

# Rakkasan Review

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# Rakkasan Review

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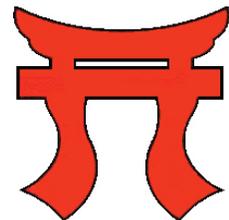
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Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

## Iron Boston

A Soldier from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), helps clear a courtyard in the Said Abdullah Corridor, Iraq, during Operation Iron Boston Jan. 27. See complete story on page 5.

## On the cover:

Sgt. Marcus Dugar, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and Spc. Joseph Dempsey, Company B, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, 3rd Inf. Div., perform an interpretive dance/pantomime routine to the song "I Have a Dream" during a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ceremony at the Camp Striker Chapel Jan. 15.

# War Rakkasans proud of 90-day progress

By Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy  
3rd BCT PAO NCOIC

On the ground now for almost 90 days, the War Rakkasans are pleased with the progress they've seen in their areas of responsibility.

"I think we are doing a very good job of addressing the requirement of realizing that there is no single decisive point in this effort," said Lt. Col. Brian Coppersmith, commander of 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). "We've got to hit three or four (tasks) over the fence, but we've got to manage 50 tasks really well."

The "three or four" tasks that have the most emphasis are security, reconciliation, essential services and economic development – in that order.

"Security must come first – physical security – the expectation that they're secure in their person and their property and in their future," Coppersmith said. "The problem with broad-front strategy is ... you stick and move a lot.

"You go to the one in the higher priority; you have to focus on things in sequence while simultaneously addressing them all. One of the key doctrinal aspects of war fighting ... is being able to manage a multitude of tasks without neglecting any," he said.

Each of the top tasks is tied to four focus areas: management and integration of Concerned Local Citizens, partnership with the Iraqi army, meetings with influential individuals and unilateral military operations.

With each task the unit performs carrying its own level of importance, Coppersmith described the overall mission here as "a constantly rolling ball of effects where one thing leads to another, which leads to another."

So – going back to the unit's

four top tasks – security affects reconciliation which affects essential services and economic development, and so on.

Essential services are lacking in many areas of Iraq. Coppersmith, a native of Olean, N.Y., has given his troop commanders guidance to "pick three and get after it."

There is a plethora of areas that could stand improvement, but each troop has selected the top concerns for their respective regions.

Because each troop has a diverse operations environment, what is a top concern in one area, may not be an issue at all in another. Each troop's priorities cover a wide range of concerns and, though not listed specifically, purification of drinking water is an ongoing effort.

Connecting the area to government of Iraq-supported essential services, incorporation of Iraqi security forces

and the release of detainees are priorities for Troop A, 1-33rd Cav.

"We have gained the trust of the people..." said Capt. Toby Jimenez of San Antonio, commander of Troop A, 1-33rd Cav., in Zaidon. "We have a very good idea of what needs to happen to enable the people to reconcile with the GoI and the get the people sustaining themselves without Coalition Forces' help."

By the deployment's end, Jimenez said he expects to see the area secured by the Iraqi army and Iraqi police and being supported by Abu Ghraib with essential services such as water, roads, electricity and medical care.

Capt. Brandon Cave, who commands Troop B, 1-33rd Cav., said his area, Al Haswa, has transitioned from focusing on security to economic improvements. His "pick three" are drinking water, canals and roads.

*See Progress, Page 11*



Courtesy Photo

**Khaled Abdul Sahieb stands in front of the shop where he manufactures tractor supply parts from scrap iron in the War Rakkasans operations environment.**

# Joint raids yield massive caches

By Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy  
3rd BCT PAO NCOIC

Raids in Shubayshen and Qarghuli led Rakkasan Soldiers to the discovery of massive caches Jan. 30.

Acting on a tip from a local Iraqi citizen, the Iraqi Army partnered with Soldiers from 3rd Platoon, Company D, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and found caches including dozens of rockets and rocket-propelled grenade rounds.

After noticing strange behavior from a citizen deemed upstanding in the community, 1st Lt. Keenan Elli-

son, 3rd Platoon leader, Co. D, 3-187th Inf., approached the man to see what was wrong. Within hours, several individuals were detained and a stockpile of explosives and bomb-making materials were taken off the streets.

The most interesting aspect was the location of one of the caches – a chicken coop.

“The ground in the chicken coup wasn’t right; the soil was loose, almost like sawdust,” Ellison said. “We gently and carefully dug through it with our hands until we hit the jackpot.”

The platoon leader said “jackpot” was almost an understatement, as they unearthed a 20-pound bag of home-made explosives, switches, conductors, Bulgarian rockets, four RPG launchers, 66 RPG rockets, fuses, 30 RPG propellant rods, a container of RPG parts, eight fragmentary grenades, 27 81mm mortar rounds, 44 60mm mortar rounds, and various other ammunition and explosives paraphernalia.

An extra vehicle was needed

**Iraqi Army troops and Soldiers from 3rd Platoon, Company D, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and found caches that included dozens of rockets and rocket-propelled grenade rounds in Shubayshen and Qarghuli Jan. 30.**

to carry all of the munitions.

IA troops and Soldiers from 3rd and 4th Platoons, Co. D, 3-187th Inf., conducted a raid on surrounding houses to find those responsible for the cache. The troops set up inner and outer cordons and Iraqi Soldiers quickly interrogated and gathered intelligence.

The 3rd and 4th Platoons alternated houses until the individual responsible was located. Confronted with intelligence gathered from his neighbors, the individual confessed to storing the weapons and was detained.

“Without the IA we would have failed,” said 1st Lt. Phil Schupp, 4th Platoon leader. “Their language abilities allowed them to interrogate individuals at each house we raided and gather the intelligence for the next house to target. If we only had our one interpreter we would have failed to move quickly enough to catch the insurgent; it’s that simple.”

The unit’s leadership said the raid was an example of how IA and Coalition Force partnership should function.

“The trust that we’ve build with the locals laid the foundation for this, and our partnership with the IA made our victory complete, allowing us to catch the insurgent as well as taking the munitions from their arsenal,” said Capt. Frank Castro, commander of Co. D, 3-187th Inf., 3rd BCT 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT).



# Iron Boston targets al-Qaeda hideout

By Staff Sgt.  
**Tony M. Lindback**  
*3rd BCT Public Affairs*

Iraqi Army and Soldiers from Companies C and D, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), air assaulted into the Sa'id Abdullah Corridor Jan. 27.

Operation Iron Boston was a daytime air assault. Keeping the enemy guessing is exactly what Pittsburgh native Capt. Michael Starz, commander of Company C, wanted to do.

"Every air assault we do is different," Starz said. "There's not a single time that we do a big operation that it looks the same to the enemy. We never want to be

predictable."

The Iraqi Army detained 24 individuals. Five of the men were detained after Iraqi Soldiers discovered them hiding in a spider hole. Starz described the hole as being well constructed, deep and big enough to fit 10 men.

Kiowa helicopters provided close-air support to ensure the area was safe for U.S. and Iraqi troops. While ground forces moved in and out of houses, the Kiowas made low-level passes and fired rockets to deter any would-be attack-

ers.

Insurgent activity has been prominent in the corridor.

"The Sa'id Abdullah

Corridor is where all the al-Qaeda groups in this region were controlled from," Starz said. "It's where their leadership was present, where their logistics occurred – basically they controlled the movement of foreign fighters into the area from this location."

Historically, the Sa'id Abdulla Corridor has been the borderline between operating environments for Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces. Being on the border may have led insurgents to believe they could avoid detection.

Starz said his unit communicates closely with 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), the neighboring battalion to 3-187th Inf. Regt. "Between all the Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces operating in the area, it's no longer a safe haven for them."



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

**Iraqi Soldiers celebrate the end of Operation Iron Boston in the Sa'id Abdullah Corridor Jan. 27.**



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

**Cpl. Joseph Konieczny provides security while occupants of a home are escorted outside before their house is cleared in the Sa'id Abdullah Corridor during Operation Iron Boston Jan. 27. Both Soldiers are with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).**

# Abu Farris locals receive medical care

By Pvt. Christopher McKenna  
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Gloomy weather did not deter Iraqi doctors, Iraqi Army medics and Coalition Forces from holding a coordinated medical engagement in Abu Farris, Iraq, Jan. 12.

A total of 665 citizens from four tribes in the surrounding area were treated for medical and dental issues at the CME. Coalition Forces supervised the event, which was run by the IA with seven teams of Iraqi doctors.

“It was pretty much hands off for us, because the Iraqi Army did an extremely good job,” said 1st Lt. Michael Podojil, fire support officer for Company B, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Air-

borne Division (Air Assault).

Dr. Anwar Abbas, with the Iraq Ministry of Health, treated nearly 180 patients himself.

“It is nice to see the Iraqi people meet together and, as a doctor, I give my best to help and treat the people of my country,” Abbas said.

This was the first CME in the area since the beginning of the troop surge in 2007.

“For this to even occur



Pvt. Christopher McKenna

**A dentist with the Iraqi Ministry of Health examines a man's teeth with assistance from Capt. Tran Quach-Miller, a dentist with Company C, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) during a coordinated medical engagement in the town of Abu Farris Jan. 12.**

it took two months to coordinate the air travel for the

doctors and to make sure the needed medical supplies and doctors would be present,” Podojil said.

Abbas said the preparation and coordination paid off.

“Coalition and Iraqi forces provided a good environment to achieve such a peaceful mission,”

Abbas said.

Podojil said these types of missions build citizens' confidence in their government and the Iraqi Army.

“This is showing the Iraqi people that we are here to support the Iraqi Army, and that the Iraqi Army will continue to be here to support them,” Podojil said. “It also shows that their medical system can work, and that they will be able to get support medically from their government.

“We have been hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Army, we have their support just they have ours, and this CME is just another example of where we come together and help the community of Abu Farris,” Podojil said.



Pvt. Christopher McKenna

**An Iraqi Army soldier and Soldiers with 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), hand out meals and water to Iraqi children during a combined medical effort in the town of Abu Farris Jan. 12.**

# Mahmudiyah mayor declares 'year of peace'

By Capt. Allison Flannigan  
3rd BCT PAO

The four nahias that comprise the Mahmudiyah Qada Council came together Jan. 15 to discuss progress in the qada and talk about future plans.

Lt. Col. Daniel Dolwick, deputy commanding officer of 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Maj. Robert Bertrand, brigade civil military operations officer, and members of the four nahias – Lutifiyah, Mahmudiyah, Yusufiyah and Al Rasheed – attended the meeting.

Mahmudiyah Mayor Jabbar Farraj Mullah al-Kilabi began the meeting by describing the responsibilities councilmen have to constituents in their respective nahias.

"This will be the year of peace and development," al-Kilabi said. "Security is strong and it has been relatively strong for some time now. It's time for the people of Iraq to see their government stand up and start governing."

The chairman, Najim Mahdi Al-Dulaymi, echoed the mayor's sentiments and encouraged the nahia leadership to provide essential services to

the people of the qada. He congratulated the local populace on their victory over al-Qaeda and encouraged them to continue their recent progress.

Bertrand said the Mahmudiyah Qada has seen relative peace for the last six months, lending hope to the people and the government of Mahmudiyah.

"It's impressive to see the council members beginning to cut ties with American funding and go to their own government to solve their own problems," Bertrand said. "This inspires the Coalition Forces to work even harder to help the Iraqi government to achieve their own independence."

Since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003 and the development of the insurgency, the Mahmudiyah qada became known as the Triangle of Death, where Sunni insurgents fought both Coalition Forces and Shia citizens. In these recent months of peace, the qada council, local citizens and their leadership have begun referring to this area as the "Circle of Peace" as they begin their road to reconciliation.

## 1-33 uncovers VBIED factory

By Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy  
3rd BCT PAO NCOIC

A routine gathering with local leaders resulted in the discovery of a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device factory near Hamid Shaban Jan. 13.

Acting on a tip from an attendee at the meeting, Rakkasan Soldiers from Troop A, 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), acted quickly and found what appeared to be a makeshift VBIED workshop about a mile away from the gathering.

"We came up with a quick plan and headed that way," said Staff Sgt. Adam McMurray, a platoon sergeant from Aydlett, N.C., who provided command and control for the mission. The Soldiers had to find their way to the house, about a mile away, without detailed directions or a grid coordinate.

Once at the location, the house was cleared by a team of Soldiers led by Sgt. Walter Nickel, from Pago Pago, American Samoa.

"After the house was cleared, we noticed that the kerosene heater was still on, the Chai (tea) was still hot," McMurray said. "I mean, we had just missed these guys."

The most valuable find was in front of the house – four vehicles suspected to be used as VBIEDs. One vehicle had wires running from the inside to the trunk. McMurray said it was blatantly obvious the vehicle was intended to be used as a VBIED.

The Soldiers found more explosives and a homemade rocket launcher. "We found a bunch of paperwork ... a lot of explosives, mortar rounds and bomb-making materials and weapons," Nickel said. "There was stuff just ready to get hooked up to explosives. It seemed to me they were just getting ready to do something, they were just getting things together."

"We feel great that we found something that could've caused a lot of damage to Coalition Forces," said Sgt. Jose Rivas, from Nashville, Tenn. "It was a long day but it was worthwhile."

Got news?

Send your story ideas to  
[rakkasanspao@yahoo.com](mailto:rakkasanspao@yahoo.com)



Pvt. Christopher McKenna

Players involved in the Sadr Al Yusufiyah soccer tournament battle for the ball during early afternoon play Jan. 21.

# Tribal differences set aside for soccer

By Pvt. Christopher McKenna  
*3rd BCT Public Affairs*

A double-elimination, 18-team soccer tournament, the Sadr Al Yusufiyah Cup, was held in late January in the Abtan Village.

“We created a bracket consisting of 18 teams in a 33-game double-elimination tournament and ... the money used for the tournament came solely from the reward money for the capture of a high-value individual,” said 1st Lt. Ricky McGuire, fire support officer for Company D, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

The individual who received the award money decided to use it to purchase uniforms for tribal soccer teams.

The first game was played on Jan. 8, and the tournament was scheduled to end on Jan. 27. However, since wet weather kept the field too muddy to play, the tentative date for the final has been pushed back a week or so.

“The tournament came about when I approached the company commander and had a sit down talk about bringing some sport to the area,” said Mohsin

Ali Naif, the sports manager and planning advisor for the Sadr Al Yusufiyah Soccer Tournament. “We came to an agreement about soccer and, since then, they have been extremely supportive.”

Teams are made up of players from seven different tribes in the Sadr al Yusufiyah area. None of the teams are solely made up of members from one specific tribe.

“Differences are put aside on the field,” Naif said. “When you are on the soccer field, it doesn’t matter who you are playing with, you just want for your team to succeed.”

The community has come out to cheer on the teams during the tournament.

“I am very happy with the support shown by the people, as each team that plays has support from many of the people from the area,” Naif said.

As of Jan. 23, 13 of the 18 teams that started the tournament remain. When a victor is crowned, the winning team will receive a large trophy and a track suit for each team member. The second-place team will also receive a trophy.

“It’s as much of a hands-off event for us as it can be on the day to day basis,” McGuire said.

“We will go out as spectators to ensure things are running smoothly, but Naif has been handling the tournament very well,” he said.

“This is the first year we have had this tournament, but obviously I would love to make it an annual event,” Naif said.

Many of the men who play are part of the Concerned Local Citizen checkpoints, making security not a hard issue for the games.

Of all the sports that could be played, soccer seemed to be the most logical choice for the area.

“It is the first game in the world, and many of the people around here have great passion for the sport,” Naif said.

A couple of years ago, a tournament such as this could not have been imagined.

“This gives the people in the area something recreational to do and something to look forward to,” McGuire said. “For many of the people it brings them a sense of pride.”

# Gates visits Fort Campbell

*Defense secretary holds closed-door session with spouses, deploying Soldiers*

By **Gerry J. Gilmore**  
*American Forces Press Service*

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky., – Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates met with a number of Soldiers who are getting ready to deploy to Afghanistan, and he visited with a group of Army spouses during his first official visit there Feb. 1.

The secretary held closed-door meetings with both groups, where he listened to concerns such as the current length of overseas deployments, medical and child day care, housing allowances and other issues.

Gates told reporters after the meetings that he was prepared to do some “bureaucracy busting” to resolve some of the issues raised by the Soldiers and spouses.

The length of overseas deployments, he noted, was a key issue cited by the spouses.

“There is no question that 15-month deployments are a real strain; not only on the Soldiers, but (also) on the families they leave behind,” Gates said.

“Our hope is that we can move back to 12-month deployments as soon as possible,” the secretary continued. “A lot depends upon how quickly we

can grow the Army and also in terms of the drawdowns that we’ll have in Iraq over the next months.”

Emily Bhatta, one of the 11 Army spouses that met with Gates, was pleased with the secretary’s visit. She said one of the key issues the spouses they discussed was the length of military deployments.

“He really listened to our issues and he took notes and it seemed like he really wanted to help make change,” said Bhatta, whose husband, 1st Lt. David Bhatta, is currently deployed to Iraq with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, an element of Fort Campbell’s 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Tasha Buchanen’s husband, Army Pfc. Theodore Buchanen, is a helicopter mechanic with the 101st Division who deployed to Afghanistan on Dec. 20.

“Health care was a really big issue” during the spouses’ meeting with Gates, Buchanen said.

“He really came here wanting to know how we are doing,” Buchanen said.

Army Sgt. Tyler R. Fernlund, a 4th Brigade, Special Troops Battalion non-commissioned officer who is getting

ready to deploy to Afghanistan, said he was impressed after meeting with the secretary.

Gates “was really sincere and took our questions seriously,” Fernlund recalled, noting the availability of child daycare was among the topics discussed.

“He said he appreciates what we do and he was real concerned about the welfare of our families,” Fernlund said.

Army Staff Sgt. Nathan S. Hammarsten, another Special Troops Battalion NCO, said he was thankful that Gates “took the time” to visit with the soldiers and to listen to their concerns.

“The 101st is really good at taking care of spouses,” Hammarsten, who is married, pointed out.

The division’s family support networks, he added, ensure that information and other forms of support are provided to the spouses of deployed Soldiers.

Gates routinely seeks input and ideas from servicemembers and spouses during his visits to military installations, Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell, who accompanied the secretary to Fort Campbell, told reporters.

## Army taking action to stem rising suicide rates

By **Donna Miles**  
*American Forces Press Service*

WASHINGTON – With Army suicides on the rise - approaching rates for the same demographic among civilians - Army officials are evaluating their programs to see what more can be done to stop the escalation.

During 2006, 102 active-duty Soldiers committed

suicide, the highest number since the last large-scale military deployment, in 1990 and 1991, Army Col. (Dr.) Elspeth Cameron Ritchie, psychiatric consultant to the Army surgeon general, said during a media roundtable today.

That’s a rate of 17.5 per 100,000, a dramatic spike from 12.8 per 100,000 in 2005 and the highest rate since 1980, Ritchie said.

This compares with the 19.9 per 100,000 rate among military-age civilian males.

All indications show the 2007 rates will be at least as high as in 2006 and probably higher. So far, 89 suicides have been confirmed during 2007, and another 32 active-duty deaths are being investigated, Ritchie said.

Meanwhile, there’s an equally troubling spike in suicide attempts, which

surged beyond 2,000 in 2007 from about 1,400 the previous year and about 350 in 2002. Ritchie conceded the rate is on the rise, but probably not as dramatically as the numbers alone indicate.

She cited better compliance with reporting requirements and new electronic medical records that make data easier to capture with boosting the numbers.



Maj. David E.M. Jones

## Ashura Observance

(Left) Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Defreese, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) observes Ashura festivities Jan. 19 in Yusufiyah. Ashura begins the 40-day commemoration of the battlefield death and martyrdom of the Imam Ali. (Below) Crowds fill the streets of Yusufiyah Jan. 19 in observance of Ashura.



Maj. David E.M. Jones

# Progress

From Page 3

Cave, of Omaha, Neb., said his unit is working to improve economics and essential services to show the Iraqis that life is better without insurgency or al-Qaeda. "When we arrived, we thought that we would have to remove (al-Qaeda) influence and this has turned out to be not true," he said. "We have been working with a couple fringe element players who have expressed interest in rejoining normal life and halting attacks, to this point (locals) have been moderately helpful in tracking extremists, but have completely halted illegal activities."

Troop C has rated four areas as top priorities in Rasheed: medical capabilities, roads, canals and drinking water.

"You can get a better truck or new tires, bottled water and clean the canals yourself, but medical treatment is ... (substandard) unless you live in Baghdad," said Capt. Jerome Parker of Stafford, Va. He added that by the time his unit leaves the area he hopes to have two medical clinics fully operational, a cleaning rotation for the canals implemented, two nahia representatives and a functional water plant.

Whether it's securing the area, releasing detainees or revitalizing the community, all the initiatives the troops are working on require communication and coordination on a larger scale – above and beyond what Coalition Forces can do on their own. That's where reconciliation – a term used commonly in regard to the current state of Iraq these days – comes in.

Coppersmith defines reconciliation as competing parties identifying common ground of mutual benefit. He said you don't bring people together who are hostile by demanding compromise; you find places of common benefit first.

"The most pressing issue for reconciliation right now is the perception by the local people that the uniformed services of Iraq mean them harm because it's not true," Coppersmith said. "I'm impressed with the quality of leadership of the Iraqi army officers I work with." He said Gen. Ali, the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army commander, and Col. Muhammad, and 3rd Battalion, 4th Bde., 6th IA commander, are "superb at addressing the needs of the people, ensuring that they are secure

where they sleep, looking after their essential services, economic development and (are) actively pursuing these kinds of reconciliation measures."

While there is still much work to be done in Iraq, Coppersmith said he is satisfied at the moment. He said he is most proud of the human network the unit has inherited and built upon.

"Counterinsurgency doctrine calls for engaging the population and using all efforts available to secure them, gain their trust and enlist their common effort in the total enterprise," Coppersmith said. He said the network of local citizens, leaders and Iraqi Army contacts has enabled his unit to build most of the time and fight in intelligence-based operations when fighting becomes necessary.

"The end state for our redeployment is: attacks are down, a self-policing population, no extremists or militia and sects work together," Coppersmith said, adding that the unit's predecessors, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), set 1-33rd Cav. up for success. "It was a superlative effort from them that we've inherited. They gave us a tremendous running start."

## What is your favorite Valentine's Day memory?



"My wife surprised me with clothes, cologne and wine after telling me not to get her anything since she was going to be at drill that weekend."

Spc. David Figueroa  
Headquarters and Headquarters Troop,  
1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry

"My children sent me a stuffed teddy bear that played music and some chocolates when I was in Korea."

Sgt. Heather Burch  
Company A,  
626th Brigade Support Battalion



"I took my son out for pizza on Valentine's Day when he was 5 and he got one of those rings from the quarter machine, got down on his knees and proposed to me. He asked me if I would be his wife."

Sgt 1st Class Blanca Rosado  
Headquarters and Headquarters Company,  
3rd Brigade Combat Team



"In 2000, I got to hear my daughter's heartbeat for the very first time."

Maj. Kris Rogers  
Headquarters and Headquarters Company,  
3rd Brigade Combat Team

In Memoriam...



Sgt. Tracy Birkman  
July 16, 1966 - Jan. 25, 2008  
Patrol Base Dragon, Iraq  
Gone but not forgotten