

IBC

Iron Brigade Chronicles

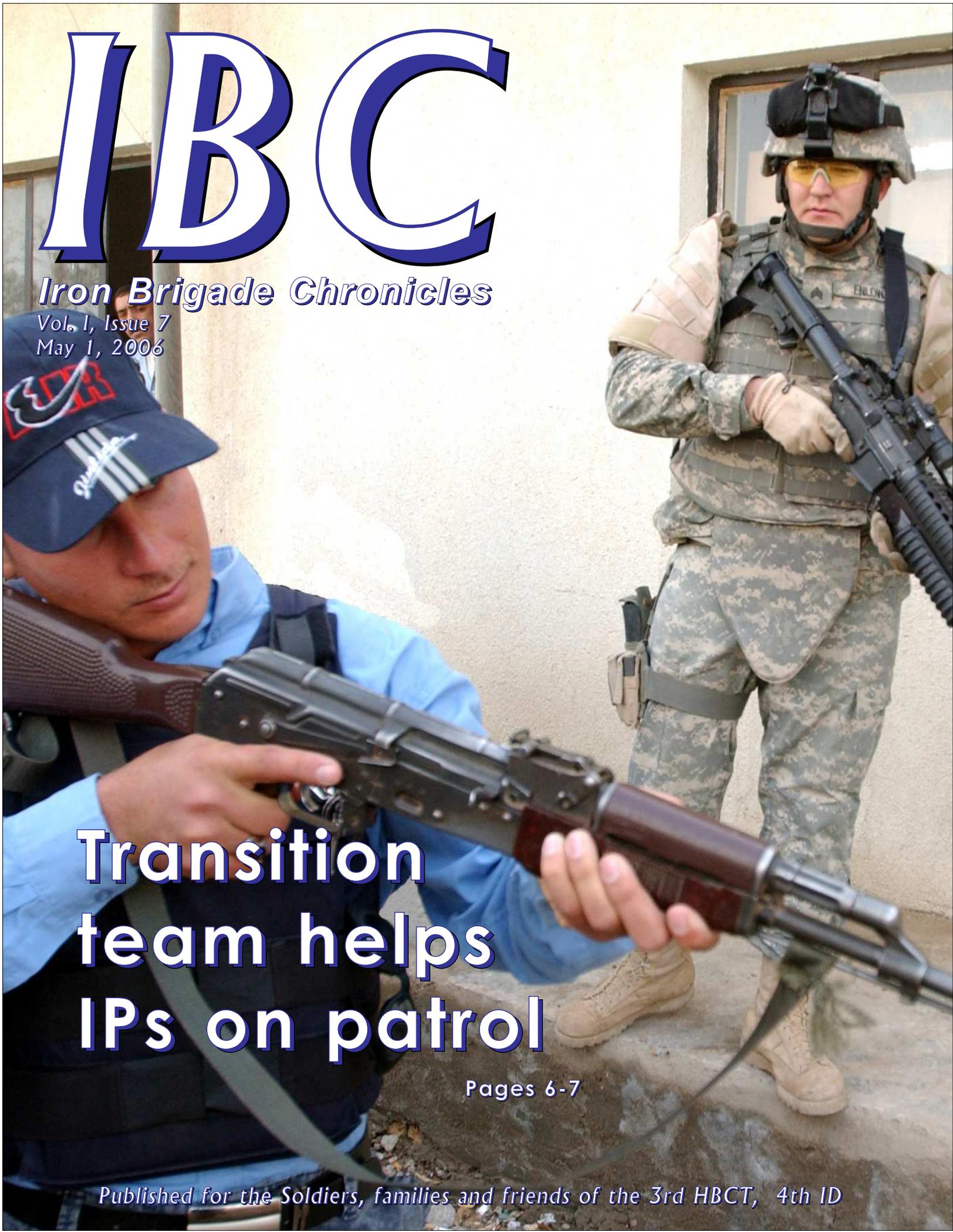
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**Transition
team helps
IPs on patrol**

Pages 6-7

Published for the Soldiers, families and friends of the 3rd HBCT, 4th ID



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The *Iron Brigade Chronicles* is published in the interest of the Soldiers, families and friends of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.

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Cover Photo

Sgt. Jonathan Enlow, a team leader with 2nd Platoon, 978th Military Police Company, instructs an Iraqi policeman how to properly engage a target.

Photo manipulation by Sgt. Zach Mott

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Strikers,

On April 11, members of the Iraqi army, Iraqi police and government leaders (to include the governor) came to Forward Operating Base Warhorse for a day-long security council meeting in order to synchronize the efforts of the IA and the IP in defeating the terrorist threat. The next day, the terrorists countered with VBIEDs in both Khalis and Baqubah, killing 28 people, and wounding more than 80.

I realize that sometimes it seems like progress is two steps forward and one step back, but it is important to remember that we are moving forward. I've said all along that the enemy has a vote here, and on April 12 they voted in both Khalis and Baqubah. The majority of our Iraqi partners voted also, by not allowing these terrible acts to incite additional violence.

Still, our Iraqi counterparts are gaining momentum even with this minor setback. The first on the scene at both bombings were Iraqi police and firefighters, who were quick to respond to reestablish security and treat the wounded. The Iraqi army later arrived to assist with security and in evacuating the casualties; indicating that there is growing cooperation between the police and the army.

Even as the Iraqi police and Iraqi army step up to assume more responsibility for security here, I could not be more proud of the accomplishments and contributions of our own Soldiers. The response of 1-68 Soldiers to the attack in Baqubah was exemplary; infantry, armor and medical personnel working side-by-side with Iraqi first responders to eliminate any residual threat and provide critical medical aide to wounded civilians. Their medics and doctors were also assisting the doctors and nurses at Baqubah General Hospital, before the flow of injured became too much for the hospital to bear and many of the wounded were evacuated to Warhorse and Gabe.

I personally witnessed the care and professionalism demonstrated by Bravo Company, 64th BSB as they quickly established a system to move the wounded from the helipads to the aid station. There, Charlie Med would have put any U.S. hospital emergency room to shame for the way they triaged and treated the wounded Iraqis. Our doctors and nurses treated 25 Iraqis in the span of two hours, many with life threatening wounds that simply would not have made it without the skill of our medical personnel.

Even in the midst of this terrible tragedy, I see hope that the Iraqi army, the police and the Diyala government are learning to solve their own problems. Police performance continues to improve across the province, and 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division recently assumed the lead in their area of operations in Southern Salah al Din.

And I have incredible pride in the dedication and professionalism of our Soldiers. The reaction of 1-68's and of 64th's Soldiers is just like that of 1-32's, of 1-8's, of 3-29's, of 3STB's, and of the many attachments we have; professional, courageous and consistent. Our Soldiers and young leaders are impressive! The events of April 12 could not be more telling of how far the Iraqis have come, and how well you are performing in this tough environment.

**Steadfast and loyal!
Striker 6**



Col. Brian D. Jones

List's List

We have now been in the fight for almost six months and the Soldiers in this heavy brigade combat team impress me every day with all the missions we have going on, they keep their professionalism and can do attitude throughout all -- from hunting down and finding caches, killing the enemy to supporting all the troops with all classes of supplies. From fixing wounded Soldiers and civilians to fixing our equipment, our Soldiers are all over it.

Respectfully helping the Iraqi people build an army, build a police force, build a new free life and going the extra mile to do

things right and above the standard. I am extremely proud of each and every one of you. I have a note in the back of my FM 7-22.7 The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide, I do not know the author, but it describes the Soldiers, NCOs and officers of this HBCT:

HEROES PUT OTHERS BEFORE THEMSELVES
HEROES DEFEND THOSE THAT CANNOT DEFEND THEMSELVES
HEROES MAKE THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE
HEROES PUT SERVICE ABOVE REWARD
HEROES DON'T KNOW THEY ARE HEROES

The Soldiers in this brigade are true Heroes!!!

Keep up the great work and remember to always fire at a target until it changes form!

God bless the Soldiers and families of the 3rd HBCT

Striker 7



Command Sgt. Maj. David H. List



BANNED

3rd HBCT, 4th ID PAO

Increased, and still increasing, temperatures, makes using the following products a danger to Soldiers here in theater by amplifying the risks for becoming a heat casualty, incurring liver damage or dying. For these reasons, the commander for the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers has banned all products that fall into one of the following categories: creatine, anabolic steroids and thermogenics.

Many of these products may be purchased over-the-counter, and used to be sold at the Post Exchange, as well as served in the Dining Facility. However, the costs out-weighted the benefits and they were therefore removed.

Soldiers found using these types of products will be subject to penalty under the Uniform Code of Military Justice by order of the brigade commander.

Authorized products are, PowerBars, protein or whey protein drinks and high-calorie weight gainers. If you are taking a body-building or health supplement and are unsure if it is in one of the above categories, ask your first sergeant, commander or medic to find out for sure.

This ban is only for while in Iraq.



Graduates ...

The Diyala Regional Training Facility proudly graduated it's latest batch of highly-trained NCOs and officers who were charged with going out and becoming part of the ever-increasing back-bone of Iraq, the Iraqi army. The 14-day course, known as the Warrior Training Course, focuses on combat missions the units will face on a daily basis.

In attendance at the graduation, and also the guest speaker, was Command Sgt. Maj. David H. List, the command sergeant major for 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers. List encouraged the graduating class by letting them know what it will take to be successful in future missions.

"The life of an Iraqi NCO or officer is a truly exciting one. As with any endeavor, there will be highs and there will surely be lows," said List. "There will be exhilarating moments of pride, and there will be sad moments of disappointment, but despite all the ups and downs, nothing will give you a deeper sense of satisfaction then leading your Soldiers and watching them succeed."

Photo courtesy of Commd Sgt. Maj. David H. List



Photo by Sgt. Zach Mott

Staff Sgt. Juan Villanueva, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, stands next to his Iraqi army brothers-in-arms during a Transfer of Authority ceremony at an Iraqi army post near Balad, Iraq.

IA assumes Fighting Eagles' mission

by Sgt. Zach Mott
IBC editor

Iraqi Soldiers assumed control of part of Salah al Din Province from 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion in a transfer of authority ceremony at an Iraqi army outpost near Balad, Iraq, April 15.

The Iraqi army's 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division is assuming control of an area of responsibility that encompasses Balad, Al Duluyah and Yethrib, as well as the smaller villages surrounding these cities.

"We're not pulling out of here right away; we're out here to be by their sides," said Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Dailey, command sergeant major, 1-8 CAB, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers. "But, put them in the lead and set them up front so the people notice that they're out front, out leading, they care about their people."

With an Iraqi face on the forces that provide security it has allowed the joint force to improve security not just for the

Soldiers, but the Iraqi people who call this region northwest of Baghdad home.

"This battalion could not conduct this operation without the cooperation from all the citizens in the area," said Lt. Col. Hamed, commander, 3rd Bn., 1st Bde., 4th Div. "By this cooperation we are creating a safer environment for all Iraqis."

The cooperation of the citizens, as well as cooperation with coalition forces, has allowed the 3rd Battalion to become successful in providing security in this region as well as ridding it of insurgents.

"The battalion has conducted many operations to capture insurgents," said Col. Shojaa, the 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division commander. "During these operations, we have found numerous amounts of weapons, IED materials and we have captured many terrorists. Our battalion also conducted security operations during the elections."

The accomplishments of this battalion are helping secure Iraq as the country is stabilizing its government.

"Their efforts in fighting the terrorists

that threaten the citizens of Iraq have not gone unnoticed and their discipline, training and dedication are setting a tremendous example for their fellow Soldiers," said Col. Brian D. Jones, commander, 3rd HBCT, 4th ID. "It will be an honor for me to stand on the same field as these brave Soldiers."

The 3rd Battalion played an instrumental role in the successes enjoyed during Operation Cowpens – a month-long operation on the Jabouri Peninsula that yielded numerous caches and seriously hampered the insurgent efforts to create chaos in the region.

"I believe that doing (Cowpens) jointly was a great factor (in transferring authority to the battalion)," Dailey said. "The people saw that their people were there. I don't think it could have been done without the Iraqi army's help."

The 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division was established in December 2003 and was formerly known as the 203rd Iraqi National Guard Battalion prior to its current designation. 5



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ABOVE RIGHT: Sgt. Jonathan Enlow, a team leader with 2nd Platoon, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, corrects the hand position of an Iraqi policeman while training the Jedediah police on how to move as a team while on patrol.
 ABOVE LEFT: Members of the Jedediah, Iraq, police practice walking during training provided by the Fort Bliss, Texas, based 978th Military Police Battalion. The IPSS were instructed on the basics of holding your rifle and maneuvering.

'Rod's Garage' keeps trucks moving



Photo by Spc. Lee Elder

Staff Sgt. Astol Rodriguez, left, and Spc. Nicholas Barker, both members of Company B, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, do precise work during a typical workday at his company's motor pool which has been dubbed as "Rod's Garage."

by Spc. Lee Elder

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Those looking for the Company B, 64th Brigade Support Battalion Motor Pool, might best call it by the name used by Soldiers here, "Rod's Garage."

The garage – nicknamed for its noncommissioned officer in charge, Staff Sgt. Astol Rodriguez – is a busy place. Soldiers repair and maintain a fleet of 350 vehicles ranging from the standard Humvees to large, tracked vehicles.

Iraqi roadways are tough on military vehicles, and it shows. These mechanics are in their shop every day doing their part to keep these vehicles running and the Soldiers who drive them safe.

"We work long hours," said Sgt. Matthew Kasten, a shop sergeant who hails from Hoyleton, Ill. "But we like to stay busy because it keeps your mind off everything.

"Most guys here would rather be wrenching."

Kasten said the clerks and mechanics at Rod's Garage are a tight-knit group. When they're not working, they hang out together and watch movies.

They have another ritual. It's something they do every day.

"We always eat chow together," Kasten said. "Sometimes, we might take up a whole table, but we always take our meals together."

Rodriguez, a Camuy, Puerto Rico, native, said he tries to plan cookouts and other non-work related activities. Garage mates

may also play pool or other sports together.

When they're in the garage, though, it's all business. Soldiers might be replacing a worn-out battery, repairing a bent tire hub or fixing a broken suspension while their noncommissioned officers are nearby offering advice and support.

The sounds of clanging metal and tools turning echo through the garage's big open bay. Vehicles come in and out all day as do the mechanics who keep them running.

The shop provides most 20 and 30-level maintenance -- to put this is civilian English, repairs and maintenance

to the units' vehicles. Iraq's difficult roadways, coupled with the threat of roadside bombs, provide a constant workload for the members of Rod's Garage.

"The Soldiers drive these vehicles real rough," said Pfc. Jau-el Robinson, who has worked on cars since he was 12 years old while growing up in Salem, Ore. "They drive these vehicles sometimes until they are ready to drop."

Despite the challenges, Robinson said he and his fellow mechanics keep the units' fleet rolling. He still enjoys his job.

"I love it," Robinson said. "You can get a vehicle that is not running and get it working fine or find another vehicle that is running OK and get it to where it is running fine. "It's just great."

Despite all their efforts, mechanics can't do their jobs if their clerks don't do theirs. Sgt. Shannon Vargas, a prescribed load and license clerk from Pueblo, Colo., is one of only four women who work in the shop. She said she enjoys being a member of Rod's Garage.

"They treat me like a lady, but I'm one of the guys," Vargas said. "I really like working here."

Days are long and the work never stops coming she said. However, it's made easier by the camaraderie Vargas enjoys with her fellow Soldiers, and the sense of accomplishment she gets from a mission done right.

"The best thing is seeing the convoys rolling back in and knowing that everybody made it back safely," Vargas said.

Bulldogs, Iraqi army conduct side-by-side patrol

by Pfc. Paul J. Harris

IBC staff writer

A strong, unified Iraq will only come when the new government has the full confidence and support of the people. The people of Iraq need to feel safe and confident their own security forces can take care of them.

To do this the Iraqi army needs to demonstrate they can go out and find the insurgents before they can do harm. Helping the Iraqis achieve this goal are Soldiers from Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.

Joint patrols are conducted between 2nd Squadron, 9 Cavalry and the 4th Iraqi Army Division to help the Iraqi army improve relations with the people.

“The ultimate goal is to have the Iraqi army come out on its own. Have them meet the population so the people understand that the Iraqi army is here to help them, not hurt them. They should have no fear of the Iraqi army,” said Command Sgt. Maj. David List, command sergeant major, 3rd HBCT, 4th ID, who joined a

recent 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry patrol to observe how the NCOs handle themselves in the field.

“What I am looking for is how non-commissioned officers act (toward the Iraqis),” List said. “I am big on give respect-get respect, one of the key things that I always talk about with the non-commissioned officers.”

Staff Sgt. Daniel Barnes, section leader, Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9 Cavalry, 3rd HBCT, led the patrol the day of List’s visit. His patrol encountered a possible improvised explosive device on the way to meet the Iraqi Soldiers. This delayed his patrol from linking up with the Iraq forces. By the time Barnes’ patrol reached the Iraqi camp the Iraqi Soldiers did not want to leave because it was getting dark.

Barnes explained, through an interpreter, the seriousness of the mission to the Iraqi Soldiers and was able to convince them to come out on patrol.

The mission for the night was to enter neighborhoods near Balad and talk with the locals to find out who is in charge of their water and electricity and to ensure

the job was Completed. While talking with the homeowners, Barnes would instruct his Soldiers along with Iraqi Soldiers to search the area together looking for any possible weapons or munitions.

“It is a fine line we have to tow when we do a house search,” said Sgt. Matthew Woosley, squad leader, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry. “You want to be as thorough as possible but you also want to be respectful of people’s homes and try not to break anything.”

During a meet and greet with the locals Barnes and List met an Iraqi man who used to work as an interpreter with the U.S. Marines. After returning home he could not find work. The man explained to Barnes that the Iraqis tend to hire their family or extended family as he was feeling shut out. The vast majority of Iraqi men want to work but there just aren’t enough jobs, the man said.

Unemployment is the biggest concern with him and his peers and asked List if he could get him a job, and a soccer ball, a boy from the crowd shouted at List to which he replied “That I can do, the job I will have to work on.”

The Iraqis were thrilled they were able talk freely with the American and Iraqi Soldiers, they asked for the patrol to stay for dinner but Barnes had to respectfully decline as reports were coming in of possible mortar fire directed at Logistical Support Area Anaconda. The patrol did not find the shooter but Woosley and his squad uncovered a mortar tube buried in the ground.

“One less piece of equipment they can use against us,” Woosley said.

After a 10-hour patrol, Soldiers from Bulldog Troop said goodnight to their Iraqi counterparts returned home without a U.S. escort.

It is a positive sign they are willing to return to their base by themselves. It means they are starting to become more comfortable in their area of responsibility, Barnes said.

After the days events, List was impressed with the progress the patrol made and the NCO that led the mission.

“I think he (Barnes) is doing an outstanding job,” List said. “From the finding of the possible IED, to talking to people with the interpreter, doing a great job and he has a very good reputation with the Iraqi army that he is working with”



Photo by Pfc. Paul J. Harris

Pfc. Brett Brooks, Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, has a laugh with an Iraqi Soldier from the 4th Iraqi Army Division while on patrol near Balad.

Peninsula yields large find

by Spc. Lee Elder

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

An orchard on Al Daluiyah yielded U.S. and Iraqi forces a plentiful crop of weaponry and munitions as joint operations continued on the Jabouri Peninsula.

Soldiers from Company A, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers continued their patrols in support of Operation Cowpens, a month-long operation. Each day, they continue to find an array of insurgent weapons, ammunition and explosives.

"We're getting rid of all this stuff," said 1st Lt. Joseph Mickley, 3rd Platoon leader, Company A. "(Our company has) never had finds this large before."

On this day, Mickley's platoon, which is part of 3rd HBCT, combined its efforts with Iraqi army elements from 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division. It's been a rewarding partnership so far.

Company A – dubbed "The Rock Company" – has also utilized local Iraqi police in its efforts, said Capt. Timothy Knoth, the company's commander. The forces are a blend of Iraq's Sunni, Shiite and Kurd factions.

"It's been a real melting pot of security forces," said Knoth. "We are trying to force people to work together who often might not want to."

"They've been very helpful," Mickley said. "They're like bloodhounds out here. They know this terrain and they know where this stuff is hidden."

Soldiers quickly found 200 feet of detonation cord. Later, they found a foot-long rocket buried with a bag full of armor-piercing rounds and six mortar rounds encased in plastic.

Most of the items found were in plastic barrels. They were buried just a few inches below ground beneath the orchard's row of trees.

Soldiers used metal detectors and probing polls to locate the items. They worked well with their Iraqi counterparts to find weapons that could pose a common threat to both armies.

"They were going to use this stuff against us," Mickley said. "It's better that we find it and get it out of here."

A tip that was later confirmed by overhead surveillance led the Fort Carson, Colo., Soldiers to begin their search near an area soccer field. The field was being used by insurgents for not only recreation, but also to hide caches of weapons as well.

On March 17, Soldiers made a huge find. Among items found on the first day were:

- ◆ 30 pounds of TNT;
 - ◆ 28 82mm mortar rounds;
 - ◆ 15 cases of 14.5 mm rounds;
 - ◆ 14 (57mm and 68mm rock-
- ets).

"The whole scope of the operation expanded," said Company A 1st Sgt. David Kozak from Akron, Ohio. "It went from a platoon operation, to a company operation and finally to a battalion operation."

The battalion action – dubbed "Operation Cowpens" – kicked off with an air assault conducted by two Company A platoons. A more thorough search of the grounds in and around the soccer field ensued.

During the course of the operation, Soldiers changed their patrolling scheme. Instead of the standard eight-hour patrols, two platoons spent two to three days conducting searches.

"It's allowed us to stay around and continue the search," Kozak said. "Now, we don't have to fight our way in each day and then go back."

"It has really kept the bad guys off balance."

Patrols are staggered in times and duration to keep enemy forces guessing. Soldiers from Forward Operating Base McKenzie often go out on a few hours' notice so that no set pattern is established.

The stepped-up patrols have also been coupled with an outreach program to local Iraqis. It has improved relations between Coalition forces and the area population.

"In the past, every time we showed up, there was shooting," Kozak said. "Our message is, 'Stop shooting at us and see what we can do for you.'"

The finds have increased with information provided from these improved relationships with local citizens. The results are impressive.

Coalition forces have captured two dozen rifles, more than 10,000 rounds of ammunition and nearly three dozen rocket-propelled grenade launchers. Artillery and mortar rounds have also been plenty in the recovered items.

Soldiers on the scene estimated that enough explosive material has been found, along detonation cord and signaling devices, to rig up more than 300 improvised explosive devices. These roadside bombs have been an ongoing challenge to Soldiers in Bradley- Fighting Vehicles and in Humvees.

"We've put a stop to a lot of the IED making," said Sgt. Daniel Reinhardt, a team leader. "The more we're out here, the more we stuff we bring out, the less the bad guys are here."

"We're keeping them off their home turf and that is a good thing."

In addition, coalition forces have killed 10 insurgents during action surrounding the operation. An April 1 attack resulted in the deaths of three insurgents trying to attack a mounted platoon with anti-tank grenades.

An added benefit to the operation has been the Iraqi army's increased role. They are now at the forefront of the effort to deprive insurgents of their deadly arms.

"Initially, U.S. forces were finding most of the stuff," Kozak said. "Now, it has evolved into more an Iraqi army operation."

"Our role now is largely pulling security for the search teams. It's good to see they are taking over in providing security for this area."

Innovative design gets our Soldiers home safe



Photo by Pfc. Paul J. Harris

Spc. Joseph Garrison, medic, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, loads a litter into the new, modified Humvee. The Humvee has a fold-down door cut into the back of the blast plate so a patient can be transported in full protection of the Humvee's armor.

by Pfc. Paul J. Harris
IBC staff writer

When the weather is bad enough in Iraq to ground helicopter flights and there are casualties on the ground, patrol leaders are presented with a tough situation: How do you put a casualty on a litter inside an armored Humvee without displacing passengers and jeopardizing more lives?

The current technique is to place the litter across the laps of the back seat passengers with one side door open so the handles of the litter can stick out.

"The problem with that technique is the Humvee and its passengers are now exposed to enemy fire or a blast from an improvised explosive device," said Sgt. 1st Class Brian Delaney, Battalion Aid Station NCOIC, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.

Delaney believes his team has come up with a better way of transporting wounded from the battlefield to the aid station.

The idea for a better combat ground evacuation system first came to Sgt. Justin Folts, treatment NCO, HHB, 3rd Bn., 29th FA, 3rd HBCT, after arriving in Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Folts noticed the Humvees had a blast plate in the rear wall of the cab for protection against IEDs. The blast plate was great for security but it limited the amount of space a medic had to work on a patient. He toyed with the idea of cutting the handles off a litter to make it fit inside of a Humvee.

But, cutting the handles of the litters off would be too time-

consuming, said Folts. There is no solid way of stabilizing a patient when they are laid across the back seat. A medic would have difficulty treating the patient in that configuration. When transporting a patient from the battlefield it is critical to keep the patient stable and to avoid causing any further injuries as a result of transportation.

Upon arriving in Iraq, Folts noticed the ambulances did not have adequate armor and were not fit to go out into a combat environment. He got together with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Joe Bolte, motor chief, 3rd Bn., 29th FA, and his fellow medics to hash out a plan to keep a patient protected by armor during a ground evacuation. They decided to cut a hole in the rear blast plate big enough for a litter to fit inside the Humvee length wise.

With help from welders of Company G, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd HBCT, 4th ID, a fold down door was

inserted in the back of the rear blast plate. They were able to reinforce the seams along the door with armor for protection against IED blasts and added heavy, hinge bolts for stability. Stirrup stops were added to the floor of the vehicle and straps are in place to keep the patient from sliding and damaging the communications equipment in the front of the Humvee.

"We did not want a vehicle that looked different so it might be targeted," said Capt. Paul Ruchalski, physicians assistant, HHB, 3rd Bn., 29th FA. "The design is very subtle, no one would know from the outside looking in (that the Humvee had been modified)."

The new, modified Humvee allows for a patient to be placed inside the vehicle, fully protected by armor without having to displace any passengers, said Ruchalski. Even the turret gunner can fit inside by straddling the patient or using the sling to sit on.

All the parts used in the design of the modified Humvee were readily available at the maintenance bays, said Delaney. Little cost would be incurred by the Army to modify one out of every three Humvees with this fold-down door.

The fold-down door has been approved by Col. Brian D. Jones, commander, 3rd HBCT, and the designs have to be submitted up the chain for Army-wide distribution.

Delaney, Ruchalski and Folts hope once the Army sees the benefit of their team's design, the fold down door will become a permanent design feature on future Humvees.

"It is important to have a standardized way for the Army to be tactical yet still take care of the Soldiers when they are wounded," said Folts.

FAR # 5

Far #5 Always have comms and know your location (we can't help you if we can't talk to you or find you).

Successful communication is key to winning the war on terror. Relaying your location, whether you're in the middle of a palm grove, driving down a main supply route or simply turning in your laundry at your respective forward operating base's laundry facility, allows people to find you in any event.

During a recent attack on FOB Warhorse no one was seriously wounded and no damage was done. Everybody reacted properly and quickly making accountability easy. This is directly attributed to NCOs and officers communicating the right thing -- calling in the incident, and relaying where their Soldiers were.

Imagine this experience from a different perspective. The FOB was rocketed, a Soldier was seriously wounded and you just arrived to the FOB and are still trying to figure out where your office was located. You are the only one in the area. You run to help the injured Soldier. You don't have a radio, but the Soldier you are helping does, and he is unconscious.

You call on the radio, "I need medical assistance. I have an injured Soldier who is unconscious."

The receiver of your message responds, "Roger. What is your location?"

Then it dawns on you, "I don't know."

This may seem to be an extreme example, but it is very possible. Not everyone has a radio, however at the very least all Soldiers should know where they are.

Random Thoughts

In the wilderness of the Israeli Judean Mountains stands a fortress named Masada. This fortress stands as one of many strongholds that were used as a hiding place for many that fled from oppression and tyranny. During the centuries this Judean wilderness was used by many to evade and escape different authority figures who were attempting to take away their peaceful existence.



King David, ruler of Israel around 1000 B.C. wrote in the Psalms about his many experiences in the Judean wilderness and how he found God to be his refuge from trouble. God is described in Psalm 18:1-2 as he wrote:

"I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom will I trust; my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

The 48th verse of the same chapter says, "He delivers me from my enemies: yes, you have lifted me up above those who rise up against me ..."

David was placed in a position where he needed to trust God for his very existence. As his enemies pursued him David sought refuge in the Lord. Today, we as deployed Soldiers encounter situations where we need to look to God for our refuge and our strength. We must realize that without God we do not have the power on our own to overcome the devilish adversary. As we lean on the Lord and recognize Him as the all mighty and all loving God that He is, we can then come to Him with any pressure, any trouble, any grief, any sorrow and know that He will take us up in His arms of love, and take up our cause and defend us. Go to Him today.

Photo share -- show off your view of Iraq here



Photo by Chris Hoff

Lighting strikes near Baqubah during a recent storm that swept across Forward Operating Base Warhorse. Although the rainy season was thought to be over, water once again found its way onto the FOB to turn dirt to mud.



Photo by Maj. Byron Sarchet

Soldiers and Airmen of Forward Operating Base Caldwell run around Kirkush Military Training Base during an early morning Easter Run. The run was one of many activities the group conducted to celebrate the day.

To see your photos here, e-mail them to: zachary.mott@us.army.mil. Photos can be anything from a promotion to everyday life on the FOB. Please include as much information about the pictures as possible.