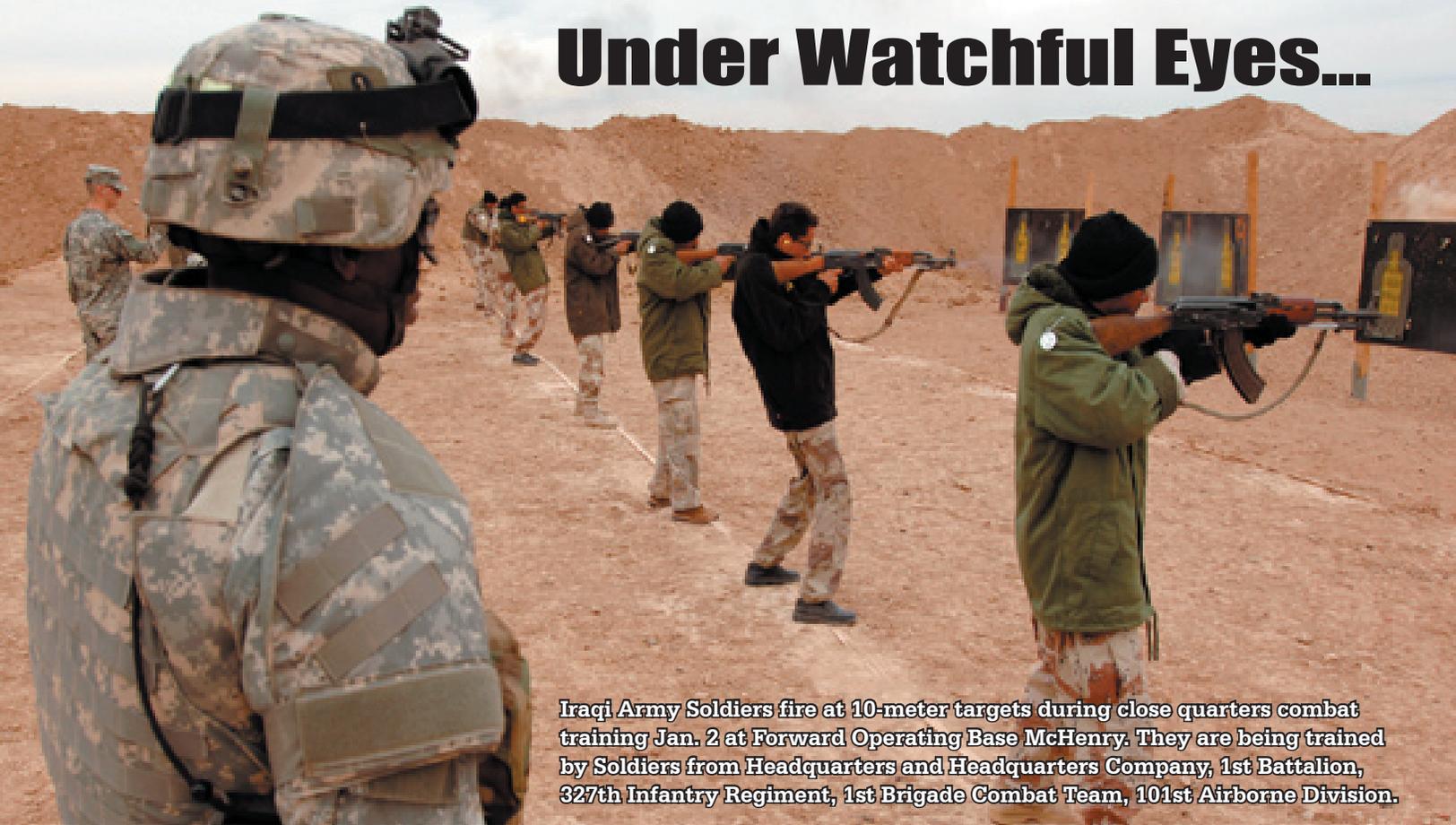


# BAND OF BROTHERS

Vol. 1, Issue 4  
February 2006



# Under Watchful Eyes...



**Iraqi Army Soldiers fire at 10-meter targets during close quarters combat training Jan. 2 at Forward Operating Base McHenry. They are being trained by Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.**

photo by Spc. Timothy Kingston

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## On the cover...

Staff Sgt. Jacob Sprenger and Pfc. Dewayne White, from Company A, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, provide security at a vehicle checkpoint during a search outside of Hawijah, Iraq.

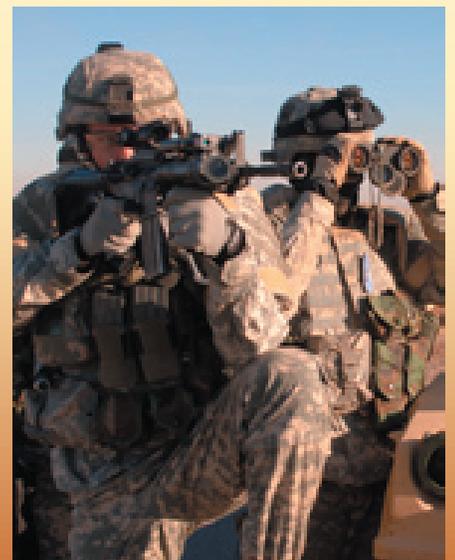
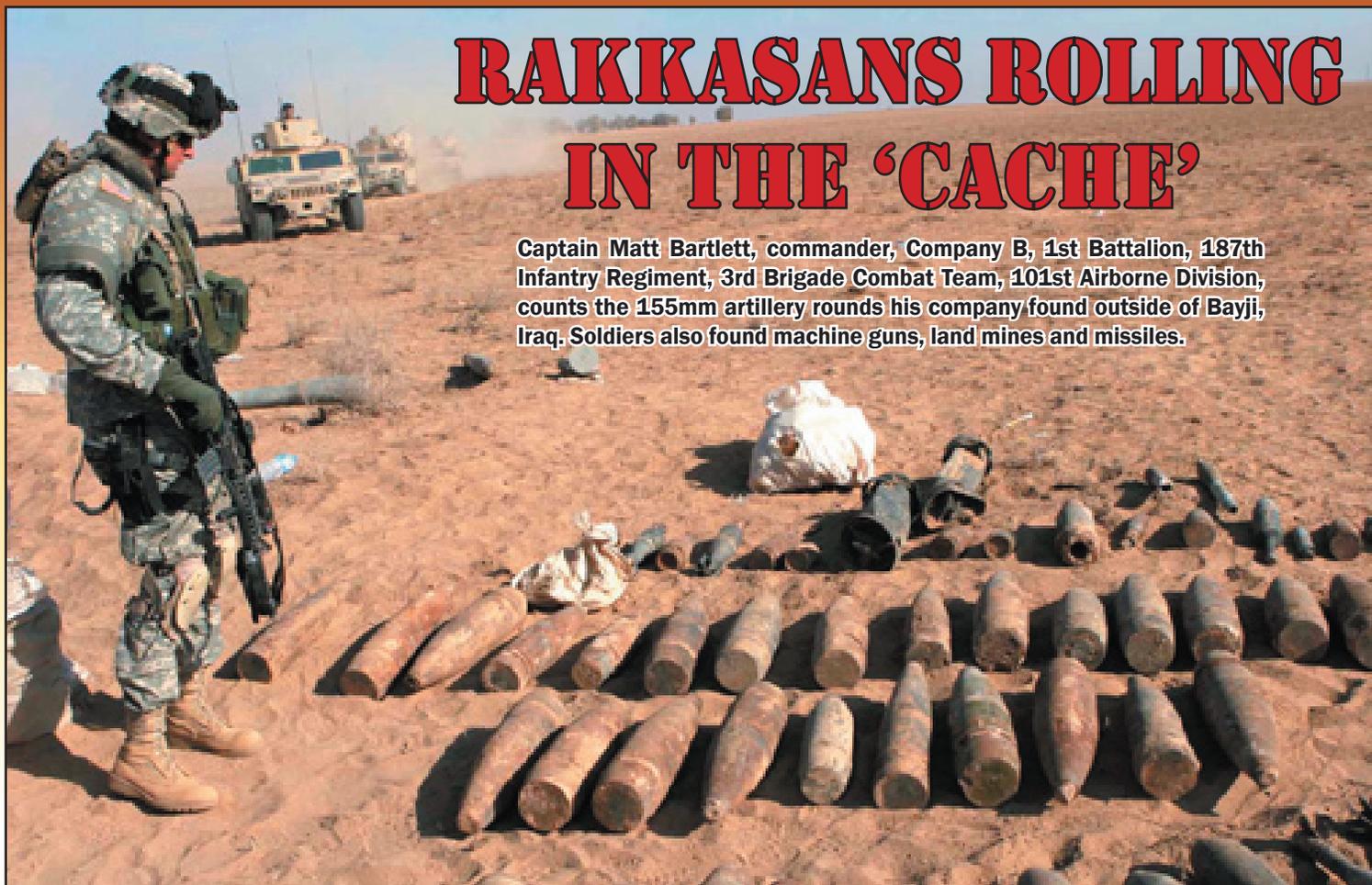


photo by  
Spc. Timothy Kingston

# RAKKASANS ROLLING IN THE 'CACHE'

Captain Matt Bartlett, commander, Company B, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, counts the 155mm artillery rounds his company found outside of Baiji, Iraq. Soldiers also found machine guns, land mines and missiles.



photos by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski

## BAND OF BROTHERS

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Your Screaming Eagle Soldiers continue to perform valiantly in the mission to train Iraqi Security Forces and build on the security and stability that started taking root under our predecessors. I cannot say enough about how much we appreciate the support we are receiving from our families and friends at Fort Campbell, and from alumni and friends of the 101st Airborne Division. The encouragement you provide is vital to this command.

Our first four months in Iraq have been marked by milestones and great progress. ISF did a great job during the Dec. 15 parliamentary elections. Task Force Band of Brothers' area of responsibility grew on Dec. 30 from four provinces to six provinces with the inactivation of Task Force Freedom in northwest Iraq. In adding Dahuk and Nineveh provinces to Diyala, Salah ah Din, Kirkuk and Sulymaniyah provinces, the task force added the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team from Fort Wainwright, Alaska, and the 3rd Armored Cavalry

Regiment from Fort Carson, Colo.

The 101st Airborne Division's 1st and 3rd Brigade Combat Teams are working hard to strengthen Iraqi



Army units and increase security around oil and electrical infrastructure essential to Iraq's future in Kirkuk and Salah ah Din provinces, respectively.

Second and 4th Brigade Combat Teams are representing the division and Fort Campbell well with their work as part of Task

Force Baghdad. It's tough work, but they are clearing terrorist caches and areas they previously considered safe for launching attacks against Iraqi civilians, security forces, and coalition forces every day.

In return for Strike and Currahee Soldiers working in Baghdad, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, has joined Task Force Band of Brothers and continues progress made to prepare the 5th Iraqi Army Division as it assumes more security

responsibility in Diyala.

The 101st and 159th Combat Aviation Brigades are flying in support of combat operations throughout Iraq, demonstrating the effectiveness and capabilities achieved by cross-leveling attack, assault and reconnaissance capabilities between them during transformation last year.

The 101st Sustainment Brigade, operating from the coalition base at Qayyarah West, is out on the roads keeping supplies and services moving to the units that need them in northern Iraq.

Numerous senior leaders have visited our task force and seen tough, disciplined Screaming Eagle Soldiers at their posts. Secretary of the Army Dr. Francis Harvey, numerous members of Congress, state governors, and military leaders have visited, remarking at the high levels of motivation and commitment our Soldiers have.

We will remain focused on achieving our mission.

Air Assault!

Fellow warriors of Task Force Band of Brothers, last month I talked about our training and partnership with our Iraqi allies and the positive effect that was having on Iraq. I will continue to reinforce this important facet of our operations on a monthly basis, ensuring our Iraqi allies are well trained, equipped and continually in the forefront of counter-insurgency operations. The Iraqis deserve peace and prosperity and the Soldiers of Band of Brothers will ensure they receive just that.



I would like to say farewell to the famous 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, who are returning to America after a very successful rotation here in Iraq. The exploits of the 3rd ACR are well documented and respected by all. The retaking of Tall Afar and continued security of that city, the securing of the Syrian border, and their partnership with the 3rd Iraqi Army is now legend.

A mighty Hooah welcome to the newest members of Task Force Band of

Brothers, the "Ready First Brigade" of the Army's famous 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. The Ready

First recently assumed our northwestern sector from 3rd ACR and is moving out confidently in their daily missions.

As we continue operations to combat terrorists and build a free and prosperous Iraq, we must take a moment to remind ourselves of basic military standards.

Are you walking by problem areas as a leader without making corrections and then giving an unspoken approval for low standards? Are you wearing your uniform correctly and ensuring your haircut is to standard? How is your muzzle awareness as you maneuver with your weapon on and off the FOB?

Constant attention to basic standards directly correlates to how well a Soldier or team will fare in combat. If a Soldier cannot wear a PT reflective belt to standard, how will that same Soldier load the right fill in his or her radio prior to a mission? Will the same Soldier under-

stand the immediate actions required to clear a stoppage in a weapon--especially in a gun fight?

Every standard has a purpose and every standard correlates directly to success and survival in combat.....DON'T EVER FORGET THAT!

I know you are well aware of the casualties we have sustained so far in our quest to bring peace and prosperity to Iraq. Our tactics, techniques and procedures are all confirmed under fire and our missions are thoroughly planned, but unfortunately casualties are a part of this counterinsurgency landscape. Our hearts go out to the families and friends who have lost loved ones in our fight.

What the terrorists are starting to realize is they will always be engaged by a Screaming Eagle at a time and from a direction they least expected.

Continue the good fight against evil and always know how personally proud I am of each and every one of you. God Bless you, America and Task Force Band of Brothers. Air Assault!

**Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Grippe**  
**Division Command Sergeant Major**

# Attention All Soldiers:

**John Rice**  
101st Airborne Division  
Safety Manager

## Safety Alert Message

A safety problem has been brought to the division's attention by Forces Command safety specialists concerning a select restraint system being used by gunners in Army tactical vehicles. Soldiers and leaders, please take this warning seriously and check which restraint system is being used by your Soldiers to prevent an unnecessary loss in your ranks. Please contact your unit safety officer if your troops have any of these systems in use here in Iraq.

### PROBLEM

Black Mountain Industries is selling a seat with restraint system called the "Cooper Seat" to be used in turret openings on Army tactical vehicles.

They are conducting a direct marketing campaign called "Adopt-A-Gunner," which has been targeted at family members and corporate sponsors.

Although comfortable to sit in, the seat and restraint will not adequately secure the gunner or allow the gunner to drop inside the vehicle in the event of a rollover.

Testing performed on one version of the system showed that it did not prevent the gunner from being ejected out of the gunner's hatch and would actually prevent rapid entry into the vehicle crew compartment during a roll over accident.

The system did hold the gunner to the top of the vehicle where, in a rollover, the gunner would be crushed between the ground and the top of the vehicle. Use of the system will lead to almost certain serious injury or death in a roll over accident.

### SOLUTION

Units will immediately stop procuring and installing the Cooper seat with restraint system, sold by Black Mountain Industries or any other non-approved restraint in turret openings on all tactical vehicles.

Vehicles with the Cooper sling seat and restraint system installed in turret openings must have it removed from service immediately.

PM Tactical Vehicles has developed an approved harness and retractor

system that can be installed in the M-1114 up-armored humvee with weapon ring mounts. This is the only approved and authorized tactical vehicle gunner's restraint system.

PM Tactical Vehicles is currently in the process of fielding the gunner's restraint system with approximately 1,400 systems already in Iraq and it is anticipated that all systems will be distributed by July 2006 at no cost to the gaining unit.

Distribution of the gunner's restraint will be done in accordance with the plans and priorities as set forth by Multi-National Coalition-Iraq.

PM Tactical Vehicles will be sending a team of mechanics to conduct train-the-trainer for both installation and operation of the gunner's restraint at each site where installation will occur. ■



photo by Staff Sgt. Jesse Riffin

# Hayat school reopens with bright future

**Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks**  
3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment  
Public Affairs Office

**TAL AFAR, Iraq** -- As he loaded a humvee with donated school supplies, Capt. Dan Ruecking couldn't hold back his enthusiasm. Within minutes of arriving to Hayat, the supplies were passed out to the hands of needy Iraqi children.

Ruecking, who serves as the commander of Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, was at the school not only to hand out supplies, but to cut the ribbon on a newly renovated school in the village.

The ceremony, held Jan. 14, marks the seventh school renovation the unit has done as part of a civil military operations project.

"This is very rewarding," Ruecking said. "When you get to come to a school opening, it's thrilling to see the kids' reaction coming to a better school than what they had before."

According to Capt. Kenneth Woods, information operations officer, 1st Squad, 3rd ACR, the unit has spent \$220,000 in contracts to renovate the selected schools.

"We find the worst schools in our area, and then we fix them up," Woods said. "We look at the condition of a school's infrastructure, how many students attend the school, the size



photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

**Iraqi Army Soldiers hand out school supplies with Capt. Dan Ruecking, Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, to children at the reopening of the Hayat Primary School in Hayat, Iraq, Jan. 14.**

of the school, and what materials and services the school needs."

The Hayat Primary School renovation began Nov. 1 to expand the size of the school from four classrooms to eight for students.

A separate room was added for a generator and the school's septic waste system was repaired. The over-

all cost for the project was \$39,000.

"This school is very important for our children and gives them a better place to learn," said Salim Jendy, the school's headmaster. "Education is key to Iraq's future and this school is a small step towards building our country. The happiness on the children's faces speak enough." ■

# Ivory Clinic excels in treating Bastogne Soldiers

**Spc. Barbara Ospina**  
1st Brigade Combat Team  
101st Airborne Division Public Affairs

**KIRKUK, Iraq** -- Soldiers of Company C, 426th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, take life into their hands everyday as they run Ivory Combat Clinic on Forward Operating Base Warrior.

The small, but efficient, 24-hour clinic provides care for 20 to 80 patients a day, which includes Soldiers, contractors and interpreters on Warrior. The clinic offers x-rays, dental work, and procedures above and beyond a regular field hospital.

"The medics are pretty thorough," said patient Steve Radcliffe, an Army

contractor. "They do a good job, and in difficult conditions."

There are even some instances where medics will treat local nationals and detainees.

"We always try to encourage them to seek medical care at the facilities we have helped establish off the FOB," said Spc. Sergio Del Vecchio, a medic at the clinic. "If there is life, limb, or eyesight at risk, we will never turn them away."

Ivory Clinic is not just a miniature field hospital. Soldiers are also prepared for emergency room procedures with a complete trauma set-up for emergency patients.

"Anything that comes in the door, we can handle," Del Vecchio said. ■



photo by Spc. Barbara Ospina

**Private 1st Class Cindy Lin, a medic in Company C, 426th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, examines patient Steve Radcliffe, an Army contractor stationed at Forward Operating Base Warrior.**



photo by Sgt. Zach Mott

**Sergeant 1st Class Jason Andrews, tank commander from Company D, 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, consults a digital map in an M-1A2 System Enhancement Program Tank while on a route-clearing patrol in Baqubah, Iraq. Andrews is part of a crew of four that sweeps various roads in the Baqubah area in search of IEDs. (Below) Two Iraqi policemen stand on guard of a suspected IED Andrews spotted on a recent mission.**

### **Sgt. Zach Mott**

3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
4th Infantry Division Public Affairs

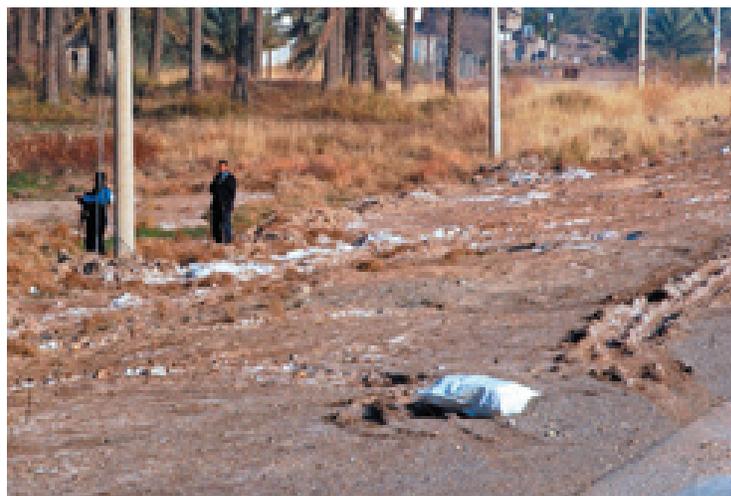
**BAQUBAH, Iraq** -- With eyes darting from one partitioned window to the next, Sgt. 1st Class Jason Andrews is on a mission. He and his crew are out in the first peaks of daylight to clear roads of suspected IEDs and other patrol-hampering road blocks.

The Destroyers of Company D, 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conduct patrols to clear main transportation routes around the Baqubah area to ensure patrols passing over these roads will be safe.

"If I have to get hit in this vehicle, I kind of feel reassured that nothing's going to happen versus [being in] a hum-vee," said Sgt. Michael Smallwood, a gunner with Co. D, who rides in an M-1A2 System Enhancement Program Tank. "They have a lot of armament to get through if they get me."

Smallwood watches a number of things through his gunner sight in the belly of the 73-ton beast, relaying any pertinent information to Andrews, his tank commander.

"I pay special attention to the roads, the area, and what people are doing at certain times," Smallwood said. "I watch the flanks of the vehicles, then I warn the tank commander if anything suspicious happens and he'll take further action from there." ■



# Celebrate Black History Month

by Sgt. 1st Class Ava Johnson  
101st Airborne Division  
Equal Opportunity Office

**B**lack History Month is the time of year where people from every race, religion and gender can reflect on the positive influences each African-American has brought to American history.

The roots of Black History Month can be traced to the early part of the 20th century. In 1925, Carter G. Woodson, an educator and historian, began campaigning to schools, journals and black newspapers for a "Negro History Week" to be celebrated. The week would honor the importance of black achievement and the contributions African Americans have made in the United States.

He was able to institute Negro History Week in 1926, during the second week of February. Today, we celebrate Black History throughout the entire month of February.

The 2006 Black History Month theme is "Reaching Out to Our Youth: A Strategy to Excellence." There are many African-American-sponsored youth empowerment programs. These programs provide a helping hand to all children.

African Americans have a long and storied history as educators.

For more information on Black History Month and the history of this celebration, visit the Library of Congress Web site: [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov).



# HYDRATION: KEY TO HEALTH

Since your first day in the Army, you have probably heard “Drink water” more times than you would like to remember. Despite the best efforts of Army leaders, heat injuries and illness continue to negatively impact readiness. Between 2003 and 2004, 11 Soldiers died from heat stroke or heat related causes and over 2,600 Soldiers suffered heat injuries. The temperatures in Iraq will rise in the coming months, as will your risk for heat injury.

## How can I deal with heat easier?

Get fit! Soldiers in poor physical shape are three times more likely to suffer a heat injury compared with Soldiers who are physically fit. In order to maintain a normal core temperature, your body must transport the heat created in your body to your skin. If your heart and lungs are in better shape, you are able to do this more efficiently.

## How much should I drink?

Eight to 12 cups of fluid typically meets the fluid needs of adults who are not physically active. As your level of physical activity increases, so should your fluid intake.

When exercising or working in Heat Category 5 (temperatures above 90 F), the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine recommends consuming one quart, or 32 ounces of water per hour. Additionally, USARIEM recommends that you limit your water intake to no more than 1.5 quarts, or 48 ounces, per hour and 12 quarts per day.

## Capt. Reva Rogers

101st Airborne Division Dietician

## Do I need a sports drink?

During the first two weeks of exposure to high temperatures, your need for fluid and sodium increases. You can meet this need by lightly salting your food or consuming a sports drink.

After about 10 days of heat exposure, your body starts to conserve sodium and the amount lost in sweat decreases. At this point, your need for sodium is close to normal, and usually can be met by consuming three meals per day.

If you are exposed to the heat for long periods of time, or exercise for longer than an hour in the heat, you may need more salt. Consuming a sports drink is one way to increase your sodium intake. If you spend the majority of your time in air-conditioning and do not exercise, drinking water and eating regularly should meet your fluid and sodium needs.

## Can I over hydrate?

It is possible to consume too much water and over hydrate. When you drink too much fluid, usually more than two quarts per hour, you can lower the concentration of sodium in your blood. This is known as hyponatremia, which can be fatal if not treated by a medical professional.

The early signs of hyponatremia -- confusion, nausea, fatigue, muscle cramps and weakness -- may be mistaken for mild dehydration. Because the symptoms of the two illnesses are easily confused, you should limit field treatment of a Soldier suspected of having dehydration to one hour.

You should encourage the Soldier to drink, but limit consumption of fluid to two quarts. Soldiers suffering from mild dehydration typically recover quickly. If there is no improvement in the symptoms within one hour, seek medical treatment. The best way to prevent hyponatremia is to eat regularly and follow the Army's fluid guidelines.

## Work/Rest and Water Consumption Table

Applies to average sized, heat-acclimated soldier wearing BDU, hot weather. (See TB MED 507 for further guidance.)

Easy Work		Moderate Work				Hard Work	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weapon Maintenance</li> <li>• Walking Hard Surface at 2.5 mph, &lt; 30 lb Load</li> <li>• Marksmanship Training</li> <li>• Drill and Ceremony</li> <li>• Manual of Arms</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking Loose Sand at 2.5 mph, No Load</li> <li>• Walking Hard Surface at 3.5 mph, &lt; 40 lb Load</li> <li>• Calisthenics</li> <li>• Patrolling</li> <li>• Individual Movement Techniques, i.e., Low Crawl or High Crawl</li> <li>• Defensive Position Construction</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking Hard Surface at 3.5 mph, ≥ 40 lb Load</li> <li>• Walking Loose Sand at 2.5 mph with Load</li> <li>• Field Assaults</li> </ul>	
Heat Category	WBGT Index, F°	Easy Work		Moderate Work		Hard Work	
		Work/Rest (min)	Water Intake (qt/hr)	Work/Rest (min)	Water Intake (qt/hr)	Work/Rest (min)	Water Intake (qt/hr)
1	78° - 81.9°	NL	½	NL	¾	40/20 min	¾
2 (GREEN)	82° - 84.9°	NL	½	50/10 min	¾	30/30 min	1
3 (YELLOW)	85° - 87.9°	NL	¾	40/20 min	¾	30/30 min	1
4 (RED)	88° - 89.9°	NL	¾	30/30 min	¾	20/40 min	1
5 (BLACK)	> 90°	50/10 min	1	20/40 min	1	10/50 min	1

For additional copies, contact: U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Health Information Operations Division at (800) 222-9698 or CHPPM - Health Information Operations@apgs.army.mil. For electronic versions, see <http://chppm-www.apgs.army.mil/heat>. Local reproduction is authorized. June 2004

• The work/rest times and fluid replacement volumes will sustain performance and hydration for at least 4 hrs of work in the specified heat category. Fluid needs can vary based on individual differences (± ¼ qt/hr) and exposure to full sun or full shade (± ¼ qt/hr).

• NL = no limit to work time per hr.

• Rest = minimal physical activity (sitting or standing) accomplished in shade if possible.

• CAUTION: Hourly fluid intake should not exceed 1½ qts.

Daily fluid intake should not exceed 12 qts.

• If wearing body armor, add 5°F to WBGT index in humid climates.

• If doing Easy Work and wearing NBC (MOPP 4) clothing, add 10°F to WBGT index.

• If doing Moderate or Hard Work and wearing NBC (MOPP 4) clothing, add 20°F to WBGT index.



CP-033-0404

## What about Cold water during exercise?

Cool water, between 50 - 59 F, slightly warmer than refrigerated water, is easier for your body to absorb and will help maintain a lower core temperature.

Although pouring water over your head may feel good, it will not help lower your core body temperature. Drinking the cool water will help maintain a lower core temperature and will help meet your hydration needs.

For a guide to drinking water in the heat, the consumption table provides the recommended amount of water in relation to work levels and the heat category.

# IRAQI ARMY:



# THE REAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS

## RAKKASANS TRAIN DEMOCRACY'S NEW GUARDIANS

**Pfc. Cassandra Groce**

133rd Mobile Public  
Affairs Detachment

**SAMARRA, Iraq** -- The Iraqi Army in Samarra has been working closely with the Rakkasans, participating in a new training program for the past three weeks designed to bolster the proficiency of the fledgling Army.

The new regimen consists of weapons training, map reading, general orders and basic first aid, taught to the officers and non-commissioned officers in the military. The higher-ranking officials will then teach the classes to the lower enlisted.

Those being trained are both seasoned Soldiers with years of experience, as well as Soldiers right off the street. The classes are a baseline to start everyone for training and evaluation.

The Military Transition Team, better known as the MiTT team, decided that the U.S. Army baseline would be a good starting point for the Soldiers. Each company's leaders train in the 12-day course, then the rotation starts over with a new company.

"It empowers their leaders and gives them the experience and knowledge to control their Soldiers," said Capt. Christopher Swint, the assistant MiTT team chief, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

After the classroom and hands-on training concludes, the Soldiers' level of understanding is tested with patrols in the streets of Iraq. They search homes and arrest detainees in a quest to eliminate anti-Iraqi forces.

"We've assessed this battalion and found they needed this training," Swint said. "The end-state is the same though, a self-sustaining military capable of conducting independent

counter-insurgency and operations in their own battle space. The word independent is important-- it means they do this without Coalition Force help."

Every unit is evaluated once a month. Categories tested include training level, sustainability, logistics ability, communication, leadership and operations. The evaluation for each unit can vary slightly since the testing is devised in conjunction with the Iraqi Army's commander.

"We don't force a particular way of doing things because in the end, it's not our Army," Swint said. "So we evaluate the end-state, not the procedures."

Ultimately, the Iraqi government has to accept the unit as ready to take over operations based on the evaluations.

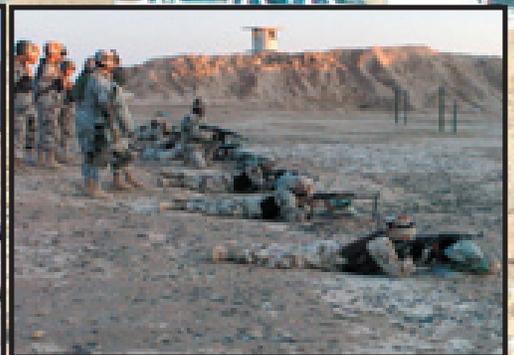
Regardless of how well the unit does on evaluations, IA Soldiers still struggle to prove themselves to their communities. IA Soldiers have to wear civilian clothes while at home because they often become targets of AIF.

"Soldiers in America are heroes, but that pride is not established here yet," Swint said. "But it will be. They don't have a reputation of being an elite force because they don't have the history yet."

MiTT Soldiers are working tirelessly to help the IA gain that history and respect as Iraq's heroes. The team in Samarra feels that the current training is a step in that direction.

"They perform guard duty well and their base is safe, they operate a machine gun properly and the enemy learns that they are lethal," Swint said. "These basic skills hold a small amount of worth alone, but combined, they create a force to be reckoned with." ■

**LEFT: An Iraqi Army Soldier aims his rifle after a series of battle movements consisting of crawling and running through sand dunes. BELOW: After a long day of classes, Soldiers prepare weapons to practice sector firing.**



# ***New IED Task Force tours Iraq to combat attacks***

**Sgt. Dennis Gravelle**  
138th Mobile Public  
Affairs Detachment

**MOSUL, Iraq** -- Retired Army Gen. Montgomery Meigs visited Forward Operating Base Courage Feb. 3 to meet Soldiers from the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team and 142nd Combat Support Battalion.

Meigs will spearhead an expanded Department of Defense task force to counter the threat of IEDs against U.S. and Coalition Forces. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld asked Meigs to come out of retirement to run the program.

"I thank him for his willingness to resume public service," Rumsfeld said.

IEDs have been a major problem for Coalition Forces troops in Iraq. Since July 2003, a total of 723 Coalition Force Soldiers have been killed in action -- 694 of them American Soldiers.

Meigs will have his work cut out for him. Currently, there are an estimated 10 million hidden explosives in Iraq and is considered one of the most heavily mined nations in the world.

"The challenge we face from IEDs is in part technological, but goes beyond that to encompass the manner in which our forces operate, their tactics and procedures," Rumsfeld said.

Meigs will bring the perspective of a senior commander

to the newly formed IED task force. He will expand the efforts to integrate technology and training with battlefield tactics, and leverage outside sources for a rapid acquisition of technical solutions. ■



photo by Sgt. Dennis Gravelle

**Colonel Michael Shields, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team commander speaks with retired Army General Montgomery Meigs, head of the DoD initiative to counter IEDs Feb. 3 at Forward Operating Base Courage.**

## ***MLRS reigns over terrorists cells***



photo by Sgt. Dennis Gravelle

**A missile blasts off from the Multiple Launch Rocket System operated by field artillery Soldiers in Qayyarah West.**

**Sgt. Dennis Gravelle**  
138th Mobile Public  
Affairs Detachment

**QAYYARAH WEST, Iraq** — The Multiple Launch Rocket System is a weapon that has been used in combat as long as Soldiers have been in Iraq, hitting its target every time.

The Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment, use a Guided MLRS as a means of counter fire -- ready to launch against enemy artillery, air defense systems, and personnel.

The MLRS is not always used on a specific target. A mission Jan. 6 in Qayyarah West was terrain denial -- a "metal shower" that explodes over areas where insurgents are known to position mortars and rocket launchers.

"This system reduces the risk of having to send Soldiers out to destroy [areas where insurgents fire], which in the long run saves Soldiers lives," said

Lt. Col. Mark Johnson, commander, 2nd Bn., 20th FA.

During this recent mission, three M-270 launchers fired one round each. Within seconds, the missiles were out of sight and on their way to the target.

Without ever leaving the cab of their vehicle, the crew of three, have the capability of firing up to twelve MLRS rockets in 60 seconds.

"Today's operation sends a strong message to terrorists that we will not let them intimidate Iraqi citizens, and that they are not welcome in Iraq," Johnson said of the terrain denial mission. "We will do what it takes to make Iraq safe."

The MLRS has continued its reputation of maintaining a high level of readiness, reliability and maintainability.

"The operation was a huge success," said Capt. Paul Otto, assistant operations officer. "This is what our Soldiers are here for, to help make Iraq a safer place for all citizens." ■

# Rakkasans gotta whole lotta booty

**Maj. Tom Bryant**  
3rd Brigade Combat Team  
101st Airborne Division

**TIKRIT, Iraq** -- For two Soldiers in the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, a unique challenge arose recently with the discovery of a very special doorstop in the terrain team's work area -- a 25-pound block of gold.

"I noticed it during the [relief in place] with the unit before us, sitting under the table in the office," said Sgt. Teresa Burroughs, a terrain analyst in the Rakkasans' intelligence section. The Shenandoah, Iowa, native said the outgoing unit "used it as a doorstop in the summer."

During a recent cross-training session in the terrain team office, Mas-



photo by Staff Sgt. Jesse Riggins

**The 25-pound ingot of 10-karat gold found by the 3rd Brigade Combat Team Intelligence Section was tested by an American jeweler and is worth approximately \$110,000.**

ter Sgt. Jay Phelps, the intelligence noncommissioned officer, noticed a brown block on the floor. He tried to

move the large block with his foot, but it wouldn't budge.

"I couldn't be certain, but I thought this is probably a block of gold," Phelps said.

Phelps and Burroughs immediately notified the commander and secured the block in the company safe.

Back home on leave, Burroughs called on jewelers with a small piece from the block to determine the block's composition. The jeweler confirmed that it was a low-quality, around ten-karat amalgam of gold worth \$110,000.

Phelps and Burroughs never wavered in making the right decision by agreeing the gold was not theirs and should be given to the proper Iraqi authorities.

The gold block will be returned to the government of Iraq in the coming weeks. ■

## *Soldiers to return ancient Iraqi artifacts*

**Spc. Barbara Ospina**  
1st Brigade Combat Team  
101st Airborne Division

**KIRKUK, Iraq** -- The discovery of ancient artifacts has created another connection between Coalition Forces and the citizens of Iraq after Soldiers of Company B, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion returned a collection of historical items found on Forward Operating Base Warrior over the past few months to the community of Kirkuk.

The artifacts may appear to be just broken pieces of formed clay to some, but to Ayad Hussein, the civil engineer director of the Kirkuk Museum, they hold great value in the history of Iraqi culture.



"If we have all the pieces, then we can carefully put them back together," Hussein said. "We can send them to Baghdad to be fixed and further examined."

According to Hussein and his assistant, the most valuable item discovered is a child burial urn, which they believe dates back to 250 B.C. Hussein believes it to be a priceless link to history that can be shared with the present generation of Iraqis.

According to Capt. Cole Calloway, team chief for Civil Affairs Team A, the Kirkuk Museum was

looted by vandals after the first Gulf War and has never fully recovered. There are many display cases that sit empty, gathering dust, waiting to be filled with meaningful historical items for the people of Kirkuk to see.

"We are hoping that the artifacts we hand over will help the museum re-establish itself," Calloway said. "Iraq is rich in ancient culture, and we are trying to allow the people to appreciate it more."

Calloway, with an anthropology degree, said his goal is to hand over every artifact found on the base to the community, which will bring the museum one step closer to restoration.

"Civilization cannot be built by one person," said Hussein's assistant. "But by this, we can find a part of the old history of Iraq." ■



photo by Spc. Barbara Ospina

**Civil engineer director of the Kirkuk Museum Ayad Hussein and his assistant examine historical artifacts that were discovered on Forward Operating Base Warrior.**



# NIGHT OPS

## Screaming Eagles Stop Terrorism

Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, arrest a man who has been coordinating enemy attacks against Coalition Forces during a cordon and search in Hawijah, Iraq, on Dec. 13, 2005.



# GOT MORTARS?



photos by Spc. Barbara Ospina

**Spc. Barbara Ospina**  
1st Brigade Combat Team  
101st Airborne Division

**KIRKUK, Iraq** -- Shortly after the sun broke through the morning sky Jan. 7, mortarmen and fire support specialists from 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, started setting up outside Forward Operating Base Warrior for some invaluable training and a lot of noise.

More than 100 white-phosphorus, illumination and high explosive rounds meant plenty of ordnance to launch down-range, filling the day, and much of the night, with countless explosions.

"Training exercises allow us to remain proficient at indirect firing and forward observer skills," said Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Barton, the battalion fire support noncommissioned officer.

Back at Fort Campbell, Ky., the unit's garrison home, the "No Slack" battalion conducted similar exercises at least once every quarter before arriving in Kirkuk.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Jason Sager, the mortar platoon leader, they are trying to keep that pace while deployed.

In preparation, the Soldiers spent the week prior to the live-fire exercise conducting misfire rehearsals and gun preparation.

"They did well in rehearsals," Sager said. "They were prepared today." ■



**TOP:** Mortar men from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, set up a 61mm mortar tube during a mortar live-fire exercise outside Forward Operating Base Warrior. **LEFT:** A mortar round bursts on impact after being fired by 1st BCT troops. **RIGHT:** Two 81mm white phosphorus mortar rounds fill the air after fired.



# IA Soldiers train to save lives in combat

**Staff Sgt. Jesse Riggan**

3rd Brigade Combat Team  
101st Airborne Division

**AD DAWR, Iraq** -- Since assuming responsibility in Ad Dawr in December, the Hunters of 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, are operating at Forward Operating Base Wilson with Company D, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division.

Like the rest of the Rakkasans, the Hunters are working to train IA Soldiers in every aspect of Soldiering to integrate them into their area of operations and eventually hand them control of the area.

As part of the comprehensive training and integration plan for Co. D., the Hunters recently celebrated their partnership with the IA Soldiers along with one of the units' accomplishments -- training eight IA Soldiers to save lives in combat.

Lieutenant Col. Louis Lartigue, commander, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cav. Rgt., awarded the Soldiers with Combat Life

Saver certificates and temporarily allocated six armored humvees to the company to help equip them as they take on greater responsibilities in the area.

The eight CLS qualified Soldiers received additional training on basic medical diagnostic and treatment procedures. Lieutenant Col. Richard Knowland, nurse practitioner, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2-9 Cav. Rgt., led the training along with other members of the medical team.

The Soldiers will act as medics in their unit and will eventually start working in clinics around Ad Dawr.

The training has already paid off for one IA Soldier. Corporal Alli Mohammed Nidi, 1st Platoon, Co. D, reacted when one of his fellow Soldiers was shot in the shoulder on a patrol. Alli controlled the bleeding and prepared the Soldier for transport to a medical treatment facility.

According to Co. D 1st Sgt. Fared Rashed Abed, he is going to have his newly trained Soldiers help reopen his company's aid station.

"This training is very important," Fared said. "It builds confidence in my Soldiers to know that their medics are trained by U.S. Soldiers." ■



Courtesy photo

**A Soldier from 3rd Platoon, Company D, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, practices IV therapy on his comrade as a medic from 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, at Forward Operating Base Wilson guides him through the process during CLS training.**



(Left) Staff Sgt. Alvin Cates, an instructor at the Qayyarah West NCO Academy, assigned to the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, makes sure an Iraqi Soldier's rifle barrel is clear before entering a range Jan. 25. (Below) Iraqi troops prepare to head out for training at the range during their 21-day course at the NCO Academy. Each Soldier is handpicked from their command leaders.

photos by Sgt. Rachel Brune



## TRAINING NEW LEADERS AT THE

# IRAQI NCO ACADEMY

**Sgt. Rachel Brune**  
101st Sustainment Brigade  
Public Affairs

**QAYYARAH WEST, Iraq** -- Down a long, gray road, the first three runners drew nearer, running as quickly as they could in their desert combat boots. Sergeant 1st Class Wesley Derrick, a senior instructor at the Noncommissioned Officer Academy, looked down at his watch and began counting time out loud.

Breathing hard, the Soldiers crossed the finish line and stood single file to catch their breath after a physical training test Jan. 23 at the Qayyarah West Base Complex for Iraqi NCOs.

The test, a modified version of the U.S. Army PT test, consisted of three events. The Soldiers had one minute each to do sit ups and push ups, then completed a one-mile, timed run.

As Staff Sgt. Edwin Sanchez, an infantryman from 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, read the instructions, he paused frequently to allow interpreters to translate his words into Arabic

and Kurdish. Fellow instructor Staff Sgt. Willie Signil, also of 1-17th Inf. Reg., demonstrated each exercise.

"The Iraqi Soldiers have never taken this kind of a PT test and most do not perform group PT on a regular basis," Sanchez said in between test-takers. "In a few days, they'll be rolling."

Alongside the American instructors, Iraqi Army instructors Sergeants 1st Class Neshwan and Mohammed pushed the Soldiers to pound out more push ups or exert themselves for one last sit up. Neshwan got down on the floor and did push ups along with the Soldiers to keep them from giving up.

"Once they start the cycle here, we challenge them every day," Mohammed said, through an interpreter. "If the training is too easy, after graduation they will know nothing. Then they will go out, and the terrorists will be able to kill them."

This is the challenge the instructors face. This NCO course is not just for promotion points. These Iraqi NCOs and their Soldiers will go back to facing terrorists shortly after they receive their graduation certificates.

"The day after graduation, these guys can be on a mission," Signil said.

For the first three days, the training takes place mostly in the classroom. Each instructor teaches blocks of information such as the *Iraqi Army Values* or *Law of Land Warfare*.

"The most important instruction is the IA values, because if they learn these, they will do everything the right way," Mohammed said.

The instructors teach the values with a presentation that includes the definition of each value in English and Arabic.

The Americans unanimously speak of their Iraqi colleagues with respect.

"If all Iraqi Soldiers were like [Mohammed and Neshwan], we'd be out of here tomorrow," Signil said.

The coming days at the academy's 21-day course will bring many more classes on subjects such as drill and ceremony, urban operations, and professional development as a Soldier.

"If the training is like this all the time, all the areas [in Iraq] will be safe, and all the U.S. Soldiers will be able to go home," Mohammed said. ■

# 1-1AD replaces 3rd ACR



photos by Spc. Joshua Hutcheson

(Left) Colonel Sean MacFarland uncases his unit's colors during a transfer of authority ceremony marking the brigade's arrival to northern Iraq and the relief in place with 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment from their area of responsibility. The ceremony took place Feb. 19 at Forward Operating Base Sykes in Tall Afar. (Above) 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Graham and Col. Sean MacFarland, commander, stand beside 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment Command Sgt. Maj. William Burns and Col. H.R. McMaster, commander.

## Staff Report

101st Airborne Division Public Affairs

**TIKRIT, Iraq--** The 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, assumed responsibility for the northwestern region of Iraq during a transfer of authority ceremony held at Forward Operating Base Sykes in Tall Afar Feb. 19.

The unit, based in Friedberg, Germany, replaced the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, which is returning to Fort Carson, Colo., after its year-long tour.

The "Ready First" commander, Col. Sean MacFarland, and the brigade's command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Graham, uncased the brigade's colors while the 3rd ACR's colors were prepared for the return to the states. Task Force Band of Brothers and 101st Airborne Division Commander Maj. Gen. Thomas Turner also spoke during the ceremony to welcome the new TF unit.

The uncasing of the colors symbolizes the unit's arrival and assumption of the mission to assist the Iraqi Security Forces in preserving the democratically elected government and ensuring the safety of the Iraqi people.

This is the second tour in Iraq for the Ready First brigade. The unit was stationed in Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom I for a 15-month tour in 2003-2004. ■



photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Allmon II

**Private First Class Jonathan Leffers, an infantryman assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, patrols the streets of Tall Afar Feb. 14 with onlooking local children. The Ready First Combat Team arrived mid-January and conducted relief in place with 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. The unit is now conducting operations in the area.**

# Iraqi Police rap with Kirkuk neighborhood

**Spc. Barbara Ospina**  
1st Brigade Combat Team  
101st Airborne Division

**KIRKUK, Iraq** -- Soldiers from Civil Affairs Team A, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion, joined forces with the Kirkuk Police Jan. 9 on a patrol to help Iraqi police officers build a stronger relationship with their community -- a relationship that will be an important part of their country's future.

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

The survey showed that the commu-

nity desired more personal interaction with their police force.

"The people feel that the police are not spending any time talking to them," said Staff Sgt. Ignacio Betancourt, the team sergeant for CAT A. "Talking with the people helps build their trust."

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

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

"A large concern among the people is trash pickup," Betancourt said. "So the schedule is going to be revised by the police." ■



photo by Spc. Barbara Ospina

**Iraqi Police in Kirkuk and Civil Affairs Team A, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion, hand out candy and toys to children during a neighborhood visit.**

# Soldier's repair skills keep medical equipment up

**Pfc. Cassandra Groce**  
133rd Mobile Public  
Affairs Detachment

**TIKRIT, Iraq** -- Little things are often overlooked by people in a fast moving environment, but little things can lead to big results in Iraq.

For Spc. Michael Leinweber, a resident of Willoughby, Ohio, his job in Iraq revolves around small gadgets. Leinweber is a medical maintenance technician in the 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division. He deployed to Iraq in September and spends his days working on the delicate wires, circuits and gadgets in machinery.

Recently, the sole medical maintenance technician for the brigade flew to Forward Operating Base Summerall to support a surgical team that was in need of his services. The team's generators had a power surge that damaged electrical systems on critical medical equipment.

"This makes it sound a lot simpler than it is, but in this case, most medical equipment gets a fuse popped," Leinweber said. "You just replace the fuse, and sometimes you have to replace a circuit board."

Leinweber worked for 36 hours straight to ensure the vital medical equipment was up and running. Before he finished, the team asked him to look at their X-ray machine, which was taking poor images.

A few hours after Leinweber fixed the machine, a patient was rushed in for a chest X-ray, which revealed a collapsed lung.

The team later informed Leinweber and his first sergeant that his dedication to complete the repairs helped save the Soldier's life.

"It feels good knowing the machines I fix impacted somebody's life," Leinweber said. "You take more pride in your work. I'm sure I will have more opportunities to fix equipment for Soldiers in the future." ■



photo by Pfc. Cassandra Groce

**Specialist Michael Leinweber fixes a damaged generator. Leinweber is a medical maintenance technician working for 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.**

# BOB ON THE FOB

by SGT Albert J. Merrifield

"The Looooove Boat, exciting and new... Hop aboard, we're waiting for youuuuuuu...." Man, I've got a great voice...



## Shower Princess n. (shou'-ər prīn-ses)

Suggested by Capt. Mathew Bunch

1. Phrase used to describe members (male or female) of a highly disruptive species of fobbit native to the area near shower and latrine facilities. These animals exist outside the normal space/time continuum, so all 5-minute showers (to them) appear (to the rest of the world) to take at least 45 minutes. Species survives by sucking all hot water out of any water heater within a quarter mile. Can be spotted on the way to the shower by huge toiletry kits, often mistaken for a rucksack, but identified by the scented bodywash and sponges hanging from it. Identified within the shower area by steam emanating from shower stall and Broadway show tunes or bad television theme songs being sung. Has the unique ability to not hear the phrases "combat shower," "quick shower" or "hey, we'd like some hot water, too!"

Got a phrase for BOB on the FOB? E-mail it to [bobonthefob@gmail.com](mailto:bobonthefob@gmail.com), and if your suggestion is used you'll receive credit for it in the strip based on your idea!



# HUTCH'S TOP 10

## TOP TEN WAYS TO SURVIVE DEPLOYMENT BOREDOM...

BY SPC. JOSHUA HUTCHESON

10. Build yourself a still out of toothpicks and mud. Then create your own fruit juice. Ummmm, tasty!
9. Learn a useless and dead tongue, just in case you ever stumble across a long-lost tomb potentially filled with buried treasure. I suggest Sanskrit, or perhaps Aramaic.
8. Partake in a new hobby. Many people find curling to be an engaging activity. Or, at least they would if there was any ice around. You can always go with mastering the complex game of 52 Pickup.
7. Catch and train your own army of flies. Use them to harass and torment your bosses.
6. Practice sleeping.
5. Start your own record label. Specialize in Arabic hip-hop and country music.
4. Count every grain of sand you see. At the end of the deployment come tell me the number. If you're close I'll give you a prize.
3. Make friends with a Soldier with a funny last name, (if there's anybody out there named Starsky, give me a call.)
2. Formulate a plan to take over the world. Make it needlessly complicated and incredibly intricate, involving hundreds of steps and relying heavily on luck. Then, sell it to Canada, just to see what they'd do.
1. Spend all your time writing grammatically incorrect letters, suspiciously lacking in facts and logical arguments and mail them to the editor of Stars & Stripes, to be printed. Use somebody else's name.

# KINVILLE'S HITS

Music you need to

Download or Burn NOW

BY SPC. JEANINE KINVILLE



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T

1. My Chemical Romance, "**The Ghost of You**"- Perfect for your significant other
2. Twista featuring Pitbull, "**Hit the Floor**"- Sure to get your CHU party going
3. Sean Paul, "**Temperature**"- Dance Reggae to bump with on guard duty
4. Fall Out Boy, "**Dance, Dance**"- For those who can't dance, just bounce!
5. Black Eyed Peas, "**My Humps**"- Sing this in the shower all you shower princesses
6. Weezer, "**Perfect Situation**"- For every closet nerd hiding out in the ranks
7. Notorious B.I.G. featuring various artists, "**Nasty Girl**"- Not dancing yet?
8. The Killers, "**Midnight Show**"- Perfect for your next 'Rendezvous with Destiny'
9. Ying Yang Twins featuring Pitbull, "**Shake**"- More music for the CHU after party
10. Muse, "**Stockholm Syndrome**"- When you think of reenlisting in Iraq
11. Juelz Santana, "**Oh Yes**"- As catchy as that whistle song, but way hotter
12. Panic! At The Disco, "**I Write Sins, Not Tragedies**"- For your engaged battle bud
13. Lola, "**No Strings**"- For the next chance encounter in the chow hall or PX
14. Hawthorne Heights, "**Ohio is for Lovers**"- Because it's way cooler than Virginia
15. We Are Scientists, "**Nobody Move, Nobody Get Hurt**"- For the next raid you do



# EXCUSE ME...

*Has this deployment been what you expected it to be?*



**1st Lt. Gregory Galstad**  
2nd Bn., 9th Cav. Rgt.

*"Pretty much. It's about the pace I expected."*

**Capt. Athanasia Austin**  
Joint Air Mobility  
Operations Center  
*"I thought it was going to be a lot worse, facility wise."*



**Capt. Patrick Chadwell**  
445th Civil Affairs Battalion

*"It's better than I expected. Living conditions improved."*

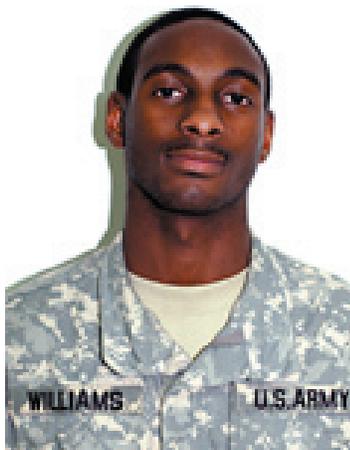


**Spc. Amber Hull**  
27th Trans. Batt.  
*"No, because I'm stuck behind a desk."*



**Sgt. Pablo ValdezMatinez**  
18th Field Artillery Reg.  
*"I found it easier than I expected it to be."*

**Spc. Jameson Williams**  
Sig. Det., 501st STB  
*"No, because I thought it was going to be a lot worse."*



**Samira Saqqa**  
Contractor-Linguist  
*"Yes, I expected freedom and democracy for Iraq."*

**Maj. Javier Hernandez**  
335th Theater Sig. Command  
*"Not really. But being with the 101st is tremendous."*



# Love is in the Air



photo by Sgt. Ryan Matson

**Captains Aaron and Elizabeth Martin, Kiowa and Blackhawk pilots, respectively, both command units in the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade.**

## **Sgt. Ryan Matson**

101st Combat Aviation Brigade  
Public Affairs

**TIKRIT, Iraq--** At the end of the day, a lot of married couples may ask each other how their day went and what they did that day. In the case of the Martins, the answer may be surprising in comparison with the average couple.

"I flew a team of U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers into a remote Iraqi village to capture suspected terrorists," Capt. Elizabeth Martin may tell her husband.

Capt. Aaron Martin may answer, "I flew over an infantry troop and covered them from above during a firefight, then provided protection for a convoy."

That's because the Martins have a rather unique marriage. They are both commanding officers in the U.S. Army, both Soldiers in the same brigade, and both helicopter pilots. Elizabeth is commander of Company C, 5th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, and an Army Blackhawk pilot. Her husband, Aaron, commands Troop C, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 101st CAB, and flies Kiowas. Both are currently deployed with the 101st in Iraq.

They met as freshmen in January of 1995 at Florida Tech, in Melbourne, Fla., and wound up being in the same squad. Both husband and wife said they are able to get time together through careful coordination and planning.

The passions the two share, love of the Army, love of flying and commanding, and of each other, have made the Martin's a strong team, whether together or apart. ■



# Vows of Forever

**Married Soldiers from 426th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, gather in the Bastogne Chapel on Forward Operating Base Warrior to renew marriage vows to their spouses back home on Valentine's Day.**

photo by Spc. Barbara Ospina



**Pro Deo Et Patria,  
Chaplain (Maj.)  
Scott Hammond**

But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.

**Jonah 1:17**

# Inspiration

One of many privileges I have serving in the Army as a chaplain in Iraq is the opportunity to actually see many of the historic sites discussed in the Bible. A few weeks ago, I was visiting some of our great Soldiers in the Nineveh province. While walking through one of the shops on the forward operating base, the store owner saw the cross on my ACU top. He then informed me that he too was a Christian and gave me a marble cross. I learned that marble is a natural resource in that area and that remnants of a synagogue in honor of Jonah can still be seen today. From this delightful encounter, I began to study the life of Jonah from the book of the Bible named after him.

God called Jonah to go to Nineveh some 600 miles northeast from the town he was from called Joppa. Jonah did not want to do the job God was calling him to, and decided to go to another place 2000 miles northwest called Tarsus. God had called Jonah to go to a people and location he did not like. Maybe there are times you feel like God has put you in a similar situation.

In God's prophet Jonah, we see a man who tried to make a getaway because he wanted his own way and not God's way. Jonah was willing to do God's work as long as it suited his own purposes.

God calls each of us to our Nineveh. God has placed each of us in our own work place, job position, or FOB to be agents of spiritual awakening. God is saying, "Go to Nineveh." Where are you headed? There are only two roads in this life: one road leads to Tarsus while the other road heads to Nineveh. Not all roads lead to God's blessings.

You may be asking yourself and God, how you got to where you are today. I would like for all of us to be encouraged by life of Jonah. Even if you have tried to chart your own course, rather than following the Lord's; and you find yourself in a "whale" of a mess. Remember, God did not

abandon Jonah, but continued to send His provisions even after Jonah tried his own way and began to drown.

From inside the fish in Jonah 2:1, Jonah prayed to the Lord his God: *'In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry.'*



Have you ever come close to drowning? You swam in rough waters and got pulled in by the undertow. When you get up for air another wave slaps you in the face. Some of you might feel as if you are in a similar situation as Jonah. Whether you are running from God or not, you may be going through a storm, and feel tossed overboard into the raging sea. You may feel like you've been saved from the storm, only to be swallowed by a fish. It is hard to pray in any of these stormy situations.

No matter how bad the storms of our life get, God is able to deliver us.

What do you do in the belly of the fish? You pray!

Pray because God is good even when we are not.

Pray because God is powerful enough

to pull us out of anything. Pray because prayer will change you for the better and because no matter how far we stray, God is eager for us to come home.

I close with a humorous story from the simplistic and profound faith of a child.

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales.

The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though they are very large mammals, their throats are very small.

The little girl stated Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

The teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah."

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?"

The little girl replied, "Then you ask him." ■

# FLIGHT RESCUE

**Sgt. Ryan Matson**  
101st Combat Aviation Brigade  
Public Affairs

**TIKRIT, Iraq** -- Every Army unit deployed to Iraq has a unique mission. But for the 542nd Medical Company, an air ambulance unit, the measure of success on a mission can be the difference between life and death.

That is because the 542nd Medical Company, 6th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, is responsible for running 24-hour air medical evacuation operations for northern Iraq from Forward Operating Base Speicher.

Since taking over the mission from the 1159th Medical Company in December 2005, the 542nd has flown more than 200 missions, transporting and providing in-flight care to more than 300 patients.

"It comes in peaks and valleys," said Capt. Brent Gruver, the company's executive officer. "If the weather is bad, then we may not have any, but one day we had eight across the country. We average between two to three a day."

A medical evacuation mission begins with the call to the flight operations center. The call may come over the radio, by phone, or even by a walk-in messenger. Somewhere, someone is injured and requires quick transport to a combat support hospital.

Soldiers in the flight operations center are quick to respond to the call, which is transmitted in the form of a nine-line medical evacuation report. This gives all the information necessary for the crew to get the patient, including the patient's grid location and type of injury sustained.

"We try to get all the information within two minutes," said Staff Sgt. Angela Brown, a flight operations non-commissioned officer. "That way the helicopter can take off within 10 to 15 minutes."

Because of the heavy operational tempo the unit is flying, Soldiers from various backgrounds have been pulled into the flight operations center and trained on the job. Specialist Jed Becks, who normally works as a fueler, is one such Soldier.



photos by Sgt. Ryan Matson

**Sergeant Matthew Kinney, a flight medic assigned to 542nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance), 6th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, writes down the vital statistics of a patient during a transport flight on Feb. 4 in Iraq.**

Becks has been trained to wear many hats for the unit. He is constantly monitoring the weather, relaying information to the crew about the accident scene, tracking the helicopters en route to the scene, maintaining flight records, and performing a host of other duties in the flight operations area.

"It gets stressful, but you've got to realize you're doing something good for people and you can walk out at the end of the day knowing that," Becks said.

When the 542nd takes off on an evacuation mission, a crew of four specially-trained Soldiers respond to the call. The pilot and co-pilot fly the aircraft, while the crew chief acts as the helicopter's eyes and ears, watching the space around the



*“It gets stressful, but you’ve got to realize you’re doing something good for people and you can walk out at the end of the day knowing that.”*

**Spc. Jed Becks**  
Fueller, 542nd Med. Co.

# DUSTOFF!

**Flying Screaming Eagles  
Back to the Nest**



Courtesy photo



**(Top Left)** Sergeant Matthew Kinney, a flight medic with 542nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance), checks the vital statistics of a patient while in flight. **(Center)** A UH-60A Blackhawk medical evacuation helicopter takes off from Forward Operating Base Speicher en route to a nine-line mission. **(Bottom)** Kinney, leads a group of Soldiers carrying a litter with a patient to a medical evacuation helicopter during a mission in Iraq earlier this year.

helicopter the pilots cannot see. Assisting the crew chief is a flight medic -- an Army medic with extra training directed to performing medical procedures while flying in an aircraft.

While providing emergency medical care may be a challenging task on the ground, it can be significantly more challenging in the air in a noisy and vibrating aircraft, said

Sgt. Matthew Kinney, a 542nd flight medic.

The scope of patients transported by the 542nd can range from an injured U.S. Soldier or civilian, to an injured Iraqi Soldier or civilian. The majority of the missions are in response to injuries caused by IEDs, said Spc. Kyle Hollenbeck, a flight medic with the unit. ■



# TASK FORCE BAND of BROTHERS IN MEMORIAM

*Once firmly grounded upon this earth,  
these Screaming Eagles now soar in brighter skies.*

## January 20

1st Battalion, 327th Infantry  
Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team

**Staff Sgt. Rickey Scott, 30**  
Columbus, Ga.

**Sgt. Dennis J. Flanagan, 22**  
Inverness, Fla.

**Spc. Clinton J. Yazzie, 23**  
Fruitland, N.M.

## February 2

**Cpl. Walter B. Howard II, 35**  
1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment,  
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,  
4th Infantry Division  
Rochester, Mich.

**Pfc. Scott A. Messer, 26**   
1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment,  
1st Brigade Combat Team,  
101st Airborne Division  
Ashland, Ky.

## February 3

**Cpl. Jesse M. Zamora, 22**  
1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment,  
3rd Brigade Combat Team,  
101st Airborne Division  
Las Cruces, N.M.

## February 4

**Spc. Roberto L. Martinez Salazar, 21**  
14th Engineer Battalion,  
555th Combat Support Brigade  
(Maneuver Enhancement)  
Long Beach, Calif.

## February 5

562nd Engineer Company,  
172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team

**Staff Sgt. Christopher R. Morningstar, 27**  
San Antonio, Texas

**Sgt. Jeremiah J. Boehmer, 22**  
Parkston, S.D.

## February 6

**Spc. Patrick W. Herried, 29**  
14th Cavalry Regiment,  
172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team  
Sioux Falls, S.D.

## February 12

**Cpl. Andrew J. Kemple, 23**  
3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment,  
3rd Brigade Combat Team,  
101st Airborne Division  
Cambridge, Minn.

*(These are the names that have been released as of Feb. 15)*

