

THE COALITION CHRONICLE

Volume 2, Issue 8

August 2007

Brits aid in training • Paratroopers capture insurgent



Through Their Paces
*Operation New Blue puts locals
in charge of police stations*

What's Inside

THE COALITION CHRONICLE

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MNC-I Commander
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New Blue

Iraqi communities get local policing under new recruiting program

Page 3

Working Together

Brits help 10th Mountain troops train Iraqi soldiers

Page 18

Laying a Nest

Airmen help Marines prepare for Ospreys' arrival

Page 20

Nowhere to Hide

Air assault leads to capture of insurgent

Page 22

Helping Their Own

Iraqi Army conducts humanitarian ops

Page 25

Rogue Thunder

Coalition Forces reclaim Jamea'a

Page 26

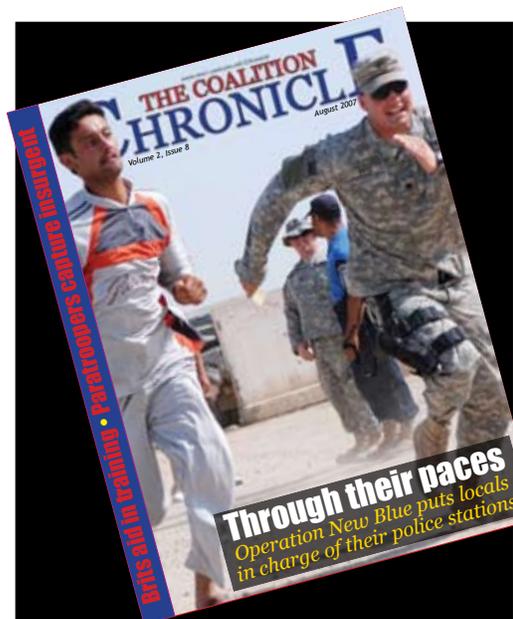
Departments

Commander's Voice
Page 1

Freedom's Focal Point
Page 6

Coalition News Briefs
Page 2

In Remembrance
Page 28



This month's covers

Up front: Spc. James Boyd, a Task Force Marne military policeman in the 23rd Military Police Company runs with an Iraqi Police recruit during Operation New Blue. Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback. *On the back:* Two Iraqi Army Soldiers prepare to assault an enemy position during a mission near Khan Bani Sa'ad July 12 Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Scott Taylor.

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COMMANDER'S VOICE

We ask a lot of each and every member of the Coalition on a daily basis. This is manifested in Operation Phantom Thunder, which we began in mid-June, and in our engagement with tribal leaders that want to cooperate with the government of Iraq and Coalition Forces to rid their neighborhoods of terrorism and extremism. It also includes the establishment of joint security stations and combat outposts among the population, which is gaining the confidence of Iraqi citizens while simultaneously facilitating the continued growth and development of Iraqi Security Forces. We are now seeing initial indicators of success due to your hard work and dedication in these important tasks.

In the past, when we focused operations in one area, some of the enemy would attempt to avoid Coalition Forces and find a new "home." However, due to your diligence and tireless efforts, as well as that of Iraqi Security Forces, there are fewer and fewer places for al-Qaida in Iraq and other extremists to find safe haven. From al-Qaim, Haditha, Hit, Ramadi, and Fallujah to Habbaniyah, from Abu Ghraib to Arab Jabour and to Baqubah, major population centers in Iraq have been liberated from al-Qaida during the past six to seven months.

The Iraqi people are clearly rejecting the Taliban-like mentality of extremist groups like al-Qaida that offer no hope for Iraq or its people. They are rejecting these groups because they're not only tired of being exploited, intimidated and terrorized by these rogue extremists, but also because they have come to understand that we are here to protect the Iraqi people and help them along the path to a more peaceful future. The "Awakening Movement" that started in Anbar is now spreading to more diverse provinces such as Diyala, Salah ad Din, Ninawa and North Babil. Across Iraq, both Sunni and Shia are raising their hand to join in the fight against foreign and extremist influences.

Tips all over the country have led to the discovery of over 600 weapons



Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno
MNC-I Commander

caches, 1,300 found and cleared IEDs, as well as many VBIEDs and associated factories neutralized since the beginning of Operation Phantom Thunder.

The bottom line is we are ready and willing to talk with leaders of any groups opposing AQI or other extremist groups who want to work the Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces, and the government of Iraq.

Under the tutelage of our transition teams and partnered units, Iraqi Security Forces have made tremendous strides over the last six months. With thousands of volunteers eager to sign up for army or police forces, manning levels have increased. The most encouraging part is that not only do they have more people to carry out their missions, but they are also demonstrating vastly improved technical and tactical proficiency which has increased the quantity and quality of ISF independent operations. They are fighting their own fights, and they are fighting hard. At times when previously faced with an intense fight, some soldiers and policemen of the Iraqi Security Forces would abandon their posts. That is truly a

thing of the past. The Iraqi Security Forces are now courageously standing their ground, and absorbing casualties for the cause of freedom.

All of this is coming together to yield some very tangible progress. Not only are sectarian attacks down, cache finds up, and more extremist leaders eliminated, but the people of Iraq are beginning to feel safe. Iraqi citizens are expressing the fact that they feel an increased sense of security and are thanking Coalition Forces. We are also beginning to see those who previously left are now returning to their homes. These are all positive trends and indicative of our focus on protecting the Iraqi population.

Our progress since Phantom Thunder began is significant and has not

gone unnoticed.

Recently we have had a large number of influential individuals and groups visit Iraq to see for themselves what is "really going on." Many

of them are surprised at what they find. They come over expecting to see a country in utter chaos, but most have left with a much different perspective. They see a country moving in the right direction and beginning to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Coalition. We are still a long way from where we want to be, but we have taken significant steps to allow this country to become a peaceful, productive, and stable member of the global community. Quite simply, this would not have been possible without all of you. As one of our country's leading strategic thinkers, Dr. Anthony Cordesman, told me recently, "You have a remarkable team at every level." I could not agree more with his assessment, and I thank each and everyone of you for your continued dedication and service. 

The Iraqi people are clearly rejecting the Taliban-like mentality of extremist groups like al-Qaida.

COALITION NEWS BRIEFS



Operation Bastogne breaks up IED ring

Speed, stealth and surprise are key ingredients to any successful combat operation and the Paratroopers and Soldiers from Task Force Steel are perfecting that recipe day in and day out in North Babil.

The Steel task force of the 4th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division put those assets to use in the early morning hours of July 1 during Operation Bastogne, a raid near the Chaka III area of North Babil.

“Operation Bastogne was designed to capture members of an improvised explosive device cell operating along Highway 1 and other roads in the north Babil province,” said Capt. Stew Lindsay, a native of Freport Penn., and commander of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

In addition to capturing the IED cell members, the operation captured hundreds of rounds of 7.62mm sniper ammunition, IED making materials and an instruction manual on how to construct IEDs. [🔗](#)



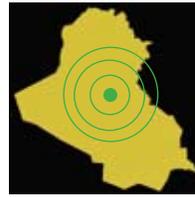
Anbar Marines step up urban operations

Regimental Combat Team 2, located in western Al Anbar Province, launched Operation Mawtini July 15 to neutralize any future attempts by anti-Iraqi forces to reestablish a presence in key urban areas along the Euphrates River valley.

The operation calls for more than 9,000 U.S. Marines, Soldiers, Sailors and Iraqi Army members to strike deep into the less-traveled regions of the regiment’s operating area.

“We anticipate that the terrorists will attempt to step up their attacks in the urban areas to regain power and influence over the population,” said Col. Stacy Clardy, RCT-2 commander. “We’re hunting them down to make sure that doesn’t happen.”

The operation began on the heels of Operation Harris Ba’sil, which provided a better picture of enemy movement patterns and safe havens. [🔗](#)



IA soldiers repel attack on Jamea’a outpost

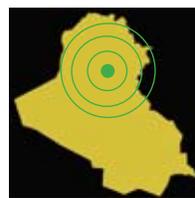
Coalition Outpost Lion was targeted in an insurgent attack with two car bombs, rocket-propelled grenade and machine gun fire two days after it was established in the western Baghdad neighborhood of Jamea’a July 26.

Members of 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division repelled the attack on the unit’s newest COP.

An observation post in the neighborhood was attacked with RPG and small-arms fire shortly after noon. The Iraqi soldiers rushed to the scene to assist after a car bomb detonated seven blocks away. Two Iraqi Army vehicles in the convoy suffered damage and four Iraqis suffered light wounds in the attack.

A second car bomb exploded 15 minutes later two blocks south of the outpost. Two IA vehicles were damaged and two soldiers received minor wounds in that attack. No IA or Coalition Forces were killed during the incident.

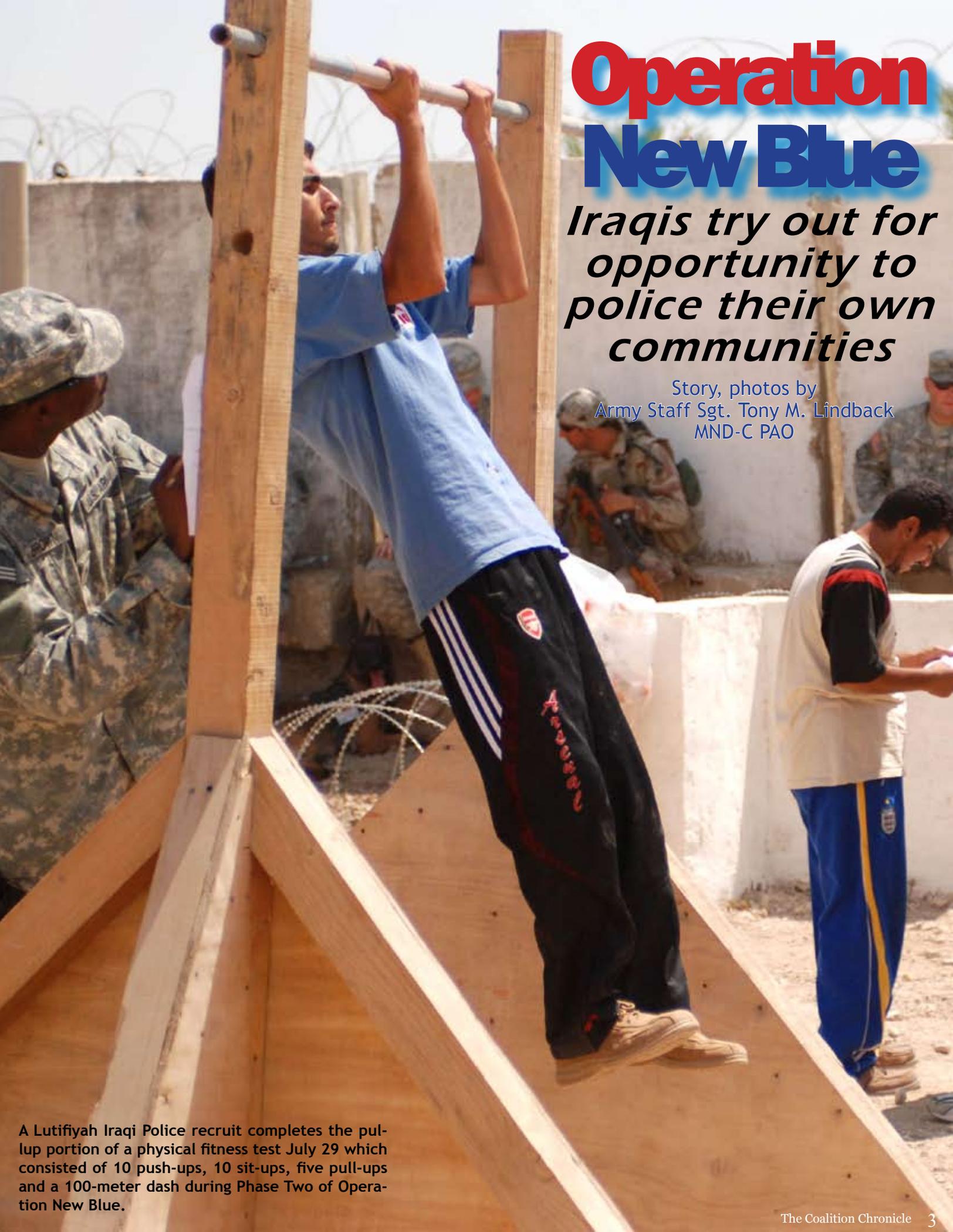
The attacks were believed to be in response to the establishment of COP Lion earlier in the week. Iraqi Army soldiers man the outpost with the help of Coalition Forces. The outpost was completed with help from Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division. [🔗](#)



Khalis sheiks sign peace agreement

About 75 tribal sheiks and local leaders gathered at the Iraqi Army headquarters in Khalis to discuss grievances between tribes, determine security and services solutions, and unite to defeat al-Qaida in Iraq and other terrorist organizations in the area.

The meeting, led by Staff Maj. Gen. Abdull Kareem, commander of Diyala’s Iraqi Security Forces and Staff Maj. Gen. Ghanem Abass Ibrahim al-Qureshy, provincial director of police, resulted in the signing of a peace agreement between 18 of the leaders present. [🔗](#)



Operation New Blue

*Iraqis try out for
opportunity to
police their own
communities*

Story, photos by
Army Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback
MND-C PAO

A Lutifiyah Iraqi Police recruit completes the pull-up portion of a physical fitness test July 29 which consisted of 10 push-ups, 10 sit-ups, five pull-ups and a 100-meter dash during Phase Two of Operation New Blue.



Spc. Wayne Hall, 23rd Military Police Company, works with Iraqi Police and recruits to assist an IP recruiting drive as part of Operation New Blue in Lutifiyah July 29.

Communities like Lutifiyah, Yusifiyah, Mahmudiyah and Al Rasheed will get a little more local support from the boys in blue thanks to a new operation.

Iraqi Police recruiting, dubbed Operation New Blue, is putting residents in local police stations to guard their own communities. Iraqi police stations in the area are currently assigned officers from outside communities.

The multi-phased operation began with recruits applying. During Phase One, recruits filled out applications and had their fingerprints and pictures taken and entered into a database for a background

check. If the check was cleared, the applicants were allowed to return for Phase Two, said Capt. William Jennings, commander, 23rd Military Police Company, currently attached to 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division.

Phase Two of the drive took place July 29 and was a day-long event. It consisted of a literacy test and a physical fitness test similar to the Army Physical Fitness Test.

“We had a total of 289 that actually came through the gate, but

there were a total of 216 that were on our list from the first phase of the recruiting,” Jennings said. “The ones who weren’t on the list

were escorted outside the gate and told that we would have a future recruiting drive there and they’d have another opportunity.”

The literacy test was more of a reading comprehension test, Jennings said. The recruits were given

Many sprinted barefoot on jagged rocks to meet the standards.



Spc. James Boyd, 23rd Military Police Company, runs with an Iraqi police recruit during the 100-meter dash portion of Operation New Blue's Phase Two in Lutifiyah July 29.

a paragraph written in Arabic and were then given five questions referencing the who, what, when, where and why of the material.

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Schaffer, Police Transition Team chief for the Lutifiyah police station, 23rd MP Co., was in charge of the literacy test

portion of the event.

"They did better than I thought they would," Schaffer said. "Being this far south of Baghdad, I've noticed in the past, the average Iraqi has a tough time reading and writing. Out of the guys we had come in, about 75 percent passed

the literacy."

For those who passed the literacy test there were more obstacles to overcome — 10 push-ups, 10 sit-ups, five pull-ups and a 100-meter dash had sweat pouring from many in the midday heat. Not all were prepared for the events as some wore sandals. Many sprinted barefoot on jagged rocks to meet the standards.

"The guys at the recruiting drive are giving it all they got," Schaffer said. "They're sitting in the sun, 120 degrees in the straight sun, waiting in line all day long.

"It's determination," Schaffer continued. "Most of them are trying to provide for their families. I commend them for that."

There has not been a police station in these areas during the past four years, according to Jennings. He said it has been a challenge getting enough police to do democratic policing operations, especially in the urban areas.

"The residents want to police their own," Schaffer said. "That's the best thing about the recruitment we did. The majority of them are from Lutifiyah and they'll be protecting their own."

To see the recruits walking the streets, providing a secure community for neighbors and family is the goal. Schaffer and Jennings both said they hope people will have the feeling that the local law enforcement is family, and that will inspire them to help clean up their towns and rid them of illegal activity. 

Freedom's Focal Point



Freedom's Focal Point



Iraqi National Policemen assault several buildings in search of insurgents who fired upon U.S. and Iraqi forces during a presence patrol in northern Dora in Baghdad July 7. Photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class David R. Quillen.

Freedom's Focal Point





Far left: A female Iraqi police officer practices weapon handling techniques at the Forsan Police Station in Ar Ramadi July 23. Photo by Marine Staff Sgt. Michael Kropiewnicki.

Top: Iraqi Army soldiers from the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division practice entering and exiting helicopter at Camp Striker July 30. Photo by Army Maj. Web Wright.

Left: Iraqi Army soldiers assigned to the Iraqi Military Academy commandant's Military Police Company conduct cordon and search training at the Iraqi Military Academy in Rustamiyah July 17. Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Bronco Suzuki.



Freedom's Focal Point



An Iraqi Army driver with 3rd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division, stands up so he can see the path as his vehicle climbs up an incline July 18 near Camp Taji. Photo by Army Sgt. Rachel M. Ahner.



Freedom's Focal Point

Freedom's Focal Point



Top left: A Marine with Battery K, 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment provides watch over the village of Sid Ad Dibahn July 30. Photo by Marine Lance Cpl. Robert S. Morgan.

Top right: Soldiers with Company A, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, perform a route clearance mission along Route Tampa in southwest Baghdad July 28. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Dennis J. Henry Jr.

Bottom right: A Special Forces Soldier dry fires the Carl Gustav M3 recoils anti-tank rifle during familiarization training at Camp Courageous Aug. 3. Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Perez.

Bottom left: Marine Sgt. Nicholas Robinson, a green belt Marine Corps Martial Arts Program instructor with Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, Task Force Military Police, demonstrates proper MCMAP techniques to Marine Pfc. Leo Andavazo at 1/12 TFMP's Combat Operations Center in Al Asad July 2. Photo by Marine Cpl. Thomas Lew.



Freedom's Focal Point



Freedom's Focal Point

More than 580 U.S. servicemembers take the oath of enlistment administered by Gen David H. Petraeus, commanding general, Multi-National Force-Iraq, during the largest reenlistment ceremony at Camp Victory July 4. Photo by Air Force Tech Sgt. Andrew M. Rodier.





Freedom's Focal Point



Top left: Army Capt. Henry Shih, brigade surgeon, 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, prepares to dismount upon arrival to an aid station in Buritz July 5. Photo by Air Force Airman 1st Class Christopher Hubenthal.

Right: Army Spc. Richard Dumoulin receives training on the M-249 SAW from Sgt. Lane Duhon, both from the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division in Arab Jabour July 9. Photo by Navy Petty Officer Second Class Justin K. Thomas.

Bottom left: Iraqi Army scouts fire at targets during a course in advanced firearms conducted by U.S. Special Operations Forces near Fallujah July 26. Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Eli J. Medellin.



Freedom's Focal Point





Brits help 10th Mountain troops train Iraqi soldiers

Capt. James Morris, British Royal Marines, trains Iraqi troops on marksmanship. Courtesy photo.

Working Together

by Army Sgt. Chris McCann
MND-C PAO

One of the United States' long-standing allies is helping build the Iraqi Army, sometimes from the ground up.

There are four British Soldiers serving with troops of the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division at Patrol Base Lions' Den, Iraq, at any given time.

They aid the Golden Dragons of 2/14 Inf. Military Transition Team, also known as a MiTT.

Capt. James Morris, a native of Devon, England, is a Royal Marine who came to work with 2-14 Inf. Regt. as part of an officer exchange with U.S. troops.

Sgt. Paul Watson is a native of Manchester and a member of the Royal Guards — the well-known guards around Buckingham Palace who wear tall bearskin hats and are teased by tourists trying to get them to break their straight faces.

They and two others deployed April 28, training in Kuwait and Iraq, before arriving at Lions' Den in May to work with the infantry battalion. They work closely with Capt. Dennis Grinde, of Grand Forks, N.D., and Sgt. 1st Class Scott Madden of Miamisburg, Ohio, the

MiTT commander and noncommissioned officer in charge, respectively.

"There's really not much difference between the U.S. and British Armies," said Morris, who served with the 10th Mountain Division's 3rd Brigade in Afghanistan in 2006. "Your armored Humvees are much better. But patrol tactics are not much different. You can integrate British and U.S. troops with no problem. What you call 'fives and twenty-fives' we call 'five-meter-and-twenty-meter searches,' but it's not difficult to figure out. The tactics remain pretty much the same."

Watson agreed.

"I call it same (stuff), different Army," Watson said. "Soldiers are Soldiers at the end of the day, wherever you go."

"It's really interesting," Grinde said. "We're really all one team. Like Winston Churchill said, fighting a war with an alliance is hard, but it's impossible without one."

The MiTT has been working on training many Iraqi soldiers, most of whom they had to re-train from the ground up because the troops had not internalized much of their previous training.

On a recent mission, much of the Iraqi company

was late to begin the patrol.

“One of the platoon leaders, Omar, always has his guys there on time and squared away,” said Morris. “The others, not so much.

“We’re not trying to get them up to Western standards. We’re trying to get them to Iraqi standards, so that the British and American Soldiers can go home and they can have a functional native Army,” he continued. “We’re not here to change their culture, we’re here to train them. In their culture, it’s very ‘insh’allah’ – God willing – being on time isn’t a big deal.”

“In the last four weeks, they’ve started really thinking,” Watson said. “They’re asking for vehicle support, but they’re doing their own techniques and we’re falling back a little bit.”

“They need confidence,” Morris added. “We’re trying to give them that, and then start weaning them off our support. We’re stepping back and doing overwatch while they do more of the missions now.”

After the Iraqis train at Lions’ Den, they will go south to Tallil to work with an Australian unit, which will help get them to a higher level of skill, Morris said.

Until then, the Soldiers of 2/14 Inf. Regt. and their British attachments continue to teach.

“If we train them in the morning and late afternoon, they remember more,” Morris said.

Making classes entertaining is

also important, said Watson.

“The level of education and literacy they have means that practical, hands-on training works better,” he explained. “And when we make it a little entertaining, it works much better.”

The Coalition Forces also try to keep things entertaining for themselves.

The British regale the 2/14 Inf. Soldiers with tales of their riot training, with full-contact company-

company riots, with a unit of British regulars against a unit of Nepalese Gurkhas. The fighting is no-holds-barred, with live Molotov cocktails – “petrol bombs,” as Morris and Watson call them – and attempted kidnappings.

The Americans enthusiastically ask about Watson’s time in the Queen’s Guard. (“Does the Queen send tea out for you?” “Yes, but we can’t drink it, it would involve moving,” And “What happens if you smile?” “Twenty-eight days in jail, no questions at all.”)

There is also some good-natured ribbing about the American Revolutionary War.

“You guys should be good at counter-insurgency now,” one Soldier said, laughing. “I think we kind of beat you with insurgency warfare a few years ago.”

“That you did,” Morris said, also laughing, “Although, we had a good run at the beginning. But we’re onto those tricks now.”

More importantly, the Iraqi troops are improving drastically. 

“We’re trying to get them up to Iraqi standards ... so that they can have a functional national army.”

Royal Marine Capt. James Morris team chief



Sgt. Paul Watson, British Army’s Royal Guards, walks with an Iraqi child south of Camp Striker.



British and American Soldiers slog through the tall reeds of a canal near Patrol Base Lions’ Den on a combined patrol with soldiers of the Iraqi Army.



Watson pulls rear security on a combined U.S., Iraqi and British patrol.



Marine Brig. Gen. Timothy C. Hanifen, the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) commanding general, and Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Caceras, a heavy equipment operator with 557th Expeditionary Squadron, spread freshly poured concrete June 19 near Al Asad. Photos by Marine Lance Cpl. James F. Cline III.



The Air Force's 557th Expeditionary Squadron's 'Dirt Dogs' pour concrete on the flightline.

LAYING A NEST

Airmen help Marines prepare for Ospreys' arrival

by Marine Cpl. Ryan R. Jackson
MNF-W PAO

The Marines asked for help, so the Air Force unleashed its "Dirt Dogs" on the Al Asad flightline to finish building a home for the Marine Corps' MV-22 Osprey.

The 557th Expeditionary Squadron began constructing infrastructure on the flightline May 17 to prepare for the arrival of the Ospreys.

Since arriving at Al Asad in May, the 557th has been tasked with many projects by the Marines, but this is a project they won't soon forget.

"We're adding a ramp which adds one-third more taxiway to the flightline and two Osprey shelters," said Senior Master Sgt. Arthur Flecker, the heavy equipment operator superintendent for the 557th Expeditionary Squadron. "Red Horse is used to taking on big projects, but this one is huge."

The Ospreys will use the ramp as a taxiway and

parking area. The two shelters will be used for storage and maintenance of the aircraft.

To complete the project, it required 21 Dirt Dogs working around the clock. The night crew consists of 18 Airmen who excavate, prepare and pour concrete at the site to create the 270-foot by 430-foot 10-inch-thick pad. The three Dirt Dogs on the day crew haul away debris and bring the necessary tools and equipment to the site as well as conduct the saw cutting, which adds strength to the freshly poured concrete.

The 557th has faced many challenges while building a home for the MV-22, but the biggest has been relying on the concrete contractors to produce enough quality concrete fast enough.

"The other day we were battling the concrete," Flecker said. "The concrete was so hard coming out of the shoot it took eight hours for us to work what would normally take us three hours to do. The contractors couldn't keep up with us. It was a tough night, but you can't defeat the Red Horse. This is an



Airmen in Al Asad prepared the flight line for the arrival of MV-22 Ospreys, which will be deployed to Iraq for the first time.

awesome group.”

The primary role of the 557th ERHS at Al Asad is to support the Army and Marine Corps with construction operations.

“We are actually under Army control. We are combat engineers,” said Flecker. “We have people doing electrical sub-stations. We have people building SWA huts. We’re tasked from building everything from Hesco barriers with concertina wire to taxiways and runway shelters.”

Compared to the ERHS that was here before them, the 557th’s Airmen are running at half strength and are performing the same work load as the former squadron.

“It’s a diverse group and in the Air Force diversity

“The concrete was so hard coming out of the shoot it took eight hours to do work that would normally take three.”

***Air Force Senior Master Sgt.
Arthur Flecker
heavy equipment operator***

is key, because there are all sorts of people with experience and everyone has something to add to the project,” said Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Caceras, a heavy equipment operator with 557th ERHS.

The Airmen working on the project feel a sense of pride for working for the Marines and the Osprey, Flecker said.

“Our number-one mission on this base is to get this taxiway and those two shelters up before the Osprey show up,” he said. “It’s the number-one project for the Marines here. We

feel privileged because it’s a once in a lifetime thing to go home and say that you built the place where the first Osprey came.” ☺



Staff Sgt. John Panowich, a squad leader with Strike Force Geronimo, prepares to breach a door during Operation Marne Avalanche

Nowhere to Hide

Paratroopers capture insurgent during early-morning air assault

Story, photos by
Army Sgt. Ernest Henry
MND-C PAO

Paratroopers from Strike Force Geronimo captured one insurgent from a cell responsible for attacks against citizens and security forces in North Babil during Operation Marne Avalanche July 26 northwest of Iskandariyah.



Cpt. David Coulombe, a platoon leader with Strike Force Geronimo retrieves an AK-47 assault rifle that was found in a canal during Operation Marne Avalanche.



Paratroopers from Strike Force Geronimo secure the area around a DSKA .50 caliber heavy machine gun that was found during Operation Marne Avalanche.

che.

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 509th Airborne, 4th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, conducted an early morning air assault and continued raids throughout the day in an al-Qaida in Iraq stronghold northwest of the city.

“Our primary target was an al-Qaida safe house being used to interrogate and torture residents,” said Capt. David Coulombe, a platoon leader with Company B, from

New Lennox, Ill. “We wanted to secure that, and then push out into the town to search the area and talk to the locals.”

After securing the safehouse, the paratroopers began pushing into the town, where their mission began in earnest.

“As we were moving into the town, an Iraqi Army platoon was out in front and they started tak-

ing fire from insurgents,” said Staff Sgt. John Panowich, a squad leader with Company B, from Anderson, S.C. “When we moved in, we were talking to the helicopters flying close air support for us. We moved into a building to get better security and found the first cache hidden in there.”

In addition to capturing the insurgent, the paratroopers discovered three weapons caches during



CH-47 Chinook helicopters fly in to pick up paratroopers of Strike Force Geronimo after Operation Marne Avalanche.

the operation. In the first cache, they found a .50-caliber heavy machine gun with 75 rounds, a rocket propelled grenade launcher with seven rounds and 100 RPK heavy machine gun rounds.

In the second cache, more than 400 RPK rounds were uncovered. The third cache consisted of three AK-47 assault rifles, an RPK heavy machine gun, an ammunition vest and a can of 7.62mm ammunition.

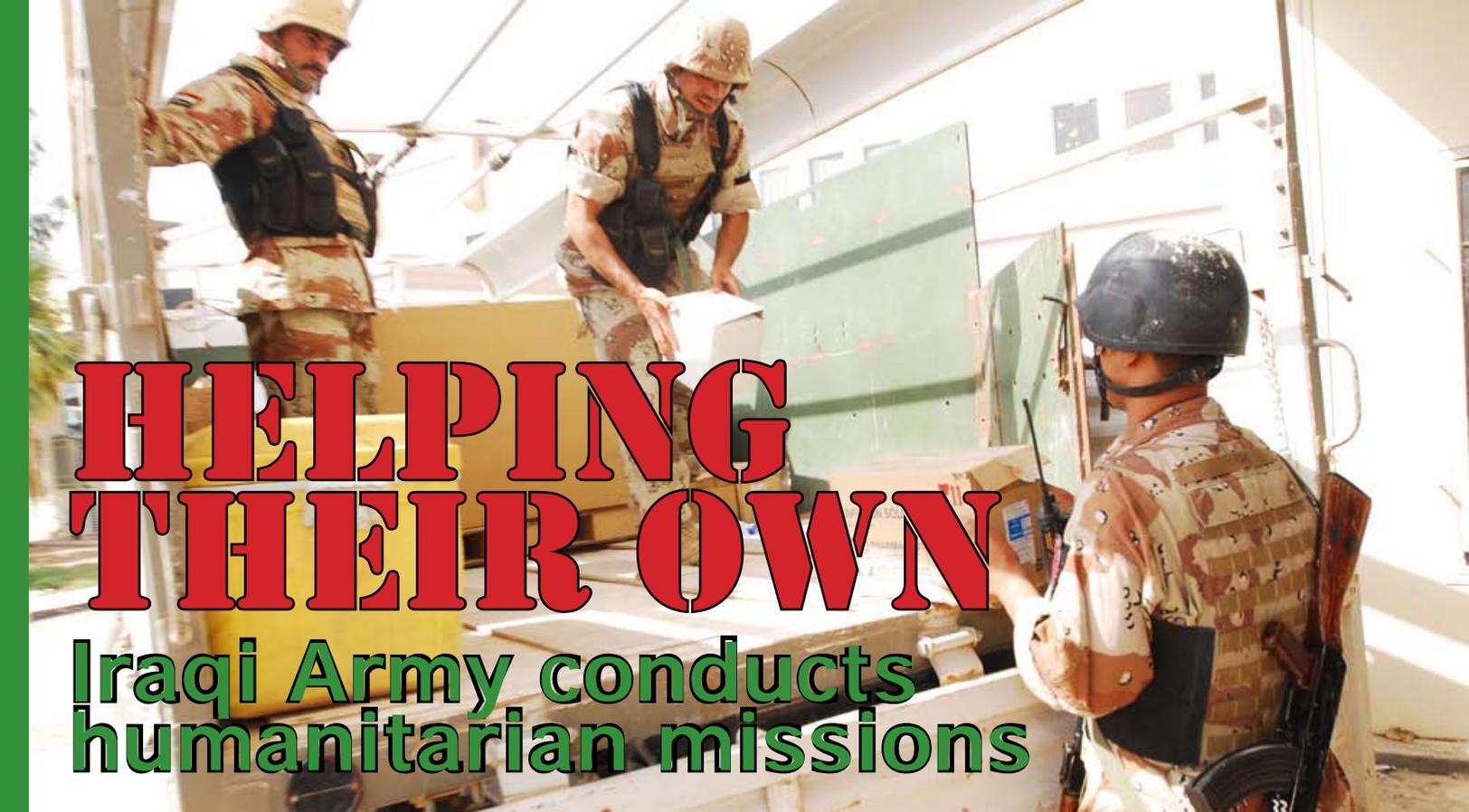
“Going into areas like this,

where insurgents have been running around freely really makes them think twice,” Panowich said. “No Coalition or Iraqi Security Forces have been in that area for quite some time. So, for us to just pop up in his own back yard one night is going to keep him laying low and watching over his shoulder for a while.”

The insurgent is being held for further questioning. An explosive ordnance disposal team destroyed the weapons on site. ©

“Going into areas where insurgents have been running around freely makes them think twice.”

**Army Sgt. John Panowich
squad leader**



HELPING THEIR OWN

Iraqi Army conducts humanitarian missions

Iraqi Army soldiers from 1st Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division unload supplies from a truck at Ramadi General Hospital.

Story, photo by
Army Spc. Ricardo Branch
MNF-W PAO

The locals greeted the Iraqi Soldiers in central Ramadi with handshakes and smiles. Those smiles are something new for the troops, who have overcome years of violence from insurgents in their quest to secure the city.

The Iraqi Army soldiers patrolling the streets of Ramadi brought supplies to the people during humanitarian missions June 29 through July 1.

“The Iraqi Army here may be from all backgrounds and provinces of Iraq, but that doesn’t change how we feel about our country,” said Col. Sabah Fadel, 1st Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division commander. “As Iraqi Army Soldiers, it’s our job to protect and help the people, which is our goal with these missions.”

Col. David Freeman, 1-7 brigade Military Transition Team chief, said the operations are an indicator of the Iraqi Army’s commitment to Ramadi.

The Iraqi brigade commander approached the MiTT team to do a civil affairs mission about a month prior, Freeman said. It was important to do the mission because months ago terrorists paraded down the streets, demonstrating their dominance of Ramadi, which is now in the Iraqi Army’s control.

During the three-day operation, called Operation Helping Hand, the troops visited the Al Hommerah,

and Al Hoz districts of Ramadi, the Women and Children’s Hospital and the Ramadi General Hospital in their effort to further strengthen relations with the Iraqi Army and local residents.

“We chose those areas to show the people that the streets formerly held by insurgents are now held and patrolled by the Iraqi Army,” Fadal said. “This is to tell the people that we’re here to help them.”

The IA’s helped the locals by bringing supplies such as food, fuel and medicine to help improve the peoples’ lives.

“The people really need these supplies,” Fadal said. “As Ramadi gets safer, we’re able to go directly to the people and take care of their concerns because it’s our job.”

Throughout the operations, Iraqi Soldiers were smiling and waving to the people of Ramadi.

“If people want to know how we feel about the work we are doing they just need to look at Ramadi,” Fadal said. “The efforts of the Iraqi Soldiers here have done much for the city. The hospitals are receiving medical supplies, people are beginning to get fuel more often and life is gradually improving for the people of Ramadi – this makes us happy.”

Although this was just one humanitarian mission for the Iraqi soldiers, everyone participating from the colonel to private sees hope as Ramadi moves forward from violence to prosperity, and a brighter future for all. 



Iraqi soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, begin constructing a traffic control point near the Najra Mosque in Al Jamea'a.

Rogue Thunder

Story, photos by
Army Spc. Alexis Harison
MND-B PAO

As Operation Arrowhead Ripper moves along in Diyala, ever so quietly, Operation Rogue Thunder swept through a section of the capital in hopes of ridding the area of anti-Iraqi forces for good.

The 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army, their Military Transition Team and Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, cleared Al Jamea'a of caches, bombs and insurgents while helping to ramp up security efforts to reclaim the area terrorized and bullied by al Qaida in Iraq.

The terrorists in the area had been ruthlessly controlling every action of the people according to Maj. Chris Norrie, the transition team's commander. Women were forced to cover their faces, men were arrested

Coalition Forces reclaim Jamea'a

for seemingly nothing and children weren't even allowed to play soccer in the streets.

Al Jamea'a used to be occupied by white-collar professionals until the insurgents began the scare tactics that led to many well-off residents leaving their homes. Many of the mansion-sized homes in the neighborhood are empty, and as Capt. Peter Kilpatrick said, the empty homes are seen as an opportunity for insurgents to move in.

"Only 30 percent of Jamea'a was occupied," said the Bronx, N.Y. native. "The vacancies made it vulnerable."

Several caches had been found during previous operations around the Najra Mosque area. During the first day of this operation, the streets and shops around the Najra Mosque were empty. A few people cautiously came out to see the Humvees, tanks and Iraqi Army vehicles stage. This would begin the lengthy process of securing the area.

Iraqi soldiers began setting up traffic control points

along the street to inspect vehicles. Meanwhile, in another section of the neighborhood, Soldiers were busy setting up observation points to over watch the area known for its high number of roadside bombs.

This area is of particular importance for the Soldiers of the 1/64 Armor. They lost several of their comrades to deep-buried improvised explosive devices in recent times. The observation towers and combat outpost being placed in the neighborhood give them constant presence in the area therefore deterring any would-be bomb placers from accomplishing their mission.

During the ramp up of security measures, several teams were searching houses for caches. One cache of more than 50 60mm mortar rounds was found in one of the abandoned houses.

Sgt. Kenneth Swartwood said that many of the residents are happy to see the Coalition Forces move into their neighborhood. More importantly, the combined presence of Iraqis and Americans working together proved to the people just how important the area's security was.

"1/64 came in with open arms to the (Iraqi Army)," the Corpus Christi, Texas, native said. "A big reason Adel and Jamea'a are good now is because of the partnership with the IA. They actually worked with them hand-in-hand. The civilians feel a lot better when it's a partnership. They feel like it's twice as secure."

After many of the new security measures were in place, the commander of the Iraqi Army battalion, Raheem, went to the mosque to use its loudspeaker to make an announcement to the people in the neighborhood.

He let it be known to the people that the Coalition Forces were in the area to make a change for the better. He said that security will improve for the people and that they have not only God watching them, but the entire Coalition.

"Almost immediately, people began to come out of their homes," Raheem said. "These people deserve to live in peace after al Qaida had oppressed them for so long."

Raheem commands one of the largest battalions in the area. Many of the soldiers he commands are very new to life in the

The combined presence of Iraqis and Americans working together proved to the people just how important the area's security was.



1st Sgt. Joseph McFarlane, the 3-5-6 Military Transition Team's top noncommissioned officer, Maj. Chris Norrie, commander 3-5-6 MiTT, and a few of their Soldiers check out the placement of a watchtower.

army, but he and the transition team made sure that they conducted themselves with the utmost professionalism.

Now that the security measures are in place, Kilpatrick said Coalition Forces in the area will have 24-hour surveillance over the entire area.

"We've established several static positions," he said. "However, I don't think locals would have felt comfortable with putting a (Coalition outpost) next to the mosque without help from the Iraqis."

Raheem said that many of the locals feel that having a combined presence in the area is good and that it helps gain the

trust of the people even faster. ☺

IN MEM

NAMES OF COALITION SERVICE MEM
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM BETW

June 16, 2007

Lance Cpl. James Cartwright, 21
Badger Squadron, 2nd Royal Tank Regt.
Spc. Zachary A. Grass, 22
2/12 FA, 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Sgt. Danny R. Soto, 24
2/12 FA, 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
1st Lt. Frank B. Walkup IV, 23
2/35 Inf., 3rd Bde., 25th Inf. Div.

June 18, 2007

Pfc. Larry Parks Jr., 24
3/61 Cav., 2nd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Sgt. Frank M. Sandoval, 27
2/5 FA, III Corps
Sgt. Eric L. Snell, 35
3/61 Cav., 2nd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Pfc. Jacob T. Tracy, 20
1/8 Cav., 2nd Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Pfc. David A. Wilkey Jr., 22
1/28 Inf., 4th Bde., 1st Inf. Div.

June 19, 2007

Spc. Darryl W. Linder, 23
1/12 Cav., 3rd Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Pfc. Joshua S. Modgling, 22
1/30 Inf., 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Sgt. 1st Class William A. Zapfe, 35
1/30 Inf., 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.

June 20, 2007

Pfc. David J. Bentz, 20
1/64 AR, 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Maj. Sid. W. Brookshire, 36
1/64 AR, 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Spc. Joe G. Charfauros Jr., 33
1/64 AR, 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Maj. Paul Harding, 48
Fire Support Co., The Rifles
Staff Sgt. Darren P. Hubbell, 38
1/64 AR, 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Sgt. Shawn P. Martin, 30
1/28 Inf., 4th Bde., 1st Inf. Div.
Staff Sgt. Stephen J. Wilson, 28
CLB 13, 13th MEU, 1st MEF

June 21, 2007

Pfc. Daniel J. Agami, 25
1/26 Inf., 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.
Spc. Karen N. Clifton, 22
95th MP Bn.
Pfc. Anthony D. Herbert, 19
1/26 Inf., 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.

Pfc. Thomas R. Leemhuis, 23
1/26 Inf., 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.
Sgt. Alphonso J. Montenegro II, 22
1/26 Inf., 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.
Pfc. Raymond N. Spencer Jr., 23
2/12 Cav., 4th Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Pfc. Jeremiah J. Veitch, 21
1/15 Inf., 3rd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Sgt. Ryan M. Wood, 22
1/26 Inf., 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.

June 22, 2007

Sgt. Michael J. Montpetit, 31
15th FSB, 2nd Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Cpl. John Rigby, 24
4th Bn., The Rifles
Spc. Dominic N. Rodriguez, 23
4/9 Cav., 2nd Bde., 1st Cav. Div.

June 23, 2007

Sgt. William E. Brown, 25
2/227 Avn., Air Cav. Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Spc. Derek A. Calhoun, 23
2/8 Cav., 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Sgt. Joel A. Dahl, 21
2/23 Inf., 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Sgt. Chris Davis, 35
2/69 AR, 3rd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Sgt. Joel A. House, 22
2/8 Cav., 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Spc. Joseph P. Kenny, 20
27th BSB, 4th Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Sgt. Jimmy M. Malone, 23
2/8 Cav., 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Staff Sgt. Michael D. Moody Jr., 31
2/69 AR, 3rd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Airman 1st Class Jason D. Nathan, 22
48th Sec. Forces Squadron, 48th MSG, 48th FW
1st Lt. Daniel P. Riordan, 24
2/8 Cav., 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Pvt. Shane M. Stinson, 23
2/69 AR, 3rd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.

June 24, 2007

Pfc. Henry G. Byrd III, 20
1/30 Inf., 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Spc. Carter A. Gamble Jr., 24
1/15 Inf., 3rd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Spc. Eric C. Palmer, 21
1/505 PIR, 3rd Bde., 82nd Airborne Div.

June 25, 2007

Pfc. Andre Craig Jr., 24
2/16 Inf., 4th Bde., 1st Inf. Div.

GREATE HATH N THAN TH A MAN LA HIS LIFE FRIE JOHN

Sgt. Trista L
425th BSTB, 4th B

June 2

Cpl. Derek C
2nd AA Bn., 2nd M
Sgt. 1st Class Nath
2nd Bn., 1st

June 2

Staff Sgt. Daniel
1/8 Cav., 2nd B

June 2

Sgt. William W
2/16 Inf., 4th B
Pfc. Cory F
2/12 Inf., 2nd B
Cpl. Paul J
2nd Bn., The Roy
Pvt. Scott K
3rd Bn., The Roya
Pvt. Jame
3rd Bn., The Roya
Sgt. Shin V

2/12 Inf., 2nd B
Sgt. Michael J
2/12 Inf., 2nd B
Sgt. Giann C. Jo
2/12 Inf., 2nd B
Spc. Dustin L. V
2/12 Inf., 2nd B

June 2

Spc. James
1/28 Inf., 4th B

June 3

Staff Sgt. Robb
2nd Bn., 10th

MORIAM

MEMBERS WHO DIED WHILE SERVING IN
BETWEEN JUNE 16 AND JULY 15, 2007

ER LOVE
NO MAN
S: THAT
AY DOWN
FOR HIS
NDS.
15:13

. Moretti, 27
Bde., 25th Inf. Div.

6, 2007
C. Dixon, 20
Mar. Div., 2nd MEF
man L. Winder, 32
t SF Group

7, 2007
A. Newsome, 27
de., 1st Cav. Div.

8, 2007
W. Crow Jr., 28
de., 1st Inf. Div.
F. Hiltz, 20
de., 2nd Inf. Div.
Joszko, 28
al Regt. of Wales
Kennedy, 20
l Regt. of Scotland
s Kerr, 20
l Regt. of Scotland
W. Kim, 23
de., 2nd Inf. Div.
. Martinez, 24
de., 2nd Inf. Div.
ya Mendoza, 27
de., 2nd Inf. Div.
Workman II, 19
de., 2nd Inf. Div.

9, 2007
L. Adair, 26
de., 1st Inf. Div.

0, 2007
o L. Rolfing, 29
h SF Group

July 1, 2007

Sgt. 1st Class Raymond R. Buchan, 33
1/18 Inf., 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.
Lance Cpl. William C. Chambers, 20
1/2 Mar. Regt., 2nd MEF
Spc. Victor A. Garcia, 22
1/38 Inf., 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Pfc. Jonathan M. Rossi, 22
2/12 Inf., 2nd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Staff Sgt. Michael L. Ruoff Jr., 31
1/77 AR, 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.
Lance Cpl. Jeremy L. Tinnel, 20
1/2 Mar. Regt., 2nd MEF

July 2, 2007

1st Lt. Christopher N. Rutherford, 25
19th Eng. Bn.
Lance Cpl. Juan M. Garcia Schill, 20
2/7 Mar. Regt., 1st Mar. Div., 1st MEF

July 4, 2007

Pfc. Steven A. Davis, 23
2/12 Inf., 2nd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Pfc. Andrew T. Engstrom, 22
1/82 FA, 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Chief Warrant Officer Scott A.M. Oswell, 33
4/6 Air Cav. Regt.

July 5, 2007

MAj. James M. Ahearn, 43
96th CA Bn., 95th CA Bde.
Cpl. Jeremy D. Albaugh, 21
1/4 Mar. Regt., 1st Mar. Div., 1st MEF
Sgt. Keith A. Kline, 24
96th CA Bn., 95th CA Bde.
Spc. Michelle R. Ring, 24
92nd MP Bn.
Lance Cpl. Steven A. Stacy, 23
3/1 Mar. Regt., 1st Mar. Div., 1st MEF
Spc. Jeremy L. Stacey, 23
2/12 Inf., 2nd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Spc. Anthony M.K. Vinnedge, 24
2/107 ACR, Ohio Army Natl. Guard

July 6, 2007

Sgt. Gene L. Lamie, 25
3/7 Cav., 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Petty Officer 1st Class Jason D. Lewis, 30
Naval Special Warfare Group 2
Sgt. Eric A. Lill, 28
2/17 FA, 2nd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.
Col. Jon M. Lockey, 44
HQs, Dept. of the Army

Petty Officer 1st Class Steven P. Daugherty, 28
Naval Special Warfare Group 2
Petty Officer 1st Class Robert R. McKill, 42
Naval Special Warfare Group 2
Pfc. Bruce C. Salazar Jr., 24
1/30 Inf., 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
Rifleman Edward Vakabua, 23
4th Bn., The Rifles
Cpl. Kory D. Wiens, 20
5th Eng. Bn., 1st Eng. Bde.
Pfc. Le Ron A. Wilson, 18
26th BSB, 2nd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.

July 7, 2007

Spc. Roberto Causor Jr., 21
2/505 PIR, 3rd Bde., 82nd Airborne Div.
Lance Cpl. Ryan Francis, 23
2nd Bn., The Royal Regt. of Wales
Cpl. Chris Read, 22
3rd Regt., Royal MPs

July 8, 2007

Pfc. Jason E. Dore, 25
2/5 Cav., 1st Bde., 1st Cav. Div.

July 10, 2007

Cpt. Maria I. Ortiz, 40
Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic

July 11, 2007

Sgt. Courtney T. Johnson, 26
3rd BSTB, 3rd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.
1st Sgt. Jeffrey R. McKinney, 40
1/26 Inf., 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.

July 13, 2007

Sgt. Allen A. Greka, 29
3/1 Cav., 3rd Bde., 3rd Inf. Div.

July 14, 2007

Pfc. Christopher D. Kube, 18
2/17 FA, 2nd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.

July 15, 2007

Pfc. Benjamin B. Bartlett Jr., 25
2/7 Cav., 4th Bde., 1st Cav. Div.
Spc. Eric M. Holke, 31
1/160 Inf., Calif. Army Natl. Guard
Sgt. John R. Massey, 29
142nd Fires Bde., Ark. Army Natl. Guard
Spc. Robert D. Varga, 24
759th MP Bn.

