

# The Heart Beat

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division  
Volume 1, Issue 6  
February 1, 2006



## LEADING THE LIONS:

**"STRIKE"** Soldiers Strengthen the  
4th Bde, 6th Iraqi Army  
Division Through  
Leadership  
Training



*"Strengthen  
the things that  
will remain,"  
-Revelations 3:2*

Free Mail

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# "Strengthen the things that will remain,"

(Revelations, 3:2)

**T**he real aim of true counterinsurgency is to reestablish peace. Real peace means reintegrating into society its disaffected elements...The essence of our efforts is to apply maximum force with minimum violence in such a manner to destroy the will of the enemy, not their lives and certainly not the lives of civilians.

### Resisting Rebellion

What will physically remain:

- Innocent Iraqis
- A legitimate democratic and functioning government
- Our Iraqi brothers in arms to secure the peace
- Blood from our fallen "Blackheart" team mates

Our reputation will remain

- How well we fought
- How well we broke the will of the enemy
- How well we cared for those less fortunate

Our STRIKE history in Iraq will remain

- In our hearts
- In our minds
- In our souls
- Forever

God bless our Soldiers and our families—  
Your strength is our strength

**STRIKE!**  
Todd J. Ebel  
Commanding

## "THE HEART BEAT" STAFF

**Editor:** Maj. Jose Garcia

**Writers/ photographers:**

Spc. Kelly K. McDowell

Spc. George Welcome

**Video production/ broadcast journalist:**

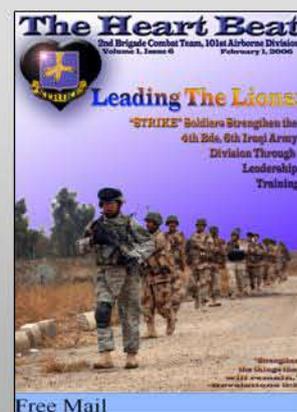
Sgt. Joy Kroemer

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### Cover Photo:

Photo by Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd Mobil Public Affairs Detachment.

A "STRIKE" Soldier leads a group of 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, soldiers on a dismounted patrol as a part of the Leadership Training Jan. 12.



# LEADING THE LIONS:

## "STRIKE" SOLDIERS STRENGTHEN THE 4TH BDE, 6TH IRAQI ARMY DIVISION THROUGH LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Story and photos by

Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – The 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division began a junior leader development course on Jan. 12 in Mahmudiyah, Iraq.

Members of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division assigned to Military Transition Teams, work with Iraqi Soldiers daily. They know that junior leader training is a key element in the overall development of small unit leadership. The leader training Iraqi soldiers receive now will be used by them in the future to train their own Soldiers.

The transition team mission, under the constant watchful eye of hopeful Americans, is to prepare a very young Iraqi Army to take over the job of securing their own country.

"It's a very challenging mission, but the more we stay with the Iraqi Army, the better they become," said Staff Sgt. Arturo Delagarza, MiTT 2, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. "That way they can transition to taking over their area and we can shift to another location or possibly even out."

The process of preparing the Iraqi Army for the eventual turnover of responsibility is one that requires the dedication of both Iraqi and American forces.

"They know we're not here to take over," Delagarza said. "We're here to help build and they're working toward taking over for themselves."

To see evidence of the transition team's progress, you do not have to look very far.

The Iraqi Army is already out regularly, going on raids, doing patrols and operating traffic control points on their own, Delagarza explained.



Capt. John Stroh, 2nd in charge of MiTT 2, discusses patrol tactics and training exercises with the future noncommissioned officers of the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division during junior leadership development training course Jan. 12.

These examples of an ever-improving Iraqi Army are reasons for hope and excitement, he said. Yet there is still much that remains to do.

"They've shown a lot of progress, but they still need work," he said. "They're trying to get into the professional mode, and that's what we need them to do."

There will continue to be challenges that face both the transition team and the IA, but together they have shown the ability to overcome adversity.

"The biggest challenge facing us right now is drawing the Iraqi Army away from the towns and into the field where we're having a lot of problems," Delagarza said. "They continue to shadow us and hopefully that will begin to bolster their confidence."

Along with partnered missions, the MiTT provides other types of training to the IA to help with its development.

"We've done a lot of tactical training with these guys," said Capt. Ryan Hartwig, MiTT 2, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. officer-in-charge. "Training like entering and clearing rooms, close quarters marksmanship and basic movement formations."

Continued on Pg. 11 see DESERT LIONS



Left is the patch for the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division. "Desert Lions"

# Extraction experts keep the convoys rolling



Story and photos by  
Spc. George Welcome

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq—When a vehicle breaks down outside the wire due to mechanical problems or battle damage, Soldiers can take comfort in knowing that their vehicles and their comrades will soon be retrieved.

The recovery team of Bravo Company, 526<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion knows that Soldiers are counting on them to respond quickly to their calls for help. In fact, the recovery team is ready to roll in as little as fifteen minutes after receiving a downed vehicle call.

“The overall recovery mission is to retrieve immobilized and damaged vehicles in the Strike Brigade area of operations,” said Warrant Officer Byron Wheatley, the allied trades technician for the service recovery section. “We return the vehicles to a repair facility so they can be made operational as quickly as possible.”

With three M984 HEMMT wreckers and one M88 Tracked Recovery vehicle, the recovery team manages to successfully retrieve all vehicles that are unable to make it back to camp under their own power.

From Monday through Wednesday, every week, the Soldiers of Bravo’s recovery team are in “on call” status, meaning whenever a vehicle needs to be picked up, no matter the time, they are the first responders.

“When we are on call, we have a 15 minute recall standard,” said Capt. Ethan Mills, commander of Bravo Company, 526<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion. “All we need to receive is a six line recovery report that includes what personnel are with the vehicle, what equipment is out there, what kind of package we need to put together, how the ve-

hicle is damaged, the location of the vehicle and security of the area.”

Time is a critical component of the mission of the recovery team. The longer a vehicle remains downed, the longer the Soldiers securing it remain exposed to the enemy.

“Fast recovery missions from the time we SP to the time we have recovered the vehicle is about 30 minutes,” said Mills.

“On average, it takes about an hour for battalion to gather their data and prepare proper data for us to launch.”

The recovery team has been very fortunate during their missions. Only once have they had any sort of contact with the enemy.

“We only had one incident, where they were mortared while recovering a HETT a couple of months ago, other than that we haven’t had any major pitfalls,” said Mills.

“We’ve been very lucky,” said Wheatley in regards to the teams contact with the enemy while extracting vehicles. “We have had 34 recovery missions, one incident with no injuries and no damage to equipment. Our gun truck platoon and the infantry are very good at securing the recovery area for us,” he added.

To the recovery team, there is no such thing as an “unrecoverable” vehicle. They will conduct extraction missions for even the most severely damaged vehicles.

“There are no vehicles that we won’t recover,” Mills said. “Every piece of equipment that gets damaged out there is the responsibility of that unit to turn it in to higher. It helps the unit with accountability with sensitive items and primarily it helps the unit get back the piece of equipment they lost.”

“We’ll go get anything, no matter what the condition,” said Wheatley. “We have the assets available to recover any type of vehicle or aircraft, whether it is wheeled or tracked. If it’s out there, we can get it.”



# Dedication:

n. [[ME dedication<L dedication]] 1 a dedicating or being dedicated 2 an inscription, as in a book, dedicating it to a person, cause ect. 3 wholehearted devotion

*The following pages are a tribute to the Soldiers and families who dedicated their lives to service to country and paid the ultimate sacrifice.*

In the last four months the Strike Brigade has accomplished a great deal. Since arriving in Iraq, the soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team have dedicated themselves to changing the conditions in South Baghdad, and that dedication has paid off -- the enemy has felt our presence. We have moved into areas where terrorists previously had free reign to operate. We have faced danger on a daily basis to remove those criminals that want nothing more than to harm us, and steal away a peaceful existence from the good people of the area.

We were sent here to facilitate the progress of the emerging representative government, and progress has been made, as witnessed by several benchmarks, including the very successful Iraqi elections in which "STRIKE" Brigade played a pivotal security role.

The soldiers of the "STRIKE" Brigade have improved the South Baghdad area in many ways. We have imparted military skills to the soldiers of the 4/6 Iraqi Army Division, the "Desert Lion", and many of our combat operations have been conducted with them. These operations have not only created a safer South Baghdad, they have equipped the good citizens, and the Iraqi army, with the confidence required to continue down the path they have started upon. Because of this renewed confidence and a more secure environment, local police are now coming to the area, and city councils are standing up and voicing the needs of their people.

The determination and drive of Strike Soldiers and the relationships established with sheiks and civil governing officials has allowed for essential services to be brought to the local people.

For the past eight years, the people of Mahmudiyah (nearly 300,000) had only the polluted local canals as a source of water. Recently, because of the efforts of "STRIKE" Brigade, three major water projects have been completed that will bring clean, potable water to the region.

The elections in December were successful largely due to the security we provided in conjunction with the Iraqi Army. The number of voters in December was 104,000 nearly doubling the October turnout for the referendum of 53,000.

Over 62 weapons caches were found removing the means by which terrorists commit their criminal activity. The "STRIKE" Brigade has done all of this in a very short time.

Some of the very "STRIKE" Soldiers who helped make all these positive changes possible are no longer with us to see the fruits of their labor and sacrifice. Though they have left us physically, they will always be with us in spirit and in our memories. Our hearts and prayers go out to the families of our fallen comrades; you will forever be part of the STRIKE family, a living, tangible link to our friends who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country. Our promise to you -- they will never be forgotten.

Maj. J. "Frank" Garcia  
PAO OIC

## In Memoriam

Today we honor our fallen comrades, not just for their death, but for their life and all that they stood for. They will live on in the memories, the hearts and the prayers of a grateful people, their family, their friends, and their nation.

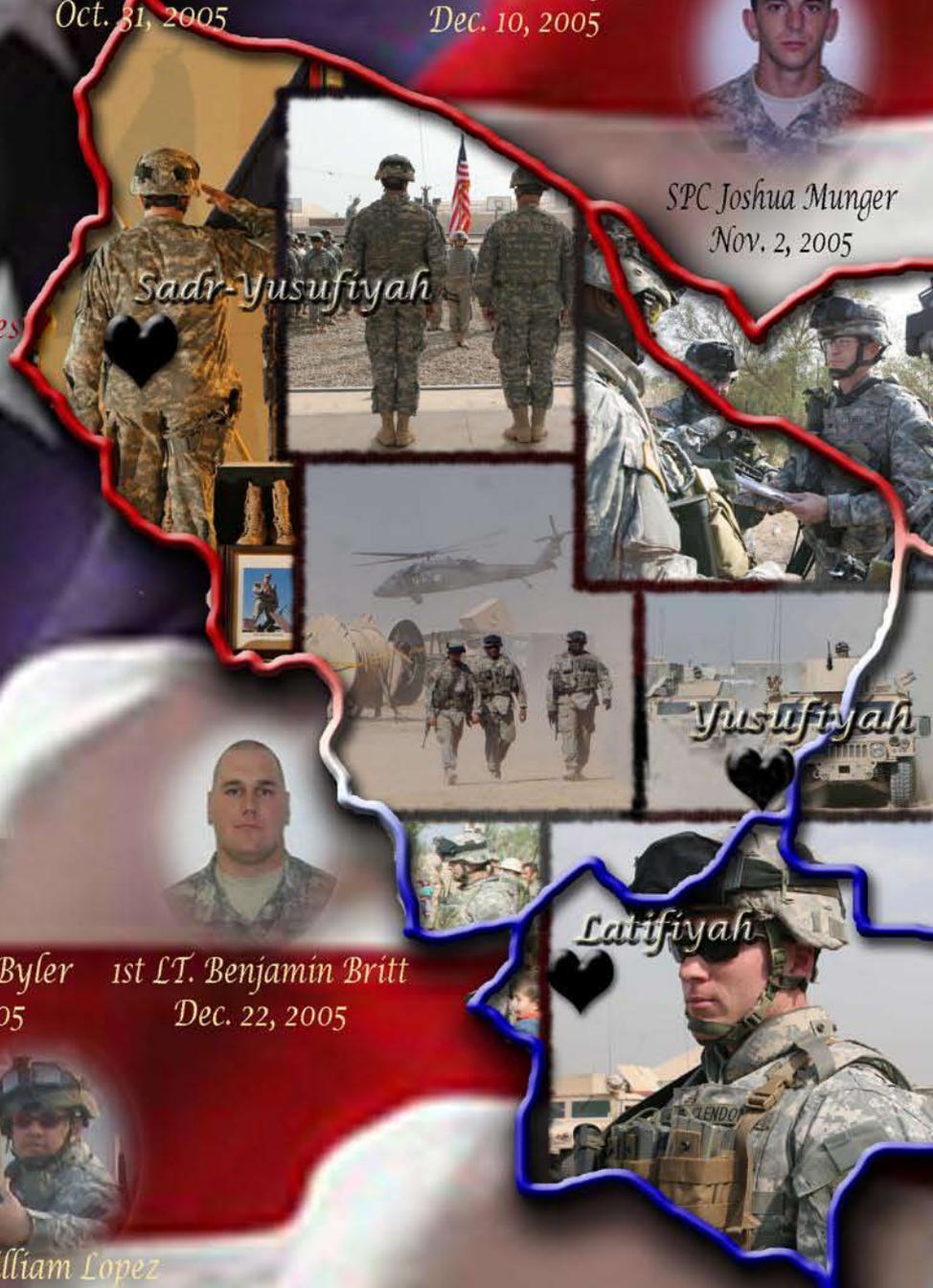
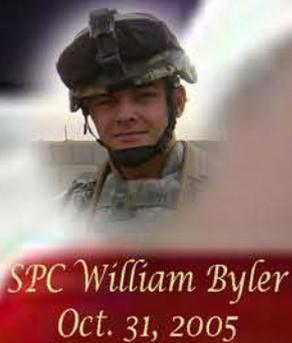
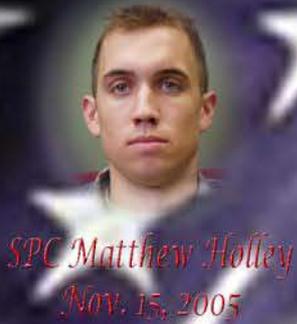
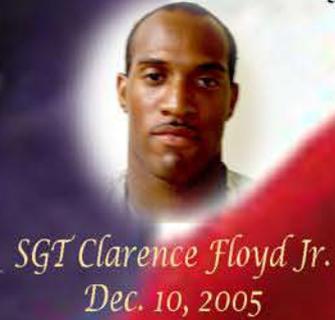
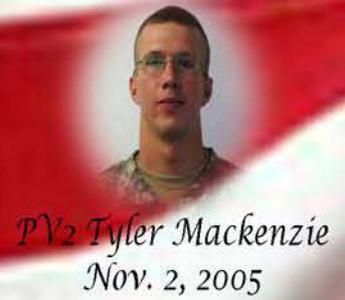
In the book of Joshua we hear these words, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage. Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee."

Our fallen Strike Soldiers have joined a noble company of warriors who fought for what was right. They were strong and courageous and they weren't dismayed. May

God bless their souls with peace and rest.

CH (CPT) Jimmy Nichols





*We thank God for the heroic examples  
who have gone beyond the call of duty*

# FALLEN EAGLES Not forgotten, ever!

*"What do ye more than others?" Matthew 5:47b*



*SGT Matthew Hunter  
Jan. 23, 2006*



*SGT Kenneth Casica  
Dec. 10, 2005*



*SSG Jerry Durbin  
Jan. 25, 2006*



*Mahmudiyah*

*Lutufiyah*



*SFC Shawn Dostie  
Dec. 30, 2005*



*SPC Allen Knop  
Nov. 23, 2005*



*PFC Adam Shepherd  
Jan. 17, 2006*



*SSG Aram Bass  
Nov. 23, 2005*



*SPC Benjamin Smith  
Nov. 2, 2005*



*SGT William Meeuwsen  
Nov. 23, 2005*

*of all faithful "STRIKE" Soldiers  
in service to their country!*

# Commentary: *Inspired by the infantry*



***"They are a fantastically trained force, unbelievable in their ability to endure, sustain and overcome."***

By SGT Ashley A. Voss  
C/526 BSB

At the blink of an eye, I became the mom. It is a role that was intrinsic, though I have no children of my own. I heard myself reminding them to wear ear plugs, and to drink enough water. I laughed inside as I asked if they had packed enough socks or instructed them on what dosage of medication to take for their illness. I listened to their frustrations and fears and attempted to remain strong. My heart hurt as their hearts hurt. The most surprising of emotions was worry. Each time a soldier left the gate, I worried. I slept less there than I have ever in my life. Every bump in the night jolted my heart to a state of awareness that took an hour to recover from. It was an emotion that seemed ridiculous as those soldiers are some the most capable, and bravest men I have ever known. They are a fantastically trained force, unbelievable in their ability to endure, sustain and overcome.

They are the soldiers of Bravo Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the 502<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, and for one month I had the privilege of being one of their medics. I was the lone female at Forward Operation Base, Yusifiyah, Iraq; a situation that made some unnecessarily concerned as I can assure you that I was treated with the utmost respect.

Upon arrival in Yusifiyah, I was given the tour, which included a walk around the facility which was once allegedly a potato factory. The entire camp spanned the area of approximately two football fields. One half of the area is occupied by Iraqi Army while the other is occupied by Bravo Company. The soldiers of Bravo run a vigorous rotation of guarding a variety of established check points, patrolling and securing the gates.

The aide station that was my home is nothing short of a miracle. Since their arrival in October, the Physician's Assistant and medics who run the aid station had seen ninety-four trauma patients by the time of my departure in mid-January. These patients included US Soldiers as well as Iraqi Army Soldiers and Iraqi civilians. Their injuries were generally due to shrapnel from mortars or IED explosions, with most casualties evacuated to obtain surgical treatment once stabilized.

Based on the number of personnel and equipment available, it is amazing that this medical team has had the success that they have. They are a truly gifted group of people and it was an honor to work with them. There are memories that I never want to forget and those that I can't forget, regardless of my effort to try. There are images that become a part of a person's eyelids; traumatic injuries of soldiers, fifteen year old detainees found with equipment to build explosives and children victim to IED explosions set up by their neighbors, intended for soldiers.

The men of Bravo Company have seen more tragedy than a person should have to see in a lifetime. They have lost fellow soldiers, they have risked their lives to save others, and each day they continue. They attend a memorial, wipe their tears, and the next day they head out on patrol, or to pull guard at another check point. They are the epitome of the American Soldier. They are the source of my pride in the Army. They are heroes.



**CPT Dennison Segui and Bravo Company medics evacuating a casualty.**

# "Sapper Beasts" making a difference

by Capt. Bradley Cortazzo  
2-101 BTB

The soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team are supported by only one combat engineer company, the Sappers and builders of A Company, 2-101<sup>st</sup> Brigade Troops Battalion, the "Sapper Beasts."

The company executes most of the route clearance and route reconnaissance missions within the brigade's area of responsibility with its Task Force Ironclaw platoons. A majority of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) clearance missions within the brigade are executed by the company's EOD Escort Platoon. Most of the earthwork and general excavation for the brigade is conducted by the company with the efforts of its Earthmoving Platoon. Lastly, the company executes all demolition missions with EOD and any special engineer reconnaissance missions with its separate Sapper Section.

Since the brigade's transfer of authority from the 48<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team the EOD Escort Platoon has conducted over 70 escort missions. Although the EOD team is responsible for destroying the explosives, Improvised Explosive Devices, and unexploded ordnance found in the brigade sector, the team's security throughout their missions rests entirely on the shoulders of the EOD Escort Platoon.

The platoon must have one of its two squads prepared to conduct an escort mission with only a 15 minute notice 24 hours a day 7 days a week giving them the operational tempo similar to that of a firehouse responding to a fire back home.

Through their efforts, the EOD Escort Platoon has participated in the destruction of several tons of explosives nullifying the possibility of these explosives ever being used to target U.S. or coalition forces.

The EOD Escort platoon is comprised of soldiers from four different companies within the brigade who have all different types of military occupational specialties. The platoon consists of soldiers who are infantrymen, mechanics, field artillerymen, fuelers, chemical personnel, communication specialists, and engineers. The differences in their training and the diversity associated with everyone's military background has largely contributed to the platoon's success.

"being with EOD Escort has been in most cases a rewarding experience; meeting some of the finest people our country has to offer fighting for what they believe in," said Pfc. Moses Mateo, a platoon member and a Field Artilleryman from HHC Brigade

Alpha Company's largest efforts are involved with the company's participation with Task Force Ironclaw (TFIC). TFIC platoons clear the routes in the brigade's area of operation of IED's also referred to as roadside bombs. IEDs are the largest contributor to soldier casualties in Iraq since the onset of combat operations in March 2003.

"searching for IEDs is a dangerous mission, however, for every three IEDs we find we know that we have saved another soldier

giving us a good feeling of accomplishment," said Sgt. First Class Jarrett Greenway, member of one of the Ironclaw Platoon's command teams. "Ironclaw soldiers realize that their job is one of the more dangerous jobs in the brigade because of the nature of searching for roadside bombs."

Despite the difficulty Ironclaw Platoons are posed with everyday, the platoons have successfully conducted over 120 missions supporting all task forces within the brigade's area of responsibility. On these missions, which now span over two and a half

months of patrols, the company has found and targeted over 90 IEDs.

Like EOD Escort the Task Force Ironclaw Platoons are not just made up from engineer soldiers. In order to adequately equip the TFIC mission with enough personnel, Alpha Company was augmented by an entire infantry platoon from Charlie Company, 1-502<sup>nd</sup> IN BN. The thirty-five soldier infantry platoon was a welcome surprise for Alpha Company because it was greatly understrengthened before the company deployed from Fort Campbell.

"The Ironclaw mission can be dull at times, however, there are always tangible results," said Spc. Lyman, one of the infantrymen from the infantry platoon. "Whenever we find an IED there is a good sense that we accomplished something solid and made the roadways in our area of operation safer for coalition forces to travel upon."

*"Whenever we find an IED there is a good sense that we accomplished something..."*

Continued on Pg. 11, see SAPPER



The EOD escort platoon, A Company, 2-101, secures a road south of Baghdad, Iraq.

# Soldiers bring smiles to local children

Story and photos by  
Spc. Karl Johnson

BAGHDAD, Iraq – In a country where having a toy is a rarity, Soldiers passing out beanie babies to Iraqi children can become very popular.

“The children’s faces just light up when they see you,” said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Alan Certain, Company C, 490<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion. “It’s amazing to see what an effect a simple toy can have on a kid.”

The civil affairs Soldiers pass out the small toys during their missions in central Iraq. To date more than 150,000 of the miniature stuffed animals have been distributed throughout the war torn nation with the help of Beanies for Baghdad, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping the rebuilding effort.

What started as an attempt to get one child to smile has turned into a project that is helping Soldiers build positive bonds with the Iraqi people.

“This is forming the beginning of friendships between the children and



**A Civil Affairs Soldier greets local children with a smile and arms full of stuffed animals.**

the Soldiers,” said Donna Ward, Beanies for Baghdad project manager. “The hope for a better tomorrow is found in the children of Iraq.”

The affects of this project are not

solely limited to the smiles and friendships shared between Iraqi children and U.S. Soldiers. This project, and others like it, is saving lives.

“Most of the improvised explosive devises that we find are from tips that we receive from Iraqi citizens,” said Capt. Darrell Rethford, C-490<sup>th</sup> CA Battalion. “We are hoping to see an entire new generation of Iraqis who trust that we are their friends and that we’re here to help them.”

According to the project manager, the success of Beanies for Baghdad has just begun. “We have so much more we hope to accomplish,” she said. “These little ones didn’t ask to be born in the conditions they are growing up in and this is a way we can make a difference.”

“I personally feel this is a small gesture we as Americans and other countries can do to help our Soldiers sew seeds of friendship and to give these children something to smile about in a war torn land.”

More information about Beanies for Baghdad can be found at their website, [beaniesforbaghdad.com](http://beaniesforbaghdad.com).

**"Coming together is a beginning;  
keeping together is progress;**



**working together is success,"  
-Henry Ford, Sr.**

## DESERT LIONS *(continued from Pg. 3)*

"Any support that we provide these guys, they seem to have an open ear to what we're saying," he said. "I think they have a lot of respect for our army."

Several members of the IA have had the opportunity to gain that respect not only through recent training, but also from their own past experiences in the former Iraqi army.

"I'm finding out that a lot of them have been in the Army for a long time, and they've got some great ideas," said Capt. John Stroh, MITT 2, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

One thing the experienced Iraqi soldiers cannot bring with them from the past is knowledge of a strong non-commissioned officer corps. NCOs in the former IA basically had little or no leadership role.

"There is a reason we (in the United States) have such a dominant Army," said Hartwig. "We have an NCO corps and we're trying to build theirs."

One of the first steps taken to help build the Iraqi army NCO corps is the establishment of a Primary Leadership Development Course. The skills being trained at the Iraqi PLDC are modeled after the training received at the U.S. Army's PLDC.

"We went over troop leading procedures, how to do inspections, military values, officer and NCO relationships, map reading, patrols and convoy operations," said Staff Sgt. Justin Seimet, 2nd BCT MITT platoon Sgt. and PLDC instructor.

On Jan. 15, 2006 the course graduated its first IA students. Those graduates are just the beginning of the professional development plan under way for the Iraqi army. During the two weeks following graduation, the first PLDC class received the training necessary to begin teaching the course themselves.

"We hope that starting some time in Feb. (2006) they will take over the school," said Seimet.

The difference in the level of responsibility in the NCO corps from the former Iraqi army to the current one is a major obstacle that the transition team is trying to overcome.

"In the past, an NCO was not very important," said Sgt. 1st Class Wisam Hamad, Headquarters Company, 4th Bde., 6th IAD and recent PLDC graduate. "Now they have much more responsibility."

According to Seimet, the IA students impressed him with their ability and eagerness to learn new information and apply it in a tactical situation.

With the Iraqi army making progress in their tactical and professional development almost every day, it's not hard to look forward to what the future might hold, said Stroh.

"My hope is that I work myself out of a job," said Stroh. "I would like to go down to the Iraqi army compound and they tell me they've got everything under control."

With the continued dedication of the MITT Soldiers coupled with the hard work and enthusiasm of their Iraqi counterparts, that goal might just come true this year.

**Do you have questions or comments about the Heart Beat newsletter? Do you have photos or story ideas? If so, please contact your 2nd BCT Public Affairs office at VOIP 242-4372 or Email us at [strikepaIraq@yahoo.com](mailto:strikepaIraq@yahoo.com)**

## SAPPER *(Continued from Pg. 9)*

Besides clearing the routes for the brigade, the Ironclaw Platoons have aided in air and ground Medevac for other U.S. forces. On several occasions the Ironclaw Platoons were the first elements to arrive on the scene giving needed assistance to Infantry units in sector.

The earthmoving platoon has been involved with countless construction projects since the company first hit ground at the beginning of October. Since arriving, the platoon began moving earth, upgrading force protection, and improving the quality of life in support of the brigade's task forces even before the brigade assumed authority from the 48<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team. The platoon has worked on over 7 outlying Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and other job sites greatly increasing the force protection level of the operating bases and patrol bases for soldiers living and working there. The platoon has been verbally commended by the senior leadership from all task forces for the quality of work they have provided.

In addition to construction projects on outlying FOBs, the Earthmoving platoon also aided in clearing routes of IEDs with the tedious use of their excavation assets. They have aided in clearing over 30 kilometers of routes within the brigade's area of operation using bulldozers leading to the discovery of five IEDs themselves. One of those bulldozer operators.

"I enjoy operating and helping out the brigade but realize that every completed mission is one mission closer to getting back home," said Spc. Charles Guess a Soldier from the Earthmoving platoon.

The platoon recently added another 6 soldiers from the brigade's newly assigned task force, 1-22 Infantry, to help augment the platoon with its earthmoving effort. The newly arrived soldiers from 1-22 Infantry have been a welcome addition to the Sapper Beast.

In order for Alpha Company to execute conventional combat engineer missions, the company formed a Sapper Section. The company realized that with all of the other missions it had going on in support of "Strike", the brigade lost some of its combat engineer capabilities such as demolition and engineer reconnaissance. The section also has participated in over ten Air Assault missions with various infantry companies, dismounted patrols, cache reconnaissance, and performed urban breaching on various raids in support of the brigade's task forces.

The section recently returned from JS Bridge where they conducted engineer reconnaissance and helped construct force protection upgrades for the ground units in that sector. They also helped conduct accurate demolition targeting for larger targets designated by the Task Forces' leadership.

The Sapper Beast continues to be the "Swiss Army Knife" of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team. Its uniqueness and its ability to adapt to any mission make it a vital force on today's battlefield.

# Faces of the Heart



*(Left) CPT Albert Vigilante, Commander of Charlie Company, 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry Regiment distribute Humanitarian Aid to families in Southwest Baghdad*



*(Right) Soldiers of Bravo Company, 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry Regiment prepare for ground movement in Southwest Baghdad*

*A Machine Gunner with Charlie Company, 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry Regiment puts his weapon into action after coming off a UH-60 Blackhawk in Southwest Baghdad*



*SFC Matthew Dougherty (Noble, OK), Mortarman with Charlie Company, 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry Regiment moves through challenging terrain with Iraqi Army soldiers in Southwest Baghdad*



*(Above) Lt. Col. Mark Walters, 1-75th Cavalry Regiment commander, and Gen Ahmed Fasil shake hands at a meeting Jan. 25.*



*Sgt. Jason Durham, HHT, 1-75th Cavalry Regiment, surveys the land below on a recon mission of the units area of operation.*



*A "STRJKE" Soldier from B Co. 1-502nd Infantry Regiment visits with children on a dismounted patrol Jan. 25.*

*(Right) Soldiers of Bravo Company, 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry Regiment move off their UH-60 Blackhawk for a mission in Southwest Baghdad*

