



SCIMITAR

MNF-1's Cutting Edge



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U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey

Eyes on: Maj. Keith Hill, a doctor with 10th Combat Support Hospital, tries to repair a leg torn apart by shrapnel from an improvised explosive device. On some days he has had to treat four patients at once, but on this day it is just him and the Iraqi policeman under his care. *More medical coverage, page 8*

DoD helps launch financial program

Story by Steven Donald Smith
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — A general lack of financial knowledge makes servicemembers an ideal target for predatory money lenders, so the Defense Department is helping to do something about it, officials said.

“Equipping servicemembers with the tools and resources they need to make sound financial decisions is integral to both military readiness and the strength and stability of our service members and their families,” David S.C. Chu, undersecretary

of defense for personnel and readiness, said at a news conference held at the U.S. Capitol building.

To meet these ends, the Defense Department has partnered with the National Association of Securities Dealers Investor Education Foundation to launch the Military Financial Education Program. The NASD Foundation started in 2003, and is part of the Defense Department’s financial readiness campaign. NASD is the largest private-sector provider of financial regulatory services.

“We know from research we’ve conducted that a high percentage of servicemen and women lack basic financial knowl-

edge,” Robert Glauber, chairman and chief executive officer of NASD, said. “We are here to unveil an important new program that will help members of the armed services and their families manage their money, and save and invest it wisely.”

Unscrupulous financial institutions often use deceptive tactics such as hidden fees and exorbitant interest rates to take advantage of unsuspecting investors, officials said.

“Military families on or near base are a captive audience for everyone from used car salesmen to payday lenders,” said

See *FINANCIAL*, Page 4

Iraqi Soldiers learn land navigation

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Sheryl Lawry
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
4th Infantry Division

Gathered in an underground bunker, Iraqi Soldiers received a class on land navigation and map reading. The group ranged from privates to sergeants major to officers, all eager to learn about map legends and declination diagrams.

Typically, this type of training is done by U.S. Military Transition Teams. Because Company D, 1-68th Combat Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Soldiers work closely with Iraqi Soldiers from 1st Company, 3rd Battalion, 2nd Brigade 5th Division, it was decided that Company D Soldiers should teach the Iraqis to help increase camaraderie and trust between the two units, said 1st Sgt. Tommy Hunt.

"This was a very good class, most helpful," said Najem Mohamed, a Soldier with 1st Company.

"This training will help me when my officer gives me a target, I will be able to see it on the map," he said.

"When they make contact [with insurgents] and need our assistance, we will be able to respond that much faster if they can give us a grid, and visa versa," said Staff Sgt. Terry Bingham, an instructor.

This training for the Iraqi Soldiers will increase reaction time to improvised explosive devices and in retrieving high-



Staff Sgt. Tony Fincher explains a map legend to Soldiers with 5th Division Iraqi Army.

value individual targets, said Staff Sgt. Mark Saunders, another class instructor.

Many see this training as a direct contribution to the future.

"Land navigation and map reading skills are the foundation of any military operation. Knowledge in this area is essential to the success of the IA," said 1st Lt. Brad

Caton, a class instructor.

"The feeling of satisfaction is what comes to mind knowing that the IA is one step closer to assuming full responsibility for Iraq," he said.

On restriction



Sgt. Erica Sandoval, a medic with Company C, 205th Area Support Medical Battalion, ties a restriction band on a Soldier's arm during combat lifesaver training on Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Paul Ondik



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Anthony Nelson Jr

He can fly: 1st Lt. Brian Robbins, 492nd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing pilot, climbs into the cockpit of a F-15 to perform pre-flight inspections before departure from a deployed location in southwest Asia.

PERSPECTIVES

Adding up the miles in Iraq

Gen. George W. Casey

Multi-National Force - Iraq, Commanding General

The year 2006 is already shaping up to be a decisive year for Iraq. In 2005, Iraqis formed the basis for a free country through multiple elections, the writing and ratifying of a constitution and denying safe havens to terrorists. In 2006, the Iraqi people will reap the benefits of that hard work by taking back more and more control of their country, while seating a democratic government.

At this moment 43 Iraqi Army battalions, 10 brigade headquarters and two division headquarters control their own battlespace. To put that in perspective, Iraqi Security Forces are now responsible for security in roughly 460 square miles of Baghdad and more than 11,600 square miles in other provinces of Iraq. That is an increase of more than 4,000 square miles since October. To go with that new territory, over the last three months the number of ISF independent operations exceeded the number of Coalition force independent operations. ISF independent operations have increased by 24 percent since May.

What has made this dramatic increase in ISF forces possible? Tough, realistic training and thousands of brave Iraqi men and women volunteering to be part of the police and military forces has made current force levels possible. In



Gen. Casey

turn, this allows Multi-National Force - Iraq to field high quality units at a rapid pace.

However, this is not a factory.

Organizing, equipping, and training each battalion, and then determining if and when it is capable of controlling its own battlespace differs from unit to unit.

The Coalition is on pace for about 75 percent of the Iraqi Army brigades to take the security lead by late fall. As the number of trained and effective ISF increases, often the question about

a timetable for Coalition withdrawal arises. While the transition of Iraqi battlespace is a key indicator of Iraqi Security Force success, it is only one of several conditions determining Coalition Forces presence and at what levels. Factors such as the threat level, the ISF's continued capability to secure their areas of responsibility and key ministerial capacity for agencies such as Interior, Defense and Finance are just some of the factors that influence any future reductions.

How much the new Iraqi government is seen as a "unity" government will have a great effect on how quickly Iraq can move forward in this decisive year of 2006.

Through it all, the ISF will be taking the front line in battling the insurgency while ensuring a stable, secure, normal daily life for many peace-loving Iraqis who want to realize their great country's potential.



U.S. Navy Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Katrina Beeler

Iraqi Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 16th Field Artillery Unit stack up to enter a simulated room.

Where is 'old Army' of yesterday?

By Roger W. Putnam

In a letter to the editor of a daily newspaper, a military veteran stated we should think about having our military consider going back to some of the ways of the "old Army."

This got me thinking — what is the "old Army" many veterans and retirees talk about?

To me, the old Army would be when I enlisted in 1949 and served in Japan still undergoing reconstruction.

To another, it would be World War II or maybe the Vietnam era. The same would apply to the Korean war veteran, or the First Gulf War veteran, or to any veteran who served in peacetime.

For each, the time they served is their "old Army." Soon, Soldiers serving today will be talking about the "old Army."

So, actually, the "old Army" is a myth, fed for generations by stories of different people serving at different times, remembering different things about the Army they knew when they were still part of a military unit. There is no one "Old Army" to go back to. Veterans think their army was the best, and at their time it probably was. We must remember these great Soldiers of the past who served so

honorably and performed such heroic deeds, but a strong military must also continue to evolve. The world is an ever-changing place, with new technologies coming on board daily, and our military must be willing to change with it. Even with all this new technology, what should remain foremost in our minds is this: it takes boots on the ground to win wars and maintain the peace. Along with technology, the lessons learned from the past will produce an even greater fighting machine.

Today's Soldier is touted as the greatest Soldier our country has ever produced, and I take no exception with that. What we should also keep in mind that each generation in its time has been the best army the country could produce. We must learn from past mistakes, profit from past successes, and honor past Soldiers, but we must not live in the past. We do not need to reinvent the wheel to learn how to move forward.

The "old Army" does not need to come back, because it's never really gone. We should be proud of our military as it is, second to none, and as brave as any our country has ever fielded. We old Soldiers of the past did it our way. Now it's time for us to let the Soldiers of today's Army do it their way.

Scimitar Pulse

What is your favorite George Clooney movie?

"Peacemaker. It seems fitting because WMD and terrorism is what our unit deals with."

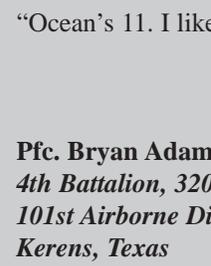


Sgt. Samuel Demelo
392nd Chemical Reconnaissance
Company
Jonesboro, Ark.



"That Quentin Tarantino movie, From Dusk Till Dawn. I brought it with me from Italy. It's kind of strange."

Maj. Davide Arcangeli
72nd Wing
Rome

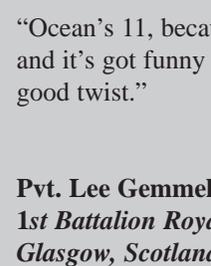


Pfc. Bryan Adams
4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery,
101st Airborne Division
Kerens, Texas



"Ocean's 11. It's something I've never seen before in a movie."

Spc. Justin Noel
392nd Chemical Reconnaissance
Company
Paragould, Ark.

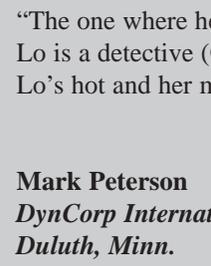


Pvt. Lee Gemmell,
1st Battalion Royal Scots
Glasgow, Scotland



"Ocean's 11 & 12. They're really one movie, and they're really good."

Staff Sgt. Billy Bob Fraas
4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery,
101st Airborne Division
Fort Campbell, Ky.



Mark Peterson
DynCorp International
Duluth, Minn.

"The one where he's in prison and J-Lo is a detective (Out of Sight). J-Lo's hot and her music is good."



Twin brothers meet in Iraq

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Will Ackerman
447th Air Expeditionary Group

SATHER AIR BASE Growing up, they did everything together. They fished, climbed rocks, and even joined the Air Force together. Now they are serving their nation in the Middle East: one in Kuwait, one at Sather Air Base here.

Recently, twin brothers Senior Airmen Jeremy and John Heinze saw each other when Jeremy's convoy stopped at Sather Air Base on Feb. 9.

Jeremy, a logistics readiness squadron tractor trailer operator, drove in a convoy with the Army's 828th Battalion from an Army base in Kuwait. His home unit is the 437th Logistics Readiness Squadron at Charleston Air Force Base, S.C.

Whenever I know he's on the road I'm uneasy, said John, a 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron utilities technician. His home unit is the 92nd Civil Engineer Squadron at Fairchild AFB, Wash.

Although John knew his brother was supposed to be stopping here, he didn't know when. Jeremy went to the utilities work center and waited to surprise John.

I was shocked, said John. Someone said, Your brother is in there.

They played video games and discussed their vacation they plan to take together in August.

We take our leave together every year, said Jeremy. We will do anything that's outdoors.

And just like a big brother, John, who's one-minute older, won't sleep easy until Jeremy gets home.

I'll definitely be worried until he gets (to Kuwait), said John.



Senior Airmen Jeremy, left, and John Heinze spend a few minutes together at Sather Air Base, Feb. 9.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ann Drier

Gen. Richard A. Cody, vice chief of staff, U.S. Army, poses with troops after administering the oath of allegiance to them during a ceremony at Camp Liberty.

Cody awards, re-enlists Soldiers

During a recent trip to Iraq, Gen. Richard A. Cody, the U.S. Army's vice chief of staff, honored Soldiers serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

At Camp Liberty he presented the Bronze Star for Valor to Sgt. Jeremy McDonald, who is assigned to Company C, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, for his actions Jan. 15 when he was wounded by insurgents after identifying a suspicious vehicle while on dismounted patrol.

While at Camp Liberty, Cody presented Combat Action Badges to 25 Soldiers for actions taken when

their convoy was struck by the roadside bomb. They ranged in rank from private to major.

Cody also re-enlisted more than 100 Soldiers and presented about 50 Combat Action Badges at Forward Operating Base Speicher to Soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division.

They know they're making a difference and quite frankly, in the spirit of the American Soldier they understand how important this war is and how important their service is. It tells me that this Army is always going to be strong, he said.

Sgt. Ryan Matson, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade contributed to this story

FINANCIAL

from Page 1

Mary Shapiro, vice chairman of NASD.

The education program will teach basic investment necessities such as how to buy a car, saving for retirement, and the tradeoffs between risk and return on investment, Glauber said.

The genesis of the program came when First Command Financial Planning, a Texas-based financial lending company, was fined \$12 million for making misleading statements while selling investment plans to military families.

About \$4.5 million of the fine

money was returned to investors, while the rest of the money was set aside for the Military Financial Education Program, Glauber said.

The program will not use any taxpayer money.

This initiative started with our disciplinary action against First Command Financial Planning. We and our partners want to make sure that that sort of thing never happens again, Shapiro said. We believe the Military Financial Education Program will move us a long way toward that end.

The multifaceted program includes:

An online resource center that

will serve as a centralized, trusted source for unbiased information on saving and investing, including original content, interactive tools, and links to financial education resources.

On-the-ground training to support the military's Personal Financial Management Program by establishing a coordinated and uniform financial education program, including the training and continued certification of personal financial managers and other volunteers.

Educational tool kits for trainers and investors offering multiple levels of personal financial information.

On-base activities and events to

motivate families to take responsibility for their financial well-being.

A long-term public outreach campaign, including print, radio and television public service announcements and media outreach to raise awareness of the tools, information and services available to military people and their families.

The program's Web site, *SaveAndInvest.org*, has a plethora of investor information and links to the NASD Web site, where further financial information can be found. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission also has launched an investor information section for military families on its Web site.

New York Sen. Hillary Clinton spoke at the news conference and said she learned about financial scams perpetrated against military personnel from her constituents.

It's a national problem that deserves a national solution, the senator said. This program is one of the best answers that we could come up with.

Chu expressed high hopes for the program.

It is our hope that with programs like this, that in the future our military personnel will be as well known for their financial savvy as they're known today for their military prowess, he said.

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

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Capt. Edgar Lopez and Staff Sgt. Marcus Oats, center, 447th Air Expeditionary Group Protocol, welcome one of many distinguished visitors who pass through Sather Air Base. The protocol staff hosts distinguished daily visitors including myriad senior officers, diplomats and celebrities.

Protocol provides red carpet service

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Will Ackerman
447th Air Expeditionary Group

SATHER AIR BASE — Day and night they arrive - four-star generals, ambassadors, congressional leaders, and Vice President Dick Cheney.

Whether they stop for a formal visit here or transition from an aircraft to a helicopter en route elsewhere, a two-person protocol team is there to greet them with a salute and a smile.

"We are the first people distinguished visitors see when they get off of the plane here," said Capt. Edgar Lopez, 447th Air Expeditionary Group protocol chief.

"We have to present a crisp military image, because that is often what they base their impression of their visit from," he said.

When the passengers are distinguished visitors, or DVs, Lopez and Staff Sgt. Marcus Oats, protocol noncommissioned office-in-charge, ensure they have a smooth transition once they arrive at Sather.

They plan as soon as they get the next day's passenger manifests. The times the DV aircraft are scheduled to arrive are anything but set in stone.

"We frequently have last-minute 'no shows,' or they don't arrive when they are scheduled," said Lopez. "We have to be much more flexible here than if we were working in protocol at home."

For example, the Iraqi minister of the interior was scheduled to arrive. However, unbeknownst to the protocol team, who were standing by, the minister stopped for the night in Egypt. But when he did arrive the next day, they greeted the minister with open arms and a crisp salute.

"Part of our job is to foster and maintain international relations," said Lopez. "That can come from simply smiling when we greet them."

Because arrival times tend to move because of flight delays or maintenance problems, they work closely with the 447th Air Expeditionary Group Command Post, which tracks all DV flights scheduled to land here.

"Nobody sticks to schedule," said Senior Airman Carrie Corder, 447th Command Post. "Sometimes we will get a call in the command post that the helos are five minutes out or the C-130s are 30 minutes out. Or a C-12 will land with a 'code' (a distinguished visitor) on board that we didn't know about."

Frequently there are time delays between when DVs arrive and when their next mode of transportation is ready, whether by air or by ground. When this occurs, the protocol team tries to make the DVs' time here relaxing and hassle free. That can entail providing "red carpet" treatment, but without the red carpet.

Unlike a permanent Air Force base, here there is no "luggage" detail and frequently no transportation to the DV lounge. Consequently, the protocol team helps carry the DV's luggage across the flight line to the lounge, all while trying to ensure their guests walk there safely from the airplane or helicopter.

"We don't have to (transport the baggage), but we want to," said Oats. "Our goal is to ensure they have a smooth transition."

This can be daunting when one group of DVs arrive, but when multiple groups of DVs are here at the same time, it presents logistical challenges. Not only does protocol have to orchestrate getting each set of DVs back to the head-

quarters safely, or to their next mode of transportation, they usually will not put two sets of guests together in the same place.

"Whoever gets here first, we put in the DV lounge. The others we will put in the DV tent," said Oats. "We keep them separate to avoid chaos."

Protocol's calm, cool professional demeanor, even under arduous conditions, ensures visitors who move through Sather Air Base can relax, even if only for a few minutes.

"Every time I come through here, I am impressed with their dedication," said Army Maj. Gen. John M. Urias, the former commander of the Joint Contracting Command for Iraq and Afghanistan. The general was returning home recently after a 13-month tour in the International Zone in Baghdad.

"I've been through here 50 or so times. Every time provided very responsive and professional service," he said of the protocol team.

In addition to taking care of DVs traveling through here, they also perform "traditional" protocol functions, which include arranging the occasional office visit with the 447th Air Expeditionary Group commander or meetings in the group conference room. This includes preparing refreshments and setting up the room.

No matter what the task or the challenge, "composure is the key to our job," said Oats. "If we are rattled, then everybody else will be rattled. We are supposed to be handling everything."

So whether it's a celebrity, congressional leader, a senior military officer, Lopez said protocol's mandate is the same. "Our goal is first-class treatment, whoever it is. We treat all our guests the same as DVs."

Iraqi Army making strides

Story and photos by Sgt. Dennis Gravelle
138th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL — On the east side of the Tigris River, Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division, perform routine patrols from Combat Outpost Resolve.

Serving alongside Iraqi Soldiers, a U.S. Military Transition Team lives with the 4th Bde. to mentor and train the officers of the Iraqi Army.

"It has been a very rewarding experience to live with the Iraqi Army. "It's a great pleasure to work with them, to learn their culture," said Capt. Jesse Bell, a MiTT officer. "They have courage and want a free Iraq."

These IA Soldiers make me feel proud to be with them, it shows a lot of heart and courage to go out without a lot of the equipment we have, said Capt. Michael Pregent, an intelligence officer working with 3rd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army.

"It makes you stand taller in our turret when we are out with them. They are very professional and courageous."

"We don't make a lot of money, but I did not join for money," said one Iraqi Soldier. "I joined to preserve my country, and to make Iraq a safe place for all the people and safe from terrorists."

One obstacle facing the Iraqi Army is a working relationship with the Iraqi Police. This has been a constant struggle for the MiTT's, but the relationship is improving by getting both organizations to sit down and talk. The 4th Brigade's mission is to quell insurgency in their area of operation, and that means working hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Police to keep the citizens of Mosul safe.



A Soldier with 3rd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army searches two individuals at a checkpoint in Mosul.



A Soldier, 3rd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army, pulls security at Combat Outpost Resolve.

Quickies

Gotch'ya

TIKRIT — Soldiers from 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, captured a man after watching him emplace an improvised explosive device Feb. 14.

The Soldiers saw the man crouching over an existing IED crater. When he noticed the Soldiers, he fled the scene. As the terrorist began to flee, troops opened fire on him and began to pursue the man.

The newly-placed IED detonated, but was far enough away that it had no effect, allowing the Soldiers to continue their pursuit.

The Soldiers searched an area where the man fled but were unable to find him. The battalion headquarters contacted the joint coordination center and learned a man walked into a local hospital with a gun-shot wound.

Troops went to the hospital to question the man and conducted an explosive residue test on him. After a positive residue test, the man received treatment for his injuries and was detained for further questioning.

Freebirds

BAGHDAD — About 430 male detainees were released from theater internment facilities over the last several days. The Combined Review and Release Board reviewed their cases and recommended release.

The Iraqi-led CRRB, which was established in August 2004, consists of members from the Ministries of Human Rights, Justice and Interior, as well as officers from Multi-National Forces - Iraq.

To date, the board has reviewed the cases of more than 27,900 detainees, recommending more than 14,600 individuals for release.

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

Engineer philanthropist



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo by Norris Jones

Project engineer Tim Rodgers of Vicksburg, Miss., poses with Iraqi orphans. Rodgers is finishing a six-month tour in Iraq with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. His congregation, the First Presbyterian Church in Vicksburg, took up a Christmas Eve and Christmas Day offering and sent him a \$3,000 check to help Iraqi orphans.

Water projects complete

DOHUK PROVINCE — The 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion and residents of Nerimerki and Tilisquif, completed three water projects.

With help from Ziyad Abdullah, head of the Dohuk Province Department of Water, the 422nd identified the villages' needs.

Villagers used to transport water from about two miles away using donkeys. Now, an electric pump pulls river water through a filtration system, into a galvanized steel holding tank in the village center.

"We feel great to get this service," said Hommad Omar Hussein, a resident of 70 years. "We've had no water for 30 years, so this is a great occasion."

In Tilisquif, a group of about 75 people came out for their ribbon-cutting ceremony despite the rain and cold.

In the village of Behere, construction of a retention wall to trap run-off water from rain and snow was completed.

"The whole village will benefit," said Abdullah.

"Everybody's going to benefit. There's been a drought for the past couple of years, so it's good that we will have a steady supply of water. This water is good not just for farming, but also for tourism and recreation," he said.

— *Spc. Richard Vogt, 138th Mobile*

"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.

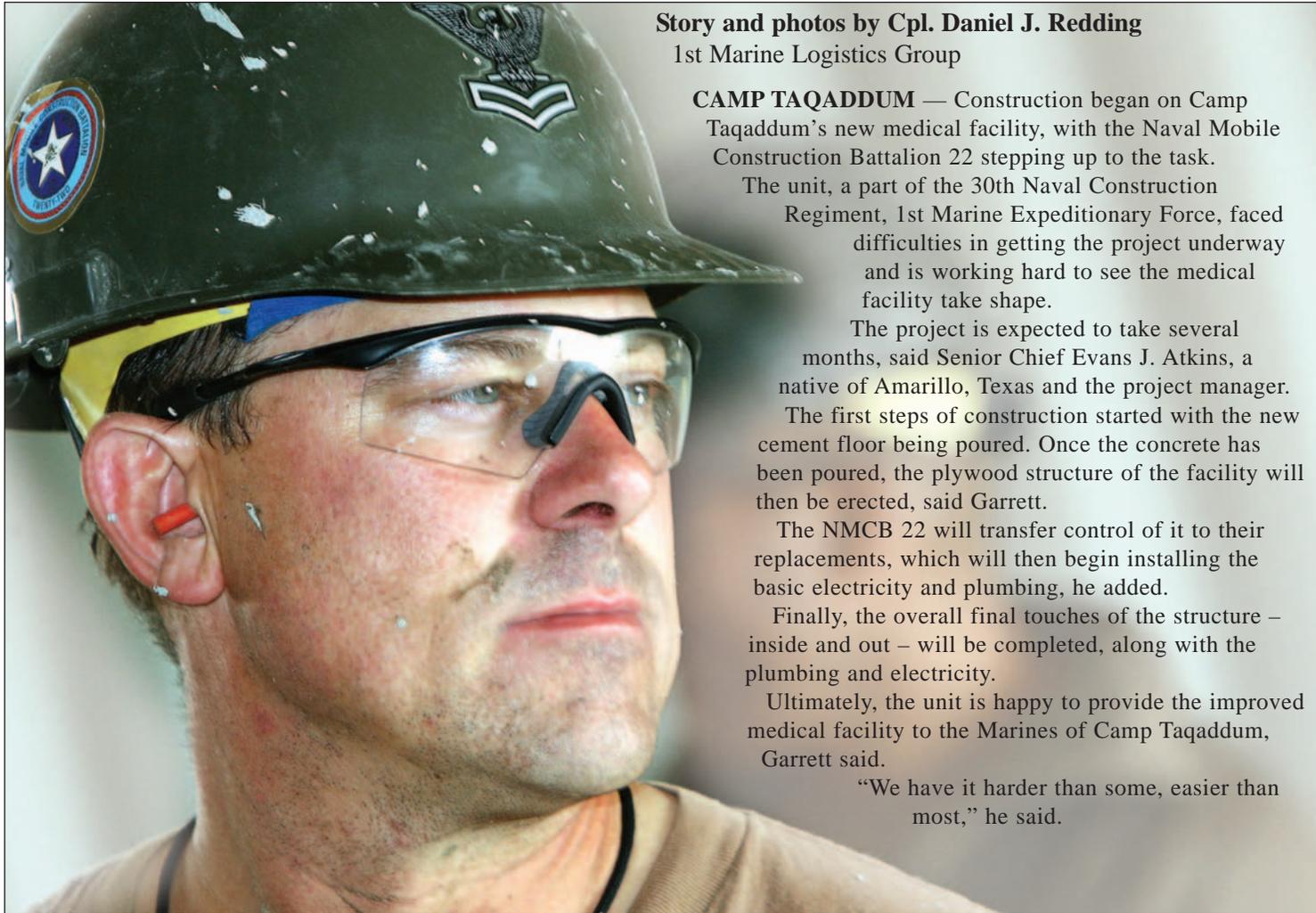


Freedom Radio 107.7 FM



We Build, We Fight

Seabees begin construction on Taqaddum medical facility



Story and photos by Cpl. Daniel J. Redding
1st Marine Logistics Group

CAMP TAQADDUM — Construction began on Camp Taqaddum's new medical facility, with the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 22 stepping up to the task.

The unit, a part of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, faced difficulties in getting the project underway and is working hard to see the medical facility take shape.

The project is expected to take several months, said Senior Chief Evans J. Atkins, a native of Amarillo, Texas and the project manager.

The first steps of construction started with the new cement floor being poured. Once the concrete has been poured, the plywood structure of the facility will then be erected, said Garrett.

The NMCB 22 will transfer control of it to their replacements, which will then begin installing the basic electricity and plumbing, he added.

Finally, the overall final touches of the structure — inside and out — will be completed, along with the plumbing and electricity.

Ultimately, the unit is happy to provide the improved medical facility to the Marines of Camp Taqaddum, Garrett said.

"We have it harder than some, easier than most," he said.



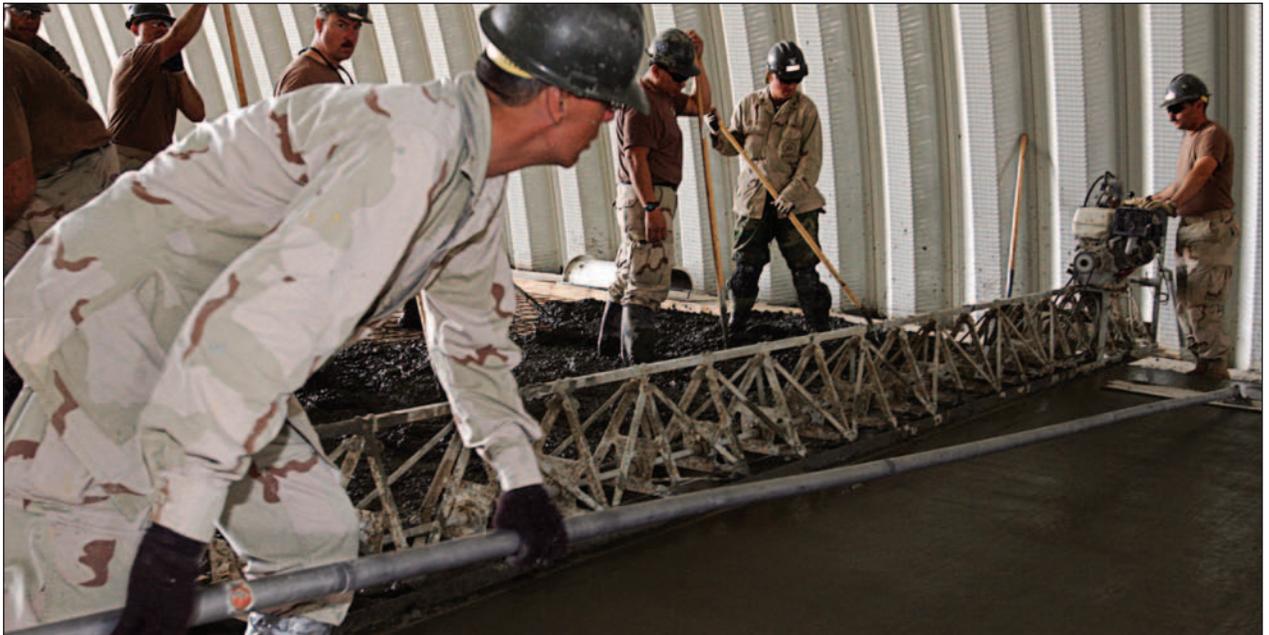
Petty Officer 1st Class Pat D. Garrett, builder, manages the flow of cement.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Green, a builder, watches a cement truck back up Feb. 16.

Photo illustration by Sgt. Jeff Lowry



Cement pours from a cement truck during the construction of the medical facility floor.



Petty Officer 1st Class Donald J. Bradford, builder, "floats" the cement floor being poured in Camp Taqaddum's new medical facility.



Sailors from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 22, 30th Naval Construction Regiment, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, lay a cement floor.

COMBAT SUPPORT

Men and women of CSH dedicate themselves to the mission

Story and photos by Spc. Rick Rzepka
Scimitar Assistant Editor

MOSUL — “Bring me only beautiful, useless things,” said Carl Sandburg in his poem murmurings of a field hospital.

The line comes from an injured Soldier in a field hospital who, wilted from the exhausting path of war, seeks to find peace as he prepares to return home.

The combat support hospital is one of the last places Soldiers want to find themselves while running the gauntlet of war here. But for many Soldiers and civilians, the CSH offers a sliver of the flipside to the brutality of human nature. It is a place dedicated to the alleviation of true pain and the commitment to humanity.

'I knew I had been shot'

Sgt. Walter R. Davis, 2nd of the 1st Infantry Battalion, 172nd Stryker Brigade, was promoted to the rank of sergeant in early January, just a few weeks before he was shot in the arm by a sniper.

Davis, who hails from Hattiesburg, Miss., was put in charge of a rifle squad who often find themselves on the front lines in the battle against insurgents in Mosul. Sgt. Davis, a natural leader according to his fellow Soldiers, knew the responsibility that came with the stripes he had just earned - and the inherent dangers of the profession he chose.

The men of the 172nd Stryker brigade had already shed blood. A few months earlier, on Nov. 19, Davis' unit, Charlie Company, was involved in a firefight with insurgents that left them with 11 wounded and one killed in action.

“When something like that happens, it really hits home,” said Davis. “I’ve never been closer to a group of guys in my life.”

On a cool morning in late January, Davis and his men were conducting business as usual in the dense urban jungle of Mosul, a rat's nest of insurgent activity since the war began.

“It was like any other day really,” said Davis of Jan. 24. “We had a three-hour patrol in the morning, came in for chow and rolled back out at noon,” he said.

On their second mission of the day, Davis and the other Soldiers from Charlie Company provided security in a heavily populated area of the city as a tactical psychological operations team was distributing flyers and pamphlets to the locals.

Davis and his fire-team took responsibility for the southwest section of the four-corner perimeter around a mosque to safeguard both the PSYOPS team and the people inside.

“He was doing the right thing,” said 1st Lt. Joe Vanty, Davis' team leader. “He knew his job well.”

Davis watched as his team dismounted from the Stryker to set up security. As his teammates scanned their sectors for threats, Davis moved from man to man for the better part of an hour to provide guidance and support.

“I went to go check on my SAW (squad automatic weapon) gunner, and as soon as I stepped off the curb onto the street is when I got shot,” said Davis. “I actually heard my bone snap.”

“The second I heard the shot, I saw him hit the ground,” said Vanty, who initially thought the body armor Davis was wearing absorbed the 7.62 mm round. Davis stumbled for cover behind the Stryker and fell over.

“I knew I had been shot,” said Davis. As he lay in the street, Davis said he immediately thought of his family back home.

After Davis fell to the ground, Pfc. Jeffrey 'Doc' Stewart rushed over and provided the initial treatment for the wound. “He (Davis) was only down for three to four minutes before Pfc. Stewart was there with the stretcher,” said Vanty.

“I packed the wound and threw a tourniquet on because I couldn't see the exit wound,” said Stewart who was worried about hemorrhaging. ‘Doc’ Stewart also determined that the bullet had not hit an artery because of the light color of the blood.

After making sure Davis could breathe without problems, Stewart helped a nauseous and bewildered Davis into a Stryker vehicle. “I thought I was going to throw up, but I didn't,” said Davis.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Anthens, Company C's senior medic, cut Davis' cumbersome gear away and determined that the wound was a 'through and through' gunshot wound, meaning that the round had gone straight through Davis' bicep. His fellow Soldiers made him as comfortable as possible and took him to the 47th Combat Support Hospital, a short ride away, said Anthens.

From point of injury to his arrival at the CSH, Charlie Company's Soldiers delivered their wounded comrade into the hands of the 47th in less than 15 minutes.

“The Stryker parted traffic like the Red Sea,” said Vanty.



Army Sgt. Walter R. Davis, 2nd of the 1st Infantry Battalion, 172nd Stryker Brigade displays his Purple Heart with a somber pride at the 47th Combat Hospital at Forward Operating Base Diamondback, Mosul.

Dedicated to life

On the modern battlefield, military medical professionals are not only trained in their respective specialties, they must also master basic soldiering skills because of their close proximity to the fight.

A medic takes on job of the Soldiers around him, whether he is with the infantry, military police, or explosive ordnance disposal team.

“We live as infantry,” said Spc. Joshua Cresswell, of 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. “We do everything they do. We're just one of the guys until someone gets hurt.”

Along with ammo and gear, the medics also lug trach tubes, IVs, tourniquets and medicine. Everything they need to save a life.

When someone does go down, Cresswell said the first step is to assess the injury.

“We try to figure out where he is bleeding,” he said. He checks the entire body, often cutting off the Soldier's protective vest. Blood is one of the few things a medic can't replace on the ground, so stopping the flow is vital.

Medics then move on to the airway, stabilizing the breathing through CPR or breathing tubes if needed. When more than one Soldier is injured, fellow infantrymen trained in first aid lend a hand, but it is the medic who is running the show. “Once one is stabilized, I move on to the next one.”

For Cresswell, stationed at Camp Prosperity, the nearest CSH is the 10th CSH in central Baghdad. The crowded streets sometimes make evacuating a patient by vehicle impossible. Instead he calls on air support. With the helicopter medivac procedure memorized, he shouts it out line by line to a radioman while still treating the casualties. There is nothing more important than getting the Soldiers out of the field and into equipment-rich environment of a hospital.

The same holds true in Mosul.

“The biggest benefit is the rapid evacuation of the casualty,” said Lt.

Col. David Misner, emergency room doctor at the hospital, said some disadvantages of being so close to the front lines are the elements for trauma, but it's a dirty environment and a boom here.”

The 47th CSH, only 200 meters from the front lines, is a target of insurgent mortars and rockets.

“Luckily they're terrible shots,” said Lt. Col. Vanty, the hospital commander, Headquarters and Logistics Company.

Hearing the call come over the radio, Vanty and his staff were inbound to the hospital, the Soldiers were already in preparation to receive the casualty.

“When these guys come in, it's a relief,” said Vanty.

While the 47th CSH, which is the only medical facility for the northern sector of Iraq, has a mix of local nationals to insurgents, the hospital is a safe haven for an American Soldier is injured, said Vanty.

As the Stryker vehicle carrying Davis arrived at the hospital's emergency service lane, the hospital staff rushed him into the trauma bay, where a trauma team leader quickly assessed his condition and relieved his fierce pain.

Davis' condition was determined from a trauma standpoint, the wound was not too deep. There are three main wires that control the arm, and they remained functional. “He is lucky,” said Misner, who expects Davis to undergo months of rigorous physical therapy in his bicep.

One-third of Davis' bicep muscle was damaged, said Col. Randall Espinosa, the surgeon who led the surgical team out of Fort Bragg, N.C.

Davis' injury could have been fatal. “We were rushed into the operating room to repair the damage to the Soldier's damaged arm.”

“He had a diminished pulse and a comminuted humerus fracture,” said Espinosa. The surgery repaired Davis' wound and repaired the damage to his arm.

In past conflicts Davis may have been able to return to his advanced technology, better response time, and the fact that injured Soldiers have an increasing number of normal lives, said Espinosa.

A CSH in Iraq is comparable to a hospital in a war zone. Of the best-trained and experienced medical professionals in the world, Doctors and nurses have all volunteered to save the patient's lives.

“About 94 percent of the trauma patients survive,” according to Col. Dennis DeLoach, the hospital's Baghdad. “One reason is because the pilots get them to us so quickly. And the medics are good folks.”

The hospital receives about 600 casualties a day, but they're not all severe cases. The hospital has a staff of about 100.

Fortunately, their work flow has improved over the last months.

“I'm convinced that we've had more casualties than insurgents have inflicted,” said Espinosa. The hospital is a humanitarian element to the hospital.

About one quarter of the 47th CSH's patients are local nationals, Iraqis, and the rest being local nationals, Iraqis, and the rest being local nationals, Iraqis.

Shortly after Davis was awarded the Purple Heart, he was on a C-17 military transport plane to the Medical Center in Germany, where he will be recovering from his wounds.

“I'll tell you, a lot of people tell me they're sorry,” said Davis. “I'm glad it was me.”

PORT HOSPITAL

themselves to saving lives here

m chief at the 47th CSH. There are
 ose however, he said. "The care is excel-
 nment and we live from boom to

from the city of Mosul, is a frequent
 kets.

said Capt. Christopher Washack, compa-
 Headquarters Company.

adio that a wounded American Soldier
 oldiers of the 47th Combat Hospital
 to receive their brother-in-arms.

we're ready in droves," said Misner.

provides comprehensive medical care
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osa. In the OR, Espinosa cleansed
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a state-side emergency room. With some
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patients that make it to the CSH sur-
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patients a month, said Doyle. While
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decreased steadily over the past few

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 recent months.

SH's patients are Coalition troops, with
 Security Forces and insurgents, adding
 ital's overall mission.

the Purple Heart by Brig. Gen. Rickey
 C-130 headed to Lundstuhl Regional
 he will transition back to the United
 nd.

me that they're sorry for me. I'm not
 as me rather than my fire team."



U.S. Army photo by Orlando Claffey

Spc. Zeida Nino readies a patient for a CT scan at the 10th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad. The machine gives doctors cross-section view of the person's torso so they can check for internal injures.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey

Spc. Jennifer Bennett, a surgical assistant, gives retractors to Maj. Keith Hill as he works to repair a patient's fractured leg.

Military medicine



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey

Under the veil of a sandstorm, Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Caesar, a medic with the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division, scans rooftops for trouble in the Jazair section of Baghdad while an explosive ordnance disposal team responds to an improvised explosive device blast. Medics play the role of infantry, patrolling and fighting along with them until someone gets hurt.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey

Technicians at the 10th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad study the readouts from a CT scan. It takes less than 10 minutes to complete the process, giving doctors a thorough look inside the patient.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rick Rzepka

A surgeon with the 47th Combat Support Hospital at Forward Operating Base Diamondback, Mosul, ensures that a bandage is clean before applying it to a casualty's leg.

Simple strap saves lives

Story by Spc. Orlando Claffey
Scimitar Staff

BAGHDAD — Front line medics in Iraq are relying more heavily on an age-old device in the field, and it is saving the lives of Soldiers.

Tourniquets have long been a staple of medical care on the battlefield. Used since the days of the Civil War, they were often thought of as a last resort way to control bleeding.

"It was an unproven myth that tourniquets should be a last ditch effort," said Lt. Col. John Groves, the head nurse at the 10th Combat Support Hospital emergency room in Baghdad.

It was often assumed that once one was put on, the limb would have to be amputated. A tourniquet can be used for hours before any permanent nerve damage occurs.

"People feared damaged nerves," he said, "but we are having trouble because patients bleed to death. The tourniquets are saving limbs and saving lives."

While doctors in trauma centers across Iraq laud tourniquets, it is the field medics' job to assess the wounded Soldiers, stop the hemorrhaging and get them to a helicopter. Their decisions are often the most important factor in a person's treatment.

"Stopping the bleeding is the first step," said Daniel Nieuwendorp, a medic with the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division serving at Forward Operating Base Falcon in south Baghdad.

In the past, field medics first checked the patient's airway, breathing, then focused on bleeding using pressure dressings. "Now the first priority is to stop any life threatening bleeds,"

Nieuwendorp said.

"The armored vests Soldiers are wearing protect them from many "core injuries" to the torso, he said, and often limbs are too severely wounded for pressure dressings. "We go right to the tourniquets."

IED attacks and shrapnel often cause several injuries to their victims. The type of wounds they inflict increase the chance a Soldier may bleed to death before he reaches a hospital.

"Without tourniquets, the blood pressure would drop and these guys would die."

Capt. Richard Erff

"Hypotension is our biggest enemy," said Capt. Richard Erff, an operating room anesthesiologist at the 10th CSH. "We see multiple severe injuries on patients, and sometimes have to do three surgeries at once. Without tourniquets, the blood pressure would drop and these guys would die."

A change in Army philosophy and the damaging effects of improvised explosive devices has greatly increased tourniquet use. In February 2003, top military doctors advocated the use of modern tourniquets in war zones. Since then, the Army has worked to give every Soldier a modern, nylon and plastic tourniquet.

The modern tourniquet replaces the belts and bandages formerly used to cut off circulation. Often, they were applied incorrectly. The new model includes its own windlass device, allowing for uniform pressure and the ability for a victim to apply it himself.

"At the hospital, we can pump in a liter of blood every two minutes," said Erff. "A medic can revive breathing, but they don't have replacement blood in the field."

Maintaining blood pressure until a patient can be flown to a hospital is vital and a \$20 strap is making the difference.



Sgt. Marki Hall, NCO Academy instructor, from Ocilla, Ga., demonstrates how to treat a sucking chest wound during basic first aid instruction Jan. 30 at the NCO Course.

Iraqi NCOs learn from the best

Story and photo by
Sgt. Rachel Brune
101st Airborne Division

Q-WEST BASE COMPLEX — "His guts are on the ground," said the instructor.

The scene was familiar to any Soldier who ever sat through a basic first aid class.

Iraqi NCOs took a test on basic first aid Jan. 30 as part of the Iraqi Army primary leadership and development course at the Q-West NCO Academy.

"I'm teaching them how to do medical things, but I'm learning, too," said Sgt. Marki Hall, NCO Academy instructor, from Company B, 423rd Infantry, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

Some of the students have rudimentary knowledge from attending the basic combat training class at the Academy, but some come with no knowledge of first aid, said Hall.

The first day of the first aid training consists of blocks of instruction in how to evaluate a casualty, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, avoid sexually transmitted diseases and maintaining personal hygiene.

Iraqi soldiers are learning to use first aid they may need to use during missions.

As NCOs, they will return to their units to teach the skills to other soldiers, said Sgt. 1st Class Jomo Anderson, NCO

Academy senior instructor, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 423rd Infantry, 172nd SBCT.

"NCOs should always know how to give first aid and how to teach it," said Anderson, a Winston-Salem, N.C., native.

The Academy instructors try to utilize as much hands-on participation as possible.

"The more hands-on [training] we do, the more they retain," said Anderson.

The second day consisted of a class on how to stop bleeding. Hall demonstrated how to treat various types of wounds on Sgt. 1st Class Mohammed, fellow instructor and Iraqi Army Soldier.

Hall took the class outside for instruction on transporting incapacitated Soldiers. One by one, he demonstrated how to carry a wounded comrade on a litter, and with one or more people.

Once Hall demonstrated, the students paired up to practice. Hall and Mohammed circulated the small area, trying to make sure each student was performing the skill correctly.

"We teach them, and they are listening," said Mohammed.

If Mohammed were to go on a mission with this class, he would feel comfortable if they had to use these first aid skills on him, he said.

"The guys are getting good information," said Mohammed. He added, even if the soldiers already know some of the skills, they will get better with more experience at the Academy.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Alfred Johnson

Medical Aids: Iraqi Soldiers of 3rd Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade watch as Cpl. Greg Fuller of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, right, demonstrates how to make an arm sling from a cravat as part of first aid training.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Conference to stimulate economy in Kirkuk soon

KIRKUK — The Kirkuk Business Center, with assistance from Soldiers on the Provincial Reconstruction Team from the 451st Civil Affairs Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, helped plant seeds for a greater economy in the Kirkuk Province during an agricultural conference attended by more than 250 farmers on Feb. 8.

The goal of the conference was for provincial leaders to gain an understanding of local farmers' concerns and to help build a foundation for future conferences and future solutions. The business center and

Soldiers hope to assemble a conference every two months. Topics such as soil, seeds, fertilizer and irrigation were discussed.

According to Capt. Steve Taylor, a civil affairs officer on the economic team, the series of conferences will help regional farmers by providing them with knowledge, modern farming techniques and potentially new equipment.

The business center will use issues raised in each conference to plan topics of discussion, choose speakers, and decide which type of vendors to invite follow up conferences.

Civil affairs company to promote Baghdad growth

BAGHDAD — Over the past four months, the Soldiers of Company D, 490th Civil Affairs Team engaged more than 20 key Iraqi leaders to promote economic and social growth.

One of the ways the CAT promotes economic growth is through a process of micro loans.

During its tenure with 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, the team coordinated projected development with local officials and businessmen for a United States Agency for International Development program, which will build the first micro-loan center to serve the

greater Iraqi community.

Micro loans are similar to other loans in the United States with one exception: micro loans focus on developing countries. An average micro loan consists of a small loan of less than \$500 invested toward a necessity that would enrich the family in receipt.

The theory is the profits of the investment will pay off the loan and a subsequent loan will be drawn. The cycle will then continue as a family grows more financially stable. The loans granted at micro-loan centers are usually focused towards agricultural initiatives in order to target grassroots development.

Iraqi Army, U.S. Special Forces clean up streets

BALAD — The 2nd Battalion 2nd Brigade 5th Iraqi Army Division, advised by U.S. Army Special Forces Soldiers, assaulted two targets Feb. 12 in Diyala Province, detaining 102 persons of interest, killing two insurgents and discovering a large weapons cache.

The assaults were designed to capture key insurgents and disrupt multiple insurgent cell operations — especially improvised explosive device production.

Of the 102 persons detained, 25 were on Iraqi Security Forces' "most wanted" lists.

A weapons cache discovered on

the first objective consisted of a rocket, two artillery rounds, five mortar rounds, three rocket-propelled grenades, an RPG launcher, three AK-47s and IED-making materials.

One Iraqi Army Soldier was slightly wounded by enemy small-arms fire during the operation. He was treated on the scene by Iraqi and U.S. medical personnel.

Iraqi commanders said that the combined operation was a success, and is a mark of the effectiveness of the Iraqi Army. They are looking forward to conducting additional missions in the future.

CHAPLAIN'S TALK

What is common here is anything but

By Lt. Col. David B. Koch
Chaplain,
Multi-National Corps — Iraq



Chaplain Koch

Esther 5:1 On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance.

How common and everyday this seems. A lady named Esther gets up, gets dressed and goes about her business. It seems, so ordinary, free of danger, inauspicious.

And yet, for Esther, it was anything but common, anything but everyday, anything but free from danger. She got up that morning to lay her life on the line for her people. They had been sold to be slaughtered, no more than a pawns in a powerbroker's hand.

We hear nothing of her preparation. We do not see her fasting to purify herself. We do not see her fear, or hear her prayers. We do not see the incredible courage to act in concert with God. We simply see the common and everyday event of a woman doing what seems to be second nature to her.

I visited with the commander of the Massachusetts National Guard's 126th Military History Detachment.

"Chaplain," he said. "You just don't hear about the

truly heroic things our troops do out there everyday. The getting up and the going out to repeatedly face the dangers they face!"

There are the explosive ordnance folks who know the dangers and yet are willing to face them, to save those civilians and servicemembers.

There are the helicopter and airplane pilots who perform their missions, knowing a missile or a bullet could bring them down.

There are the convoy folks, driving hard unforgiving miles to bring supplies to you and me.

Also, don't forget the men and women who are on patrol, doing their best to protect, safeguard and maintain order.

If we were to take a snapshot of you, what would we see?

Maybe at 17:45, washing your hands in the dining facility, for chow?

Maybe you are scraping the mud off your boots and taking off your clothes?

Perhaps you are walking into another 12-hour shift, or checking your gear in preparation to go somewhere outside the wire. There are many possibilities.

Whatever it may be, it appears common and everyday, until you dig deeper.

It appears ordinary until you see the preparation, the faith, and the trust in God.

Searching for a better tomorrow



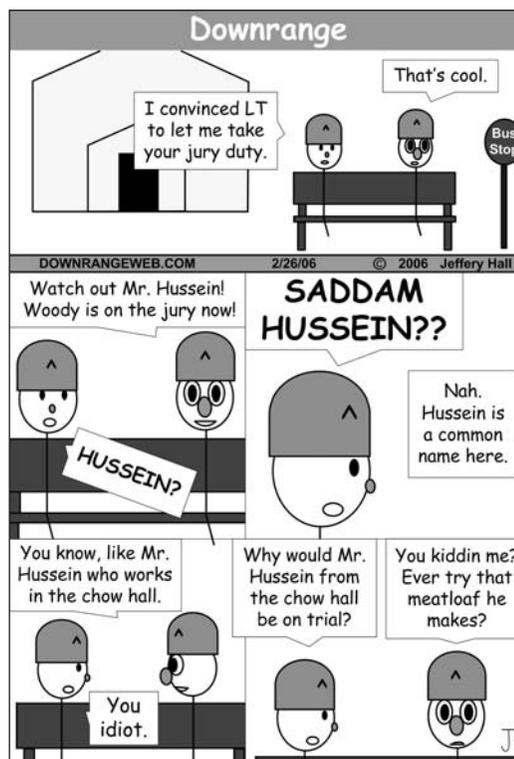
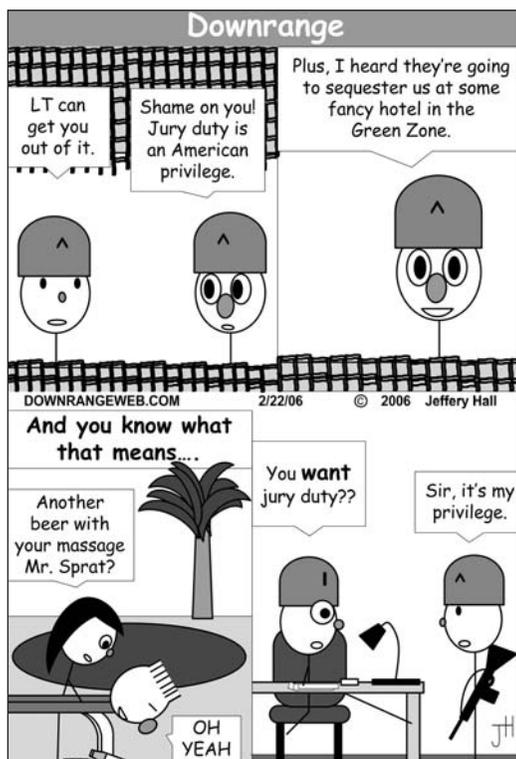
U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin L. Moses Sr.

Iraqi Soldiers from 1-2 Commandos led by Brig. Gen. Amar conducted Operation River Harvest in southern Arab Jabour, Baghdad on Jan. 30. The purpose of the mission was to prevent insurgents from operating in the area. As early morning rolls in, Soldiers continue moving from house to house, searching for insurgents.

ATTENTION

Send your funny pictures, stories and comics for publication consideration to scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil

Scimitar Slapstick



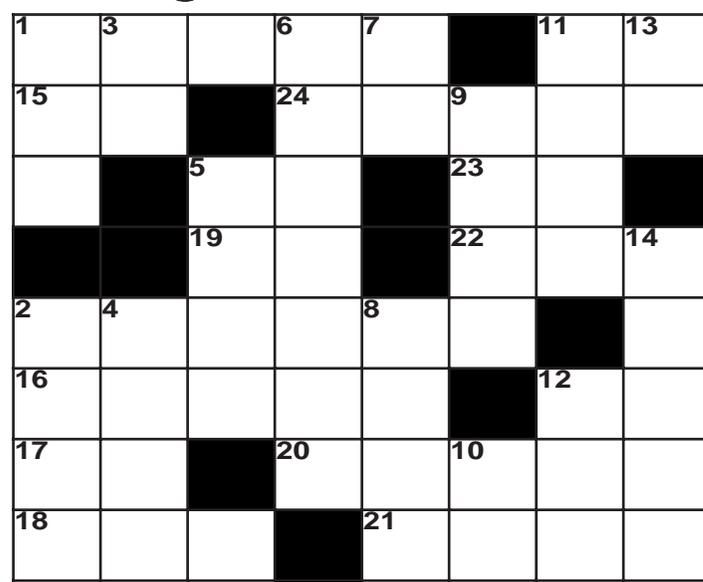
WELCOMING
our new "Country Convoy" Commander...

Spc. Laurell Tucker

Hear Spc. Tucker play your favorite Country tunes Monday - Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. on **Freedom Radio 107.7 FM**

Occasionally, Freedom Radio must leave the air for service maintenance. We appreciate your patience during these times and hope you enjoy our satellite feed from our headquarters at the American Forces Network in Mannheim, Germany.

Fightin' Words



Fightin' Words solution from Feb. 17, 2006



[Counter Radio-controlled IED Electronic Warfare]

CREW

Treat Us Right
We'll Help Save Your Life

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>DOWN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> MTV awards show Legendary hitter Ty Army affirmative action Swedish pop group Where I would rather be right now Spanish for beer When your computer crashes, call the ___ guy. Las Vegas of the East Spanish greeting Internet lingo for busy Presidential power Spastic cartoon character; gay tattoo List of injured athletes Badass editor of Iraq's greatest paper | <p>ACROSS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Leonardo Di _____ Combat _____ Artist Gieger Herpes, syphilis, AIDS etc. Transworld abbreviation Modus operandi Term for fat Legendary blues man King Creature of the night, used in baseball Designator for WWII plane, mohawk Volatile Iraqi province Black Sabbath frontman Internet lingo for laughing extended gameplay _____ Merman |
|--|--|

AAFES helps Soldiers effected by fire

Exchange provides essential items to Soldiers who lost personal items

Story and photo by

Sgt. 1st Class Mary Mott

363rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP LIBERTY — An electrical fire the morning of Feb 5 at Forward Operating Base Yusifiyah, south of Baghdad, destroyed Soldiers' personal belongings as well as doing extensive damage to the Military Transition Team tactical operations center.

There were 70 to 80 Soldiers in the camp's main building, a former potato factory constructed of rippled metal sheathing, when the fire broke out.

The fire caused the center portion of the roof to cave-in and debris covered most of the living area and office space.

An Iraqi fire department team from the town of Mahmudiyah, east of Yusifiyah, responded to the fire, which spread very quickly and destroyed most of the building.

Master Sgt. Ted Endicott, who serves as the senior Army-Air Force Exchange Services liaison officer in the Multi-National Division-Baghdad area, said he

was contacted for assistance by Lt. Col. Greg Sudman, MND-B's Supply and Logistics officer. Morale, Welfare and Recreation workers were concerned about the Soldiers who had lost their possessions and contacted Sudman, Endicott said.

"I contacted AAFES immediately about this, and it went all the way to the top and they said 'yes, let's us support these Soldiers,'" said Endicott. AAFES provided 178 sets of 3-pack t-shirts, underwear and socks as well as 178 travel packs, which include shaving gear, toothpaste, deodorant, etc. - one for each Soldier who lost their personal items.

Soldiers from Company A, 526th Brigade Support Battalion, loaded the pallet at Camp Liberty Feb. 9 for distribution to their fellow Soldiers in the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

"We have an excellent relationship with AAFES," said Endicott.

The items were delivered to the Soldiers within 48 hours of the fire," said Maj.

Bradley Rees, logistics officer for the 2nd Brigade, 101st Abn. Div. at FOB Striker.



Soldiers prepare to unload a truck full of essential items donated by AAFES for personnel whose living quarters burned down Feb. 5.

"Knowing our Soldiers (at that location) are far from an AAFES, it really means a lot to them (to get these items) to help them get back on their feet," said Rees.

The fire was accidental. Buildings in Iraq do not follow an electrical code com-

parable to that of American wiring standards. A similar fire destroyed a building nearby, occupied by the Iraqi Army, several weeks ago. That building was of identical construction to the TOC and was believed to have been wired the same.

Blast shield works!

Story and photo by

Staff Sgt. Mark ojciechowski

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MUQDADIYAH — Rolling through the streets of certain areas in Iraq is no doubt hazardous, so using the right protective gear and exercising good discipline can

mean the difference between life or death for Soldiers in combat.

The Bradley section of Troop A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division, was returning from a night mission on the morning of Jan. 25, when they were hit by a 155mm improvised explosive device. The blast from an IED this size has a potential kill radius of about 75 meters.

The first Bradley had rolled past, and just as the second Bradley passed it detonated.

Pfc. Robert Conley, who was in the turret protected only by thick glass said, "it started as a little flash and then everything just exploded sending dirt and shrapnel everywhere."

The blast blew three skirts off of the lower portion of the Bradley,

peppered the whole right side of the vehicle and shattered one of the 2-inch-thick panels of protective glass around the turret.

"All I heard was a pop and I saw light flash in through the periscopes and then the cabin started filling up with smoke," said Sgt. Steve Adams of Lumberton Texas.

One Soldier received a shrapnel wound to the hand and a few of the crew members were bumped around a bit, but other than those injuries the Soldiers were fine. The Soldiers credit the Bradley's blast shield with saving their lives.



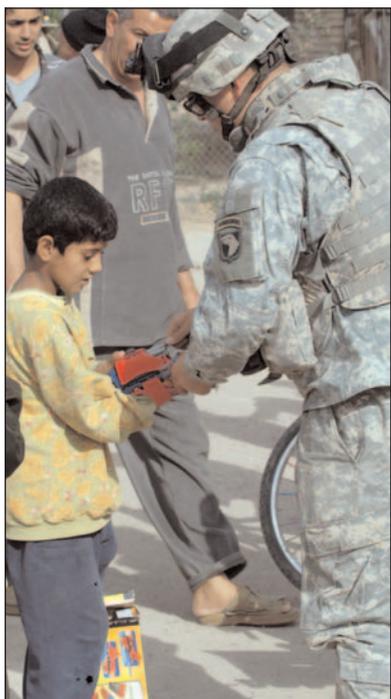
A blast shield, like this one, will save your skin.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Daniel Turner

Bongo, a bomb-sniffing military dog, leads Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, on a search for bomb-making material Feb. 8. The Soldiers along with Iraqi Security Forces secured Babil Province as Shi'a pilgrims made their way toward Karbala for the Ashura pilgrimage.

Freedom Photographs



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Charles W. Gill
A Soldier with 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, helps a child put together a toy during a humanitarian aid mission.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Bradley C. Church
Airman 1st Class Gherjuen Robinson, with the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, guards an entry control point on Ali Air Base.



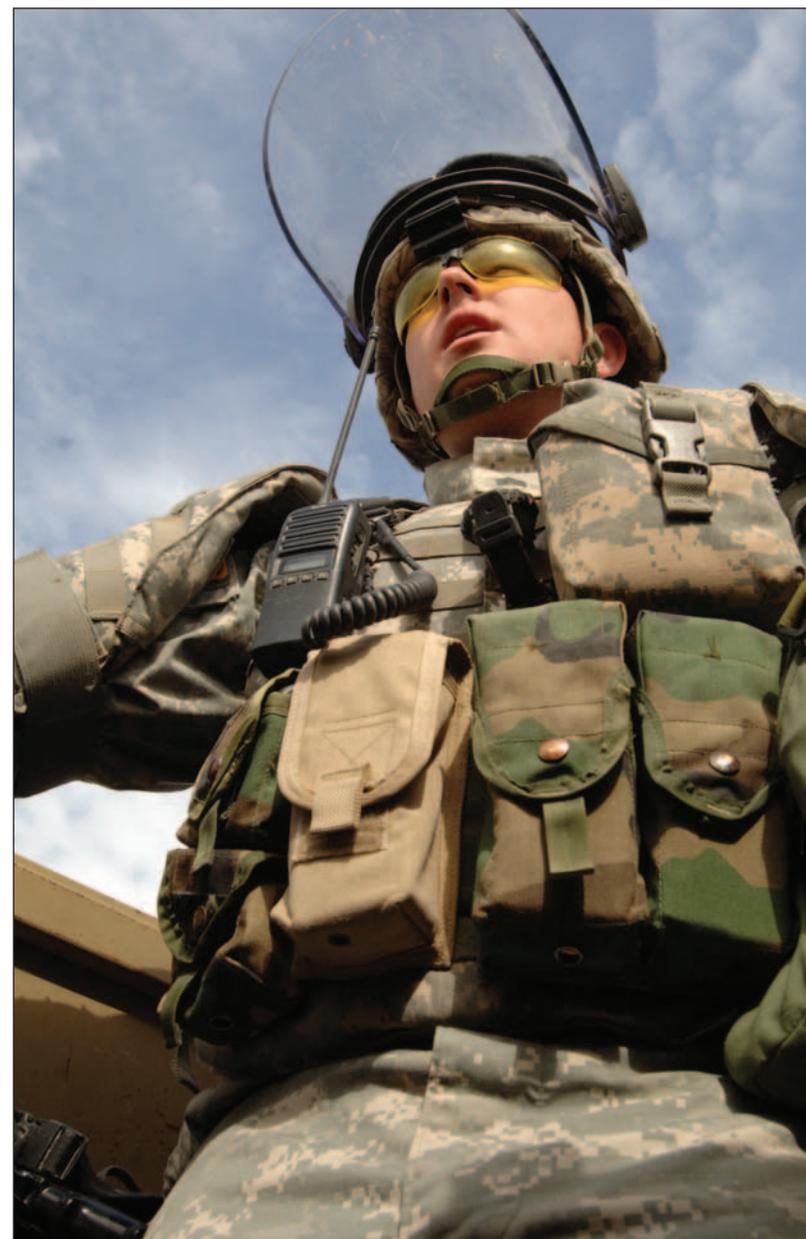
U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Larson

An Iraqi construction worker tosses a brick to another worker as they build a wall for a new school in the town of Taji.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Bradley C. Church

Spc. Brandon Vaughan scans over the interior perimeter of Ali Air Base on Feb. 1. Vaughan is part of Quick Reaction Force working with 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Teddy Wade

Sgt. David Chastain a top gunner for Battery A, 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division provides security for a convoy during Operation Ten Bears in Baghdad on Jan. 23. Operation Ten Bears was a sweep in search for possible weapons caches.

Rebuilding Iraq

Projects shaping a nation

Dahuk

Dahuk residents will have more reliable power with the completion of a new sub-station.



Makmoor

Renovations to the police station in Makmoor are complete, improving the work environment for about 200 police officers serving 78,000 residents of the city.

Kirkuk

New protective walls will enhance security at the Northern Gas Company, allowing the Kirkuk plant to produce its much needed energy for the country.

Sulaimaniyah

A border fort in Sulaimaniyah will increase security along Iraq's border with Iran. The Department of Border Enforcement will also use the structure to train border police and coordinate patrols.

Taji

Two new medical clinics now provide more than 15,000 Iraqi troops with better health care.

Nissan

A water project in Nissan is complete after the installation of about 4.5 miles of pipe and 10 fire hydrants.



Najaf

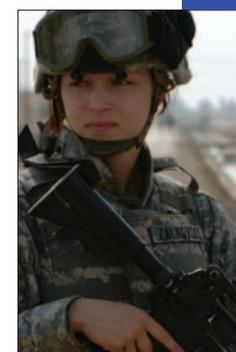
Electrical feeders will connect three 33-kilovolt substations which distribute power throughout Najaf.

Pick the Cover

Scimitar readers can choose next week's cover photo. Please e-mail your choice with subject "Cover" to scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil.



I'm going back? Capt. Erik Aadland, front and center, looks up from his reading during his flight over Iraq. Most of the passengers in this aircraft are returning to Iraq after a two-week break.



Got your six: Pfc. Janelle Zalkovsky of the Civil Affairs Unit, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division provides security while other Soldiers survey a newly constructed road in Ibriam Jaffes. It connects the village to other main travel routes.



Out of sight: John Christofferson with the Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment 11, out of Woodby Island, Wash., shoots the .50-caliber sniper rifle at a range in Ad Diwaniyah



Eating right: Maj. Polly R. Graham, a registered dietitian, offers advice and information on weight loss and nutrition to the Soldiers with the 3rd Corps Support Command.

Cool Movies, AFN Movie Channel

Saturday February 25, 2006

1100 Meet the Parents
1300 Raise Your Voice
1502 The Wedding Planner
1700 Rules of Engagement
1922 The Medallion
2100 Raise Your Voice
Sunday February 26, 2006
0100 National Lampoon's European Vacation
0247 Annie Hall
0435 Love & Basketball
0651 Groundhog Day
0847 Glory

1450 There's Something About Mary
1700 Apollo 13
1930 Have Rocket, Will Travel
2250 There's Something About Mary

Monday February 27, 2006

0445 Aliens
0730 The Paper
0917 Mutiny
1300 Raise Your Voice
1502 The Wedding Planner
1700 Friday, the 13th
1849 From Here to Eternity

Tuesday February 28, 2006

0300 Cast the First Stone

0450 The Edge
0700 The Deep End of the Ocean
903 Nine Months
1450 The Hours
1700 Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid
1905 The Fighting Seabees
2250 The Hours

Wednesday March 1, 2006

0448 Vertical Limit
0700 Bridget Jones Diary
0852 Birdy
1300 Hard Ball
1501 Signs

1700 House Party
1857 Training Day
2100 Hard Ball
2300 Signs

Thursday March 2, 2006

0450 Die Hard with a Vengeance
0700 Consenting Adults
0854 No Way Out
1300 The Fighting Temptations
1518 Charlie's Angels
1700 Bad Boys
1905 Coyote Ugly
2100 The Fighting Temptations
2318 Charlie's Angels

Friday March 3, 2006

0446 Stepmom
0700 Nell
0905 Sleepy Hollow
1300 Bourne Identity
1513 U-Turn
1700 Ace Ventura Pet Detective
1843 48 Hours
2100 Bourne Identity
2313 U-Turn

For further details check <http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil/>