

THE

Grey Wolf

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Commander's Column

By Col. David W. Sutherland
3BCT, 1CD Commander



Grey Wolf!

As we move even closer to our redeployment day, a few significant issues are beginning to surface within our formations. Safety incidents are on the rise, property is being misplaced or not handled properly, and a very few Soldiers are demonstrating professional apathy. These issues affect the overall unit. It would be very unfortunate if preventable lapses tarnished the outstanding achievements of our great Soldiers here in Iraq.

Taking shortcuts in job performance can cause injuries to Soldiers. It is the charge of the immediate supervisor to ensure Soldiers perform tasks to standard. Direct and personal supervision is a leader's duty to his or her subordinates. Every leader in this brigade should have the safety of

'Hooah' Corner

By Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Felt
3BCT, 1CD CSM



Sniff, sniff...

What's that smell people are talking about at FOBs throughout the Greywolf sector? Some people seem to smell it and others don't. It is rumored to be the smell of the Bravo-Alpha-Romeo-November. That's right, the barn.

Some people seem to smell it; others are immune to this malaise. I tell you that if you think you can smell the barn, sniff again. There ain't a barn. You ain't in Kansas anymore Toto. You can wake up and smell the coffee if you want, but there ain't a barn.

Smelling the barn is a de-habilitating illness; it results in no good to anyone. We as a unit have suffered from its effects in the last week. Smelling the barn is the metaphoric equivalent of complacency. Complacency is an illness than we can not afford at this or any point in a deployment. In the last week we have suffered a number of injuries, and regrettably a death, from accidents that could have been prevented. We have had a thumb smashed from a hammer, a torso caught in a rotating turret, a negligent discharge of a blasting cap, a lost weapon, a Soldier fall from a truck and get impaled on a piece of metal, and most unfortunately, a death from inappropriate ammunition

our Soldiers high on their list of concerns.

Some of these incidents have cost Soldiers their lives or resulted in serious injuries. I have said this in numerous occasions—this is an NCO-run brigade. Strong NCO leadership is the best way to manage risk and prevent safety incidents from affecting our Soldiers.

The professionalism and discipline of a unit is apparent in how it maintains its equipment and accounts for its property. Misplaced, lost, or unaccounted for property affects our ability to perform our mission. The Army provides you and your unit property solely because that item contributes, in some way, to your accomplishment of your mission. Commanders are responsible for conducting sensitive and periodic property accountability to standard. All property must be hand-receipted down to the individual level. Good property accountability is a trait of a great unit. And as I have said many times, there is greatness in our formations.

Lastly, professional apathy can lead to lapses that discredit both the individual Soldier and the

handling.

I full heartedly believe that each one of these could have been prevented. Aim the hammer (slow is smooth, smooth is fast), combat lock every time, proper utilization of ammunition-handling techniques, sensitive items accountability and three points of contact. No lost time, no lost weapon, no lost lives.

It is a fact that most accidents are caused by a violation of a known discipline standard. In light of this fact, they are not accidents at all - they have a cause and effect. The cause is preventable with known, published and enforced safety discipline standards.

Think about it... If a Soldier drinks and drives, fails to wear a seat belt, speeds, drives too fast for conditions and falls asleep; is it an accident when he has a fatal "accident." I don't believe it is. It is unfortunate, especially when it happens to a Soldier on his 30 day leave home from Operation Iraqi Freedom. It happened to a Greywolf Soldier after our previous deployment.

It is the same for situations in the combat theatre of operations. Failure to adhere to published standards of performance can result in preventable accidents. We see it here. We see it at home. We can prevent it. NCOs are a critical piece in this formula. NCOs enforce standards. By doing so, they save lives. They get the mission accomplished. It is leadership in action.

Many leaders do these things because they truly care for their subordinates. Some do them

sacrifice and accomplishments of our fallen comrades. The Army is a values-based organization.

We cannot allow our Soldiers to become complacent and forget the values that brought them this far with so much success. Our Soldiers need to understand the reasons we are here. They must know how their accomplishments contribute to that goal. The responsibility for these messages again lies on the shoulders of our exceptional leaders. The mistreatment of Iraqi civilians only spawns hatred. We must live up to the Army values and treat the Iraqi people the way we wish to be treated in our own country or elsewhere.

I would like to conclude this message by expressing my gratitude to our families. They have remained supportive of our Soldiers and our mission. We cannot thank them enough for the strength they have shown during this difficult deployment. Their sacrifice does not and should not ever go unnoticed. May God continue to bless our families, our country, and the United States Armed Forces.

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because they know enforcing the rules is the smart thing to do to accomplish the mission. Some because of both. I don't really care why a leader does it, I just care that they do it.

Leadership in the Army is focused on two things – accomplishment of the mission and the welfare of the troops. We are concerned about welfare so that the Soldier is capable of contributing to the accomplishment of the mission. It's not about the Soldiers' comfort or convenience. It's about mission accomplishment.

Sounds harsh – it is reality.

The best thing a leader can do for the welfare of the Soldier is to train him or her to standard in their combat critical tasks. That way the leader provides the best opportunity for mission accomplishment and the survival of the Soldier. If you, as a leader, can give your Soldiers hot chow, air conditioning and a real bed; that's icing on the cake. Leaders who enforce standards are leaders who care. They know that the best thing they can do for their Soldiers is to provide the discipline that will keep them alive.

There is no barn. That smell you smell is the smell of body odor developed by a hot sweaty torso wrapped in OTV, baked in the summer heat of the Middle East desert, kickin' ass and taking names.

It is the smell of victory.

Live the Legend,
Greywolf 9

Operation Olympus Opens Route, Secures Towns

By Pfc. Ben Fox
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Two key towns were held captive by a terrorist threat in the Diyala province, effectively blocking a supply route for many citizens in the Diyala River Valley.

As the anti-Iraqi forces continued to terrorize the towns, many of the citizens were displaced and became refugees in the nearby town of Anbakia, overpopulating the town and creating an even further shortage of food and services.

That all changed July 22 with Operation Olympus. Early in the morning, Iraqi Army Soldiers on foot, and teams of paratroopers from the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, attached to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, air assaulted into the towns and completely destroyed the terrorist cells within.

“Our operation attacked these two villages that were harboring these terrorists, isolating them and bringing overall combat power to destroy them,” said Lt. Col. Andrew Poppas, the 5-73 Cav. commander.

“This was a number of campaigns in an overall campaign plan to bring safety and security to the Diyala River Valley,” said Poppas.

“Previous intelligence-driven operations have been specifically directed at destroying anti-Iraqi forces in this region,” he said. “We have been extremely effective... at destroying the enemy in order to supply safety and security to the area.”



Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox, 3BCT Public Affairs

An Iraqi man unloads a bag of rice from a container full of food rations that were delivered by Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces to the town of Anbakia, Iraq, as a part of Operation Olympus, July 22.

The operation also focused its efforts on Anbakia, the town that held all of the refugees.

The operation emplaced a civil military operations team to deliver initial supplies and services, such as food and medical specialists, said Poppas.

The number of refugees stressed the town’s already meager rations and capabilities to address the population’s needs, he said.

Capt. Henry Shih, the brigade surgeon for 3BCT, held a combined medical engagement in the town with Lt. Wassim from the Iraqi Army.

“It was very good to have Lt. Wassim seeing patients so they could see the face of the Iraqi Army,” said Shih.

Shih said Wassim did a good job because he had knowledge of medicine and was in good spirits. He also served partially as an interpreter for Shih because he knew English.

The patients the combined force treated had problems ranging from diabetes and heart problems to rare chronic and congenital illnesses, said Shih.

The IA medic also helped the local population with the Coalition’s overall goal.

“We are trying to push them to be more reliant on the Iraqi Army for security and other services,” said Shih. “They will have to be more independent when we leave.”

The mission was an example of the IA and 5-73’s ability to handle complicated multi-faceted operations.

“Simultaneous kinetic operations have been conducted with non-kinetic operations aimed at establishing effective, representative local governments, repairing and rebuilding physical infrastructure of local communities and the establishment of basic services necessary for all communities,” said Poppas.



Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox, 3BCT Public Affairs

Master Sgt. David Wagner, 5-73 Cav., attached to 3-1 Cav., pulls security at a school house during a combined medical engagement – a non-kinetic part of Operation Olympus in Anbakia, Iraq.

In addition to the combat, food and medical support provided, 5-73 Cav. also cleared the entire route connecting these towns.

“This operation is indicative of the duality of a mission profile in which we have anti-Iraqi forces which try to attempt to deny freedom of movement for coalition forces and freedom of movement along the entire route,” said Poppas.

On their way up to Anbakia, the CMO team conducted route clearance, removing IEDs, barriers, and illegal check points in order to allow Iraqis to use the main road to travel between Baqouba and Khalis, said Poppas.

The residents of Anbakia have been loyal supporters of the Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces, which is part of the reason help was sent to them specifically with their refugees.

“The town had been friendly to Coalition Forces,” said Shih.

“They help us, so we help them,” he said. “We will continue to work with them and not just abandon them.”

“Our deliberate destruction of anti-Iraqi forces throughout the entire region has set conditions for the repatriation of these dislodged individuals,” said Poppas.

The mission ended by setting up ISF security positions in the towns and along the routes.

“The combined might of Iraqi and American power” reduced the problem set to one that the ISF can easily maintain, said Poppas.

“The establishment of Iraqi Security Forces will allow for long-term safety and security, and freedom of movement in the entire region,” he said.

Gina Whitney's 'Bootleggers' Rock Baqouba

Story, photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud
3rd BCT Public Affairs

With the sun setting in the distance behind Forward Operating Base Warhorse, located outside Baqouba, Iraq, Gina Whitney and the Bootleggers, a country band located in the United States, took the stage in the Wood Dining Facility to rock the Soldiers of the 3rd "Grey Wolf" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, July 5.

The Bootleggers "rocked the socks off" a packed group of Soldiers with original material off Whitney's next album and covered classics like Bonnie Raitt's "Something to Talk About," Patsy Cline's "Crazy," and Lynyrd Skynyrd's



Country singer, Gina Whitney, sings "Redneck Woman" with Spc. Andrea Guara, HHC, 3rd BSTB.

"Sweet Home Alabama."

With this being her third time overseas in a war zone, Whitney, formally traveling under the name Gina Notrica, said her mission was still the same – to entertain the Soldiers, give them a piece of home and to include them as much as possible into her performances.

"Every night, I try to find someone to sing 'Sweet Home Alabama,'" said Whitney. "It's an important part [of our show] to have the Soldiers involved. That's why I'm here, to raise morale and take them away from their setting out here... and to help them to have fun."

Whitney's mission is to also share a special song with the Soldiers. A track entitled, "Time to Go," off her next album, called "High Heels in a War Zone," is a song about her father, who is an Army and Korean War veteran.

"My dad was in North Korea when he received word that my mom, who was pregnant at the time, was having complications with my [unborn] sister," she said. "The guys in his unit pulled together the money to send him home to be with my mother. Three days later, his whole unit was killed in an attack.

"Though 'Time to Go,' is about my father, I would like to dedicate that song to the Soldiers," Whitney continued. "That song came from when I was talking to my dad about being afraid to fly, and he told me, 'When it's time to go, it's time to go.' That's when I first heard his story and understood how

he felt and what he had to deal with.

"[This song] comes from my dad being in the Army and the survivor's guilt he felt," she said. "I know these guys deal with [different emotions] on a day-to-day basis, that's why this song is important for me to perform for them."

While the Grey Wolf executive officer, Maj. Robert "Bubba" Cain, sang the lead to "Sweet Home Alabama," Spc. Andrea Guara, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, and a native of Dallas, Texas, was also asked to come up to the stage to sing with Whitney, an experience which was both exciting and nerve wracking, said Guara.

"I first met Gina before her concert and she was a really nice, really sweet lady," said Guara. "Once I found that out there was going to be a concert, I gathered as many people as I could to go see the show.

"[Whitney] was singing some really good music and I got excited and started singing back," said the excited Guara.

"Then Gina started singing 'Redneck Woman' by Gretchen Wilson," she continued. "If you are a female from Texas, you have to know that song.

"I was sitting in the crowd, singing along and Gina pointed me out to come sing with her," Guara said with a huge smile on her face. "I was really scared and really nervous, but it was a lot of fun."

Guara's experience was just what Whitney was hoping for - a

fun time with a chance to escape, Whitney said.

"It takes you out of a war zone state-of-mind and makes you happy," Guara said.

"It takes you away from Iraq and makes you feel good because you are at a concert and feeling like you're back at home again," she continued.

"The whole experience made my day," Guara concluded. "It was a lot of fun."

But Whitney wants to make sure the Soldiers know the pleasure was all hers.

"This means so much to me to be here and to perform for all the Soldiers," said Whitney. "I've played in bars and corporate events, and I'm very blessed to be doing this for a living, but this is the most rewarding thing I've ever done."

As the concert drew to a close, the Bootleggers packed up their gear and headed out to catch another flight to another destination in Iraq. With more shows to play, Whitney knows her band's schedule is tough, but well worth the loss of sleep and hectic traveling schedule they face to perform for more Soldiers.

"It can be grueling to perform nine shows in nine days, but I can sleep when I get home," Whitney said with a big laugh. "But this is worth it; this means the world to me.

"There are a lot of performers out there, but I hope the Soldiers know how sincere I am about what they do and getting the chance to perform for them," she said.

Useful Iraqi Phrases

Where did you see them?
wein shef-et-hum?

On the cover ...



Capt. Henry Shih, brigade surgeon for 3BCT, checks the heartbeat of an Iraqi man who complained of a heart murmur during Operation Olympus in Anbakia, Iraq, July 22.

Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox, 3BCT Public Affairs

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Chaplain's Corner

Living in the Same Old, Same Old

When I was asked to write an article for this edition, I was asking myself what I could write about to my Soldiers and their families that will bring them a new perspective in life. During the course of the day I asked another Soldier how he was doing, to what he responded, "Ah -- the same old, same old".

I thought about those words. Then I said to myself the worst kind of life one can have is a life without purpose, stuck in the same old routine. I thought about our everyday life here in the FOB and realize that for some is another day getting out of the same old bed and go to the same old bathroom to look at the same old face in the same old mirror. Some go to the same old duffle bag or TAC box to choose from the same old ACU's. Then they sit at the same old DFAC for breakfast to eat the same old breakfast. Then they go to the same old HUMVEE to head down to that same old road to that same old job. Some just walk to the same old path. Some work all day for that same old paycheck for that same old supervisor and old co-workers.

Then at the end of what is it seems to be same old day they jump in the same old HUMVEE to get back to the same old road and back to their same old CHU. Once they are in what is now the sanctity of their home they sit in the same old chair to play the same old video games or watch the same old programs in that same old television. At the end of the day they go back to that same old bed and sleep the same old position, so they can get up the next morning and start all over again. The same routine; the same old, same old.

God didn't create you to live a purposeless existence. That should be good news because that tells me that even if you're searching to find your purpose -- there's something out there to search. The things we see here in our every day life are not the only thing out there. There is something or someone worthy to be search. God has a customized plan just for you. Seek it, find it, and live it to the fullest.

Chaplain (Capt.) Jesus Perez
3BSTB Chaplain

Leaders Discuss Future with Future Present



Photo by Sgt. Serena Hayden, 3BCT Public Affairs

Col. David W. Sutherland discusses issues during a meeting with Governor Ra'ad Hameed Al-Mula Jowad Al-Tamimi, Diyala governor, while his niece and nephew listen.

Soldier on the FOB

"In the last 10 months in Iraq, what is the most important lesson you have learned?"



Spec. Jonathan Rivadeneira
B Troop, 6-9 ARS

"To not take things in life for granted, to appreciate what you have and to make the best of the situation you are in."

Spec. David Lasseter
B Troop, 6-9 ARS

"Take care of your battle-buddies and check your equipment before you roll out the FOB."



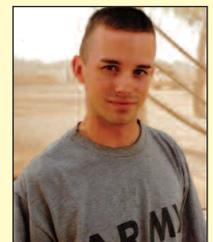
Spec. Drew Strode
B Troop, 6-9 ARS

"Wash your feet."



Spec. Joshua Hanzilk
293rd MP Co.

"The quicker we accomplish our mission, the quicker we make it home."



Sgt. Frederick Herndon
HHT, 6-9 ARS

"Don't take life for granted. You just never know."



By Spec. Ryan Stroud, 3BCT Public Affairs

GREY WOLF



Photo by Sgt. Serena Hayden, 3BCT Public Affairs

Above, before meeting with Governor Ra'ad Hameed Al-Mula Jowad Al-Tamimi, Diyala governor, Col. David W. Sutherland, commander of Coalition Forces in Diyala province, passes out toys to children in Sheik Mazen Village, July 28.

At right, after receiving his Purple Heart from Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno, MNC-I commander, Pfc. Michael Partipilo, C Co., 1-12 CAB, is thanked for his service to his country at an award ceremony held at a combat patrol outpost in Baqouba, Iraq.



Photo by Spc.



U.S. Air Force Photo by Steve Czyzs, Joint Combat Camera

Above, Soldiers of Trp. B, 5-73 Cav., walk down a road with a detainee during a mission in Ar Raqqa, Iraq.

At right, Staff Sgt. Samuel Palmer, a member of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division commander's personal security detachment pulls guard while visiting the people of Abarah, Iraq.



Photo by Sgt. Se

F IN ACTION



Ryan Stroud, 3BCT Public Affairs



rena Hayden, 3BCT Public Affairs



U.S. Air Force Photo by Steve Czyzs, Joint Combat Camera

Sgt. Thomas Bremer and Spc. Jordan Kotzian of Bravo Troop, 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division provide security on a street corner during a mission in Ar Raqqa, Iraq

'Chargers' Recognized for Heroic Acts

By Sgt. Serena Hayden
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Gathered in formation, Soldiers from the 1-12 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, stood tall and proud at their patrol base in Baqouba, Iraq, Aug. 4, reflecting on past experiences during their first ten months of Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08.

Day in and day out, the Soldiers have worked to bring security to the people of Diyala province, going places no man should ever have to go, seeing things no man should ever have to see.

Living in austere environments for the duration of their deployment, 18 "Grey Wolf" Soldiers gathered with their brothers-in-arms from the "Charger" Battalion to be recognized for past achievements – achievements of valorous and heroic acts that caused them to put their lives at risk to save others.

"Because of your actions, because of your discipline, because of the valor of the individuals and noncommissioned officers, we have been able to make a difference," Col. David W. Sutherland, brigade commander, said as he spoke to the group of Soldiers.

"These Soldiers with valor awards represent every Soldier in our formations," Sutherland said, "because I know that valor is taking place every day."

The Chargers recognized were 1st Sgt. Ronald Ramsdell, who received a Bronze Star Medal with Valor for actions under fire Feb. 2, dismounting his vehicle, getting his Soldiers out of danger and continuing recovery operations for a previous incident.

The other 17 Soldiers, Sgt. Darrel Buck, Staff Sgt. Coy Embry, Staff Sgt. Peter

Wallat, Cpl. William McGrath, Spc. Cory Barton, Pvt. Jason Meyers, Sgt. David Kukla, Sgt. David Kudlo, 1st Lt. Shannon Meehan, Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Roberts, Sgt. Brandon Duvall, Sgt. 1st Class Jose Cenicerio, Sgt. Gabriel Mihuta, Staff Sgt. Dennis Wilson, Spc. Orlando Garcia, Spc. Christopher Jankowski and Spc. Stephen Devries, were awarded the Army Commendation Medal with Valor for several acts throughout the deployment.

Their acts of heroism include disregarding personal safety and exposing themselves to the enemy by trying to open a Bradley driver's hatch submerged in 40 degree water temperatures in water that was contaminated by diesel and oil; destroying a significant number of terrorists while engaged in a high-intensity firefight located within close proximity of fighting positions; placing themselves at danger to save their Iraqi army counterparts and kill a significant enemy force; and exposing themselves to the enemy in order to save their fellow buddies while medics performed first aid.

"Whether it's the Soldier monitoring the radio, the driver in the tank, the Bradley commander or the rifleman on the ground – there is valor every day and it's making a difference," Sutherland continued. "It is



Photo by Sgt. Serena Hayden, 3BCT Public Affairs

Col. David W. Sutherland awards Sgt. Brandon Duvall, Co. D, 1-12 CAB, the Army Commendation Medal with Valor during a ceremony at a patrol base in Baqouba, Iraq, Aug. 4. Duvall was recognized for his heroic actions and steadfast leadership in Dojima, Iraq, Dec. 14, 2006.

making a difference every day for the 1.6 million people in Diyala, it is making a difference for the children who will be serving 15 years from now, and it is making a difference for your buddy on your left and your right."

"There are a lot of people who might wonder how the American Soldier might stand up to a prolonged engagement, a prolonged conflict," said Command Sgt. Maj. Donald R. Felt, brigade command sergeant major. "I will tell you that it is Soldiers like you who have removed that doubt from anybody that might have ever had it.

"You have demonstrated valor and you make me very proud," Felt said.

"There is greatness in this formation and it manifests itself every day in your actions," Sutherland said. "Your actions don't go unnoticed. Your actions are having a reverberating affect all across Iraq."



'Grey Wolf' Retention Team

3 BCT Senior Counselor
3rd BSTB
1st-12th CAV

215th BSB

3rd-8th CAV
6th-9th CAV

2nd-82nd FA

Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Helmes
Staff Sgt. Luis Carter
Staff Sgt. Jason Folmar
Staff Sgt. Alegray Hamer
Staff Sgt. Annamari Conklin
Staff Sgt. Margaret Smothers
Staff Sgt. Don Jewell
Staff Sgt. Richard Erickson
Staff Sgt. Keston Dyer
Staff Sgt. Daniel Beltran

Soldier Gets to Play with Hobby On and Off Clock

By Sgt. Joshua R. Ford
3-82 BCT Public Affairs

When Soldiers deploy, so do their hobbies. Flying toy helicopters and acoustic guitars are just some of the things Soldiers see others fiddling with on their off time.

When Spc. David Colclasure, multi-systems operator with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, decided to bring his hobby, it included a \$10,000 insurance plan for the amount of equipment that would come to Iraq with him.

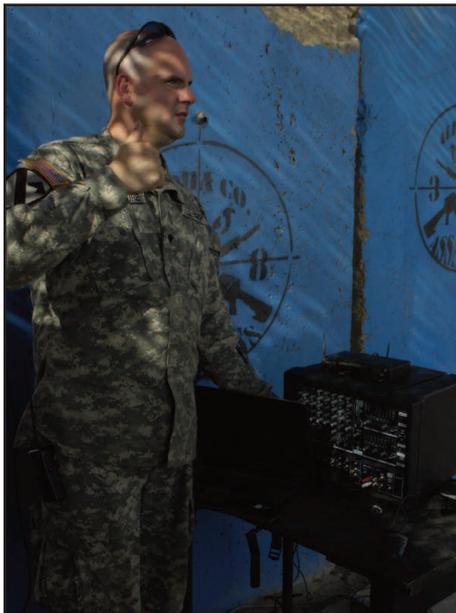


Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford, 3-82 BCT Public Affairs
Spc. David Colclasure, multi-systems operator, 3-8 CAB, gives a thumbs up while checking and testing his sound system July 29, 2007, at FOB Paliwoda, near Balad, Iraq.

Colclasure, a Marrison, Ill., native, said when he is not trying to solve communication problems on Forward Operating Base Paliwoda, he is fusing different beats to songs or creating his own music.

Sitting behind more than \$5,000 worth of mixers and computers is where Colclasure spends his off time.

He was a disc jockey in the U.S. and has continued to DJ for the Soldiers in his unit.

At every USO show or unit event, a Soldier can see Colclasure mixing away behind his equipment.

"It started when I was a kid going to dances," said Colclasure. "I was interested in how it worked so I started learning more about it."

After school he would go home and play music, constantly looking for different beats and rhythms to work with.

Over the years his system grew bigger until one day his father gave Colclasure his old stereo equipment that Colclasure had been asking for.

Once Colclasure had his father's old equipment he started performing at parties.

Now he is in charge of all sound entertainment for USO and ceremony events for his unit.

"We have the system that the Army uses, and every time we would do a ceremony it kept messing up," said Colclasure. "So the commander and command sergeant major got with my signal officer and told him to get a new system. My officer came to me and said we will buy what ever you think is best, so we bought the

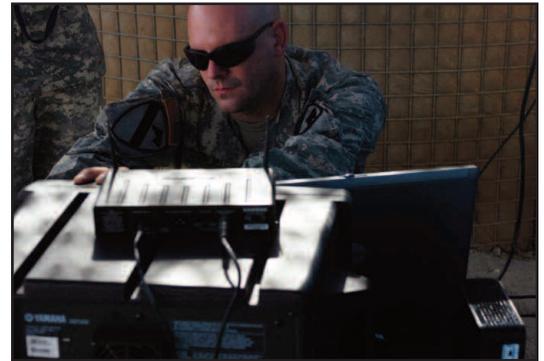


Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford, 3-82 BCT Public Affairs

Spc. David Colclasure, 3-8 CAB, sits behind his disc jockey equipment during a USO show at FOB Paliwoda.

some of the same stuff I use.

"Right now I have a 22 inch rack, 60 different types of lights, two big band speakers, and two 22 inch subwoofers," said Colclasure.

"Sometimes it seems like we are at an actual show because of the way (Colclasure) tunes people in and out," said Scott Artal, communications specialist, 3rd Combined Troops Battalion.

Colclasure wants to continue being a DJ because he enjoys entertaining people.

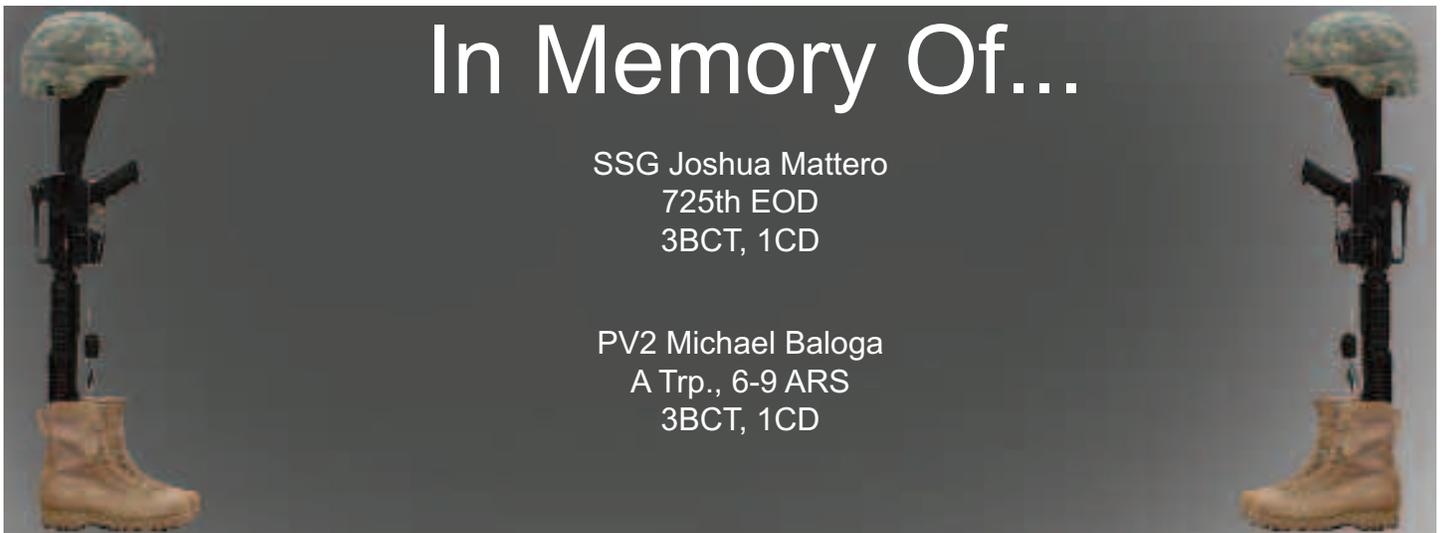
"Back home I (DJ) for the kids. I'll play the chicken dance song and musical chairs, the kids usually like. That's the fun part," said Colclasure.

"Music has always been a motivator for people. That is how you set moods. If you are playing sad music people will remember sad moments. If you are playing love music you are thinking about your first girlfriend or your wife. If you are in a bad mood and you start playing some up beat music people will usually get in a better mood," said Colclasure.

In Memory Of...

SSG Joshua Mattero
725th EOD
3BCT, 1CD

PV2 Michael Baloga
A Trp., 6-9 ARS
3BCT, 1CD



'Man's Best Friend' Saves Lives in Diyala

By Spc. Ryan Stroud
3rd BCT Public Affairs

A group of Soldiers need to clear a tall, dark building, possibly housing terrorists in the city of Muqadadiya, just north of Baqouba, Iraq. The Soldiers have received reports of booby-traps in the area and are unsure if the building itself is a trap. What are they to do?

This is where the Soldier's four-legged friend, Nero, comes in.

Nero is a military working dog serving with Staff Sgt. Zeb Miller, his handler, at Forward Operating Base Normandy, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08. Nero's job – search the building, its doorway and the surrounding area, making sure no explosives are around to harm the Soldiers trying to clear the building.

With Nero's efforts, and the efforts of many other military working dogs serving in Iraq, Soldiers' lives are being saved everyday.

"Our job out here in Iraq is mainly searching for explosives," said Miller, a member of the 7th Security Forces, U.S. Air Force, attached to 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

"Our job is to make a Soldier's job go faster," Miller, a native of Johnson City, Texas, said.

"A dog can search for explosives ten times faster than we can because he can smell it," he said. "Plus, if the dog smells the explosives, it could save a Soldier's life."

Miller started working with Nero in March after he volunteered to serve in Iraq. Once arriving, the two became close, inseparable friends.

"I've had Nero since March when I volunteered to come to Iraq," said Miller. "This was a nice change being out here at FOB Normandy with the Army because the Air Force is more force protection. Out here with the Army, I get to go out on missions and take part in the war."

But before the duo can take part in missions, Nero has to exercise and train to stay on top of his game.

"On a normal day, we try to train the dogs to keep them [prepared for missions]," Miller said. "I will take explosives out and train the dog in searching and finding. We also have a dog obstacle course that we take the dogs out to keep them [healthy] and active.

"At night, I'll take Nero out and we'll walk around fenced areas so he can sniff around; simple things to keep the dogs ready," he continued.

These training techniques keep Nero fresh and ready to go when he's need for a mission into the heart of danger, something Miller and Nero are used too.

"Our big thing is palm grove searches and weapons cache searches," Miller said. "That's really big for us; those are the main things we look for on missions – buried weapons.

"Nero will also search doorways and buildings before Soldiers will breach it," Miller continued. "[Insurgents] try to booby-trap doors and Nero can search the door to find any explosives waiting."

But Nero can also be used for other tasks to help out the units in 6-9 ARS.

"Nero is also trained to find people," said Miller. "One mission, we went searching for IEDs and also searching through houses. Nero just took off running behind one of the houses and into the palm groves.

"What we guess happened is he smelled someone who had just left the house but [was gone]," Miller continued. "We found fresh tracks in the ground, so someone might have been there waiting until they heard Nero coming."

With Nero on a mission, Soldiers can trust him to smell and sense things they couldn't imagine. Nero becomes a living weapon, just like the Soldiers, ready to quickly "get his prize."

"They say one dog is worth about ten Soldiers, not in their capabilities, but in their senses," said Miller about the importance of military digs during a mission.

"These dogs, while searching for explosives and other weapons, can turn a [several] hour job into one hour worth of

work," he said.

But what also makes Nero an interesting military dog, is unlike some, Nero is extremely friendly, something Miller is happy with.

"The first thing [trainers] tell you is this is not a dog, it's a piece of equipment," Miller explained. "But it comes down to each handler in how they treat their dog.

"The way I see it, if I love the dog, he will love me; and in return, he will work for me and possibly save me when I need it," he said.

"You're not supposed to let others pet the dog either because it's a bond challenger," continued Miller. "But, I'd rather let the Soldiers pet and play with him so they are comfortable around Nero when we go out on missions.

"I also think this helps Nero in case something was to happen to me out here; another Soldier could take him and he would be okay without me around to guide him," he said.

But Miller has no worries at all about Nero. Miller says Nero knows who his owner is and will listen when called upon.

"I know Nero will listen to me even with others around," said Miller. "Once you spend every day together, he knows who I am; he will listen to me if I tell him to do something."

Though Nero is a calm, mannered dog, Miller said he has commands for Nero which will instantly switch Nero from the polite dog he is into an attack-mode destroyer.

"They're two words I could use to have him immediately start barking at you

and if you show any fear, you would get bit," he said. "These dogs are amazing; they are incredibly smart."

When the deployment is over and it's time to go home, there is a chance Nero will have to retire, though Nero himself will probably have a few years of service left before it's his time. In these cases of retirement, the hard-working military dogs will go through a series of tests to make sure they are ready for life outside the combat zone.

"The dogs have to go through a physiological evaluation," said Miller. "They test the dog with situations like neighbors fighting. They test the dog to see what he will do and to make sure he will be safe around others.

"It's hard to let go of your dogs," Miller somberly explained. "The first dog is always the hardest. But after the dog retires, there's a possibility that you can keep your dog."

Until its Nero's time to retire, he will continue to provide his services to those serving overseas with him; saving lives on each mission he partakes in.



Photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud, 3BCT Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Zeb Miller, 7th Security Forces, U.S. Air Force, attached to 6-9 ARS, pets his military working dog, Nero. Nero specializes in locating explosives and helping Soldiers be on missions.

Silent but deadly...**6-9 SKTs Dominate the Enemy in Diyala Province**

By Spc. Ryan Stroud
3rd BCT Public Affairs

It's dark and hot outside, so hot the sweat drips down your face and into your mouth, but you don't even notice. You're focused, ready to strike. But you're quietly waiting for your moment. You'll wait for hours if you have to. You're on a mission and this mission won't end until you say it does.

Those around you are also tired; sweating just as bad as you, but they are also focused and ready. They're lying in the brush outside the city of Baqouba, Iraq, with you, waiting for your signal.

Just then, you see a small group of anti-Iraqi forces pull up on a dirt road. They dismount their truck and proceed to start digging a hole in the ground. One person brings out a small device with stringy wires hanging out of it. It's an improvised explosive device getting ready to be planted into the ground.

This is your signal; this is what you were waiting patiently for. You get your Soldiers on-line with you and prepare for your attack. But this attack cannot fail. You're surrounded by your team – a team confident in their training, equipment and skills.

You have to be perfect. You cannot mess up. You are responsible for those around you and they are counting on you to lead the way.

This is your time. This is your challenge. Can you handle the pressure?

These are the questions and responsibilities that face members of the 1st Platoon, B Troop, 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division's small-kill teams.

This small group of Soldiers is the platoon's best of the best. It's their job to locate the enemy; then travel into unwanted territory to disable any missions anti-Iraqi forces could be planning against their brothers-in-arms.

But these Soldiers are hard, dangerous Soldiers who are specifically trained to stop and kill the enemy they face.

"We are here to fight anti-Iraqi forces and other types of terrorists," said Cpl. Cory Walter, assistant team leader for dismount teams in the SKT. "We have a lot of them in our area and we're here to stop them."

"We watch [the enemy] and try to catch them in acts of placing IEDs, attacking villages, etc. We try to catch them before they can hurt us or our troops," said Spc. Andre

Lobban, a native of Brooklyn, NY.

"When the insurgents don't know you're in the area, they will do bad things to those around them or to eventually harm us," added Walter. "We've seen them try to plant IEDs and fire mortars at us. We have to stop them."

This tactic of fighting is different than most present in the Army right now, but these Soldiers know their mission is important and needs to be accomplished so other missions of meeting with leaders can take place.

"This is a different type of warfare," said Walter.

"This is not typical, but it needs to be done.

"We try to be more aggressive," he continued. "We could drive around all day and visit people but we feel like we are achieving a different goal this way. We feel we are really getting things done out here by stopping [the enemy] from planting IEDs and other things of that nature."

Though their missions are not secret, these Soldiers know keeping information on the down-low will help them with future missions.

Though their missions are not secret, these Soldiers know keeping a close hold on information will help them with future missions.

"We do our best not to be compromised or compromise those around us," added Walter. "You have to be safe and stay quiet."

"You're going behind enemy lines, reporting what's happening," Lobban continued. "Once we see something bad happen, we either neutralize the enemy or we call for backup forces. We watch the enemy. We are the eyes and ears on the ground."

But with these Soldiers, fully knowing the dangers standing before them, still choose to take on these tasks and head outside the wire every day.

"We have received extra training and awesome training that gets us ready for so many things," said Lobban. "We have great leadership that trusts us to get the job done and knows we will go out there and give our all for the mission.

"I thrive on catching things before they



Photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud, 3BCT Public Affairs

Cpl. Cory Walter and Spc. Andre Lobban, both of 1st Plt., B Trp., 6-9 ARS's small-kill teams, are members of a small, elite group of Soldiers who attack the enemy before the enemy can attack their brothers-in-arms, in the Diyala province.

happen, and I know the other guys feel the same as well," he added. "I mean, one-way firefights are the best firefights."

"We like to go out there and catch people off-guard," Walter said.

"There was a day when we ambushed a mortar team," he continued. "They were setting up to fire at our Bradley [Fighting Vehicles] that was located at an Iraqi Army checkpoint.

"They didn't even know we were there until it was too late for them," he said. "That was a good feeling knowing we stopped them from harming our guys. They could have gotten lucky and gotten a direct hit on one of our Brads or killed any IA soldiers around. But we stopped that from happening.

"That's why we do this, that's why this job is important," Walter said.

These Soldiers admit to getting scared at times, but being scared won't hinder their jobs as Soldiers, said Walter.

"You could 'What if?' yourself all day long if you want to," he said. "All you're going to do is worry yourself to death. You got to focus on what's at hand and get the job done."

And the next day will be no different for the Soldiers of their platoon's small-kill team. They will pack up and head out the gate to another location, searching for the enemy to make one mistake.

"We're just doing our job," said Lobban. "I think this is a kickin' job that we get to do. Not everybody gets to go on the missions we do or see the things that we see. We definitely see a different side of Iraq."

EAGLE CASH CARD



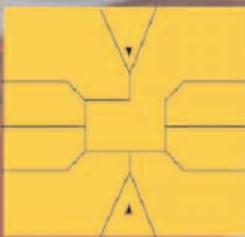
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Photos From the FOB...



Photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud, 3BCT Public Affairs

Soldiers with the 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, who were promoted during the 3rd BSTB Non-Commissioned Officer Induction Ceremony, line up to be congratulated on their recent accomplishments by the leaders of the "Gladiator" Battalion.

Got Photos?

If you'd like to see your photo in *The Grey Wolf Howl*, e-mail Sgt. Serena Hayden at serena.hayden@us.army.mil.