The Heart Beat

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)
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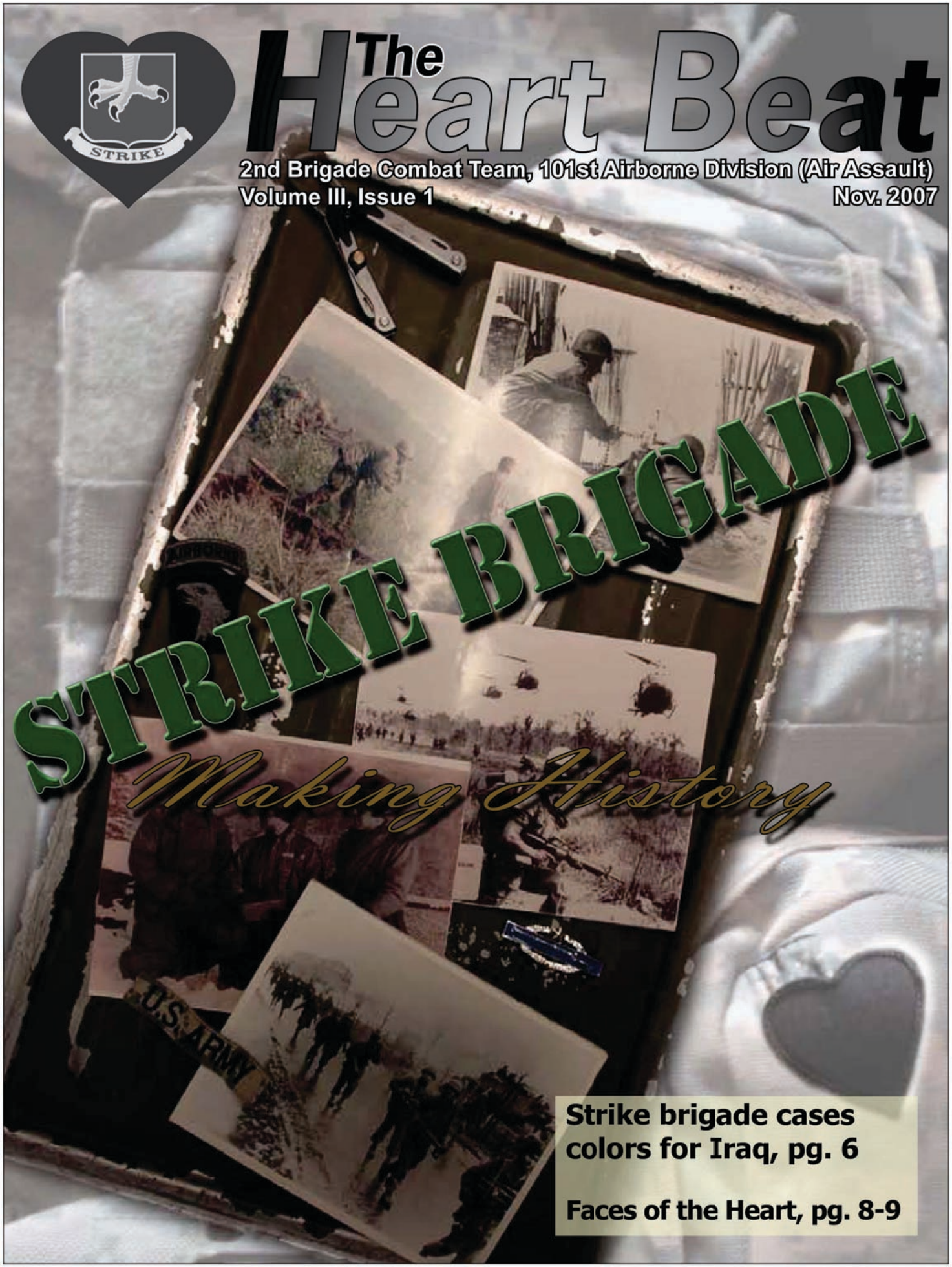

STRIKE BRIGADE

Making History

Strike brigade cases colors for Iraq, pg. 6

Faces of the Heart, pg. 8-9

Strike 6

To all members of the "STRIKE" Combat Team.

We have arrived in Baghdad and have already started to establish ourselves here. We have trained hard and it is now time to partner with our Iraqi counterparts and focus our combined "Strike Power" where it will create the greatest effect. It will be the relationships that we establish with the people in our area of operations that will make us successful. We will do all we can to assist the government of Iraq to move forward and create a better living environment for the people here. It will take all of us working together to be successful.

Our area of operations is strategic in nature. Baghdad is the main effort in the War on Terrorism. Each and every one of you has a vital job in this operation. What we do in our tour here will make a significant difference in the history of Iraq and our own military history. Take the time to continue your studies about Baghdad and its people, culture and history. Make a positive, professional impression when you conduct operations. Do not offend our Iraqi hosts by doing something you could have prevented.

A lot has changed in the Baghdad area since the brigade departed last fall, particularly in respect to security. The number of IED attacks in the AO has been greatly reduced in the last several months. This is a great thing. I pray that it will continue. We must not let this recent success lead us to a false sense of security. Have no doubt in your mind that it will take hard work, vigilance and a strict adherence to standards to carry us through this.

I would like to thank the Soldiers and leaders of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division for their support in turning over this critical area in such a professional manner. Thanks for what you have done to prepare us for future success.

I would also like to thank the Strike families for their commitment and strong support to their loved ones serving here. Your support is critical in our mission accomplishment.

Finally we wish all a Happy

Col. William B. Hickman

Thanksgiving and we are truly thankful for what we have and what we give—for it is what we give in West Baghdad that will make a positive difference and will forever change the lives of many.

STRIKE!
WILLIAM HICKMAN
COL, IN
COMMANDING

The Heart Beat
2nd Brigade Combat Team
101st Airborne Division

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Eagle STRIKE!!!

In this issue of the Heart Beat

Commander's Voice	Pg. 2
Sergeant Major's Call	Pg. 3
Focus on Faith	Pg. 3
Strike cases colors	Pg. 4
Troops arrive in Kuwait	Pg. 5
Focus on tactical medicine	Pg. 6
MRAP training	Pg. 6
Strike ready in Iraq	Pg. 7
Faces of the Heart	Pg. 8-9
From the Home Front	Pg. 11
Company A, 526th BTB	Pg. 15

2nd Brigade Combat Team — "Strike"

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, or "Five-o-Deuce," 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), sets forth on its third deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, continuing the proud heritage, lineage of the Strike Brigade. ***(Graphic illustration by Spc. Kelly K. McDowell, 2nd BCT PAO)***

Strike 7

I would like to start by thanking 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, the Dagger Brigade from Germany, for the reception and remarkable job they have done in this area of Baghdad.

The effect they have had on this place in the last year is amazing, and has made this place safer for the Iraqi people and our Soldiers. We are lucky to be trading out with such a professional unit. I would also like to welcome 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment; 2nd Squadron, 12th Cavalry Regiment; 1st Squadron, 5th Cavalry Regiment; and in the near future 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment to the Strike BCT. I am looking forward to working with you all.

Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder

The Army is a standards based organization and no place is it more important to enforce standards than in combat. Standards are the foundation that disciplined individuals and units are built on. Every task we perform is executed to a standard. From pre-combat checks prior to going on a patrol to the way we wear our uniforms. It is the leaders responsibility to make sure the standard is published, understood and enforced. While we are deployed the minimum acceptable standard for wear of the uniform and conduct are outlined in Multi-National Force-Iraq memo 11-1 dated July 2007. For areas not addressed in this policy letter refer to Army Regualtion 670-1. All Soldiers must adhere to these standards and leaders will be unrelenting in the enforcement of these standards whether on a combat patrol, a forward operating base, or forward on a joint security station/observation point. It does make a difference.

To the families back home thank you for what you do everyday to make your Soldiers job easier. We have had very few incidents and I am certain it is because we left such a strong rear detachment command team behind. The Brigade has completed its training and I am confident we are prepared for the mission ahead.

Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder
2nd BCT Command Sergeant Major

2nd BCT, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)

Focus on Faith

By Sgt. Meghan Recoma
2nd BCT UMT

WHAT IS FAITH?

In religious circles we hear a lot about FAITH. There are a lot of different ways that people describe what FAITH is. Some think of FAITH as the type of church they attend. Others think that FAITH is wishing upon a star, reading your horoscope, or going to a fortune teller. So it is very easy to see why people get so confused when we bring up the word FAITH. I believe when we are in doubt about anything, the best place to go is God's word. In Hebrews 11:1 the Bible describes FAITH like this. Now FAITH is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. So now we know what FAITH is, but what is hope? Hope is trusting God based on the knowledge of what we already know he can do. What is your HOPE?

We have to figure out what we are hoping for and what we can find hope in? We can find hope in GOD, our families, friends as well as completion of our mission here in Iraq. If we can find hope, we can then activate our FAITH.

The key is to walk by FAITH not by sight. Having first FAITH in GOD, second having FAITH in your leaders, and finally you must have FAITH in yourself. Believing that GOD has equipped you for the mission ahead. Isaiah 7:9 says "If your FAITH is not enduring, you will not endure." This is a 15 month journey, you have to take it one day at a time and remember it is going to take your HOPE, FAITH, and TRUST in GOD to get you through.

PRO DEO ET PATRIA
"For God and Country"

Strike cases colors for Iraq deployment

Story, photo by
Sgt. James P. Hunter
2nd BCT PAO

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. -- The Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), cased the brigade's colors during a Casing of the Colors Ceremony at Strike Field, Oct. 9.

The color casing ceremony marks the beginning of the brigade's deployment to Iraq where they will once again conduct counter-insurgency operations.

"The very soul of a military unit is symbolized in the colors under which it fights, for they record the glories of the past, stand guardian over its destiny, and ensure inspiration for its future." said Capt. Chad Henderson, who spoke as the ceremonies narrator. "The colors lead the unit into battle… Today, the colors serve as a binding symbol of continuity and point of inspiration for the future."

The legacy of the Strike Brigade can be seen through its colors and streamers, for the Strike BCT has fought and won in many conflicts on behalf of the nation, said Col. William B. Hickman, 2nd BCT Commander

"Now it's going to be your turn to add to that legacy," Hickman said. "You are the men and women who will write the next chapter in the glorious history of the Strike brigade combat team."

The Strike Brigade traces its proud heritage back to August of 1917, when they were known as the 159th Infantry Brigade, an element of the 80th Division.

Since WWI – where the brigade fought in the Somme Offensive of 1918, in the Meuse-Argonne, and the Picardy 1918 – the Strike troops have fought in nearly every major battle to this day where they once again stand ready to fight for the very same reason those who fought before them did.

"Today, once again, we stand ready," said Hickman. "We are trained, mentally and physically prepared, and I have full confidence in you and your leadership's ability to get the tasks done that lie ahead."

Col. William B. Hickman, 2nd Brigade Combat Team commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder, brigade command sergeant major, case the colors of the Strike Brigade during the Casing of the Colors Ceremony, Oct. 9.

Strike's mission in the heart of Baghdad is critical, for Iraq is the central battlefront in the global war on terror, said Hickman. Each Soldier of the brigade will play a huge role in the success of the operations and the continued rebuilding of the government of the Iraq with a free and democratic future.

"Iraq has come a long way. Progress can be seen in security, essential services, economics, government development and other areas," Hickman stated. "But the battle is only half won. We have to continue to win total victory. And you and your fellow Soldiers are in the process of changing the course of history in the Middle East."

The people of Iraq have suffered for over 35 years under Saddam's regime, Hickman said. The dedication, commitment, skill and courage of each individual Soldier of the Strike BCT will give these men and women a better future; one far better than terrorism can offer.

"It's a huge challenge," Hickman said. "It will not be easy, and it will not be short."

"I know you are ready," he said.

Also during the ceremony, Strike Brigade units were awarded battle streamers for their efforts and success' while conducting combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07.

Headquarters, 2nd BCT; 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment; and 526th Brigade Support Battalion each received the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

"Many of the Soldiers standing in formation participated in the actions that earned the unit this award," Hickman said. "The brigade's actions assisted in setting the conditions for future success in south Baghdad, and we will always remember the sacrifices of those Soldiers that did not return and (remember) their families."

The Strike Brigade will once again embark upon their next "Rendezvous with Destiny."

Troops arrived in Kuwait, ready for Iraq

Story, photo by
Sgt. James P. Hunter
2nd BCT PAO

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait-- Nearly a year after the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) returned home to Fort Campbell, has been called upon once again to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"People trust our abilities," said Capt. Michael Thiesfeld, company commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd BCT. "The 101st is able, reliable and up to the challenge."

Soldiers of the Strike Brigade left their families and their loved ones back home and began filtering into Kuwait at the end of September and will continue to do so through mid-October.

Thiesfeld, who is on his fourth deployment, said it is very difficult to leave family members behind, but this continued effort in Iraq is important.

The family members need to know there Soldiers are well trained, with great leadership, guidance and experience within the brigade, he said.

Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), personal security detachment conduct ready-up drills during weapons training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

However, no matter how well trained these Soldiers are, the driving force behind these Soldiers and the Strike Brigade will be their families, Thiesfeld said.

"The support every single Soldiers get back home from his or her family is as critical to a Soldiers success and a unit's success as any military skill we practice," said Lt. Col. Fred Wintrich, executive officer, 2nd BCT. "And perhaps it may be the most important component because the support, understanding and hard work of our families is really what lets each of us go forward, knowing that back home we all stand on a firm foundation, and that we got the support and strength of all our

see KUWAIT, pg. 10

Strike Soldiers train to prevent battlefield deaths

Continued advances in medicine helps Strike Soldiers during combat

Story by
Sgt. James P. Hunter
2nd BCT PAO

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait—The reality of war is that casualties will occur no matter how tough, dedicated or trained a Soldier may be, but many battlefield deaths are preventable.

The three major preventable deaths are hemorrhaging, airway compression and tension pneumothorax, said Ralph Wilson of the Medical Simulation Training Center at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Each, depending on the severity of the injury, may be prevented.

To prevent this, Soldiers need to train continuously to efficiently, quickly aid a casualty during combat, said Sgt. 1st Class Cowden, 2nd Brigade Combat Team Brigade Surgeon noncommissioned officer-in-charge, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Strike Soldiers continued their medical training during their stay in Kuwait at the MSTC, aiding dummy patients with a series of injuries.

"The end result is a better trained Soldier and improved combat care—a combat multiplier," Cowden said.

The training focuses on care for a casualty while under fire, tactical field care and casualty evacuation care, Wilson said.

"The reality is," said Wilson, "this is tactical medicine."

During combat when Soldiers receive enemy fire, first and foremost, they must return fire with aimed fire, Cowden said.

"We all know our mission as Soldiers. If you're receiving fire, you need to return fire," Wilson said. "Doing the right thing at the right time in the different phases of care may help prevent a death on the battlefield. Get out of the line of sight and care for this person, quickly!"

After returning fire and eliminating the threat, Soldiers must secure the area, assess the situation, and assess the casualty of what he actually needs, said Cowden. If his airway is blocked, then treat his airway. If he's bleeding, then stop the bleeding.

> ***"Doing the right thing at the right time in the different phases of care may help prevent a death on the battlefield,"***
> said Ralph Wilson
> Medical Simulation Training Center.

Once the casualty has been aided, he needs to be evacuated immediately.

One of the main goals of the training was to familiarize Soldiers with the contents of their improvised first aid kit to enable them to apply emergency treatment on the battlefield.

Over the decades, tactical medicine has changed greatly to better assist Soldiers in a combat situation.

From Somalia to Operation Iraqi Freedom, lessons learned have helped better equip and train Soldiers on

see MEDICINE, pg. 10

[redacted]

"The Singing Cowboy"

Country music singer Freddie Fuller, "The Singing Cowboy," visited Forward Operating Base Justice during his first visit to Iraq Nov. 9.

Staff Sgt. Rodney Porter, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, poses for a photo after winning a Gibson guitar from Freddie Fuller, "The Sining Cowboy," Nov. 9. (Photos by 2nd Lt. Lindsey Travis, 2 BSTB)

Spc. Robison and Sgt. Adney of the 2 BSTB show Freddie Fuller, "The Singing Cowboy," the inner workings of the Joint Network Node at Foward Operating Base Justice.

With Dagger Brigade set to re-deploy, Strike troops will play a vital role in Baghdad

Story by
Sgt. James P. Hunter
2nd BCT PAO

"Thirty-two hundred years of invaders and oppression in this land," said Maj. Timothy E. Collier, civil affairs officer, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). "From Genghis Khan on, this part of the world has been invaded time and time again."

This area has been devastated and destroyed from years of destruction. For nearly the last five years, as Coalition forces try to reconstruct and revitalize the Iraqi government, terrorists and insurgents have wreaked havoc throughout the area, not enabling the government, the economy and the people to move forward with their lives.

To achieve the goal of a stable, self-controlled government and economy, those responsible for the destruction needed to be weeded out.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, ran counter-insurgency operations – such as joint patrols, cordon and searches, house clearing, and cordon and knocks – to weed out these insurgent forces responsible for the violence.

"When I look at the history of this brigade combat team in northwest Baghdad from February of this year to September of this year, it's what I label as the battle for northwest Baghdad," said Col. J.B. Burton, commander, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div. "In that, we saw some very high rates of violence."

Starting in January, preceding this battle to control northwest Baghdad, they placed Joint Security Stations out in the neighborhoods, and established safe neighborhoods with the gated communities through controlled entry and exit points to these communities, Burton said.

The JSSs are patrol bases within the Iraqi communities, where U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces run combat patrols and dismounted presence patrols out of to get face-to-face with the Iraqi people, said 1st Lt. Kurtis Larson, executive officer, Company B, 2nd Squadron, 12th Cavalry Regiment.

In March, the surge in Baghdad began, Burton said. This is where they began to see a significant increase in violent indicators, especially in May and June.

Burton attributes that to his Dagger Soldiers, the ISF and local volunteers being more active on the battlefield, 24-hours a day in areas where the enemy was determined to control.

"A lot of people sacrificed (their lives) to get this city where it is right now," said Collier.

The surge in Baghdad seemed to push out the terrorists and thwart their activity. The volunteers can take much credit for the decreased activity in the area.

"The single most dramatic thing that has happened I think is what we call the concerned local citizens, or the Ameriyah freedom fighters, or the Ghazaliyan Guardians, or some of the Sunni citizens groups— a lot of them former al-Qaeda, former anti-Coalition fighters— that have decided that nothing good is coming of Al-Qaeda," Collier continued, "and nothing good is coming of further extremism and violence after four and-a-half, five years. They've seen enough death and destruction."

These volunteers stepped-up and paved the way for economic growth, volunteering themselves for the greater good by providing safety, justice, peace and order to their friends and neighbors, Collier said.

> ***"So now we've hit a turning point. Now (the Strike) brigade is taking over where it's pretty critical,"***
> said Maj. Henry Delacruz
> civil affairs officer, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.

"Nobody wants to see their neighbor suffer continuously," he added.

So the U.S. troops had to adapt and become ever-changing. Instead of focusing solely on insurgent forces, their focus now became improving the essential services of the Iraqi people. This was always a focus, but became the essential, main focus.

Baghdad is an old city— it's an ancient city, with its municipal services laid in between the fifties and seventies. It is critical these repairmen get into the areas and fix these essential services.

"Essential services absolutely cannot go forward unless the municipal workers can go across the city and do their jobs," said Collier. "A trash collector or utility repair guy isn't going to go into a hostile war zone because he's not trained as a Soldier. Unless there is security in an area, the trash doesn't get picked up, the sewer lines don't get fixed, the water lines don't get fixed, the electrical lines don't get repaired, then the neighborhood falls apart."

Since July, power went from one-to-two hours a day to six to eight hours a day. The Dora Thermal Power Plant brought all its boilers on line, and Al-Qaeda is no longer targeting the high-tension electrical cables coming into the city. Repairs are proceeding on all the substations and transformers and a lot of that is because of security, Collier said.

Now with the Dagger Brigade's deployment on its final leg, it's up to the Soldiers of the 2nd BCT, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) to continue the success of the Dagger troops.

"So now we've hit a turning point. Now (the Strike) brigade is taking over where it's pretty critical," said Maj.

see **STRIKE**, pg. 14

Faces of the Heart

photo provided by 2 BSTB

2nd Lt. Dana Crigger, Capt. Jason Felix and 2nd Lt. Lindsey Travis, with 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, pack school supplies up with 4 1-6 Military Transition Team for children in Ghazaliya.

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's Color Guard retire the units colors during the Strike Brigade's Casing of the Colors Ceremony, Oct. 9.

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

A Soldier pulls security, far right, while others from 2nd platoon, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, talk with security gaurds at an electrical power plant, in Katib Nov. 11.

photo by Capt. Lauren Koban, 526th BSB

Soldiers from Company B, 526th Brigade Support Battalion train on maneuvering with a fire hose and foam liquid fire extinguisher solution.

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Pvt. 1st Class Kawmi Robinson, armorer, HHC, 2nd BCT, clears his weapon at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

photo by Spc. Charles Gill, 55th Combat Camera

Students recieve dental hygiene products and information at the ribbon cutting ceremony for Al Mateem Elementary School in the Hateem neighborhood of Baghdad, Iraq on October 29, 2007. Soldiers from Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment were at the school for the re-opening.

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Capt. Daniel Antolos, assistant brigade engineer, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, checks his target to make adjustments to his M-4 Carbine during weapons training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

MEDICINE

individual first aid, Cowden said.

The IFAK, which every Soldier carries with him during combat, is an improved first aid kit containing a combat application tourniquet, nasopharyngeal airway tube (used to maintain a casualties airway), bandage/dressing, compressed gauze, medical tape and a needle used for decompression of air trapped between the lungs and the cavity, Cowden said.

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

A Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, provides aid to a dummy patient during medical training.

Also, the plastic covering around the bandage can also be used for an open chest wound by cover over the wound and placing tape on three sides, he added.

"Less is more. You want to stop the bleeding," said Cowden. "We use to teach that you couldn't do a tourniquet until the last step. In today's training that is one of the first things we do is put on a CAT tourniquet, which can be found in the IFAK bag that each individual Soldier has."

The IFAK has the equipment needed for immediate aid to a casualty, he said. Knowing how to use each piece of the first aid kit is important for effective first aid.

In the end, the reality is a Soldiers life is in his buddies' hands, Cowden said. Whether he is putting rounds down range to deter an enemy fighter or aiding him medically, he is important.

Through training, lives can be saved on the battlefield, ensuring Soldier and unit combat effectiveness, he said.

Strike troops getting ready

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Soldiers with the personal security detachment of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), mount their vehicles in preparation for a movement to Forward Operating Base Justice, Nov. 5.

Preparing for War

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), personal security detachment conduct ready-up drills during weapons training at Camp Buerhing, Kuwait.

KUWAIT

families, and of all our friends and nation at home that allows us to take these skills and carry them forward (into Iraq)."

Over the next few weeks, the brigade will continue to focus its efforts on the mission in Iraq.

The Soldiers within the brigade will conduct a series of training events focused on refining and sharpening these skills and tasks before pushing forward into Iraq, said Wintrich. This also allows the Soldiers to acclimatize to the weather and get themselves in the right state of mind—focused and ready.

The Strike troops will conduct weapons training, counter-improvised explosive device training, Counter Radio Controlled Improvised Explosve Device Electronical Warfare; Humvee Egress Awareness Trainer, and the prevention of fratricide.

All these final training tools, combined with the culmination of the year leading up to the deployment, will enable the Soldiers to carry on the success of the unit they are replacing (2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division), said Wintrich. They will continue to improve upon and reinforce the Government of Iraq's ability to provide for her citizens.

"The focal point is not necessarily counter-insurgency operations against Al Qaeda in Iraq and various factions," Wintrich said, "but more importantly putting clean drinking water on the table, providing a ministerial system that allows children to go to school, people to hold jobs, to provide all the service and capabilities a functioning government provides to its citizens."

The brigade will rely heavily upon its experienced troops to successfully accomplish the mission, said Wintrich. These Soldiers, and the Strike Brigade as a whole, will be a guiding force in the continued development of the Iraqi government.

From the Home Front

Students collect pennies for those in need

Story, photo by
Sgt. Paul Monroe
2nd BCT PAO

FORT CAMPBELL, Kentucky--Pennies don't buy much these days but eighth graders from Mahaffey Middle School are hoping that the seemingly insignificant currency can help those in need within their community.

In their spare time, students collected over 13,000 pennies. Some collected spare change lying around the house. Others turned in piggy banks. Fourteen year old Jackie Coffindaffer's request to trade in her dollars for her father's pennies elicited astonishment.

"He said, 'Are you sure you want to do this,' I said 'yeah,'" she said.

All of this generosity sprang from lessons learned in the classroom.

Carleen Massey's eighth grade reading class is not just another pedagogic lecture on dangling participles and misplaced modifiers. Students in the class are introduced to real life problems through reading assignments.

"If you try and make it real for them then they will understand the importance of the story," said Massey.

"The Treasure of Lemon Brown," by Walter Dean Myers, brought the realities of homelessness to light for students.

After an argument with his father, fourteen year old Greg Ridley runs off and encounters Lemon Brown a homeless former blues singer. Brown doesn't have much, but what he has, he treasures.

In the one year Jackie and her mother were homeless, she learned the value of the smallest gestures of kindness.

"It means a lot..." she said. "I mean it really does. It's like 'Wow, someone cares about you,' 'Wow, someone wants you to stay here and do good with your life.'"

From left Jackie Coffindaffer, Paul Getchell, and Wilaslyn Figueroa tally up their earnings. Students collected over $300 in pennies to help those in need in the community.

According to June Cacal, sharing that experience with her classmates during discussions on the story helped her fellow students.

Cacal has served as the gifted and talented facilitator at Mahaffey Middle School for the past five years. She works with teachers to enhance their classroom activities. She said when students like Jackie share their personal experiences it increases their classmates understanding of how real a problem is and leads them to want to do something about it.

"It's getting them to think and getting them active," said Cacal.

Eighth grader Paul Getchell juggles a lot at his age. Afterschool he can either be found doing homework or on the soccer field practicing. Depending on the day of the week he may even be attending tae kwon do practice or honing his skills on the violin, but he said this project taught him there's always time to give back.

"People need to take a break from their busy lives, maybe once a week just to help others," he said.

Originally the eighth grade class whom collected the most pennies would receive a pizza party. Overwhelmed by the success of the students, school officials decided to give the entire eighth grade class a pizza party. While there was much excitement about pizza for lunch instead of the usual fare, it's also clear that students are determined to do even more for their community.

When asked about what's next Jackie, Paul, and fellow student Wilaslyn Figueroa, recall an experience Cacal shared with them that took place at a local retail store.

An employee was cleaning up and threw away food prepared that day.

"I don't understand why they do that," Wilaslyn said. "That's perfectly valuable food."

Hai Draq establishes Neighborhood Advisory Council

Story by
2nd Lt. Adam Buchanan
1st Bn., 64th AR

Nine key, influential members of the Hai Draq community conducted their first Neighborhood Advisory Council meeting at the Kurtoba School, Nov. 3.

Soldiers with 2nd Platoon, Company D, Task Force 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, spent months coordinating with members of the Hai Draq community to find locals with political influence, known as "wasta" to Iraqis, in order to start a new NAC in the neighborhood.

The Hai Draq NAC is still in its opening stages. The obstacles standing in the way of the council becoming a fixture in the local political landscape are numerous. They still need to identify a permanent meeting location, publicize the new group, divide leadership responsibilities, identify one member to represent the NAC at the District Advisory Council, prioritize the key issues within the neighborhood, and establish a meeting agenda.

They also plan to help establish bonds between NAC members and other community leaders involved in providing essential services to Hai Draq, so the NAC members can initiate improvements in the neighborhood on their own.

However, these problems pale in comparison to the larger obstacle of setting up and having the initial meeting, which has already been overcome. "With that crucial step complete, boundless possibilities exist for this neighborhood," said 2nd Lt. Gregory Fredlund, platoon leader of 2nd Platoon, Co. D, TF 1st Bn., 64th AR. Fredlund's platoon is responsible for securing Hai Draq.

Hai Draq is one of the more advanced neighborhoods in the "Black Knight" area of operations, in fact, in all of Baghdad. In Hai Draq, a higher level of civic duty exists, which has made such projects as the new NAC a reality.

The neighborhood, in coordination with Delta Company, has also conducted an Iraqi Police recruiting drive. This will allow selected local men to patrol and secure their own neighborhood. These men were selected by a screening and application process led by members of the new NAC. These recruits will go through the same training that all Iraqi Police undergo, which is overseen by the Ministry of the Interior.

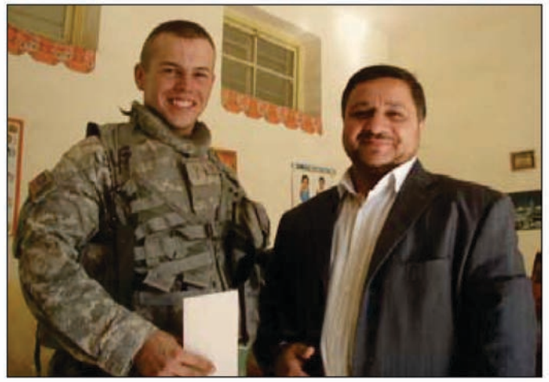


photo by 1st Lt. Robert Coody, 1st Bn., 64th AR

2nd Lt. Gregory Fredlund of 2nd Platoon, Delta Company, Task Force 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment meets with Zacharia in the Al Mansour district. Zacharia, an influential leader in Hai Draq, has played an integral part in all of the "Black Knights'" efforts to increase local security and governance in the neighborhood. Zacharia helped orchestrate the Iraqi Police recruiting drive in October, and his efforts have made the Neighborhood Advisory Council a reality.

"Measures like these are creating more pride and influencing more civilians to stand up and take initiative in stopping violence in their hometown," Fredlund said.

The NAC meetings are scheduled to occur every Saturday. The two key religious leaders in the neighborhood representing the Sunni and Shia population will attend the meeting next week. Maj. Walid Ali, commander of 1st Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army, which is responsible for the Hai Draq area, will also attend next weeks meeting.

The participation of political, religious, and military representatives will allow the new NAC, with the help of the Delta Company Soldiers, to bridge the gaps that have existed in voicing the needs of the neighborhood.

TRAINING

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Staff Sgt. Brian Chapman, S-6, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) gives a class to Soldiers on the performance steps of the M-249 machine gun.

OIF

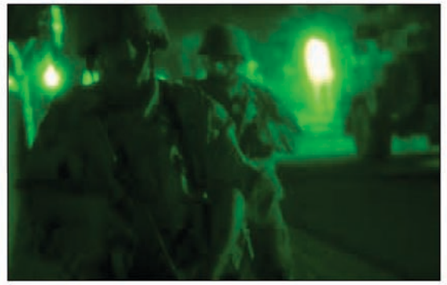


photo by Spc. Charles Gill, 55th Combat Camera

An Iraqi soldier moves down the street to clear another home during a house search with Soldiers from Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment.

Joint Network Node

photo by 2nd Lt. Lindsey Travis, 2 BSTB

Staff Sgt. Bryant Thomas and Sgt. Jason Lines, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, prepare the generator to power the JNN and other associated equipment, while Sgt. Jessica Dubee downloads equipment and supplies.

Around the Military

Chairman speaks on top priorities

Defense Link

Navy Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff addressed the public for the first time since taking over as the new chairman, Oct. 25, 2007.

Mullen outlined his three top priorities for the military:

Priority 1:

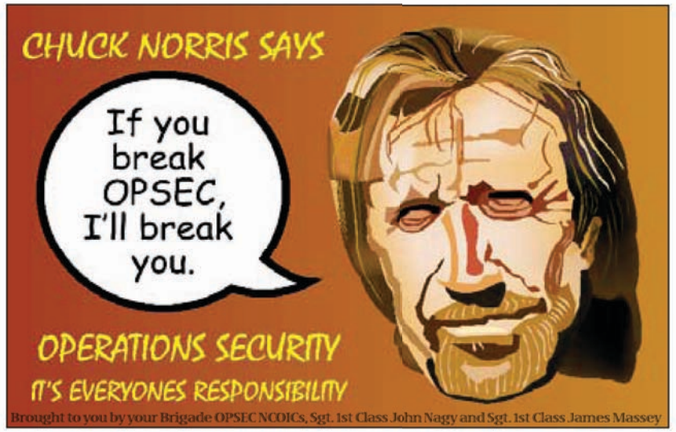
To develop a military strategy tied to national vital interests in the Middle East, to include Iraq and Afghanistan, and looks beyond them as well.

Priority 2:

To reset, reconstitute, and revitalize U.S. forces, especially the Soldier and Ma rine ground forces who have been pushed very hard over the last several years.

Priority 3:

To properly balance global risk to help maintain a position of leadership and preserve our freedom of action to counter the threat of transnational terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and associated technologies; to contend with regional instability, to deter aggressive action by potentially hostile state actors, to help manage the growing competition for natural resources, to help mitigate the effects of natural disasters and pandemics; to take advantage of all the opportunities for international cooperation and progress our globalized world has to offer.



Volleyball

Soldiers frpm Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team leap into the air to make a play on the ball during a volleyball game, Oct. 31, during the brigades stay in Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Paul Monroe, 2nd BCT PAO)

STRIKE

Henry Delacruz, civil affairs officer, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div. "The (Government of Iraq) has got to take advantage of the improved security and help provide essential services, help create employment through various means, whether through essential services or through economic needs.

photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Commander of the 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), Col. William B. Hickman, prepares to mount his vehicle in preperation for a movement to Forward Operating Base Justice, Nov. 5.

"This is the hard part," he continued. "As Soldiers, we know how to fight; we know how to find the bad guys. The hard part is this nation building piece. It's helping facilitate governance in an area. It's tough trying to revitalize the northwest Baghdad economy, and it's tough trying to revitalize essential services, especially something that has been broke for the last three, four or five years."

It will take time, hard work and dedication from all to improve the economic capacity.

"If we could get 20 hours of electrical services across the city, that would be immense. You would see a greater boom of prosperity, and people able to educate themselves," Collier said. "The industry can get back on their feet much easier."

First they will have to take care of the essential services, the physical structures and get the markets and the economic physical stores open again, said Collier. This, up to this point, seems to be happening. When the security was set, it sparked a dramatic turn-around. Of the eight of 10 markets open, 90% of the shops within are operational.

"The next piece is building some of the economic structures that nations and economies have," said Collier. "People need money to start a business."

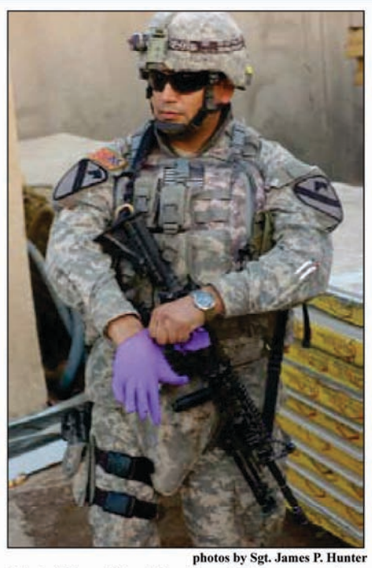
Iraqis need to deposit money and get a loan from a bank; write business plans and manage their money, all of which would be based on the Islamic traditions, he added. The third step is the continual expansion of markets, and building associations, and increasing the amount of business that goes through the muhallahs. They strive to bring these aspects together and bring society back on line again.

Also, GOI will need to play an enormous role in securing Iraq's future. Thus far, there is a huge gap between the government and the people of Iraq, said Collier.

"We want to bring the government to the people," he continued. "We want to broker a relationship between the government and the people."

The government has to act for the benefit of the people, said Collier. Strike Soldiers will help them and support them, but ultimately it will be the Iraqis who will make this happen.

2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment troops talk with Iraqis at an electrical power plant



photos by Sgt. James P. Hunter

Sgt. 1st Class Miguel Sanchez, platoon sergeant with 2nd Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), puts gloves on prior to using an explosives detection kit, exspray, to check a man for the possiblity of explosives use while they talked with workers at an electrical power plant, Oct. 11.

Sgt. 1st Class Miguel Sanchez, platoon sergeant with 2nd Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), puts gloves on prior to using an explosives detection kit, exspray, to check a man for the possiblity of explosives use while they talked with workers at an electrical power plant, Oct. 11.

Company A 526th Brigade Support Battalion 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

photos by Sgt. James P. Hunter, 2nd BCT PAO

Pvt. Dominique Monk, driver, convoy security team, Company A, 526th Brigade Support Battalion, cleans the window of her Humvee, Nov. 14, at the 526 BTB motorpool on Camp Liberty.

Spc. Adam Williams, gunner, convoy security team, Company A, 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), rids the filter of his humvee from dust and debris, Nov. 14, at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Spc. Rene Guajardo, convoy security team, 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd BCT, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), checks the transmission fluid on his humvee Nov. 14 on Camp Liberty,

Mechanics with the 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) fixes a Class I leak on a brake caliber, Nov. 14, in their motorpool.

Managing Risk

by Mike Williams
2nd BCT Safety Officer

Managing risk is an essential task during training and combat operations. Determine hazards concurrently as you develop your course of action. Develop good control measures for each hazard and methods for implementing them. Example, rollovers are a common hazard during training and combat. A simple control measure that usually prevents injury is using seat belts. One way to implement that control measure is to brief the use of seat belts in your convoy briefing and require all truck commanders check their passengers to ensure they are using them. Practice your rollover drills with everyone belted in so soldiers get used to operating with them on.

Another threat is improvised explosive devices. One control measure is to slow down. IEDs are what used to be called mechanical ambushes. The best anti-ambush drill is to not enter the kill zone. Slowing down gives you a better chance of spotting an IED before entering the kill zone. Each passenger has an area of responsibility to look for any enemy activity including IEDs.

Ensure all passengers are briefed on their area of responsibility. Leaders at all levels are responsible for risk management. Don't make it a paper drill. Brief those young Soldiers who are out on the ground about the hazards they will face, and the control measures they will use to help make the mission a success.

OIF

07-09

2ND BCT

101ST ABN DIV

(AIR ASSAULT)

STRIKE