeds of democracy can grow.

For the Iraqi people, this means a more even distribution of power and a level playing field upon which democracy can play out, Casey said.

Hub stackers move cargo

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Mark Wojciechowski
133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

Q-WEST BASE — The General Support Hub at Q-West Base is keeping Soldiers off the highways of Iraq by taking needed supplies to the skies.

Soldiers from the 317th Maintenance Co., 551st Cargo Transport Co., and 305th Quartermaster Company, and civilian contractors build about 20 pallets per day for transport by aircraft instead of by convoy.

When cargo arrives, the Hub workers download the pallets from the trailers and determine whether each pallet contains equipment going to a single destination.

If a pallet contains equipment destined for multiple locations, the Soldiers sort the equipment and rebuild the pallets, a process known as "transloading," according to Sgt. Elsira Wedderburn, the retrograde materiel noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 317th Maintenance Company.

"We're the only hub that is actually flying," said Wedderburn.



Pfc. Christopher Field, Pfc. General Walkers, and Pfc. Andrew Geesaman, all with the 551st Cargo Transfer Company, tighten the straps on a pallet.

Kerry in the IZ



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rick Rzepka

John Kerry made his way into the International Zone here, Jan. 19, to show his support for servicemembers in Iraq. The senator from Massachusetts, Vietnam veteran and former Democratic Party nominee for president signed autographs and had his picture taken with servicemembers and other officials. "Everyone in the U.S. is proud of what your doing over here and support your unbelievable commitment," Kerry said.



Senior Airman Jeff Mangalin, of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing command post, talks to an aircraft preparing to taxi at Balad Air Base.

Securing Balad Air Base

Story and photo by
Senior Airman Bryan Franks
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

BALAD AIR BASE — Behind a locked door, windows boarded up, and no visible access to the outside world except for a video camera showing them who is at their door, members of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing command post act as the eyes, ears and voice of the base.

Like any Air Force command post, the Balad shop receives and relays information about inbound and outbound aircraft, cargo, attacks and emergencies.

“We’re a central point for all information regarding the base,” said Senior Airman Jeff Mangalin, 332nd AEW command post controller.

“We are a conduit for information that flows from all the agencies to the wing leadership.”

The command post is also directly connected to the flying mission here.

Aircraft pilots call in and report the number of passengers on their flight. The information is relayed to Air Traffic Operation Center, which in turn arranges bus transportation for the passengers.

Command post Airmen also report the type of cargo on the aircraft, so logistics

will know what equipment to bring out to off load it.

In addition to relaying passenger and cargo information, the command post monitors all attacks on the base. Because of command post’s location and equipment, wing leadership regularly monitor attack responses there.

“We receive our information about incoming attacks on the base from the Joint Defense Operation Center located here,” Mangalin said. “They give us the most accurate information about the incoming attacks.”

Although the Airmen who work in the command post are always behind closed doors, they do enjoy being “in the know” about a lot of things going on the base.

“It’s nice to work with senior leadership and to see the behind the scenes actions,” Mangalin said. “We always work 24-7 relaying information to support the warfighter.”

The work of the command post Airmen has not gone unnoticed by their chain of command.

“I’ve expected a lot from my Airmen and each time they’ve risen to the occasion,” said Capt. Rodney Bagley, 332nd AEW command post officer-in-charge.

ground safety shop watches the daily operations of Balad Airmen every day.

“We are always out and about, watching ground operations on the base,” said Tech Sgt. Bob Brock, 332nd AEW ground safety non-commissioned officer-in-charge. “We spend a lot of time monitoring operations on the fight line.”

That includes monitoring ground operations, keeping an eye on contractors and conducting accident investigations. If someone is hurt at a Balad forward operating

721st Airmen keep big planes moving on up

Story by Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

BALAD AIR BASE — The 721st Air Mobility Operations Group, Detachment 5, keeps cargo on the move.

The 721st AMOG does not own any aircraft, but the unit is responsible for all of Air Mobility Command’s C-5 and C-17s traveling to and from Balad Air Base.

“Our reason for being here is to provide maintenance support for strategic airlift at Balad,” said Capt. Ken King, 721st AMOG detachment commander.

“The aircraft that we provide support to transport everything from bullets to blankets into the theater. Everything the warfighter needs comes through this detachment,” he said.

Attached here from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, the detachment receives all landing military cargo planes not assigned to Balad.

The 721st AMOG Airmen work alongside the aircraft crew chiefs to ensure a quick turnaround. “We want the transient aircraft landing on our airfield to be here for as short a period of time as possible,” said Master Sgt. Roland Ireland, 721st AMOG

production supervisor and detachment first sergeant. “It is our goal to turn around these aircraft in 30 minutes to four hours, depending on maintenance needed.

The planes will not remain here overnight, unless they are broken.”

In a typical day, the detachment Airmen service and launch about a dozen aircraft. Over the last six months, they have serviced more than 1,300 C-17 and C-5 cargo aircraft moving about 27,000 tons of cargo.

The aircraft serviced by the unit have transported almost 60,000 passengers including more than 1,800 medical evacuations. The detachment Airmen also know they save lives in

other ways, too. Every C-17 and C-5 that comes through Balad means one less convoy required in Iraq. “We are decreasing the number of convoys that need to travel when C-17s are able to perform air drops; getting parts and supplies where they are needed,” Ireland said.

The planes continuing on from Balad have also provided humanitarian support to the Pakistani people affected by the October earthquake and conducted a blanket drop in Afghanistan.

“Everything the warfighter needs comes through this detachment.”

Capt. Ken King



photo courtesy of U.S. Airforce

Airmen with the 721st Air Mobility Operations Group, Detachment 5 help unload equipment from a C-5 Galaxy. The 721st AMOG is attached to Balad Air Base from Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

332nd AEW Ground Safety Office: the ‘OSHA’ of the Air Force

Story by Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

BALAD AIR BASE — Keeping the Airmen at Balad safe is not a task taken lightly by the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Ground Safety Office.

“Our job is to prevent the loss of life or damage to government equipment,” said Tech Sgt. Clyde Lathon, 332nd AEW ground safety manager. “We are the Air Force equivalent to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.”

To accomplish these goals, the two-person

ground safety shop watches the daily operations of Balad Airmen every day.

“We are always out and about, watching ground operations on the base,” said Tech Sgt. Bob Brock, 332nd AEW ground safety non-commissioned officer-in-charge. “We spend a lot of time monitoring operations on the fight line.”

That includes monitoring ground operations, keeping an eye on contractors and conducting accident investigations. If someone is hurt at a Balad forward operating

base, the safety team travels to the FOB to investigate, Brock said.

All of this and more is done by the ground safety office Airmen, who coordinate their programs down to the lowest levels with the assistance of unit safety representatives.

“Normally at a wing this size we would have more people to do this job,” Brock said. “Because there are only two of us, we rely heavily on unit safety representatives.”

Lathon said, “Unit safety representatives

“Our job is to prevent the loss of life,”

Tech Sgt. Clyde Lathon

GULF REGION DIVISION, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS



Iraqi children in Dohuk are happy to receive a special delivery from Lana Aziz. Aziz, an Iraqi citizen and junior engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has coordinated the collection and distribution of school supplies and gifts for the children.

Engineer's love of kids brings supplies and gifts

Story and photo by Polli Barnes Keller

MOSUL - After years of tyranny and war, the children of Iraq have almost nothing and are very grateful for each gift they receive.

Lana Aziz, an Iraqi citizen and junior engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, coordinates the collection and distribution of shoes and school supplies for Iraqi children. With each gift she gives to a needy child, she also gives joy and hope to their lives.

Through her childhood, Aziz watched as American organizations sent clothing and items to local places of worship. She watched as the goods were distributed and noticed some didn't make it to the families that needed them the most. Dismayed by the lack of support for American generosity and the misdirection of goods, Aziz decided she would do something about it.

While on assignment in the local villages, she noticed the children lacked proper shoes. This gave her the idea to collect shoes for the needy and make sure they were distributed to those who truly needed them.

In July 2005, Aziz put the word out through co-workers, friends and family that she was collecting shoes.

Word spread quickly and before she knew it, shoes came rolling in.

Church groups from the States, Aziz's family and friends of friends rose to the challenge and collected approximately 150 pairs of shoes, which Aziz distributed in Dohuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah.

The effort was a huge success and well received by those in need.

Now, almost seven months later, packages again began arriving addressed to Aziz. She

opened the boxes and was happily surprised to find not only shoes for the children, but school supplies and toys, as well. Aziz's response was, "If they send it, I will deliver it!"

Word travels fast when there is good news to spread and the story of Aziz delivering goods to schools last year made it all the way to Texas and Utah. Donations also came from schools and large corporations. Contributors included Southwest Airlines' Maintenance and Engineering Department in Dallas, Texas; Hewlett Packard in Richardson, Texas; and the second-grade class from the William Penn Elementary School in Salt Lake City, Utah. Aziz received toys, school supplies, candy and shoes.

Early in January, she and Lt. Col. Greg Gunter, USACE Gulf Region North Deputy Commander, traveled to two schools in Dohuk and delivered the goods.

"It was an honor to take part in such a noble and worthwhile effort initiated by Ms. Aziz. It was heartwarming to see that the generous gifts sent from within Iraq, as well as the United States, found their way to the children at these two schools," said Gunter.

The second-grade class in Utah received photographs of their delivered donated goods.

The second-grade teacher said, "My students and I were ecstatic when we put your photos on the big screen and saw our red Christmas houses! Seriously ... we went crazy!"

She added, "What a joy it was to actually see our school supplies and cards in the hands of those beautiful Iraqi children!"

In a year of employment with USACE, Aziz went from interpreter to junior engineer. She graduated from Mosul University in 2004, with a degree in computer engineering.

Afraid No More

Water repairs done despite threats

Story by Norris Jones

BAGHDAD - Despite insurgent activity, Iraqi workers completed repairs to two water treatment plants in south Baghdad after nearly four months of work.

Due to their skill and bravery, about 1 million Baghdad residents will benefit from the renovations that continued despite insurgent attacks.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Central

oversaw the restoration project.

Local workers cleaned the large, 34-meter sedimentation basins, repaired pumps and generators, and installed new chlorine pumps.

Because of these combined efforts, each treatment plant now produces about 530,000 gallons of clean,

potable water per hour.

"Mahmoudiya and Latifiya residents in south Baghdad this week had water flowing from their faucets for the first time in nearly eight years," said Alfred Everett, GRC Resident Engineer supporting the 2nd Brigade

Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

"That's what people in those communities are telling us."

A Baghdad firm was awarded the project to rehabilitate two water treatment plants servicing the areas northwest of Latifiya

along the Euphrates River.

"Despite setbacks and damage to the generators and other equipment in both facilities, the contractor successfully finished the job," said Everett.

"There's no question that Iraqis working on these projects demonstrated significant courage every day."

"Residents in south Baghdad this week had water flowing from their faucets for the first time in nearly eight years."

Alfred Everett

Baquba Hospital is now delivering

Story by Polli Barnes Keller

MOSUL - Baquba Maternity hospital, a hotel-turned-maternity-hospital, now delivers babies instead of room service.

The facility houses 229 beds and serves a local population of about 350,000.

Workers completed the \$700,000 transformation in Diyala Province on Jan. 4.

After the Iraqi government requested a change to the building's function, a local construction company conducted the renovations.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided quality assurance and oversaw the project.

The modernization included repairs to the wastewater treatment plant, incinerator, and elevators in the hospital.

Workers installed a new water purification system, as well.

"This facility was originally designed and built as a hotel and was converted to a maternity hospital in the 1980s.

"The overall layout and utilities of the facility were constructed to function as a hotel. This included the elevators, sewage treatment facility, water supply, and the internal layout of the building," said Basim Hussain, USACE Project Contracting Office project manager, when asked the most interesting aspect of this project.

"The scope to renovate this facility included bringing the elevators back to sound operating condition, installing a state-of-the-art medical waste incinerator, an overhaul and upgrade of the sewage treatment capability to properly address medical wastewater and provide for a better potable water quality," said Hussain.

"The objective was to reduce sources of infection which is the number one battle in any health facility."

The hospital remained functional throughout the repair process as officials coordinated all construction and renovations with hospital staff to minimize disruptions to hospital operations.

"The objective was to reduce sources of infection, which is the number one battle in any health facility."

Basim Hussain



Lt. Col. Douglas Gabram, commander, 1st Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, passes the oath of reenlistment to Spc. Robert E. Guzman, who reenlisted in the Apache "Ol Rigormortis" Dec. 1 on Forward Operating Base Speicher. Guzman is among 70 Soldiers who have reenlisted in 1st Battalion since the battalion deployed in September 2005.

'No Mercy' Reenlistment Leads Division

Love of helicopters, unit keep Soldiers of 1st Battalion coming back for more

Story and photos by
1st Lt. Elizabeth Casebeer
1st Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment

FOB SPEICHER — As a kid, Spc. Robert E. Guzman watched the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels and the U.S. Air Force's Thunderbirds with his jaw open in awe. He decided at an early age he wanted to be a pilot.

"I think it's every kid's dream to fly," said Guzman.

Years later, in 2002, Guzman enlisted in the U.S. Army as an aviation operations specialist. Upon arriving at 1st Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, Guzman recalled his childhood dream of becoming a pilot. This was further encouraged during Guzman's first deployment to Iraq less than a year after he joined the Army. He credits the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Douglas M. Gabram, for his fascination with AH-64 Apache attack helicopters.

"Lt. Col. Gabram is very proud of his unit. His 'gung-ho' attitude has made me realize how cool Apaches are," said Guzman.

Guzman's fascination with the aircraft and pride in his battalion grew to the point where he decided to extend his commitment to the Army; he signed up for six



Spc. Robert E. Guzman, An aviation operations specialist with 1st Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, holds his oath of reenlistment Dec. 1.

more years and received \$15,000. Guzman, an aviation operations specialist, said he will see how much he enjoys being a noncommissioned officer first, but is still interested in the warrant officer program and someday possibly flying Apaches.

Guzman was not the only one who

decided to stay a Soldier. Of the 70 Soldiers who have reenlisted since deploying to Iraq, 65 have chosen to stay within the battalion.

"This shows our Soldiers love this battalion and they want to be a part of it," said Staff Sgt. Rebecca Norris, 1st Battalion retention NCO.

First Battalion already leads the entire division in reenlistments for 2006. It is no coincidence that all but two eligible Soldiers in Company A reenlisted.

"These Soldiers love this battalion and they want to be a part of it, and that's partially due to the outstanding leadership on all levels and an almost unheard of camaraderie amongst us," said Norris.

Guzman joined hundreds of 101st Soldiers who reenlisted upon deployment to Iraq. This year, First Battalion achieved 152 percent of its goals for initial term Soldiers, who are the Soldiers reenlisting for the first or second time. First Battalion met 117 percent of mid-term reenlistments and 100 percent of career reenlistments. One company alone hit 800 percent of its retention goals.

Even with these statistics, Guzman wanted a reenlistment he would remember for years to come.

Guzman decided the perfect place to conduct his reenlistment ceremony was in an Apache helicopter.

The reenlistment was conducted by the battalion commander, with Guzman in the front seat.

All the aircraft systems were powered up as Lt. Col. Gabram read the oath of reenlistment on the ground.

GREYHAWKS CELEBRATE

Helicopter squadron proud to



Flying in the same CH-46 that flew through the skies of Vietnam, the Greyhawks of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 are preparing to surpass 50,000 mishap-free flight hours at Al Taqqadum.

Story and photos by
Cpl. Cullen J. Tiernan
2nd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL TAQQADUM — The Greyhawks of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 spent their 55th birthday supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom at Al Taqqadum on Jan. 15.

HMM-161, known as "The First," was the Marine Corps' first tactical helicopter squadron. The Greyhawks were established Jan. 15, 1951 and deployed two months later in support of the Korean War. At Al Taqqadum, they fly CH-46 Sea Knights, respond to urgent casualty evacuations and provide general support for the ground combat element near Fallujah and Ramadi.

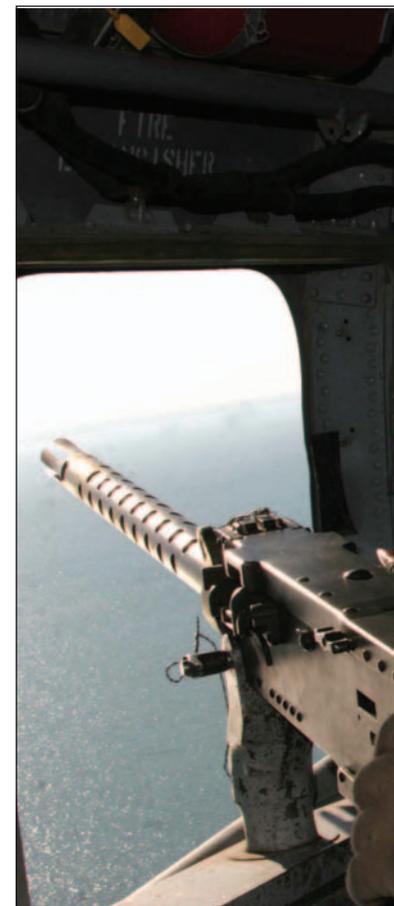
"Our squadron has seen combat in every major conflict the Marine Corps has been involved with since the Korean War," said Capt. Mateo Salas, a CH-46 pilot with HMM-161 and a Hacienda Heights, Calif., native. "We were the first Marine Corps squadron ever to deploy troops in a combat zone utilizing helicopters."

Continuing their history in Iraq, the Greyhawks are preparing to surpass 50,000 mishap-free flight hours.

"This accomplishment is a testament to the hard work of all the Marines in the squadron," said Maj. Allen Gilbert, a CH-46 pilot with the Greyhawks, the squadron's director of safety and an Anamosa, Iowa, native. "Despite challenges, we're getting the mission accomplished. We flew 12 Casevacs in a single day, helping move Iraqi civilians after a suicide bombing, sometimes with five on a single bird. It's a proud feeling knowing everyone in the squadron's regard for getting the mission done safely."

This is the Greyhawks third deployment in support of OIF. Gilbert said the Greyhawks have had a significant impact, saving lives and moving troops and captured insurgents while in a combat environment.

"It's nice to know we have been successfully executing the same mission this long," said Capt. Mark Fitzsimmons, a CH-46 pilot with HMM-161 and a San Diego native, on his first



Sgt. Maj. William F. Fitzgerald, Big Rapids, Mich., native, stands by a CH-46 during a troop evacuation mission, Jan. 16.

deployment with the Greyhawks. "It's amazing the Marines are able to keep the 46s flying flawlessly. It's an old aircraft, with a great deal of history, but it's performing well accomplishing our mission here."

Fitzsimmons credits the squadron's continued success to the dedication of all the Greyhawks.

"We have a tradition of success," said Fitzsimmons. "Since the beginning of the squadron, skilled Marines have passed their knowledge and expertise to new Marines and from Casevac missions, to night raids, there are many rewarding moments for the Marines' hard work."

Lance Cpl. Joe Berry, a CH-46 crew chief with the Greyhawks and Missoula, Mont., native, flew on the helicopter raid and took part in transporting 17 detainees from Ramadi.

"It was unbelievable seeing that many birds flying in unison," said Berry. "Everyone in the squadron was a part of it. From the mechanics to the flyers, it takes everyone working long hours for helicopter raids to be

THE BIRTHDAY IN IRAQ

carry on combat heritage here



III, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161's sergeant major and a crew member look out the window of a CH-46 Sea Knight during an urgent casualty evacuation mission. The Greyhawks, of HMM-161, fly out of Al Taqqadum, saving lives, and evading insurgents.



Lance Cpl. Joe Berry, a CH-46 crew chief with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 and Missoula, Mont., native, holds a .50 caliber machine gun as he looks down on Ramadi during an urgent casualty evacuation mission, Jan. 16. Berry said his job as a crew chief is to scan the area and make sure they don't come under fire. If they do, he suppresses it or they maneuver out of it.

successful, and for us to be near 50,000 mishap free hours."

Berry said it feels good flying on Casevac missions. He said without the Greyhawks, the wounded might not get the medical attention they need.

"I go to sleep at night looking forward to the next day, because I might help save someone's life" said Berry. "As a crew chief, I keep a scan during missions and make sure we don't come under fire. If we do, I suppress it, or we maneuver out of it."

Berry said the airframes on the CH-46 he flies are the same that flew through the skies of Vietnam.

"You know those aircraft have seen a lot," said Berry. "They have maneuvered out of missiles, been hit by rounds, carried a lot of patients and moved a lot of troops. I'm proud to be a part of their history today and future tomorrow."



Seaman Christopher Sexton, a Navy corpsman with II Marine Expeditionary Force Casualty Evacuation Team, tends to a wounded Iraqi Soldier during an urgent casualty evacuation mission, Jan. 16.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Richard D. Stephens

Cpl. Michael A. Kelly, a squad leader, points to a delay setting on an 81 mm mortar round.



U.S. Marine Corps photo Lance Cpl. Peter R. Miller

A Marine with the mortar platoon, Battalion Landing Team 1st Bn., 2nd Marines drops a high explosive round into the tube during an indirect fire mission launched against terrorists near Forward Operating Base Hit.

Mortarmen hit their targets

Totally tubular platoon supports ground troops

Story by Lance Cpl. Peter R. Miller
22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HIT — In the middle of a relaxed game of soccer, the frantic call for counter-fire brings the fun to an abrupt end.

While the ball continues to roll, Marines of the mortar platoon race to their guns and scramble into Kevlar helmets and dusty individual body armor.

"We can do all types of missions," said Lance Cpl. Jesse L. Evans, of Clifton Springs, N.Y., a mortarman with Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines. "We fire counter-fire missions against insurgent mortar teams, fire illumination missions, or even mark targets."

"But, most of what we send downrange is high explosive," said Evans, who is on his second deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The mission this day was exactly as Evans described — sending high explosive rounds downrange onto an enemy mortar position that was targeting other Marine forces in the vicinity of Hit.

Among the ranks of the platoon's many Iraq veterans is Sgt. Jason O. Sackey, who returned to Iraq for a third tour. According to Sackey, the platoon is capable of providing quick, responsive and accurate fire support, all under the watchful eye of a forward observer.

"We always hit our targets," added Sackey. Veterans like Sackey, Evans, and Cpl. Raymond C. Ramos pass their knowledge and experience down to the younger, less experi-

enced Marines in the platoon in order to continue their legacy of success.

"Most of what we do isn't learned in the schoolhouse, it's learned out here in the field," said Ramos, a Miami native. "We run drills constantly, before we fire, after we fire, even when we don't expect a mission. When you hear 'counter-fire' or 'get on your gun', you see people fly every time."

"I was a gunner last year, now I'm the squad leader, so it's my turn to teach," he said.

One of Ramos' pupils, Lance Cpl. Edward Elston elevates the mortar tube to the desired height as he swivels it into position for the next shot. This Hackettstown, N.J., native trusts in the abilities of the mortar platoon regardless of situation or mission.

"We can set up our guns in a matter of minutes," said Evans, who serves as gunner for Ramos' M-252 81 mm mortar. "We can drop out of a (helicopter), set up the gun, drop 10 rounds and be back in the air in just a few minutes."

For several minutes, the Marines dropped and adjusted their rounds until the call for cease fire was sounded, bringing the fire mission to a halt. After cleaning the mortar and realigning its sights, the Marines have one final task before returning to their game of soccer — prepping another stack of rounds for the next mission.

"I make sure the Marines in my charge are always ready," said Sackey. "If the grunts on the streets ever run into something they can't handle alone, they can always call on us."



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Richard D. Stephens

Lance Cpl. Richard J. Googe, a mortarman, adjusts the sights on his 81 mm mortar during a fire mission.

"Most of what we do isn't learned in the school house, it's learned out here in the field."

Cpl. Raymond C. Ramos

Rocket's Glare...



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Dennis Gravelle

The Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment, use a multiple launch rocket system against insurgents near Qayyarah last week. Three M-270 launchers fired one round each. Within seconds the missiles were out of sight and on their way to their target. Without ever leaving the cab of their vehicle, the Soldiers can fire up to 12 MLRS rockets in 60 seconds.

Iraqi Police officers are the people in the neighborhood

Story by Spc. Barbara Ospina
1st Brigade Combat Team,
101st Airborne Division

KIRKUK — Soldiers from Civil Affairs Team A, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion, joined forces with the Kirkuk Police Jan. 9 on a patrol to help them build a stronger relationship with their community.

The mission was planned after Soldiers conducted a survey in Kirkuk to get the community's view of the police and problems throughout their neighborhoods.

The survey showed that the community desired more personal interaction with their police force.

"The people feel that the police are not spending any time talking to

them," said Staff Sgt. Ignacio Betancourt, the team sergeant. "Talking with the people helps build their trust."

The police took to the streets of Kirkuk to remove trash and hand out candy and toys.

"After about five minutes, you could tell the Iraqi Police were happy interacting with the kids," Betancourt said. "The kids also became more comfortable [around] the police."

The police also walked through the neighborhood and spoke with residents to discuss problems in the area.

"A large concern among the people is their trash is not being picked up as often as it should," Betancourt said. "So the schedule is going to be revised by the police."

Guarding the gate

Navy unit nabs would-be smugglers

Story by Tech. Sgt. Pamela Anderson
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

BALAD AIR BASE — As members of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing prepare to head back to their home stations, personnel assigned to Navy Customs, Battalion Papa, Delta Company are responsible for ensuring they don't leave the area of responsibility with anything illegal.

"We inspect all (Department of Defense) personnel and cargo leaving the (Central Command) AOR to support the rapid redeployment of troops," said First Class Petty Officer Dawn Montgomery, a Navy photographer's mate and customs operations department head.

The U.S. Navy handles customs for all outgoing personnel, passenger luggage, unit gear and cargo on Balad Air Base and Logistics Support Area Anaconda.

As more units head home, customs is preparing for business to pick up.

"We're expecting to process about 3,000 people in the next five weeks," Petty Officer 1st Class Montgomery said. "But, when there is no surge we average about 200 people a week."

Though that's a lot of people to process, she said that's not the difficult part of her job.

"The hardest part of this job is keeping up with the changes in regulations," Petty Officer 1st Class Montgomery said. "We follow General Order number one, U.S. Customs, Transportation Security Administration policies and Department of Agriculture regulations and CENTCOM policies."

Though changes occur on a regular basis, she said there aren't many people who try to take illegal items out of the country.

"A lot of people are compliant, and the ones who aren't, it's usually because they've simply forgotten," Petty Officer 1st Class Montgomery said.

"We usually catch things like that," she said. The need to find things before the flight takes off does more than just protect the passengers on the aircraft.

"We need to make sure that nothing gets home

Staying customs clean

To ensure personnel process out of the area of responsibility quicker, here is a list of restricted and limited items:

— Articles originating from embargoed countries such as North Korea, Cambodia, Iran, Libya and Cuba.

— Copyright violations — unauthorized copies or those that falsely imply they are copyrighted in the U.S. are restricted to one item per title.

— Obscene and pornographic articles, books, pictures, films, communications, videotapes or movies.

— Over-the-counter medication must be able to be positively identifiable by custom agents as non-prescription pills.

— Prescription drugs must be in their original labeled container and not loose. Prescription drugs should be hand carried.

— Soil, earth and sand can not be taken outside of Iraq; however, clean rocks and shells are OK.

— War souvenirs must have written approval from a reviewing official.

that shouldn't," said Navy Information Systems Technician Second Class Petty Officer Anita Harmon, USN Customs Battalion Papa, Delta Company customs border clearing agent. "From an agriculture perspective, we keep sand and dirt out that may carry mites or something like that."

It's also important to keep weapons from being taken out of Iraq because those weapons end up being sold on the streets, she said.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Harmon is one of the agents who goes to units throughout Balad Air Base and LSA Anaconda and inspects squadron and unit cargo before it's shipped out of here.

"We label it so it doesn't have to be reinspected when it gets back to the states," she said. "Though 10 percent will get rechecked when it gets to its destination, this helps the process go faster."

Provincial elections set for February

TIKRIT — Recently at the District Election Office in Tikrit, Coalition Forces met with Salah Ad Din Province officials to begin planning for the upcoming provincial elections.

A special team from the 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team met with officials to decide what role Coalition Forces will play in the elections and to determine what help is needed.

The actual date of the provincial elections will be determined now that the official count from

the national elections has been released.

Planning is now underway to prepare for the provincial elections expected to take place in February.

According to Akeel Hussein Abdullah, director of the election office, the Iraqi constitution states that elections are held in order from national to provincial to local.

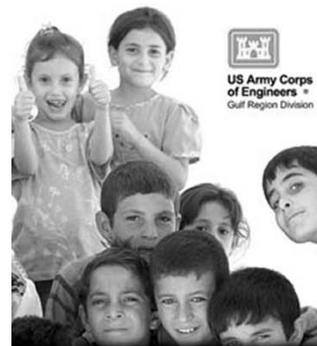
— Spc. Wayne D. Haley,
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

"This Week in Iraq"
a weekly review of how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is rebuilding Iraq,
and improving the quality of life for the next generation.

Saturday & Sunday
@ 8:45 a.m., 1:45 p.m., 5:45 p.m. and 9:45 p.m.

Freedom Radio 107.7 FM





US Army Corps of Engineers
Gulf Region Division

Haiti and Iraq similar, 101st Soldier says

Story and photo by
Spc. Lee Elder
133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

BAQUABAH – A Haitian-born U.S. Soldier sees many similarities between his troubled homeland and Iraq.

Staff Sgt. Mitterand Jean-Francois serves as an intelligence analyst with the Police Transition Team at the Provincial Joint Communication

Center in Baquabah. He is an Army Reservist called to active duty from the 841st Engineer Battalion based in Miami.

“Every time I get on top of this roof, it looks like I’m in Haiti,” Jean-Francois said as he pointed to the building that houses the PJCC. “It’s about the same.”

Jean-Francois came to the U.S. in February 1999, and enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. After four years, including a stint in Al Kut during Operation Iraqi Freedom I, Jean-Francois left active duty. He enlisted in the Army Reserve in 2003 after becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen.

Haiti, one of the poorest nations in the world, is on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. It has often been the scene of unrest and bloodshed.

“I remember in ’95 when I first saw American Soldiers and Marines,” Jean-Francois said. “Now, here I am doing the same thing for the Iraqi people.”

Living and working with Iraqi Police and Police Commando units is worthwhile, Jean-Francois said. He believes he can use the lessons learned from his native land to help the police here.

Jean-Francois’ supervisor, Capt. Ean Howard, the intelligence officer for Task Force Blue, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, said Jean-Francois is a major player on the task force. His position as senior

noncommissioned officer analyst is vital to the team’s success. “He plays a really big role because there are only two of us,” Howard said. “He makes sense of the intelligence we receive from other battalions.”

Having had one tour under his belt makes Jean-Francois especially valuable, he said.

“This is my first tour, and I rely on his experience,”

Howard said. “He’s very proficient and that helps.”

Once his tour here is over, Jean-Francois hopes to pursue a master’s degree in diplomacy. He is also trying to get a direct commission in the Army Reserve.

For now, the aim of training a professional police force is a worthy one for Iraq, Jean-Francois said.

He believes that Iraqis will adapt their training to work within the confines of their society.

“I really feel that I am helping the Iraqi people,” Jean-Francois said.

“Perhaps in 10 years I will return here and be happy knowing that I



Staff Sgt. Jean-Francois

CHAPLAIN’S TALK

How Big Is Your God?

By Chaplain (Maj.)
Paul Burns

Multi-National
Security Transition
Command - Iraq



Chaplain Burns

Let me ask you, have you ever had a bad day? I’m sure you probably have. Sometimes when I am having a bad day it’s because I’ve forgotten that God is a big God and He is able to help me with all my problems.

No problem I might have is too big for God. The problem is that I usually want to try to handle them myself. I forget to put them in the SFGTD (Something For God To Do) Box and then leave them alone. I want to get them out of the box and try to handle them myself. I need to remember whenever I have a problem to just put it in the box and leave it there, trusting in Him to take care of it for me.

The problem I have is sometimes I need to realize just how big God is. Chapter 40 of Isaiah gives me a wonderful understanding how big He truly is.

First, Isaiah 40:10-11 says, “See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and His arm

rules for Him. See, His reward is with Him, and His recompense accompanies Him. He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those that have young.”

The imagery I see in this passage is a God who rules everything He has created — the earth and everything in it and all the stars and planets in the sky with one arm. Yet, because He still cares so much for me that He holds me in His arm and cradles me just as a shepherd would a lamb.

Try to picture this: the image I see is a God with one arm stretched out controlling everything that has ever been created and then, there I am or you are, resting in the cradle of His arm next to His chest as we would cradle a baby in our arm, a very loving picture.

Verse 12 states, “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?”

He is so big that He can hold all the water in all the oceans, lakes, and rivers in the hollow formed in His hands when they are cupped the way we cup ours to hold water. And just as the breath of a hand

was used to measure something, the way the height of horses is still measured, God uses His hand to mark off the heavens.

Verse 15 tells us, “Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; He weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.”

How much is a drop in a big bucket? Basically nothing. When was the last time you were worried about dust on the scales?

I have almost always had to be taped in order to make weight during our semi-annual weigh-in. Back in the very early 80’s, you either made weight or you didn’t.

I would take my keys, knife, bill-fold, everything else out of my pockets to make weight. But I never got down

and blew the dust off the scales. The dust meant nothing.

In comparison to God, the nations and everything else are so inferior that there really is no comparison. Even the United States, as powerful as we are, is nothing compared to the power of God. Verse 17 states, “Before Him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by Him as worthless and less than nothing.”

Verses 21-24 proclaim, “Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded? He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than He blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.”

Have you ever been sitting in a room when a sunbeam shines in the

window? In that sunbeam you see fine particles of dust floating in the air. You can blow on them and see the particles go everywhere. All of them are changing positions and moving in a totally different place or direction.

That is how I picture God in relation to the nations. They are like the dust floating in the sunbeam. God blows on them and instantly everything changes.

Do you know anyone that predicted that the Berlin wall would have been knocked down as it was? No one predicted it and no one I ever heard claimed that they knew it was going to happen.

But God just blew on the nations and everything changed. The same is for the USSR. I never heard anyone predict that breakup or claim to know it was going to happen. God blew on them and everything changed. It is my hope that here in Iraq, God is about to do the same thing for these people who have been oppressed for so long. God is in the midst of blowing on this nation and everything is going to change. It might happen over a period of time or God might change it in an instant.

Verse 26 states, “Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.”

I’ve heard that with the new Hubble Telescope they have determined that there are more than 100 billion galaxies with many stars and planets. God created them and calls them each by name and He makes sure they remain.

Always remember how great God is and how much He cares for you. In times of trouble, remember these words from verses 28-31: “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and His understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

God does more than just narrowly free us from our troubles. He will empower us to new life and joy if we will but trust in Him.

Polish Soldiers’ gifts help with Iraqi history

DIWANIYAH — Last week Polish Soldiers from the Multi-National Division - Central South gave computers and specialty equipment to Diwanayah University.

The equipment will aid archeology students with research and help protect Iraq’s ancient artifacts.

Along with 25 computers and a satellite dish, the Soldiers gave the university measurement tools and a power generator.

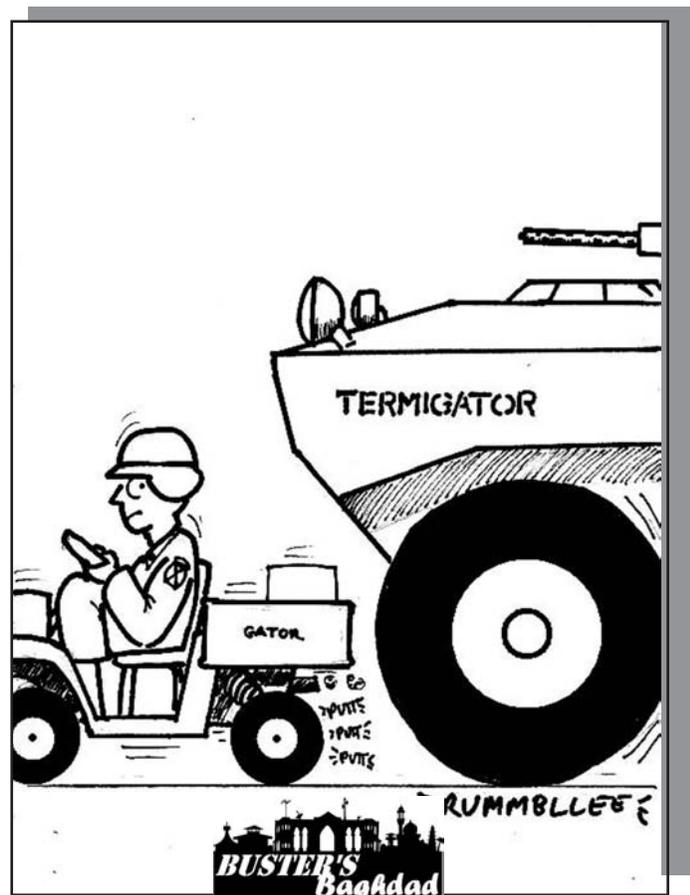
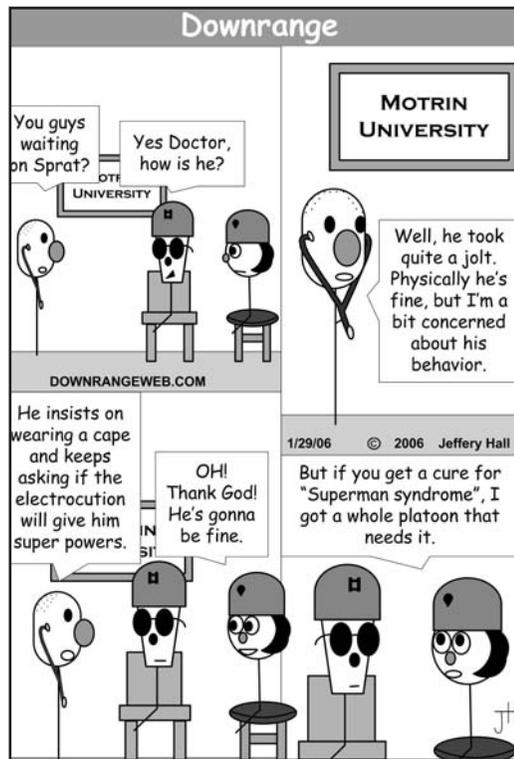
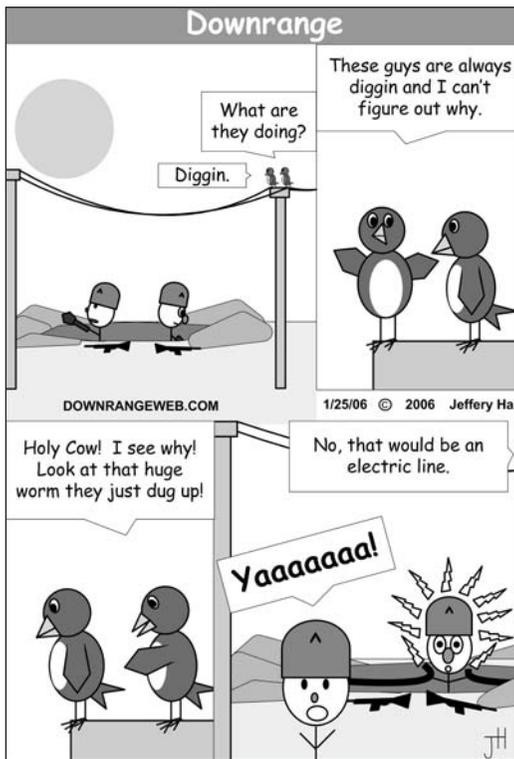
The equipment will benefit about 100 Iraqi students.

In another recent project, Polish soldiers supported the police responsible for protecting historical artifacts by providing patrol cars, communication devices and equipment.

From the beginning of their mission in Iraq MND-CS Soldiers completed about 100 projects to protect Iraqi historical artifacts.

— Lt. Cmdr. Bartosz Zajda,
Multi-National Division -
Central South

Scimitar Slapstick



Shhhh!

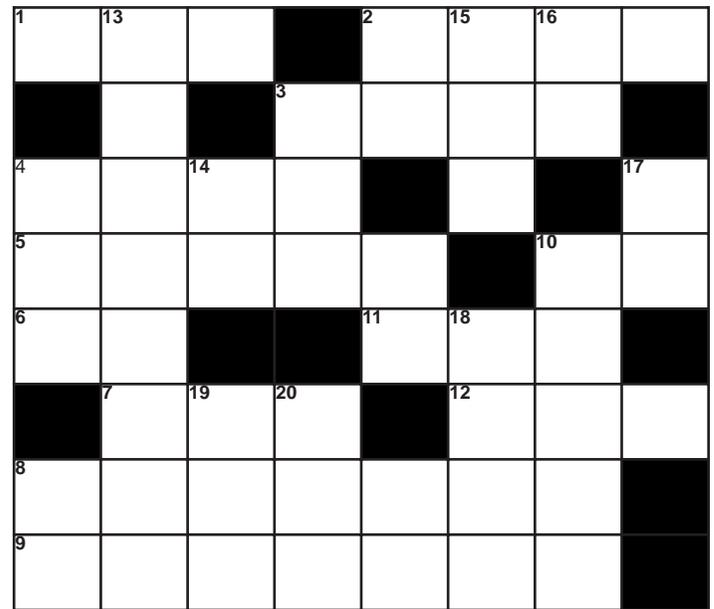
**Operational Security...
OPSEC**

Keep cell phone and email comms free of sensitive information.

You don't know who's listening.



Fightin' Words



ACROSS

DOWN

- 1. Hired thugs
- 2. Operations area
- 3. Emergency signal
- 4. ___ dance shoes
- 5. Mennonite sect
- 6. 3.14
- 7. Confucians' guiding principle
- 8. ___ cluster
- 9. Elway's team
- 10. ___ knows sports
- 11. New Army duds
- 12. Boxing organization
- 3. NY neighborhood south of Houston
- 4. One Michael's older brothers
- 8. ___ GYN
- 10. Colorado football team
- 13. Iraq's best newspaper ever
- 14. Calculator company abbreviation
- 15. UPS rival
- 16. Santa's mantra
- 17. Opposite of stop
- 18. Hello in Italian
- 19. Army website
- 20. TV channel for outdoorsmen

Fightin' Words solution from Jan. 20, 2006



[Counter Radio-controlled IED Electronic Warfare]

CREW

Treat Us Right
We'll Help Save Your Life

HEALTH & FITNESS

**Training to lose weight, but gaining it?
Can't seem to win the battle of the bulge?
A Marine tells all the secrets to ...**

Eating more, while keeping

Lean

Story and photos by

Cpl. Ruben D. Maestre

2nd Marine Expeditionary Force

CAMP FALLUJAH — The trend across camp is apparent; as servicemembers redeploy back to the states, more and more are attempting to physically burn off those extra servings from the chow hall to produce a leaner, meaner body.

It may be hard to burn off the junk food from mom's care packages, but it's never too late to begin a proper exercise program.

A good exercise program includes consistency in exercise, moderation in diet by eating more times but smaller portions throughout the day and some knowledge of exercise physiology, according to Cmdr. Steven Galeski, group surgeon, Group Aid Station, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, Headquarters Group.

"If you do a little bit of each [types of exercises] building muscle mass and spread your feeding out so you put less calories into your body, you're going to lose weight," said Galeski. "I guarantee it's really that simple, but you have to be motivated to do it, and you got to know how to do it."

Knowledge of exercise physiology is essential to obtaining successful goals in the battle against the bulge. One ounce of muscle is approximately four times smaller than one ounce of fat and the same ounce of muscle burns approximately four times as many calories as an ounce of fat, according to Galeski.

In addition to aerobic exercise, Galeski recommends anaerobic exercise through resistance or weight training. The muscle breakdown and buildup which occurs, increases our basal metabolic rate—the thermostat for burning calories.

"When you exercise to lose weight, the first thing that's going to happen is you're going to gain weight," he said. "But that is the transition from burning up fat to making lean muscle which burns up more calories."

Anaerobic exercises burn calories for 8 to 12 hours after the workout and aerobic exercise burn calorie for approximately 12 to 18 hours.

The other factor to meeting personal fitness goals is proper dieting. Galeski recommends a daily caloric intake spread out in five meals instead of three and eating more of your food earlier in the day to allow daily activity and exercise to burn calories.

"Research has proven conclusively that if you eat more frequently than three squares a day, you will put fewer calories in your mouth," he said. "If you don't eat breakfast usually most people starve and will eat a big lunch, and if

they skip lunch then the hunger builds up which almost guarantees a big dinner. And what do most people do after dinner? They sleep."

Understanding how the human body functions and combining consistent exercise and proper dieting will help anyone meet their fitness goals.

"Using the techniques that Cmdr. Galeski teaches, it is a definite, safe, effective way to lose weight," said Staff Sgt. James D. Tunis, ammunition chief, logistics section in the headquarters group. "Proper diet and exercise to build lean muscle mass will strip the fat away. I have been using the techniques taught to me by Cmdr. Galeski and have lost over 30 pounds."



Cpl. David A. Nguyen, a logistics vehicle systems driver with Company A, 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, trains with weights at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at Camp Fallujah.



Marines, Sailors and Soldiers with 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, Headquarters Group, play a game of volleyball at Camp Fallujah.

Freedom Photographs



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin L. Moses Sr.
A Soldier from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry gives an Iraqi boy a high five during a medical civil affairs program visit to the village of Almeshahama.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Moses Sr.
Staff Sgt. Kevin Surette, of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, hands out candy to Iraqi children in a village west of Baghdad following a site survey in the area.



U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Ronald Gaete
Army Capt. Jesse Curry from Company C, 70th Engineer Battalion interacts with local Iraqi children during the distribution of school supplies in Subak Sur.



U.S. Army photo Spc. Clydell Kinchen
Staff Sgt. Richard Long of Troop A, 4th Battalion, 14th Regiment holds up an Iraqi girl at the Dar Al Zando Kindergarten and Orphanage in Mosul.



U.S. Army photo Spc. Clydell Kinchen
U.S. Army Pfc. Michael Bird of Troop A, 4th Battalion, 14th Regiment, plays with children at the Dar Al Zando Kindergarten and Orphanage in Mosul.

Oasis of fun

Troops enjoy music club, ease deployment blues

Story by Sgt. Ryan Matson
101st Combat Aviation
Brigade, 101st Infantry
Division

Troops walking around Forward Operating Base Speicher on a Friday night, may hear the sounds of an electric guitar piercing through the night air.

It may seem odd to hear the "Free Bird" guitar solo blaring from amidst a sea of plywood buildings and hangars full of helicopters under repair. But if you follow the music, it will lead you through the desert sand to a little nook known as "The Oasis."

The Oasis is a building in the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Infantry Division area of FOB Speicher which has become a live music venue for Soldiers and civilian contractors to get together and hold jam sessions. To many, the popular spot provides a couple of hours of distraction each weekend from the stress of a long deployment in Iraq.

"It's a good stress relief," said Maj. Scott Weichl, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade chaplain. "It's unstructured. When you walk in there, it just seems like you're not on a military facility for a few moments – you can just sort of relax and get away from the grind of the day."

The Oasis is about to enter its third year as FOB Speicher's main musical retreat. The building was originally built as a small Christian coffeehouse under the front overhang of an aircraft hangar, that was formerly occupied by Iraqi jets under the Saddam Hussein regime. Now the hangar houses Chinook helicopters, and the Oasis.

Although small in the beginning with just bar stools, the Oasis has expanded and now includes a booth, a dressing room, and an outdoor patio.

Weichl, and his chaplain's assistant, Staff Sgt. Harry Slone, got right to work at improving the Oasis.

"We gutted the whole thing inside," Weichl said. "We ripped all the interior partitions out to make it larger inside and more open, then moved the stage to the opposite side of the building to give the artists more room to perform their songs. We also painted the outside blue with yellow trim, our aviation regimental colors."

The pair also added couches in place of some of the sets of tables and chairs and beefed up the already

impressive sound system. A couple things that remained intact were the neon Oasis sign, a string of Christmas lights on the concrete bunker barriers outside the building that let guests know they had found the right spot and the table of food on the patio outside.

"I fell in love with the Oasis the first time I ever went," said Capt. Kenric Smith, a pilot from 6th Battalion. "It's the one time a week that I can forget about the job and just have a great time playing with some of the great musicians here at Speicher," said Smith, a drummer.

Capt. Kenric Smith

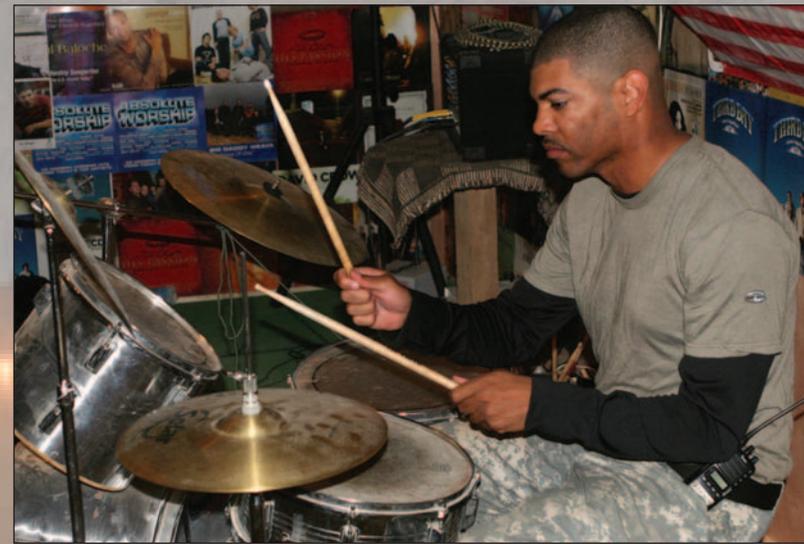
"The great part about playing music at the Oasis is that you never really know what you'll play next. We play everything from Green Day to Dave Matthews Band," Smith said.

"The musicians are awesome. It's a great way to break the monotony and have something to look forward to on Fridays."



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Eric Lobsinger

Staff Sgt. Gary Corbitt, a singer for the 4th Infantry Division Band "Muddy Boots" belts out a country tune at the Oasis.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ryan Matson

Capt. Kenric Smith, a pilot with 6th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, plays the drums to a Dave Matthews Band tune at the Oasis music club.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ryan Matson

Sgt. Jason Wolfe, left, a Chinook mechanic from 6th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, jams out with a civilian contractor at the Oasis music club.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ryan Matson

A mixture of civilian contractors and Soldiers from the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade jam at the Oasis.

"It's a great way to break the monotony and have something to look forward to on Fridays."