

Faith forms foundation for feeling fine

Story and photos by:
Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

"A man of courage is also full of faith."

- Cicero

There's strong, and then there is Army strong. And while being a Soldier may make one stronger than the average 'Joe', there are times when even a Soldier may need to rely on something

a little stronger than themselves.

In such instances the power of faith and belief in a higher power plays an important role in maintaining positive morale.

While Soldiers may not be able to visibly see this higher power, they can see people around the base that can help serve as a means to facilitate communication.

"The role of the chaplain is to either perform or provide religious support to the

Soldier," said Chaplain (Capt.) Michael Oliver, 2-3 Brigade Troop Battalion chaplain.

Such support is offered weekly at Forward Operating Base Kalsu through a variety of programs. They include worship services, bible studies and prayer groups.

The chapel works hard to provide worship opportunities to as many Soldiers as possible, said Chaplain (Maj.) Jay Hearn, 2nd Brigade

worship), religious services are still offered to these groups.

"What we do have (instead of chaplains) is approved distinctive faith group leaders authorized and endorsed by the division chaplain office," Hearn said.

Faith group leaders help other Soldiers of the same faith practice their belief. The chaplains help by providing any materials these leaders need, including locations to worship.

"Even if I am not part of their religion, I can provide them (Soldiers) the tools they need to make sure their morale remains high by being able to exercise their freedom of religion," Oliver said.

According to the Constitution, all U.S. citizens are given the right to free exercise of religion. Being able to maintain this right, even when deployed overseas, is a strong boost to a Soldier's morale.

"Morale, especially in a combat environment is everything," Oliver said. "If they (Soldiers) have a good morale they can focus on the success of the mission."

Besides services, chaplains help keep morale in a number of ways.

cont. on next page



Soldiers and civilians of the group Overflow participate in Sunday worship by singing worship hymns. Soldiers can expand their participation in worship activities by engaging in church choirs, bible study groups, or prayer group meetings.

Combat Team brigade chaplain.

Currently chaplains perform weekly Catholic worship services, three different types of protestant services - Contemporary, Liturgical and Gospel - and a Seven Day Adventist.

Although there are no Muslim or Jewish chaplains on Kalsu (Hearn said plans are underway for a Jewish chaplain to visit and conduct

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2nd BCT PAO

Maj. James Brownlee
Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
Spc. Randall Townsend



In this week's photo...

A Soldier looks through the "eyes" of a remote control robot during a training session.

FAITH, cont. from previous page

Oliver said he gives daily devotions at brigade brief to inspire leaders and their Soldiers. Additionally he said much of what he does to help Soldiers remain upbeat is through a ministry of presence.

I go to Soldiers' living areas and check up on them, see how they are doing and feeling, he said.

In doing so, the chaplain can help Soldiers discuss issues in a confidential manner without fear to their reputation or career.

Such care reinforces many of the Army values and shows Soldiers that their chain of command cares about their well being.

Active engagements with chaplains can also help maintain a strong faith, an essential key to maintaining a positive spirit, even in times of difficulty, both chaplains agreed.

"From a theological perspective, there is comfort in knowing God is always with you," he said.

Thus, chaplains work hard to ensure Soldiers can have ample

opportunities to practice whatever faith they are.

"Like physical training, if you don't work out, your muscle strength suffers. When we don't take opportunities to practice our faith, it weakens," Hearn said. "Most Soldiers, unless mission dependant, are given opportunities to worship Sunday."

Evening bible studies and lunchtime Catholic services are offered to those who can't break away Sundays to worship and strengthen their spiritual muscles.

"Soldiers, as well as their families back home, should make faith a priority," Hearn said. "It helps buffer the bad things around us."

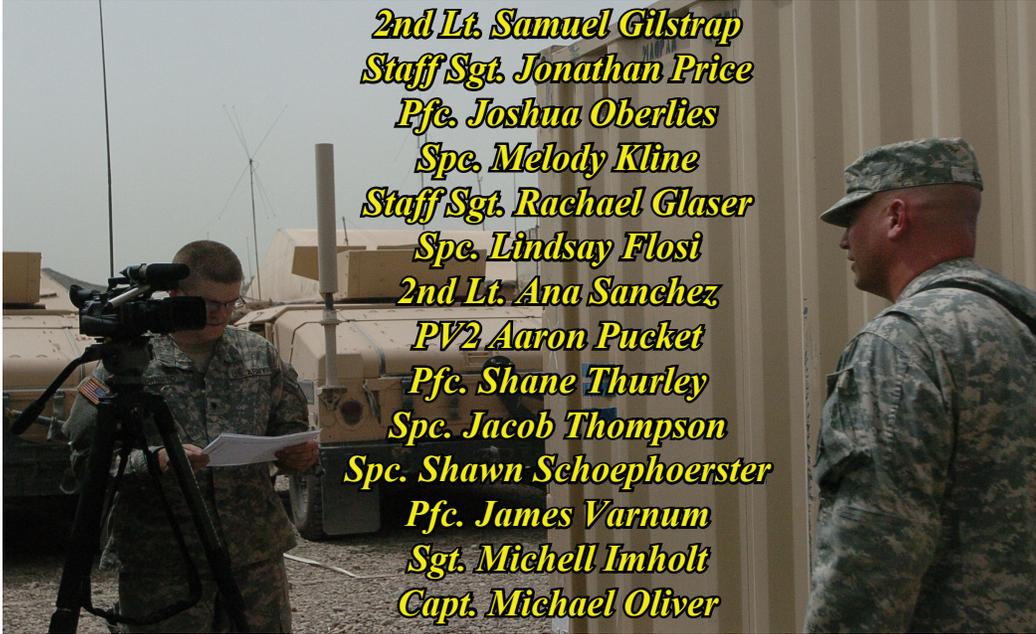
Editor's note: This is part two on a series dealing with the five pillars of Soldiers' morale. Next week look for an article on the leisure activities available on Forward Operating Base Kalsu that allow Soldiers to play hard after a long day of work.



Chap. (Maj.) Jay Hearn preaches at the contemporary Protestant service. Besides preaching in his own faith, Hearn also supports Soldiers of all faiths.



This weeks DVIDS shoutouts!



2nd Lt. Samuel Gilstrap
Staff Sgt. Jonathan Price
Pfc. Joshua Oberlies
Spc. Melody Kline
Staff Sgt. Rachael Glaser
Spc. Lindsay Flosi
2nd Lt. Ana Sanchez
PV2 Aaron Pucket
Pfc. Shane Thurley
Spc. Jacob Thompson
Spc. Shawn Schoephoerster
Pfc. James Varnum
Sgt. Michell Imholt
Capt. Michael Oliver

Families can view the video of their Soldier by logging onto the Internet at: www.dvidshub.net.

Once on the site, family members can access the videos by expanding the video link on the left hand side of the page.

Once expanded, viewers need to click the greetings sub folder to be linked to the videos.

A handy search key is located on the top of the video screen to help family members locate their loved one.

New R&R policy

Servicemembers on 15-month deployments to support Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom will receive 18 days of Environmental and Morale Leave instead of 15 days, according to a July 13 memo signed by Dr. David Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. This policy is not retroactive — Soldiers who departed Kuwait before July 13 will receive the original 15 EML days.



Medical assessment in Al Jaboor

Story by:

1-30 Infantry Sources

The 1-30 Infantry Battalion of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division conducted a medical capabilities mission on July 12 in northern Al Jaboor, Iraq.

The plan was to offer medical care to the local populace there and engender some good will too.

The operation kicked off at 8 a.m. with a medical team setting up shop and waiting for the people to arrive. Leading the team was physician's assistant Capt. Ricardo Swenness. He was aided by four medics from his aid station; Staff Sgt. Alan Sconiers, Sgt. Eric Ironsmith, Spc. Elizabeth Huggins and Spc. Richard Cowen.

Securing the team was a section from C Co. of the same unit.

The 911th Tactical Psyop

Team out of Fort Bragg, NC, announced the presence of the Coalition Forces medical team for the availability of free medical care, and soon there were dozens of Iraqi men, women and children present at the site with medical problems.

Approximately 25 people were seen and treated that day with health problems ranging from seasonal allergies, upper respiratory infections, gastrointestinal infections, acne, various rashes, Typhoid Fever, and musculoskeletal problems such as knee pain.

Some medical problems could not be fully addressed, such as a possible forearm fracture and a person with a heart abnormality. These people were treated as well as possible then advised to seek additional medical care.

The entire operation lasted about two and a half hours until the team ran out of



Courtesy photo

Spc. Richard Cowen, a medic with 1-30th Infantry Battalion, stands with a group of Iraqi children at a medical assessment mission on July 12. The 1-30th medics treated 25 patients suffering from a variety of ailments, both minor and major.

medical supplies. Overall, the MEDCAPs was a rousing success, with aid given to those in need.

Future MEDCAPs promise

more of the same with more participation by the local populace as they come to see the benefits of our operations in their neighborhoods.

Gary Owen Chronicles: *from the stables of Desperado 6 & 7*

Story by:

Capt. Scott D. Thompson, commander
1st Sgt. Ariel A. Fernandez, 1st Sgt.

Yet another month has passed here in Iraq and the Soldiers of Desperado Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th United States Cavalry have been as busy as ever. We have been in theater for just over two months now and are situated on Camp Taji, just north of Baghdad.

The Soldiers of Desperado Troop, being a Forward Support Company (FSC), have been involved in everything the Squadron has accomplished. They have been directly responsible for many of the successes that the Squadron has seen thus far. The one thing we can tell you about the Desperado Soldiers is that they are definitely not bored. Most of them have been working from sunup to sundown and beyond, keeping the Squadron fully mission capable. We cannot even begin to express how proud we are to be the commander and first sergeant of these fine Soldiers.

Distribution Platoon, lead by 1st Lt. David Dielman and Sgt. 1st Class Rodney Lindsay, have really been hard at work. They have already conducted countless combat logistics patrols to all of the Coalition Out Posts (COPs) in our sector.

With their hard work and dedication the Squadron gets all their critical supplies such as fuel, ammunition, and repair parts. They are definitely the life blood of the Squadron and truly epitomize what a Forward Support Company is all about.

The soldiers of Maintenance Platoon have been just as busy as the rest of the Troop and have been battling the elements to accomplish their mission.

They are defining the term 'Fix Forward'. Mechanics from Desperado Troop are arrayed across the battle field and fixing vehicles no matter where the

location or what the conditions. The Tank Maintenance section has already done technical inspections on every M1 Abrams tank in the Squadron and repaired several.

The master technicians in Maintenance Platoon keep the Squadron fully mission capable. They stand ready to accomplish any mission by doing what ever is required to support the Squadron. The enemy doesn't slow down because our vehicles won't roll, so the Desperado Mechanics guarantee our vehicles are ready to roll.

Private Ryan Noahubi was promoted to PV2. PV2s Rodriguez Cobb, Randy Hall, Venesha Petgrave, and Donald Rivers were promoted to private first class. Pfc. Blake Blann and Joel LaTour were promoted to Specialist.

Finally we are honored to announce the two newest members to Non-Commissioned Officers Corps. Spc. Jeremy Lovelace and Roger Keith Moore were both laterally promoted to Corporal. They were promoted based on the fact that they have demonstrated the potential to

be great NCOs. We expect great things from them and we know we will not be disappointed.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of our fallen comrades Pfc. Leron Adrian Wilson from Desperado Troop and Sgt. Gene Lamie from Apache Troop. They were outstanding Troopers and will be sorely missed. We will some day meet them at Fiddler's Green.

The soldiers of Desperado Troop 3rd Squadron 7th United States Cavalry are proud to support the Squadron and

do what ever it takes to ensure mission accomplishment. They are Cavalry Troopers in the truest sense of the term and we are proud to lead them.



Courtesy photo

Soldiers of Distribution Platoon take time out of their busy schedule to pose in front of one of the vehicles. The Distribution Platoon, have conducted countless logistic patrols to ensure their fellow Troopers get the critical supplies they need.

The Soldiers of the Headquarters Platoon are the ones who take care of the rest of the Troop. They are always busy behind the scenes making sure soldiers are getting paid and all the administrative functions of the troop are getting accomplished. Without them we would come to a screeching halt.

Our food service specialists have been hard at work feeding the troops and making sure they have the strength and sustenance needed to accomplish the combat mission. The 'Cooks' in the squadron go the extra mile and pull out all the stops to ensure the food is not only nourishing but a pleasure to eat as well.

We would like to congratulate the following Soldiers for their promotions:



Sharpshooters: photos from your Soldiers



Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Preston, sergeant major of the Army, talks with Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, about issues affecting today's Army. Preston told Soldiers that they would not serve longer than 15 in theater. He also spoke of the new leave policy (see insert on page 3).



Photos by: Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

A whole lot of CSM...

Command sergeants major Gabriel Berhane, 2-3 Brigade combat team command sergeant major, Kenneth Preston, sergeant major of the Army, Jesse Andrews Jr., 3rd Infantry Division command sergeant major, and Joseph Alton, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, (left to right) gather together at Patrol Base Murray, from where Soldiers of the 1-30th are conducting operations.

The Final Inspection

The Soldier stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

“Step forward now, Soldier,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To My Church have you been true?”

The soldier squared his shoulders and said,
“No, Lord, I guess I ain't.
Because those of us who carry guns,
Can't always be a saint.

I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.

But, I never took a penny,
That wasn't mine to keep...
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.

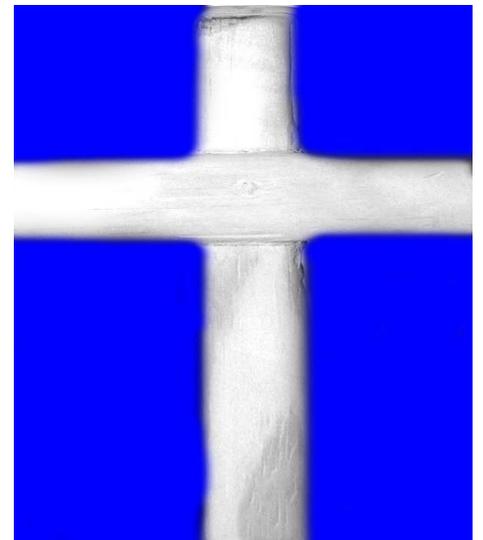
And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears.

If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.

There was a silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the Soldier waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.

“Step forward now, you soldier,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in Hell.”



Editor's Note: This poem was submitted by a family member to her husband here. If you come across something you would like to share something with all of the Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, please forward the article to:
kevin.stabinsky1@us.army.mil.