



Marne Focus



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Supporting Soldiers in MND-Center

April 27, 2007

'Hard Rock' platoon keeps streets safe in Salman Park

Story by Spc. Ben Hutto
3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd HBCT

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HAMMER – Young infantrymen face the fear of stepping on the streets of Baghdad. But not alone, combat veteran noncommissioned officers take them under their wings.

Soldiers from 3rd platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment patrolled the streets of Salman Pak in conjunction with the military police and the Iraqi National Police.

"This is just another chance for the people to see our faces and know that we are here to help out," explained Pfc. Paul Jernigan, an infantryman with 3rd platoon.

Led by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Black, the platoon sergeant, and native of Smith Station, Ala., the group spent two hours walking up and down the streets, venturing into the town square and greeting anyone who would approach them. Their mission, while relatively simple to explain, is not simple to execute.

"We just got here yesterday, but we're going to spend six days here working with the military police and the Iraqi police," said Sgt. Robert Butler, from Kansas City, Mo.

As the Soldiers from 3rd Platoon kept their intervals, Black explained how this town is actually much better than the town in the platoon's previous area of operation during Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

"The situation here is a lot better than where we were last time, based on the reputation of the Iraqi National Police working here," explained Black. "I think it helps that they work here, but don't live here. We are seeing their operations getting good results. They are taking the lead in a lot more things. Really, all we do is shadow them, in case they need back up. I think they and most of the population here know that we are just here to help."

Pvt. Clint Biddle, a medic who was also with Black in OIF III in 3rd Platoon, and native of Paris, Ky., agrees that the situation is different.

"The town is a lot bigger and we are working a lot closer with the Iraqi forces this time," explained Biddle. "I think they are doing a lot better job policing their towns."

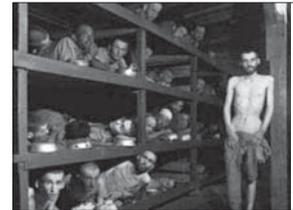
The combat experience in Black's platoon will be a huge asset in situations like this foot patrol, according to many veteran platoon members.

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Soldier firefighters

Support Soldiers train as base fire emergency crew
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Days of Remembrance

Marne Soldier shares memories, lessons

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Your money

Financial advice for your extra income

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Photo by Pfc. William Hatton
7th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Making A Lasting Impression

Pfc. Sergey Prokushev, a radio transmission operator with 2nd Platoon, Company B, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, walks along a road during a patrol in the village of Rushdi Mulla, Iraq, April 17. See page 6 for more photos.



Marne 6 sends...



Commander welcomes units

Stresses leadership, physical, spiritual fitness during deployment

The leaders of our Task Force Marne gathered here at Victory Base Tuesday.

I am proud of the accomplishments of each unit attached to this task force and we are confident that our new team is ready to win.

We come from all corners of our nation. Our units are all legendary. And today we are united as Multinational Division (Center).

Let me spend a little time telling you about some of the things I discussed with your commanders.

First, Soldiers will see me and my battle buddy, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, where they fight. You see, I believe that constant communication is key. I always ask, are we doing things right and are we doing the right things.

So feel free to talk to us. We want to know how things are going in our task force in the foxhole, where it counts. Thirty years of service has taught me that every individual is important.

I am a firm believer in the role that leaders play in their units. That's why I'll be with you on the battlefield here. I value leadership and you need to know my expectations of all leaders.

Leaders must be present and engaged in the lives of their Soldiers. Noncommissioned officers and officers of every grade, are expected to set the right example every day.

Leadership is not a popularity contest. Leaders are expected to make tough calls and uphold the Army's standards in this very tough environment.

When leaders are engaged Soldiers are protected from unsafe acts. When leaders are engaged, risks are mitigated. When leaders are engaged the unit's ethics are unquestioned. And when leaders are engaged units accomplish their missions.

You will also learn that I firmly believe that every person should also have balance. This is very important in combat. Let me expand on how I work to achieve balance in my life.

Personally, when I am deployed, I work 15 hours, rest seven, and work out for two hours each day. This helps me keep a mental and physical edge.

I also take time out for spiritual fitness. This involves having an outlet for recreation. I pray, read, and give my self quiet time. I encourage you



Photo by Sgt. Benjamin Brody
3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, 3rd Infantry Division commander, addresses troops during the recent Days of Remembrance observation outside division headquarters on Forward Operating Base Victory.

to find ways to be spiritually fit.

So, each leader must be engaged and every individual is important. These are the components of great units. And Task Force Marne,

MND(C) will be known as a great unit, the sum of all its magnificent parts.

We will have an environment where Soldiers are treated with dignity and respect. We will make safety and the mitigation of risk the centerpiece of every operation. We will reward Soldiers on time and we will honor our heroes.

We will be victorious.

I am blessed to serve alongside you as the commanding general of Multinational Division Center

and I look forward to meeting you in the coming year. For now, take care and God bless. And, as Dog Face Soldiers have proclaimed for nine decades.

ROCK OF THE MARNE!

“ Leaders are expected to make tough calls and uphold the Army's standards in this very tough environment. ”

-- **Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch**
3rd Inf., Div. commander

Marne Focus

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HARD ROCK, page 1

"I've got 12 vets that have been with this platoon since OIF III," said Black. "I took over during the middle of the last rotation, but didn't try to come in and change anything. They had their routine down and I didn't want to mess with that. I have faith in my Soldiers. I let my guys be thinkers on the ground. I don't dictate how things will be. I have a lot of faith in their abilities and judgment."

The confidence Black places in his veterans trickles down to the new Soldiers in the squad. For most, this is their first deployment and they are taking all the advice they can from the experienced non-commissioned officers in the company.

"I use every little bit of advice they (NCOs) give us," said Pvt. Brandon Bailey, from Colquitt, Ga. "They all do what they can to help us because they want us to (return home) alive."

Black agrees.

"We have a lot of combat experience spread out throughout 1-15," explained Black. "I let the NCOs teach their men what they need to know and I tell my Soldiers to trust their leaders."

Not that it is easy to blend into a platoon as tight knit as 3rd Platoon. It is a close group where everyone seems to have a nickname. Many of them have been through hard times together and that has built bonds that run deeper than casual working relationships.

"Last time I was here, me and my guys went through some really bad stuff," explained Butler. "We had gotten really tight. They were probably the bravest guys I'd ever met. You go into situations together where you think you're going to die and nobody runs. They stand right by your side fighting and they're just as scared as you are. After that, that's your brother."

Entering such a fraternity can be daunting for Soldiers still in their first year, but the newcomers to 3rd Platoon have found ways to impress the veteran members of the platoon with their zeal and willingness to do the hard work it takes to become a good infantryman and teammate.

"At first it is hard fitting in, but once you get here and get settled it's not too bad," explained Bailey.

"Our new guys are eager," said Biddle with a smile. "They want to go out on patrol."

Butler tries to keep his new Soldiers as ready as possible. In his mind, their eagerness is an asset, but he has tried to temper it with his experience.

"When the new guys showed up I told them, 'I'm not here to be your friend. I'm your sergeant and my job is to get you out of this alive,'" he said with a straight face. "If they don't like me, I don't care as long as they are back home with their families when this is over." A smile broke over his face before he continued. "I've tried not to get too close to them, but it's hard."

The platoon marched for another hour before it doubled back through Salman Pak's town square.

The town's people filled the downtown area getting haircuts, buying food, drinking chi and going about their daily lives. As the Soldiers walked by, many adults greeted them, many children came out to shake their hands or give the squad a thumbs up, but everyone was watching.

For many Soldiers, this would make them nervous. Not for these seasoned veterans.

"Normally people don't bother me," explained Butler. "The more people there are; the safer you are."

Butler explained that when the people clear the street he gets worried. It is his belief that in the smaller areas outside Baghdad the townsfolk look out for one another. He feels that the tribes are close and go out of their way to warn each other before something bad is going to happen.

"They know when things are going to happen. So if they aren't here or the children aren't out in the street, I get scared."

That fear isn't something that stops him, however. He explained that it was something he has just gotten used to.

"You learn how to fight it, because when stuff starts happening what are you going to do?" asks Butler rhetorically. "Turn around and run? You aren't just going to leave your guys there hanging."

As the patrol ended the NCOs went around and made sure all of their Soldiers were drinking water and reminded them to get something to eat. The Soldiers were tired and hot, but as Staff Sgt. Sean Holtz, a native from Columbus, Ga., started joking with several members of his squad, smiles started appearing on once weary faces. At this point, there was no mistaking that this unit was something like a family.

"It's because our senior guys know your only family is your platoon over here," explained Biddle. "Line units are close. I mean, we can decompress and relax around each other no matter what rank we are. When we are lying around upstairs (where 18 of them are jammed into a little room together), jokes just fly back and forth across the room, but jokes go out the window when we are on patrol."

The closeness of the platoon can make Biddle's job as a combat medic hard sometimes.

"I can work on 'some guy' all day and it's not hard," explained Biddle with a serious expression. "Working on one of my guys is different. The personal ties make it harder. It's like working on a family member. You have to learn to set aside your emotions and get the job done."

Biddle went on to say that being a line medic is tough that way. "Part of you wants to get hysterical along with everyone else because your buddy is hurt, but you have to be able to push all that aside and remain calm and focused on your job, he added"

As the tired squad trudged up the stairs to their room, several members from another squad in the platoon were gearing up to provide cover for two tanks outside the compound in Salman Pak. Jokes were exchanged as the first squad quickly caught the other one up on what happened on the previous patrol. For a moment, it didn't even seem like they were in the middle of a war.

“ Line units are close. I mean, we can decompress and relax around each other no matter what rank we are. ”

**-- Pvt. Clint Biddle,
Paris, Ky.**

**CLEANING YOUR WEAPON MAY
SAVE A LIFE.
IT MAY BE YOUR OWN.**

Chaplain provides faith on the front

Story by Pfc. William Hatton
7th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

YUSUFYIAH – Where does man turn to when faced with life-threatening events? Is there a place of solitude in the hardships of combat? After experiencing traumatic moments, where can Soldiers turn to for peace?

When faced with the greatest trials a human can face, Soldiers from the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, are not only seeking out comfort from their chaplain, their chaplain is seeking out them to provide comfort from the frontlines of battle.

For Chaplain (Capt.) Jeff Bryan, battalion chaplain for 4th Bn., 31st Inf. Reg., his duty station at Forward Operating Base Yusufiyah has become less of a home and more of a transitional dwelling as he moves throughout the nearby areas surrounding the FOB. Visiting his troops spread throughout the area and seeing the frontline they fight at every day becomes vital in allowing the faith to go forward.

Each day the work is different, said Bryan, a native of Watertown, N.Y. When he focuses his work around the FOB, Soldiers in the battalion visit him in hopes to seek guidance and gain motivation, he added.

“I spend most of my time going outside and

visiting my Soldiers,” Bryan said. “When guys are spread out at numerous locations, it becomes important to visit with them to gain a sense of morale within the unit.”

Going to the places Soldiers go to and riding along on the daily patrols provides an opportunity to build stronger relationships with the Soldiers, Bryan said. When Soldiers see the willingness their chaplain has to visit them in rough and hard environments, it helps to build a deeper trust, he added.

“People have different responses to different situations,” Bryan said. “When a Soldier is traumatized after a firefight, to be able to encourage him becomes important.”

Soldiers go through enough pain and stress each day when they walk around on dangerous streets, Bryan said. With the amount of trouble they face, offering comfort and motivation becomes significant, he added.

“I’m no hero. These guys are the true heroes,” Bryan said. “The guys that sacrifice everything and fight this fight, they are the real heroes.”

As the stress of war continues, finding a sense of faith or a sense of comfort becomes difficult, Bryan said. The fear and stress dealt with causes a change in faith, he added.

“Most Soldiers don’t turn to God when dealing with their troubles,” Bryan said.

When a Soldier does however turn to a high-



Chaplain (Capt.) Jeff Bryan

er power for comfort, it brings a better feeling of triumph, Bryan said.

“It leaves me with a better feeling inside,” he added.

As the fight continues, life’s troubling questions might not be answered. Attacks will continue, but as Soldiers from FOB Yusufiyah build a stronger relationship with their chaplain, the fight will go forward with a stronger force.



Sgt. Adam McDermott clips wires that connect protective barriers that will be filled with dirt around a new patrol April 24.

said Sgt. Adam McDermott, a native of Loretta, Penn., and a heavy equipment operator with the company. “This is a tier-one IED site, and with a tower here, they’ll be able to watch a lot of Route Tampa.”

He enjoys the work, he said.

“Time’s flying by; we’ve been doing work like this for eight months. Time’s flying – I like doing this stuff.”

Staff Sgt. Samuel Segrain, platoon sergeant for the light equipment section, agreed.

“It’s awesome,” he said. “This is the best job an engineer can do – supporting friendly forces. And this section is the busiest one in the whole brigade. We do mission after mission – vehicle recovery, building things, it’s constant.”

Troops aim to clean-up, fortify IED ridden area

Story and photos by Spc. Chris McCann
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division

CAMP STRIKER — The Army is placing a “Big Brother,” an area known to be a hot bed for improvised explosive devices.

Soldiers of Company A, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) out of Fort Drum, N.Y., have been constructing a new outpost along one of Iraq’s major highways. The post is to give Iraqi National Police over watch of the area.

“With the post here, it will mitigate (improvised explosive device) placement in this area. It’s one of the main IED sites,” explained Staff Sgt. Jose Salas, a native of Bronx, N.Y., who serves as the construction supervisor for the company.

The light equipment section of the company cannot finish the project alone because they lack machinery tall enough to make the fortifications as high as needed.

“We’ll be done in three days,” said Salas. “Then, another engineering asset can finish it. They’ll be able to add another layer of barriers above this one.”

Still, he said, the plan is to have national police present in the post by the beginning of May, with the position finished three weeks later.

“It’s going to provide great over watch,”

said Sgt. Adam McDermott, a native of Loretta, Penn., and a heavy equipment operator with the company. “This is a tier-one IED site, and with a tower here, they’ll be able to watch a lot of Route Tampa.”

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Sgt. Adam McDermott guides the vehicle as they stretch barriers that will be filled with dirt around a new patrol base April 24.

Support Soldiers train for fires

Story and photos by Sgt. Kevin McSwain
2/10th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Forward Operating Base HAMMER — One palletized load system, three water bladders, and ten Soldiers combined to create the first fire station here.

Soldiers from Company A, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, were tasked with the mission to establish a fire fighting crew to support forward operating base Hammer.

“We were chosen to become the base fire-fighters because we had the assets to get the job done,” said Capt. Fenicia Jackson, company commander.

Jackson said the unit, which consists of five support platoons, was able to create fire trucks using resources from their transportation and water treatment platoons.

“The two platoons worked together to build the equipment,” she said. “We used a PLS from the transportation platoon as a platform to hold water bladders supplied by the water treatment platoon.”

The configuration used to create the truck was the idea of Staff Sgt. Cleveland Randolph and Sgt. Michael Murray, both with the water treatment platoon.

“We sat down and thought about how the system was going to be set up,” said Randolph, platoon sergeant. “Once we put one together, we found that it worked perfectly.”

Randolph said the first fire truck took a few hours to build, but after the design was complete, the process became easy.

“The first day of building was trial and error,” he said. “Now we can have a fire truck built in 45 minutes.”

The platoon has built 6 trucks so far: three trucks are on standby in the company area, two trucks support 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, and one truck supports 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment both with 3rd HBCT, 3rd In. Div.

“Our trucks are here to support emergencies on base,” Randolph said. “The other trucks are part of our forward deployed units. They provide



Pfc. Carla Allen, a water treatment specialist, fills a water bladder on the fire truck.



Pfc. Carla Allen, with Company A, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division sprays water out on the roads at FOB Hammer.

support to the Soldiers who stay in areas outside of the forward operating base.”

The trucks, designed to be multiple purpose vehicles, allow Soldiers to drink the water inside the systems if needed.

“We wanted to create a water transportation system when we made the fire trucks,” said Murray, water site noncommissioned officer in charge. “Our job is to purify water delivered to us, so it is clean enough to drink.”

Randolph, from Meridian, Miss., said the trucks could carry 1,500 gallons of water.

“Each truck has three forward area water point supply systems, which hold 500 gallons of water each,” he said.

The systems are linked together and connected to a pump, which shoots water out of a ten foot hose.

“The idea the Soldiers came up with was better than I imagined,” Jackson said. “I told them what we needed and they produced a vehicle that can complete the mission and do much more.”

The Soldiers from the water treatment platoon

are responsible for maintaining and operating the new equipment.

“No one in our unit has experience fighting fires,” Randolph said. “We are all learning to operate the pump and hose through daily training.”

Different Soldiers operate the equipment on the truck each day to ensure the entire crew is proficient.

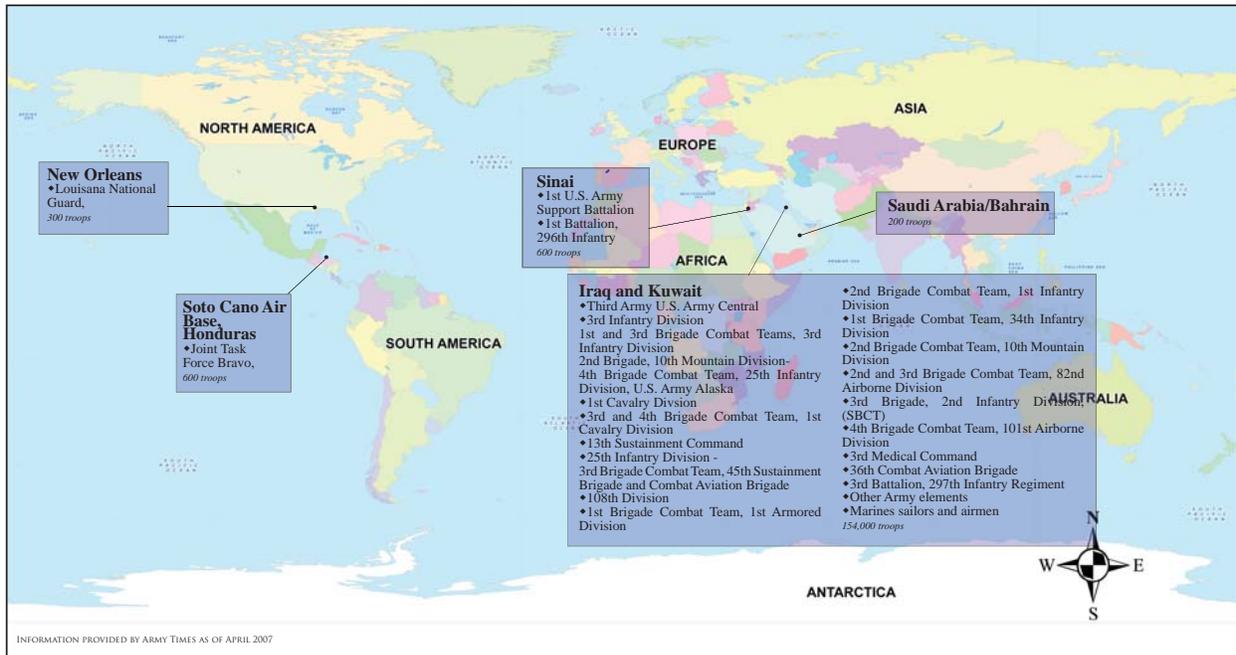
“Personnel and time management allowed us to complete this mission as we established the daily operation of our unit,” Jackson said.

In addition to the creation of a fire fighting team, the platoon is responsible for the treatment and storage of 600,000 gallons of water on the base.

Jackson said the challenge gave her Soldiers a chance to show how creative they can be to accomplish a mission.

“I was honored to be given such a great challenge,” she said. “This was an opportunity for our Soldiers to show that they are ready to accomplish any mission.”

Deployed troops around the world



A Dog's eye view: Photos from around the Multinational Division - Center taken by Soldiers, Marine, sailors, airmen and Department of Defense civilians

Sgt. Michael Proctor, an infantryman with 2nd Platoon, Company B, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, gives children candy while his unit conducts a patrol through the village of Rushdi Mulla, Iraq, April 17. Proctor, a native of Riverside, Calif., and his platoon performed an air assault into the village in October of 2006 and have occupied the area since.



Photos by Spc. William Hatton
7th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Pfc. Bryan Roberson, a medic with Company B, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, pulls security during a patrol in the village of Rushdi Mulla, Iraq, April 17. Roberson, a native of Richman, Calif., and his unit performed an air assault into the village in October of 2006 and have occupied the area since.

Send your photos to samantha.m.stryker@iraq.centcom.mil or drop off electronic copies at the Task Force Marne Public Affairs Office.



A different look around Camp Liberty during a sand storm blowing in the 3rd Infantry Division Headquarters area.

Photo by Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft
3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs Office



Pfc. Nathan Roy, an infantryman with Company B, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, pulls security at the entrance of Patrol Base Shanghi located in the village of Rushdi Mulla, Iraq, during a sand storm, April 17. Roy, a native of Pine Bluff, Ark., and his comrades performed an air assault into the village in October of 2006 and have occupied the area since.

Financial responsibility its own reward

Story by Spc. Chris McCann
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division

While a Soldier may complain about the bad points of a deployment, he will also usually admit, however grudgingly, that it "is good money." Deployments provide a tax-free status, several incentive pays and a lack of bills that is almost impossible to equal in the United States.

But often, Soldiers return from a deployment flush with cash, sometimes the most they've ever had at one time, and within weeks there's a 40-inch plasma TV in the barracks room, a fridge full of beer and a new car in the parking lot, but the money is gone.

While not everyone is Warren Buffett, "everyone can make money work and multiply instead of slipping through their fingers," said Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Harvey of Binghamton, N.Y., the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division out of Fort Drum, N.Y. human resources and finance noncommissioned officer in charge. "And whether a Soldier is content to use conservative, stable ways to build wealth slowly, or is confident enough to invest in high-risk, high-yield stocks, using money to make more money beats spending it all.

Spc. Mike Mihelich of St. Louis, Mo., a radio-telephone operator for Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, has long put the principles of financial security into use.

"For me, savings is something I've always I've been conscious of," he said. "A briefing motivated me to start my Roth (Individual Retirement Account). I'm going to separate from the Army after this deployment, and so I wanted to save money for the future."

"You have to spend money to make money," Harvey said. "But careful spending is the key."

"The worst thing you can do is to buy things without a residual value," he cautioned. Big screen TVs, cars that depreciate rapidly and stereos would all qualify.

"Of course you need things," he said. "But you can do just fine with the same old TV you have now. Having a big TV doesn't mean you're rich - it just means you like to watch TV."

Instead, a financially responsible person will invest the money.



"Invest in (certificates of deposit)," he said. "And if you're going to save money, don't put it in a checking account. Most checking accounts don't earn interest."

Another common mistake is claiming zero dependents on tax forms, he said. "While it does provide a payoff at the end of the tax year, the government is the one earning interest on the money in the interim, and you can't spend it. Claiming yourself as a dependent provides more money throughout the year, and since you didn't miss it before, invest it and keep the interest for yourself."

And when you do get a tax return check, use it wisely, he advised.

"When you get that big check back, don't blow it. Put it in savings."

Mihelich agreed.

"The number one thing is not spending money on frivolous stuff," he said. "A lot of people, just because they have the money, they're going to spend it."

'Financial reward' is a four-part series by Spc. Chris McCann, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn., Div.

Come get *your* money

Deployment entitlements

(as of 21 July 2006)

Hazardous duty pay - \$100/mo.	\$100 monthly
Hostile fire pay/Imminent danger pay - \$225/mo.	\$225 monthly
Family separation allowance - \$250/mo.	\$250 monthly
Combat zone tax exclusion	Varies, capped at \$6867.60 per month for O-1 and above
Traumatic servicemember group life insurance (soldiers contribute)	\$1 monthly
Combat-related injury rehabilitation pay	\$430 monthly
Assignment incentive pay, for each month extended after 12 months	\$1,000.00 monthly

For more information about entitlements, savings or investing through the military or allotments visit your Marine finance office or visit www.mypay.dfas.army.mil or www.dod.mil.

Though the atrocities of the holocaust are a in the past,

We must never forget, overlook evil

During a recent 'Days of Remembrance,' speech given by Maj. Robert Littman, G6, Marne Soldiers "...gathered to remember the Holocaust that occurred between 1939 and 1945 in Nazi occupied Europe."

Here is an excerpt of Littman's words for all to read and think over.

One often hears the phrase "never forget" in association with this event. "Never Forget" were the words that President Bush inscribed in the guest register at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. But what is it exactly that we should "never forget"?

When I was young, I learned the facts and figures about the holocaust, the number of dead, the inhuman conditions the prisoners were kept in, the brutality, the mass graves and the torture chambers.

I saw the identification numbers, still tattooed on people, so many years later, and it is something that I will never forget. But when we say we must never forget the holocaust, I believe that we must remember even more than the numbers and facts.

What we must never forget is that evil is a reality. Evil of this type did not start with the Nazi regime and evil did not stop with the end of this regime. The same evil that pervaded the thoughts of the Nazi guards is the same evil that caused 19 moslems to hijack four planes and kill over 3,000 people in attacks on America in September of 2001. This same evil allowed Serbians to mass murder thousands of moslems in Kosovo and Bosnia. This same evil was present in the torture chambers of Saddam Hussein. This is what we must remember and we must understand that the only way to confront these types of evil in the world is with action.

The holocaust and the Nazi government that created it, was the worst evil in the 20th Century. But it also could have been stopped sooner with earlier action from the 'free' nations of the world. Many people, at the start of Hitler's regime tried to appease the great evil. People like Neville Chamberlain and his followers who would do anything to avoid confrontation and have 'peace in their time'. They talked and sanctioned and they allowed the evil to fester. The appeasers in power in the 1930's did whatever they could do to avoid action. This applied to people both in and out of Germany. As Pastor Martin Niemoller said "First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out- because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out- because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak for me."

Ask yourself what would have happened if America and the nations of the free world had not went to war and defeated Germany and Japan in WWII. Imagine if we didn't want to take on the additional casualties after Pearl Harbor or the Army didn't want to fight far from home for long periods of time.

How many more gypsies, Jews, political prisoners, homosexuals and people declared undesirable by the state would have been wiped off the earth? But instead of giving in to Japanese and German aggression, America took on the challenge, we defeated two once powerful nations and we exposed the evils of the holocaust. Even with these important historical precedents, many people today when faced with modern evils in the world want to appease. They want to talk to the countries that our president so aptly called the "axis of evil". They want to sanction, they want to watch, they want peace at any price, and they want to forget what happens when evil festers. They want to forget the true lessens of the holocaust. But, like President Bush wrote, we must never forget.

I, like many current American soldiers, enjoyed my time in Germany. The German culture, food, Beer and wine, and the many German Friends I made gave me a good impression of the German people.

With this in mind, some people would blame the holocaust on one man in Germany and excuse the behavior of a civilized nation as if Adolf Hitler misled all the people. But this is not the case. Ruthless tyrants like Hitler, Stalin, Saddam Hussein and Kim Jung-Il can never succeed without the willing help of thousands of loyalists and supporters. These

supporters of evil do not act out of fear of one man, but because they believe in their own superiority and the righteousness of their cause. The evil intention of these leaders pervades their followers and incites them to greater and greater immoral acts. Once the leaders have gained this type of power there is no stopping the depravity to which they can sink without taking bold and decisive action by the free states of the world.

When talking about the holocaust we think of drastic chambers of torture; medical experiments on living people, exposing people to hideous penalties for the slightest offenses or for no offenses at all. And of course the use of gas chambers on a minority people who were citizens of the country. To think of these atrocities as "history", to blame it on Hitler, or the struggles that Germany was going through following WWI, is to miss the most important lesson which is that evil that still exists in the modern world. Saddam Hussein, in continuing the legacy of tyrants like Hitler, used torture, murder and in 1988 he used poison gas to kill thousands of Iraqi people.

The large-scale murder of Eastern European Jews began with the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. Einsatzgruppen, mobile killing units, systematically collected the Jews in each community, forced them to dig mass graves, stripped and shot them. Two million lost their lives in this way.

While the size of numbers like this is staggering, it is only through the action of the United States and the strength of our Army that the mass graves discovered in Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq in recent times were prevented from growing to this size. It is through the strength of our great nation, and those of our allies here, that we can show the evil tyrants in the world today, that as a nation we have not forgotten the lessons of the holocaust.

Ultimately, large-scale gas chambers were constructed in Germany. At the height of its operation, 10,000 people per day were executed. The Nazi killing machines did not discriminate against men, women, children; young or old. Yet many American people today, who remember these facts and figures, think of it as "history".

When these modern appeasers are confronted with a regime like Saddam Hussein's that used poison gas to kill men, women and children of an ethnic minority, used torture chambers on its own people, and filled mass graves with tens of thousands of people, these appeasers wanted further debate and talk before decisive action. If these appeasers were in charge of our nation we would have waited longer to take out the evil of Saddam and the atrocities he was committing on innocent men women and children would have continued.

Some years ago, my father and I made a trip to visit the site of Dachau Concentration camp in Germany. My father wrote about it afterwards and described it as "a trip through hell". The rooms and grounds of the place were eerily silent and everyone talked in hushed whispers. Yet to our ears we could still hear the screams and moans of the inmates and our senses replaced the 'to clean' smell of the place with the awful smells which must have pervaded the area. The walls of the rooms were covered in gruesome pictures depicting the evil conditions of the prisoners.

Now I want to contrast these recollections of my father, with those of USA reporter Jack Kelley describing torture chambers in Iraq soon after our liberation of Iraq. Mr. Kelley wrote "Pictures of dead Iraqi's with their necks slashed, eyes gouged out, and genitals blackened, fill a bookshelf. Jail cells with dried blood on the floor and rusted shackles bolted to the walls, line the corridors. And the screams of what could be imprisoned men in an underground detention center echo through air shafts and sewer pipes."

The same tyrannical type governments, the same evil that was in Germany, is still in places like Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Darfur many other places throughout the world.

This is truly the lesson of the Holocaust that we can never forget.

When we study the holocaust, it is not simply to wring our hands over the events of a half-century ago. It is to confront our own evil instinct

See **REMEMBRANCE**, page 9

During Operation Iraqi Freedom 09, Sgt. Jonathan Agosta's wife sent him an e-mail to lift his spirits. This e-mail gave him motivation then, and now he passes it on to others to so that they don't forget their inner child.

Comforting words for our Soldiers on the Battlefield

I'm not writing this to sound preachy or to sound like it's a clichéd answer to a situation, I'm writing this to you as words of advice as a Command Sgt. Maj. (Retired).

I know that some of what you may witness will affect you deeply. You may hear it in your battle buddies' voice, the sheer weariness of their words, each one sounding as if it weighs a ton, and they may try not to reveal their true heart, crushed emotions when they are uttered. They may try to hold back a tear, as the realization of the situation you may face over there finally hits home.

Every time you get ready to go outside the compound, you may go through a series of emotions that are too hard to describe. Your command spends the time you are away, not wanting to leave their post until they hear from you, that you are safely back. I knew from the first mention of deployment the situations you might face, the conditions you may live under, and how hard it may be on you being away from your home, your things, and going through another separation from everything you hold dear in your life. We should all be able to talk openly about these things, many here have trodded the same path you are now on, and I like to think it helps you that we can do this, as it's emotions you don't have to keep bottled up inside just because you feel the need to protect pride. As a leader all I can say at this moment, when you are down, is that you are not alone as long as you wear your uniform and pledge allegiance to your country, you will always be surrounded by your fellow soldiers. I am so proud of you all; you are already the shining example of military excellence.

As the soldier, my advice to you while you are there is this:

“ Take time over the next few days, while having a smoke, or going to the shower, to remember times when you have truly been yourself with someone, and relish in those memories. ”

**-- Wife of Sgt. Jonathan Agosta
3rd Infantry Division staff**

Remember who you are, remember all the things in this life that go to make up you as a whole; the things that bring you supreme joy, and happiness.

Make contact with that inner child, the one that gives light to your day and humor and love in your heart, that I know you have and grasp onto it hard with both hands. Your inner child, compassion and love for life are always the first casualties of combat, and if you loose them it makes you like all the rest, pessimistic, moody and normal.

Take time over the next few days, while having a smoke, or going to the shower, to remember times when you have truly been yourself with

someone, and relish in those memories. They are what will help keep that inner child alive and well.

Think of things that you've put off because of work and other things intruding, that you've meant to do with anyone special in your life, and go through them in your mind, make a commitment to yourself, that you will return to that person in sound mind,

and still with your inner child unscathed and not battle scarred, so you can do these things you've visualized.

Be true to yourself, and don't let the vagaries of combat sway you from your path in life.

By all means take a moment to mourn and think of those lost and the conditions under which they were lost, but also in that moment realize you are now the possessor of something they no longer have, and it is your duty to keep your inner child alive and enjoy life to its fullest.

In combat that is the greatest tribute a comrade can give to the fallen, live life and live it well, enjoy those moments they can't and be good to those you hold closest to your heart.

REMEMBRANCE, page 8

and the reality of evil in our world. When it comes to remembering the holocaust, we must remember that it was the U.S. Soldier who liberated the concentration camps and confronted evil. Those who fought against the evil of the Nazi atrocities are sometimes referred to as the "Greatest Generation".

I believe that those of us here now, all of us volunteers, remembering the holocaust and not forgetting the lessons

learned, making sacrifices in the dessert to do our parts in confronting evil in the world, represent a "Great Generation". I am proud of everyone here today and proud of the opportunity to do my part in continuing the legacy of America in confronting evil in the world. By these acts we do now, in fighting evil on a daily basis, that's how we honor the victims of the holocaust and show that we have not forgotten.

Let your voice be heard

Enjoying the 'Your Voice' section? The Task Force Marne Public Affairs Office would like to help more of your voices heard.

If you have heard or read a speech, story or experience that has inspired you, please share that inspiration with others. Send submissions to samantha.m.stryker.m.stryker@iraq.centcom.mil or contact the Task Force Marne Public Affairs Office.



This Week in Marne History

April 24, 1951

Young Japanese American becomes America's first 'Top Secret' hero

Story by Sasha McBrayer
Fort Stewart Museum

It was a cold and rainy night in the fox-holes near Taejon-Ni, Korea on April 24, 1951. Company H, 7th Infantry Regiment, Third Infantry Division knew the Red Chinese were inching closer and closer to their position, sounding their bugles and their mortar fire as they came.

The machine-gun section's leader was a slim Japanese-American from New Mexico. His name was Cpl Hiroshi Miyamura. When the dark figures of scrambling men became visible through the night, Miyamura sprung to action, told his men to stay put and cover him, and then crawled on his belly toward the advancing enemy before jumping up and charging them.

The trouble was coming from a force that had broken through the UN's defenses. The Third Division had been ordered to pull back, but Company H met heavy resistance when they tried. Hiroshi gave first aid to some GIs he found, and then bravely continued toward the enemy. Before long, Miyamura was alone wondering why no one had told him to join the getaway.

He suddenly tripped over the body of an expired runner. His message to withdraw had died with him. Miyamura had his answer, but had to continue to engage the enemy.

He first killed ten, then later more than 50. He was wounded and desperate to rejoin the Americans as dawn approached. A mess of barbed wire slowed him. With danger all around him, he took to playing dead as enemy troops swarmed. A single man took notice, however, and pointed a U.S. Army 45 caliber

pistol at his head. He spoke to Miyamura in English and took him prisoner.

Hiroshi, nicknamed 'Hershey' by his comrades, was a Prisoner of War for 28 months.

The 27-year-old came by another moniker, America's first Top Secret Hero, with his capture. This was because he had been in captivity 19 months when he was officially nominated for the Medal of Honor. It was wisely decided the nomination would remain secret at all costs, should the Communists learn of this and torture or kill Miyamura for his status.

Along with 19 other POWs, Miyamura was repatriated on August 20, 1953, and was pleasantly surprised with the news of his medal recommendation. He was formally presented with the Medal of Honor by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on October 27, 1953.

Miyamura had survived his nightmare. He went on to marry his sweetheart and raise three children and make a life for himself back in New Mexico as a mechanic, service station owner, and avid fisherman.

An exciting write-up of Hiroshi's story can be found at www.medalofhonor.com, written by historian Edward Hymoff. George Akimoto painted Miyamura in action in 1977. Miyamura was also, interestingly enough, promoted to the rank of sergeant while imprisoned.



MWR Schedule

Special Events

Sunday: April 29th

3 on 3 basketball tournament @ 1400. Located at the basketball court across from the food court on Camp Victory. Sign Up between 1200-1330 the day of the event.

Saturday: May 5th

Come celebrate Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Located at MWR-N from 1900-1945. There will be performances and a traditional fire dance

Daily Schedule

Monday: April 30 - Make your own video message at MWR-N
May 7th- Dominoes Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 14th - Spades Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 21st -Dominoes Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 28th- Spades Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N

Tuesday: May 1st- Ping Pong Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 8th- Spades Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-S
May 15th- Ping Pong Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 22nd- Spades Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-S
May 29th- Ping Pong Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N

Wednesday: May 2nd- Chess Tournament @ 1930 MWR-S
May 9th- Chess Tournament @ 1930 MWR-S
May 16th- Chess Tournament @ 1930 MWR-S
May 23rd- Chess Tournament @ 1930 MWR-S
May 30th- Chess Tournament @ 1930 MWR-S

Thursday: May 3rd- Texas Hold'em @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 10th- Texas Hold'em @ 1930 on MWR-S
May 17th- Texas Hold'em @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 24th- Texas Hold'em @ 1930 on MWR- N
May 31st- Texas Hold'em @ 1930 on MWR-N

Friday: May 4th- R&B Night on MWR-S
May 11th - Football Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 18th- R&B Night on MWR-S
May 25th- Football Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N

Saturday: May 5th- Pool Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 12th- 5K Fun Run @ 0700 on MWR-S
May 19th- Pool Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 26th - 10K Fun Run @ 0700 on MWR-S
May 19th- Pool Tournament @ 1930 on MWR-N
May 26th - 10K Fun Run @ 0700 on MWR-S

Female self-defense course

In observance of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Marine Soldiers are hosting a female self-defense course. Open to all females, this course is not only a good opportunity to learn self-defense moves, but is a great workout.

The course will take place Saturday, April 28, at in the basement of Building 51F, division quarters from 1700 to 1900. Participants must wear ACUs and tennis shoes. It is a good idea to bring a towel and water.

The instructor is the Grand Master Instructor, Michael M. Foley. Foley is a 30-year Army veteran. He is a 7th degree Black-American Ju-jitsu Institute, 8th degree Black-ROKATE Martial Arts Association. Foley ranks in Kodan Kan Martial Arts, Jujitsu, Judo, Aikido, Karate, tai Chi Chuan. He was a kick-boxing champion for nine years. Foley has been instructing for more than 35 years.

Come out and learn some new Force Protection moves.

Runners wanted

The Indianapolis Mini Marathon - Baghdad Edition is scheduled May 5, 2007 on Camp Victory. The 13.1 mile run and the 6 mile Fun Walk is for everyone.

Teams can register now on vbcroadrunners.com. After online registration is complete please contact your MWR representative, Jackie D'Agostino at jacqueline.dagostino@iraq.cent-com.mil or call DSN 318-822-7014.

Combatives Training

Combative training is gearing up. Classes will begin in May. Stay tuned for more information.

