



Spartan Chronicle

pointing out the weekly news from the 2nd BCT

Vol. 2, Issue 11

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Iraqi village welcomes 5-7 CAV

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Electronic skills trainer helps troops

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Flag football champs

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Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

An Iraqi noncommissioned officer salutes his country's flag during the playing of the Iraq national anthem Jan. 28 at their graduation ceremony from the Task Force Marne NCO Academy at Forward Operating Base Kalsu. The 56 NCOs who graduated are the first to complete the two-week course which instructs NCOs on leadership and Soldier skills necessary to mold their units into effective fighting forces. Turn to page 2 for more information.





Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Fifty six Iraqi noncommissioned officers stand in formation Jan. 28 at their graduation ceremony from the Task Force Marne NCO Academy at Forward Operating Base Kalsu. The NCOs who graduated are the first to complete the two-week course which instructs NCOs on leadership and soldier skills necessary to mold their units into effective fighting forces.

Kalsu NCO academy graduates 56

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT PAO

For 55 Iraqi Army and one Iraqi Police noncommissioned officers, their graduation from the Task Force Marne NCO Academy on Forward Operating Base Kalsu Jan. 28 is just the starting point for an

even more important goal: building up their home units.

The class of Iraqi NCOs was the first class to graduate from the course, which began Jan. 14. The hope is that these leaders will take their lessons learned and impart them to the troops they lead.

“What do you do now? You go back to your units and make a difference,” said Task Force Marne NCO Academy Chief Commandant and 3rd Infantry Division Command Sergeant Major,

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2nd BCT PAO
Maj. James Brownlee
1st Lt. Kalen Smith
Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
Sgt. Jason Stadel
Sgt. Randall Townsend

Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews Jr. “Use your newly acquired skills to train your units.”

The newly acquired skills consisted mainly of tasks aimed at making the NCOs more effective leaders and fighters against terror. During the 14 days at the academy, the Iraqi NCOs were taught a variety of battle drills, including reacting to small arms fire, reacting to improvised explosive devices, vehicle and detainee searching and performing building clearing, under the guidance of skilled American NCOs.

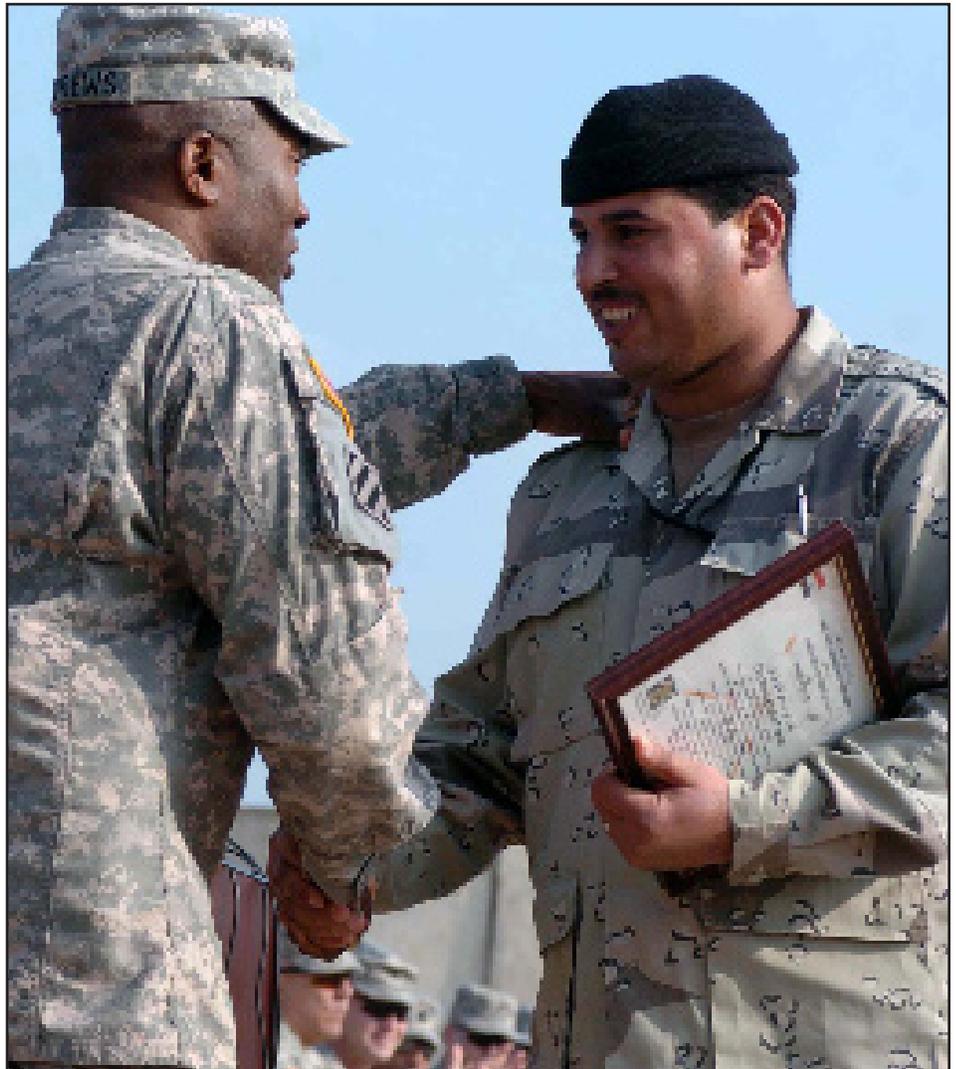
To make the training more realistic, which was based on the Fort Stewart Warrior Leaders Course, the cadre used a variety of props and simulators.

“We wanted to make it as realistic as possible,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Duke, 3rd Platoon small group leader. “We used dead rounds (artillery shells), smoke and simulators.”

Duke, originally with Company A, 3rd Battalion, 7th Inf. Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Inf. Div., was in charge of training the students what to look for when searching vehicles. He hid inert IED components in the vehicle, and had the students try to find them.

Despite his best efforts, the Ardmore, Okla. native said the students performed well and were able to successfully complete their mission.

Duke said when the students first arrived they did not work together effectively. However, as days were spent living, working and learning together,



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Above: Second platoon distinguished Soldier Cpl. Mahir Khallel Frahan receives a plaque from the Task Force Marne Noncommissioned Officer Academy Chief Commandant and 3rd Infantry Division Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews Jr., rewarding his dedication and leadership. Frahan was one of 56 NCOs who graduated the two week course which instructs NCOs on leadership and soldier skills to mold their units into effective fighting forces.

Below: The new face of Iraqi leadership in the Iraqi Army noncommissioned officer corps is shown on the face of the Jan. 28 graduating class.



See ACADEMY page 4



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Above: An Iraqi noncommissioned officers marches between the flags of Iraq and the United States on his way to receive his diploma for graduating the Task Force Marne NCO Academy on Forward Operating Base Kalsu Jan. 28. The partnership of the two countries is helping to ensure the future stability of Iraq by training Iraqis to take care of their country's security.

Left: A graduate marches back to formation, diploma in hand. Fifty five Iraqi Army and one Iraqi Police noncommissioned officers, graduated the two week course.

the individuals molded together. "By the end of the course, they wouldn't do anything individually. They understand how to work as a team."

Their successes give the U.S. Army leaders in attendance some confidence in the development of the Iraqi Security Forces.

"This is the beginning of a new era," Andrews said, noting all graduates were better leaders than they were when they first entered the class. "All Soldiers deserve outstanding leadership. You will provide it."

Although a junior leader, Cpl. Muhamed Ahmed Jasim, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division, said he is eager to share what he learned and provide that leadership.

As an infantryman, he said he

"This is the beginning of a new era. All Soldiers deserve outstanding leadership. You will provide it."

- Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews Jr.
3rd Inf. Div. command sergeant major

feels his own Soldiers will benefit from the lessons he learned at the academy. By teaching them skills such as dismounted battle drills, first aid and clearing buildings, he said they will be more effective at taking the fight to insurgents. "We gained good instructions on how to do things right," he said.

Seeing the motivation displayed by the graduates also helped the academy cadre realize the good they are accomplishing in building a strong foundation for Iraq's future security forces. "This is just a start, building a foundation," said

Andrews, a native of Lincolnton, Ga.

Construction will continue throughout the year. The goal is to have a new class graduate each month, with each month's class gradually increasing in size until classes hold 180 students, Andrews said.

"In the end this will enable us to tie into two lines of operation: security and (transition) transferring over patrol bases," Andrews said. "(If we) work together as a team, we will get the mission accomplished."

Joint CF patrol drops soccer balls

1st Lt. Tabitha Hernandez
1-64 Armor Reg.

A joint patrol comprised of both American and Iraqi forces conducted a soccer ball drop in front of the Al Zawra Primary School in the western Baghdad neighborhood of Adl the morning of Jan. 28.

The patrol was a combined effort between Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 64th Armored Regiment and jaundi of 3rd Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army. The patrol handed out approximately fifty soccer balls, provided through efforts of the 492nd Civil Affairs Battalion headquartered in Phoenix, Ariz.

The joint Coalition Forces patrol greeted the children with soccer balls and candy; presenting a positive image of the joint efforts being conducted between American



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Donavant

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment and jaundi of the 6th Iraqi Army handed out soccer balls Jan. 28 at the Al Zawra Primary School in the western Baghdad neighborhood of Adl.

and Iraqi forces to better the city of Baghdad.

The neighborhood, once a hideout for insurgents, has seen a significant decrease in criminal activities since US forces began running joint patrols and training

with their IA counterparts.

When asked the true intent behind the mission, 1st Sgt. Anthony Stimmel, a native of Angola, Ind., assigned to Company A, 1-64 Armor Reg. replied, "Just to see the children smile".

Safety Alert - .50 caliber safety

- * Improper headspace and timing can cause malfunctions, damage to the weapon, and injury to personnel.
- * Do not use headspace and timing gauges if they are bent, rusted or pitted.
- * If the timing nut can be easily turned with one finger or it doesn't click as you move it, the nut's spring is too weak and it won't hold timing. Get the spring replaced.
- * If the spring can't hold the barrel in place, the barrel turns during firing and headspace is lost. Test the spring by setting the correct headspace and

- then trying to unscrew the barrel. If the barrel turns, the spring is weak or loose or the barrel locking lugs may be worn.
- * If the barrel and barrel extension threads are chipped or burred, it will be difficult to screw in the barrel. Even worse, you may think you've screwed in the barrel when you haven't. That means bad headspace. Stone any chips or burrs until they're smooth.
- * Always set and check Headspace & Timing IAW TM 9-1005-213-10, June 2001.
- * For additional requirements see TACOM Safety of Use Message



- 06-008 dated 13 Dec 05.
- * Safety glasses, hearing protection, and protective clothing will be worn when repairing, firing, or cleaning weapon.

Mr. Daryl Lusk, safety officer



Photo by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

A Soldier with the 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, enjoys a feast presented by the residents of Sayafiyah Jan. 27 south of Baghdad. The regiment is originally from the 1st BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., but has been tasked with conducting operations in support of Marne Thunderbolt.

Warm welcome for additional forces

Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
2nd BCT PAO

In just six days of operations from Patrol Base Meade, Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, began to see the result of their cooperation with community leaders in Sayafiyah, south of Baghdad Jan 27.

In the previous days, Troops B and C, of the 5th Squadron, 7th

Cavalry Regiment, 1st BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., succeeded in establishing security in the villages near the patrol base leaving one troop, Troop A, left to handle security further south.

Troop A, accompanied by Lt. Col. Clifford Wheeler, 5-7 Cav. Reg. commander, was to establish a foothold in Sayafiyah, a region on the banks of the Tigris River, approximately 15 kilometers

southeast of Patrol Base Meade. Their arrival turned out to be much more than they expected.

Opening the road to Sayafiyah was no small feat, but residents of Sayafiyah volunteered to assist Coalition Forces.

The volunteers came forward to assist the 2nd BCT earlier in the month when Sayafiyah community

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leaders met with the commander of 2nd BCT, Col. Terry Ferrell. In that meeting, Ferrell assured Sayafiyah leaders that his Soldiers would be conducting operations in the region in order to establish a long term presence. This assertion was the sign the region's leaders needed to assist the troops by maintaining safe roads used to deliver supplies and equipment to the troops staying in the city.

The mission of assisting Iraqis in establishing Concerned Local Citizens groups was not new to the regiment.

Spc. John D. Gilga, a cavalry scout with Troop A and native of DuBois, Pa., said though he was focused on the mission venturing south, he was still nervous about

going into unfamiliar territory.

It was close to noon when Troop A and its commander arrived at their destination, a lively rustic farming community. To the Soldier's surprise, the community's residents and local leaders were on hand to greet them.

Wheeler and the local leader spoke at length of issues facing the region as well as the future of Coalition Forces in the area.

Wheeler was able to secure a building for Troop A's observation post and the residents were assured that a Concerned Local Citizens group would be established.

As night fell, a crowd of local residents gathered to watch their new neighbors dismantle the front gate of their new post.



Photo by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

An Iraqi man prepares a meal of rice pilaf and goat in Sayafiyah, a community southeast of Patrol Base Meade Jan. 27.



Photo by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, new commander of the 18th Airborne Corp, re-enlists Staff Sgt. Casey Wilcox, at Forward Operating Base Kalsu Feb 1. Wilcox, a native of Adel, Ga., is in the middle of his third deployment and is currently a forward observer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

Sexual assault programs offer help to all Soldiers

1st Lt. Kalen Smith
2nd BCT PAO

Women living on Forward Operation Base Kalsu attended a town hall meeting Jan. 28 to learn about their options should they become a victim of a sexual assault.

Sgt. 1st Class Montoya Jones, 2nd Brigade Combat Team equal opportunity advisor, coordinated the meeting with Col. Terry Ferrell, commander, 2nd BCT, 3rd Infantry Division, and Col. Thomas James, commander, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. in attendance.

“Here on FOB Kalsu we’ve had 26 reports of some type; this year we’ve had three. Of those, 97 percent ... were involved with people they (the victims) knew,” said Charles Campbell, Special Agent, Criminal Investigation Command (CID).

Ferrell said meeting with the females living here is the first step in addressing this issue, so that proper care and treatment can be given to those who may find themselves in a situation where they need to get help.

Campbell said statistics show the majority of sexual assault cases being filed in theater, which is why

the leadership chose to address females first. Many of these cases involved alcohol and drugs.

“Alcohol played a major part in everything,” he said. “We know there’s a problem here and we’re trying to get it locked down. You have that choice to take that step and not (drink) do it.”

Regardless of whether there is alcohol involved in the assault or not, Soldiers have the right to file a restricted or unrestricted report of the crime.

Restricted reporting relies heavily on the actions of the person reporting the crime, said Lt. Col. Kevin Stevenson, combat stress and mental health officer. “There are four individuals you can report to. Do not report to your chain of command; report to the Chaplain, UVA, health care provider or your SARC. The medical health care providers (for confidentiality) are medics, mental health care providers and any medical professionals.”

UVAs, or unit victims’ advocates, are Soldiers within various units who can offer guidance and support during the filing process.



Photo by Sgt. Jason Stadel

Col. Terry Ferrell, commander, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, speaks to female Soldiers living on Forward Operating Base Kalsu during a sexual assault awareness town hall meeting Jan. 28 in the dining facility.

SARCs, or sexual assault response coordinators, offer similar help, but they are at a higher level, and they ensure the filers’ rights are upheld.

Both 2nd BCT and 4th BCT UVAs report to Jones, as she is the SARC for both brigades; she reports up to the division level.

“When you say to your friends, ‘don’t tell anyone’ and you think it’s not going to happen, they will tell,” said Stevenson. “If you want to ensure that it’s confidential, make sure that you don’t tell anybody except those we talked about and it will stay confidential.”

Unrestricted reports will be made known to the command and others, but once filed cannot be

changed to a restricted case.

Campbell stressed the importance of getting examined soon after the incident occurs. “If you decide you want to go through an unrestricted report...try not to shower,” said Campbell. “Try to preserve that evidence and get examined as quickly as possible.”

Ferrell said examination kits are on their way to FOB Kalsu, but until they get here, the person who files the case must be flown to Baghdad for testing at the 86th Combat Support Hospital. “Based on time, based on weather, based on requests, we are trying

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to get them down here. We now try to send them by air,” he said. “We have all the health care providers we need right here.”

Once the exam is complete, the filer must conduct follow-on tests three months, six months and one year after the incident to check for the human immunodeficiency virus and possible sexually transmitted diseases, said Stevenson.

He also said if alcohol or drugs are involved, punitive action will be taken for that offense before the assault is addressed. “There’s an article that says you are not supposed to drink, then there’s the rape issue that we have to address.”

Campbell explained the process in cases where the victim will choose to tell a close friend instead of filing either a restricted or unrestricted report. If the friend doesn’t give a subject’s name, then the victim is questioned and if it’s dropped, the investigation drops, said Campbell.

If the friend tells the name of the offender and victim, both are questioned, but if no report is formally filed, then the investigation stops. Campbell stressed that once CID is aware of a sexual assault, they

FOB Kalsu
Sexual Assault Points of Contacts

Victims and anyone aware of a victim of sexual assault should immediately seek medical treatment and report the incident to the appropriate agency based on the victim’s reporting options.

2ND BDE SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE – 670-7083

RESOURCE	PHONE	BLDG #	OPTION
TMC (Medical Treatment)	670-7688	1 east across from the fire station	Restricted or Unrestricted
Mental Health	671-1118	Behind #1 BDE A&M Station	Restricted or Unrestricted
UVA (Contact your BN HQ) Your Chain Of Command	---	---	Restricted or Unrestricted Unrestricted
CHAPLAIN	670-7012	BDE ALOC	Restricted or Unrestricted
MIPs	670-7084	BDE TOC	Unrestricted
CID	670-7104	4/3 BSTB	Unrestricted
SJA	670-7002	BDE TOC	Unrestricted

“If you work in a predominantly male environment, or predominantly female, either way, you can go and get assistance.”

- Col. Terry Ferrell
commander, 2nd BCT

are required to do an investigation on the incident.

Males who are victims of sexual assault have the same rights as females, including civilian contractors, said Campbell. Male on male assaults have occurred in theater, but none at FOB Kalsu thus far.

Stevenson said Soldiers can be moved to a different unit if they feel their work environment causes them to feel threatened. Ferrell agreed, and said the command does not need to know the reason for the change nor should it stop anyone from asking for help.

“If you work in a predominantly

male environment, or predominantly female, either way, you can go and get assistance. The chain of command does not need to know about it,” said Ferrell. “If it is so hindering to your work that you can not do your job, it can come through your chain of command for whatever reason and tell us you have to go. What we have to evaluate is whether or not you are going to be able to do your job in this MOS (military occupational specialty) down the road. You go get the help you need. I don’t need to know about it.”

The leadership warned against filing a false report. “There is a

UCMJ article for false official statements,” said Campbell. “If you make an (false) official statement and raise your right hand, there can be repercussions for that.”

First Sgt. Richard Henson, 2 BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., said he thinks this discussion was valuable and necessary. “I think it is important because Soldiers, be it male or female, need to know who to go to if something happens. They need to know the difference between restricted and unrestricted reports, and that their confidentiality will be kept and that we’ll take care of all our Soldiers.”

Ferrell agreed the issue had to be addressed through this outlet initially, then through the chain of command to address males. He said it is important “they are fully aware of all the systems and all the programs that are in place for their well-being and protection inside the wire. The enemy rests outside the wire; they should not be concerned that there is an enemy inside the wire.”

To file a complaint or talk to someone about the filing process, the CID office is ready 24-hours a day to assist at SVOIP: 670-7104.

Cut cord leads to computer woes

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT PAO

For Soldiers trying to access the Internet Wednesday, they may have experienced a slow down in their computer's processing speed, causing some to wonder "Why me?"

However, the experience is not just limited to Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. Due to a major cable break in the Mediterranean Sea, much of Asia and the Middle East are experiencing a disruption in their Internet capabilities.

Due to the degraded capabilities, the brigade signal shop is implementing tighter restrictions on the network. To maximize the use of small amount of bandwidth available, only .mil and .gov sites will be left open for access, said Maj. Louis Manning, 2nd BCT, signal systems officer in charge.

Because the break is on a major commercial under sea segment somewhere between Egypt and France, Manning said it would take some time to get the problem corrected.

Soldiers looking for



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Soldiers fill up an Internet café on Forward Operating Base Kalsu Jan. 31. The SpaWare system the Internet café runs on is unaffected by the break in the Internet cable line in a major commercial "under sea" segment somewhere between Egypt and France. This cable provides Internet and other electronic data distribution for a majority of African and Middle East countries, including Egypt, India and Iraq.

a little faster access can go to one of the three Internet cafes on the base, said New York native Spc. Nancy Perez, 2nd BCT computer help desk.

The Internet cafes located on Forward Operating Base Kalsu run off of a satellite based system, SpaWare, and are unaffected by the break. Soldiers can use these cafes to access any site they choose.

If there is no one waiting in line, Soldiers can stay on as long as possible. However, if there is a line, Soldiers are limited to 30 minutes, said Pfc. Lawrence

Fluellen, a military policemen, MP platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-3 Brigade Troops Battalion, 2nd BCT.

Fluellen, who also works in the 2-3 BTB computer lab front desk, said since the lines went down on Jan. 30, the lab has been very busy.

Though the incident may cause some people to wonder how safe their Internet connection is, Perez said cables like the one broken are extremely difficult to damage.

Unlike normal fiber cables, underwater cables such as the one broken

are armored, making them extremely difficult to break. These cables are encased in a metal casing and covered with another insulating coating, she said.

The only explanation for the break is either the cable was hit by some boat, submarine, piece of underwater machinery or large maritime animal, Perez said.

Despite the cause, the effect will be a severe slowdown in the non-secure Internet for about seven to ten days, the length of time repairs are expected to take, Manning said.

Electronic warfare comes to Kalsu

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT PAO

The Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery Regiment, have found themselves in an unfamiliar situation, as the need for infantryman increases.

The Electronic Skills Trainer 2000 immerses Soldiers into realistic scenarios in which they are forced to react and communicate as if they were facing dangers in combat.

In one scenario, the convoy takes them through a small village, known to provide sanctuary for insurgents. Despite intelligence reports that insurgents are known to cause diversions to stop convoys, the Soldiers still stop when they see a crowd of local citizens seeking medical attention for a woman in their midst.

Dismounting from the protection of the up-armored

vehicles, five of the 4th brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga., Soldiers, along with an Iraqi policeman, walk toward the crowd to see what they can do.

The crowd shouts in Arabic, causing them to slowly raise their weapons higher from the low ready. Their Iraqi police counterpart does little to calm their nerves.

“The IP’s making me nervous,” one remarks, noting the man’s inability to stand still and focus on the crowd, his constant need to look back to the Soldiers as if for reassurance.

The policeman’s actions are understandable, and despite their nervousness; the Soldiers remain vigilant, relying on their previous training to guide their decisions.

One Soldier remembers an obscure tidbit from Arabic culture training. While most of the crowd is waving with their right hands, one man off to the side of the crowd, dressed in olive drab fatigues and a white and

black checkered headdress, is waving with his left hand, only offering a profile of his left side and concealing his right. Remembering that the left hand is considered unclean and not used in interactions, the Soldier warns his counterparts. “Watch that guy,” he shouts.

Seconds later, he calls out that he sees a weapon and raises his weapon to engage. The cries of the crowd are replaced by the click of trigger as one shot rings out.

“Defend your actions,” flashes across the screen, taking them out of their patrol and back into the safety of the dark training room.

“People really get into it,” said Steve Brockwell, EST operator. “It’s good for NCOs to train their people on.”

One noncommissioned officer taking advantage

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of the training is Sgt. 1st Class Chris LeMaire, gun truck platoon, platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1-76th Field Artillery Regiment.

“This is a new truck platoon,” he said, adding the battalion will soon be taking over responsibility of the area controlled by the 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 3rd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.

The EST unit is capable of a variety of tasks, including range training, weapon zeroing, weapon familiarization with all the weapons used by U.S. Forces, including mission scenarios and both, personnel weapons and crew-served weapons training, Brockwell said.

Although some Soldiers might not take the concept seriously at first, once engaged Soldiers quickly realize the system isn't just some over the top video game system.

“When you go down to the scenarios, we realize we can really do this for real,” said Spc. Nick Geno, a fire direction specialist with HHB, 1-76 Field Artillery. “It's not playtime anymore.”

By immersing Soldiers in a virtual reality environment, where actors portray specific roles, wearing realistic garb, speaking in Arabic and working in an environment that could have been lifted from Iraq, the experience is quite lifelike.

Adding to the realism is the weapons used by the Soldiers. Soldiers use their own weapons, which are fitted with a special device that allows them to shoot a laser to interact with the imagery on the screen. The weapon retains the recoil of a live round, said



Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

A Soldier, designated firer number 3, shoots a terrorist wielding a rocket-propelled grenade launcher at the Electronic Skills Trainer on Forward Operating Base Kalsu during a scenario. The trainer helps Soldiers practice their Soldier skills in a realistic, virtual environment. Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1-76th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, used the trainer Feb. 1 to help prepare them for a more traditional infantry role.

Brockwell, a native of Elgin, Okla.

Realism is also achieved altering scenarios as they are run through by the Soldiers, who train in five-man teams, said Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Linck, EST NCO in charge.

“We can bump up or down the severity at any time to keep them on their toes,” he said. “They’ll never know how the scenario will play out. It teaches situational awareness.”

This feature prevents Soldiers who are watching from “cheating,” Brockwell said. With the press of a button, scenarios can change in a flash, just like real combat. One squad’s previous walk through a local market could be uneventful,

while the next pass through could be full of insurgent forces.

Besides this alteration, scenarios can also be tailored to a unit’s individual mission needs, said Linck, a native of Kansas City, Mo. Units more likely to patrol the roads can spend more time on convoy-based scenarios, while foot patrolling units can experience walking through towns, manning checkpoints or engaging locals in a market place.

“Being artillery filling in for an infantry role, we’re not used to some of these missions,” said LeMaire, a native of Marietta, Ga.

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Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

A screen displaying the shot count and amount of hits and misses greet Soldiers after completing a scenario on the Forward Operating Base Kalsu Electronic Skills Trainer. Soldiers can use the trainer to gauge their skills and note their improvement in a safe, controlled environment.

“This training will help us be an efficient force.”

“When we run through as a squad, it helps give us experience giving commands, working on our communication,” added Geno, who said improving communication is key. “This is a good refresher.”

Though the EST was originally installed to help refresh the skills of the 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st BCT, 3rd Inf. Division, recently transferred under operational authority of the 2nd BCT, Linck said any unit can come work on the machine.

“We are willing to work with any unit,” he said, noting that his

“This training will help us be an efficient force.”

- Sgt. 1st Class Chris LeMaire
HQB, 1-76 FA

home unit, the 26 Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., has used the machine extensively. “The whole BSB has been through, including the key leadership. They liked it a lot.”

Even units and Soldiers who may never leave the base can get some good training out of the machine. The machine can simulate weapon qualification

ranges, allowing Soldiers to keep their shooting skills sharp without having to arrange for using a real range, getting ammunition and providing the usual safety precautions, Brockwell said.

“If you don’t fire right on the EST, you won’t on the range. Here you can work on muscle memory, see where every bullet goes,” he said.

“It’s best to hit it right before the range,” Linck added, as it helps Soldiers familiarize themselves with their weapons and refresh their basic rifle marksmanship

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skills.

Besides these advantages, the machine also has a large advantage for the Army: decreasing the cost of training without decreasing the quality. "For five dollars of diesel you can run it for eight hours," Brockwell said.

In those eight hours, a Soldier can fire thousands of rounds. With live ammunition costing 28 cents a round, the savings really add up, Brockwell said, allowing the Army to spend more money on equipment to keep Soldiers safer and more comfortable.

Soldiers do not need to come as a unit. He said if a leader just wants to come down and train a Soldier on their weapon or a new weapon system, they can come by.

On average, it takes a five man team 45 minutes to run through each scenario, allowing Linck and Brockwell to accommodate up to 100 Soldiers a day.

"I think it will be very helpful for the FOB," Linck said of the training being offered.



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

The Electronic Skills Trainer on Forward Operating Base Kalsu stops during an scenario to allow Soldiers to explain why they took a shot before a terrorist did. The trainer helps Soldiers understand the Army's rules of engagement and practice them in a realistic, virtual environment.

Watching the improvement in his Soldiers as they defend their actions in the convoy scenario and go onto another scenario, this time in a marketplace, LeMaire can't help but agree.

"What it does is it boosts the junior leadership," LeMaire said. "It gives me a chance to evaluate my guys."

The evaluations, like the targets, are shown instantly on the screen. Already a marked improvement can be seen in the percentage of lethal shots fired and reaction time of Soldiers between the time they first see a threat to the time they respond to it.

Even though the sights are virtual, the results are a reality LeMaire is glad to see. "I have a feeling that when they go outside the wire they'll have a lot of confidence."

Soldiers can contact the office by email at raymond.linck@2bct3id.army.mil or stephen.brockwell@2bct3id.army.mil. The office headquarters are at building H8A behind the Kalsu Mayor Cell. Linck has a dry erase board there Soldiers can leave messages at if no one is present.

Hours of operation are from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., although Brockwell said they are willing to work around a unit's schedule.



A Soldier looks at the EST's screen as one of his virtual allies, an Iraqi Policemen, takes cover following an indirect fire attack. The EST provides realistic scenarios for Soldiers to train on to help increase and hone their Soldier skills

SPORTS & GAMES

26 BSB wins Kalsu Superbowl



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

The 26th Brigade Support Battalion Flag Football team celebrates with the “Challenger Cheerleaders” after winning the Kalsu Football League flag football Superbowl Feb. 3. The Challengers beat the 4-3 Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division 7-0.



Left: A quarterback showdown: 26th BSB quarterback (in yellow) Staff Sgt. Bryan Tuck puts pressure on 4-3 BSTB quarterback Sgt. Angelo Glover. Tuck helped his own cause by sacking Glover three plays in a row during a crucial drive at the beginning of the second half. Defense was the name of the game, as both team’s prevented the other from scoring several times while in the red zone. Tight defense prevented runs, such as the one at right, from putting points on the board.



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Headquarters and Headquarters Company first sergeant, 1st Sgt. Nelson Douglas, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, (right in yellow) puts a heavy block on a 4-3 Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division opponent to clear a path for 26 BSB quarterback (left) Staff Sgt. Bryan Tuck, who laterals the ball back to a teammate. The two teams played each other Feb. 3 at the Forward Operating Kalsu flag football Superbowl. The 26 BSB, Challengers, came out on top 7-0. The team also won the 2nd BCT flag football tournament late last year.



Above: Douglas leaps high into the air, intercepting a pass, effectively ending a 4-3 BSTB drive. The 4-3 BSTB put on the pressure on the Challengers when they were a few yards away from the endzone (upper left). Although the team did not win, their performance and sportsmanship garnered 4-3 BSTB quarterback and team coach, Sgt. Angelo Glover, a game ball. The ball was presented by 26 BSB commander, Lt. Col. Mark Weinerth.

MWR plans activities for Valentine's day

Public Affairs Office
2nd BCT PAO

Just because Soldiers are in Iraq doesn't mean that they have no options for Valentine's Day. To help couples connect while deployed or help budding romances develop, the Forward Operating Base Kalsu Morale, Welfare and Recreation department is hosting a Valentine's Day dance at the MWR center.

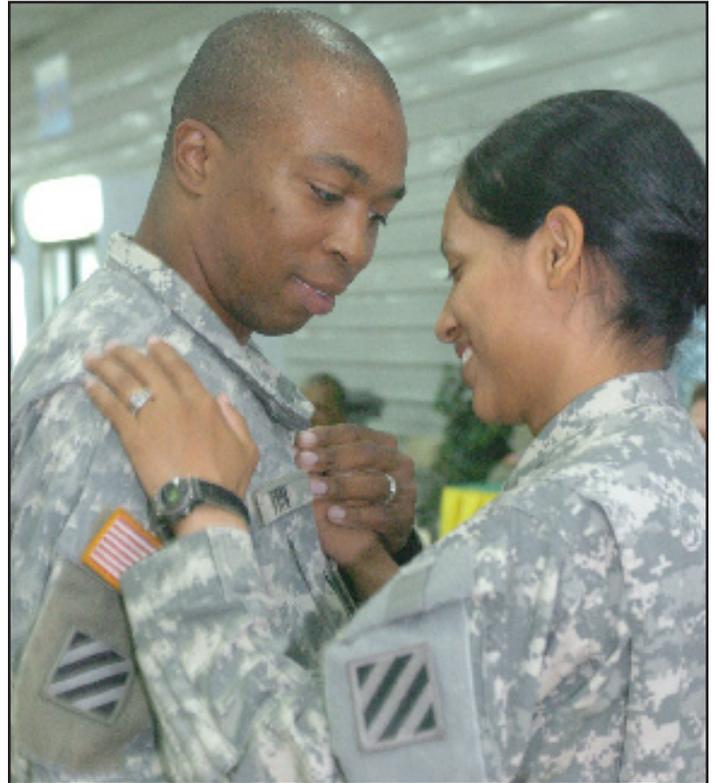
The dance kicks off at 8 p.m. and will run as long as interest remains. It will feature oldies music to dance to

performed by a live DJ.

Door prizes will also be given to the first fifty women who show up at the dance.

As for Soldiers without their special someone to share this day with, there are other ways to spend your time courtesy of the MWR.

Single Soldiers or those separated from their spouses can pair up with a few clubs and golf balls at the Kalsu driving range. The range is scheduled to be completed this week, said 1st Lt. Andrew Shadley, MWR officer.



Sgt. Kareem Brown his spouse Pfc. Diana Brown dance together at a concert Oct. 12. The Kalsu Morale, Welfare and Recreation is holding a dance for couples and singles to come out and experience something romantic. (file photo)

Editor's note: Genres for Kalsu Idol will be now chosen by the judges after the first week.

We Want YOU! Shoutout for DVIDS shoutouts



1. We have another request for HOCKEY Shout outs!!! The Pittsburgh Penguins would love to get some troops saying hi to the team!

All you need to say is your: Name, Rank, Where you are stationed in Iraq, Where you are from and add a message

to the team.

2. TEAM SHOUT OUTS NEEDED FOR:

- 1) Buffalo Sabres
- 2) Detroit Pistons
- 3) Minnesota Timberwolves
- 4) NY Islanders

*All interviews are taped and can be shared over the Web with your family – and it's free!

See www.dvidshub.net for more details and to see what the world's finest Soldiers have been up to.

To participate, e-mail 1st Lt. Kalen Smith at: kalen.marie.smith@2bct3id.army.mil



Word on the street

“How did your favorite football team do this year? Any predictions for next season?”



“My team, the New England Patriots, is going to the Super Bowl. I predict them to lose, at most, two games next year but they’ll reach 24-0 before losing.”

Staff Sgt. Floyd Lewis
26th Brigade Support Battalion



“It was a disappointing season because everyone was picking them (The Dallas Cowboys) to be in the Super Bowl but I think they’ll get there next year.”

Sgt. Lambert Thompson
Co. A, 2-3 BTB supply sergeant



“I picked the Patriots at the beginning of the season. You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to know who the best team in the NFL is.”

Sgt. Alexis Montanez
Co. A, 2-3 BTB armorer



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Unless otherwise stated, all events begin at 1930. Times and events are subject to change. Special events are in <i>red italics</i> .					1 Movie Night Spades Salsa night	2 Texas Hold'em Old school music night
3 <i>Flag Football Superbowl @ 2 p.m.</i>	4 <i>Superbowl kickoff @ DFAC, 3 a.m.</i>	5 Foosball Spades	6 Halo 2: 2 vs 2 NFL bench press comp.	7 Pool Chess	8 Movie Night Spades Salsa night	9 Texas Hold'em Old school music night
10 Darts Strongman comp.	11 Ping Pong Dominoes	12 Foosball Spades	13 Halo 2: 2 vs 2 Pullup comp.	14 <i>Valentine's Day dance @ MWR, 8 p.m.</i>	15 Movie Night Spades Salsa night	16 Texas Hold'em Old school music night
17 Darts NFL Bench press comp.	18 Ping Pong Dominoes	19 Foosball Spades	20 Halo 2: 2 vs 2 Max bench press comp.	21 Pool Chess	22 Movie Night Spades Salsa night	23 Texas Hold'em Old school music night
24 Darts Max bench press comp.	25 Ping Pong Dominoes	26 Foosball Spades	27 Halo 2: 2 vs 2 Strongman comp.	28 Pool Chess	29 Movie Night Spades Salsa night	