

Rakkasan Review

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Rakkasan Review

Col. Dominic J. Caraccilo
3rd BCT commander

Command Sgt. Maj.
Gregory Patton

3rd BCT command sergeant major

Public Affairs Staff

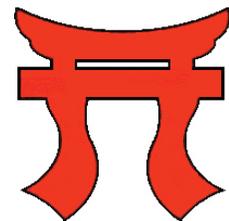
Capt. David Bolender
PAO

Capt. Allison Flannigan
Deputy PAO

Sgt. 1st Class Kerensa Hardy
PAONCOIC/ editor

Pvt. Christopher McKenna
Journalist

Staff Sgt. Desiree Wright
Broadcaster



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We welcome the submission of news items, articles and photographs. Submissions should be made to the 3rd BCT Public Affairs Office via e-mail at: rakkasanspao@yahoo.com.



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Santa Barbara, Calif., native 1st Lt. Casey Zimmerman of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, pushes a child who received a new wheelchair in Mullah Fayad March 27. The wheelchair was donated by the community and family of Sgt. Nathan Barnes, who served in the area and was killed in Rushdi Mullah July 17.

On the cover:

An Iraqi Army Soldier attempts to breach a door during joint operations in the city of Mahmudiyah April 1. (Photo by Pvt. Christopher McKenna)

Rakkasan 6 Notes

By Col. Dominic J. Caraccilo
3rd BCT commander

All of the Rakkasans, deployed, rear detachment, as well as our Rakkasan families, continue to do a great job and are providing the high level of professionalism we have come to expect.

Recently, three Rakkasans were selected for Officer Candidate School. The selected non-commissioned officers are Staff Sgt. Kyle Shook from 3-320 FA and Sgt. Josie Brennan and Sgt. 1st Class Donald Bostick from 626 BSB. Congratulations to these three outstanding NCOs.

In February, we witnessed the departure of Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno and Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, the command team of III Corps-MNC-I and the arrival of Lt. Gen. Lloyd Austin and Command Sgt. Maj.

Joseph Allen from the 18th Airborne Corps.

Coming soon is the transition from 3ID to 10th Mtn. Div. in June with the departure of Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews and the 3rd Infantry Division and the arrival of Maj. Gen. Mike Oates, Command Sgt. Maj. James Redmore and the 10th Mountain Division.

Congratulations to Capt. Jason Shultz for being selected as the next commander of the Sabalauski Air Assault School at Fort Campbell. He is the currently the commander of Company B, 1-187. We've completed eight company changes of command



Col. Dominic J. Caraccilo

and have several more scheduled in the near future. With all of these company changes, I urge everyone to keep in contact with their rear detachment personnel and their family readiness groups to ensure we don't lose the momentum on the care and concern for our Rakkasan families.

To all of the deployed Rakkasan Soldiers, I'm extremely proud of all of the work you've accomplished here in Iraq during the first half of this deployment. We've made a significant difference in our area of operations and laid a strong foundation for the future. Keep up the great work you are doing and continue to look out for each other.

 Rakkasan 6

Rakkasan 7 Notes

By Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Patton
3rd BCT CSM

We are now approaching the half way point of our mission here in South Baghdad. One of my biggest concerns is the environmental considerations that we will be subjected to over the next several months. This is when the combination of the heat, lack of focus and complacency could cost us Soldiers lives.

I'd ask all of you to look out for your Rakkasan buddy. Do not take short cuts, maintain the same high state of readiness that you've had since day 1 here in Iraq.

I have another concern and it is our Soldiers Physical fitness and height and

weight maintenance. Every one of our current locations throughout our battle space has some form of physical fitness equipment available to our Soldiers. We need to stay as physically and mentally sharp as we can. We also need to keep in mind that our Soldiers are going to be subjected to fulfill NCOES and PCS requirements upon our redeployment.

Our retention numbers continue to lead the 101st Airborne Division. This is a direct reflection on our small unit leadership and our retention NCOs getting involved with their Soldiers. With that said, we need to continue the push to retain our great Rakkasan Soldiers and NCOs.

As a brigade, we have

initiated a program to teach BSEP and prepare our Soldiers to improve their ASVAB scores, which, in turn, will open more options for our re-enlisting Soldiers.

We will depart five outstanding NCOs to attend the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy. Congratulation to Sgt. Maj. Erik Talken, Master Sgt. Andre Johnson, Master Sgt. Robert Corrigan, 1st Sgt. Stanley Wilkins and 1st Sgt. Richard Sanders. Good luck and thank you for your years of great service to the Rakkasans.

I would like to close by recognizing our brigade, battalion, and company rear detachments and the Golden Rakkasans, for a truly remarkable operation of taking care of our Families, the



Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Patton

Soldiers who we have had to redeploy and the deployment of more than 350 new Rakkasan to us here in Iraq.

Finally, I want to thank every Rakkasan Soldier and their Families for all the sacrifices they are making every day to keep our great country free.

 Rakkasan 7



Courtesy photo

Soldiers with 1st and 2nd Battalions, 25th Brigade, 6th IA Division take the lead on dismounted patrols and an air assault to launch Operation Marne Piledriver in the Mahmudiyah area April 15.

IA takes lead on Marne Piledriver

By Pvt. Christopher McKenna
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Operation Marne Piledriver launched in the Mahmudiyah area April 15 as Iraqi Army and Coalition forces conducted joint clearance missions.

Soldiers with 1st and 2nd Battalions, 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) combined to conduct dismounted patrols and an air assault.

“The Iraqi Soldiers took initiative from the start,” said Pfc. Nathan Krueger, from St. Clair, Mich., Battery A, 3-320th FA. “Every time I went into a building, there would already be

an IA Soldier clearing or searching the area. Once we got on-site, they took the lead.”

Marne Piledriver is the first Task Force Marne major operation focused on capacity-building projects throughout the Rakkasans’ area of operation. This Iraqi Army-led operation will continue efforts to root out insurgency and stimulate economic growth and development throughout the Mahmudiyah Qada.

“Our role was to support the Iraqi Army,” said Capt. Ryan Mayfield, from Culver, Ind., commander of Battery A. “Because of what has been going on in the whole country, specifically Mahmudiyah, we are continuing to maintain momentum and ... provide the basic needs, as well as freedom of

movement to the people so that the government and tribes can continue to help build the area.”

The Soldiers from 2/25/6 IA Div. teamed with 3rd Platoon, Btry. A, 3-320th FA on dismount patrols, while 1/25/6 IA Div. partnered with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3-320th FA.

“Now that we feel the (al-Qaeda in Iraq) presence is at a minimum, we are about to start establishing Sons of Iraq checkpoints through the area, which adds to the freedom of movement,” Mayfield said. “The main effort of our portion of Piledriver is to develop multiple projects (and) solid governance in the area. We are providing support to the IA wherever they deem it’s needed.”

IA keeps peace in Mahmudiyah

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

The Iraqi Army commander in Mahmudiyah won't stand for criminal activity in his city.

To that end, Brig. Gen. Ali Jassim Muhammad Hasen Al Frejee, commander of the 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and Lt. Col. William Zemp, commander of 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), worked together recently to make sure that violence seen in Basra wasn't replicated in Mahmudiyah.

Zemp, a native of Hartsville, S.C., said one word sums up the IA successes in the area: leader-

ship. The IA leadership at all levels – company, battalion and brigade – was involved in the mission to secure the city.

“As soon as there were indications of violence, a curfew was put into effect,” Zemp said. Vehicular traffic was suspended in the city, extra checkpoints were established and 14 additional platoons were deployed after hostilities flared March 28.

“(The criminals) were expecting us to only be defending,” Ali said. “That was true the first day.” After that, Ali said, his Soldiers started taking offensive measures. He said his troops believe it is their duty to pursue anyone who breaks the law.

Before the outbreak of violence, Ali said he

brought in all the battalion commanders under his charge and assigned a neighborhood to each as their respective areas of operation. He said this hampered the enemy's ability to function.

“We controlled with good cooperation between the Iraqi and Coalition forces,” Ali said. “I don't think they will try these things again in this sector.”

Zemp agreed his IA counterparts did an outstanding job.

“The IA met its enemy and then crushed it; they defeated the special groups ... in Mahmudiyah,” he said. “They did it in such a way that they took into consideration the civilian population and political ramifications and consequences of their actions. In a nutshell, they

did it right.”

Rakkasan Soldiers assisted their IA partners with troop leading, logistics, artillery for terrain denials and aviation support. A platoon from 3-320th FA worked alongside each of the IA security platoons in all major engagements.

“They're definitely pretty squared away,” said Pvt. Khristopher Wallace, Battery A, 3-320th FA, of the IA troops. “We're moving, typically, behind them ... pretty much in a support role.

“They're tactically sound and keeping everything pretty simple,” the Yorkville, Ill., native added. “It's just like working with another one of our units – very cohesive.”

Cooperation between the battalions and Coalition troops was key to success, according to Ali.

“Things are tense but stable now,” Zemp said. “The IA is clearly in control of the city as far as Mahmudiyah is concerned and the local government is still able to function.”

The vehicle curfew is currently in place at night but is lifted during daylight hours, allowing local citizens to run errands, go to work and receive medical care when necessary.

“I think the outcome defines his leadership,” Zemp said. “Swift action, decisive and the ability to interact with the local population based on intelligence, not rumors.”



Pvt. Christopher McKenna

Soldiers from the 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division prepare to engage criminals in the Mahmudiyah market March 30.

Sons of Iraq help secure Fuhail Mujeer Village

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

During the first day in Fuhail Mujeer, the Rakkasans faced the consequences of moving into an area previously controlled by insurgents by having a Soldier wounded by an improvised explosive device.

As a symbol of their renewed commitment to keeping insurgents out of the area for good, Sons of Iraq built another checkpoint on the narrow road going through Fuhail Mujeer Village April 25.

As recently as December the Rakkasans of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), established a presence in the area.

Now Soldiers from 2nd Platoon, Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), who have been assigned to their battalion's Company D and are living at the recently built Patrol Base Yates and work with the SoI to maintain security in the area.

The first of the eight SoI checkpoints was placed on the road approximately 400 meters north of blast-site. Working their way from that first checkpoint toward the patrol base, checkpoints have been placed in strategic locations along the road to

deter insurgent activity. All eight checkpoints have been fully operational since mid-March.

Increasing the SoI's ability to maintain the security on the road benefits the Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Co. C, 3-187th Inf., as much as it does the village, said 1st Lt. Michael Nolan, from San Antonio, Texas, platoon leader for 2nd Platoon.

With the SoI working to maintain security, there is less need for Coalition Soldiers to patrol the area, keeping the Soldiers safer and the road less congested for through traffic. It also brings peace of mind to the Soldiers when they do patrol the village.

"When we first went out there, there weren't any SoI checkpoints," Nolan said. "It was a little nerve wracking... Now that we have SoI checkpoints nearly 500 meters apart,

with clear lines of sight between them, we know it will hinder insurgents' abilities to plant (improvised explosive devices)."

With the SoI improving its hold on the security in the village, Nolan is able to increase his platoon's reach and presence in the area while reducing the enemy's.

"Having a presence in (the area) and having SoI checkpoints on the road through the Fuhail Mujeer Village shows we're taking the area back from the insurgents, pushing them further and further out and giving them no safe havens," he said.



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

First Lt. Michael Nolan, from San Antonio, Texas, platoon leader for 2nd Platoon, Co. C, 3-187th Inf. Regt., 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), inspects the nearly complete Sons of Iraq checkpoint in the Fuhail Mujeer Village less than two hours after the project began April 25.

Rakkasans assess medical needs of Fuhail Mujeer clinic

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

Rakkasan Soldiers at Patrol Base Yates stopped by a local doctor's clinic to assess how to improve his clinic in Fuhail Mujeer Village April 21.

Dr. Yassen Taha Salemon, from the Al-Qarghuli tribe, is the only bona fide

doctor in the village that borders the former Iraqi Army Qaqa Weapons Facility. The next nearest clinic is approximately three kilometers away and is similarly equipped. Neither clinic is currently able to handle more than minor medical ailments.

Soldiers from 2nd Platoon, Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry

Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), have been laterally assigned to their battalion's Company D while working to develop the infrastructure in the area.

While Co. D, 3-187th Inf. addresses the needs of the clinic in Qarghuli Village, 2nd Platoon, Co. C, 3-187th Inf. has taken on

improving Yassen's medical capabilities so people in the area do not have to travel to Yusufiyah or Mahmudiyah for medical care.

Yassen's small clinic is in his home and has very little medicine. The doctor is requesting financial assistance to turn the in-home clinic into a medical and dental facility.

See Clinic, next page

IA recruiting efforts increase in Habbaniyah

By Capt. Seth Palmer
1st Squadron, 33rd Cav. Reg.

The Habbaniyah Iraqi Army recruiting center recently had an influx of locals wanting to become apart of the Army April 25.

In an effort to enlarge the national Iraqi security forces, the Iraqi Army has begun IA recruiting drives to increase the total number of Soldiers.

Rakkasans from 2nd Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 187th In-

fantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) escorted 17 Iraqis to an IA recruiting center for initial evaluations.

Because of safety concerns, many local citizens appreciate the efforts by Coalition forces in protecting them while they travel for such a cause.

"It's important for us to be able to escort locals to the recruiting center," said 1st Lt. Ricky McGuire, Co. D,

1-187th Inf. fire support officer. "The country is trying to increase its security forces and this is one way that we can help."

After the stringent vetting process, seven of the 17 applicants were accepted into the IA.

With such high unemployment rates in the country, enlisting with the IA is a way to not only gain employment, but to also help the country advance toward continued success.

Clinic

From previous page

Rakkasan Soldiers at Patrol Base Yates stopped by a local doctor's clinic to assess how to improve his clinic in Fuhail Mujeer Village April 21.

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Yassen's small clinic is in his home and has very little medicine. The doctor is requesting financial assistance to turn the in-home clinic into a medical and dental facility.

Yassen also relies on the help of Othman Abad Al-Gafoor from the Gartoni Tribe. Othman is a medical analyst, pharmacist and biologist who graduated from the College of Science at the University of Baghdad.

Othman sees between 20 and 30 patients per day with typhoid and dysentery as the majority of the ailments.

Though Othman has the education that could be a great benefit to the people in Fuhail Mujeer Village, he, like Yassen, lacks proper equipment, medicine and a



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

The few medicines in the corner and austere waiting rooms found at Dr. Yassen Taha Salemon's home clinic in the Fuhail Mujeer Village.

Initiative aims to boost fish-farming industry

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

A Task Force Marne initiative to revitalize Iraq's fish farms is in full swing in the Rakkasans' area of operations.

The 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) began a comprehensive assessment in February of hundreds of fish farms throughout the Mahmudiyah Qada.

"Fish farming was one of the top three agricultural businesses in Iraq," said Maj. Robert Bertrand, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), civil military operations officer. "Right now the farming has diminished significantly due to the war, but as capacity building is increasing, fish farming is becoming more and more important."

The overall goal of the fish industry revitalization is to improve the local economy, establish a system that Iraqis will be able to sustain for the long-term and create employment.

When the fish industry is revived, the hope is for numerous jobs to be created. "We're perceiving that ... approximately 5,000 to 10,000 jobs within the qada can be created with just increasing fish-farming capacity to pre-war levels," said Bertrand, a native of Seattle.

Coalition forces are working closely with embedded provincial reconstruction teams and the Iraqi Private Sector Growth and Employment Generation, an implementing partner of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Each battalion is conducting its own assessments to identify existing or potential fish farms in its area of responsibility. Concurrently, fish farming associations and unions are being formed and requests for funds from the Government of Iraq are being submitted.

Some existing farms are only oper-

ating at partial capacity due to financial constraints. "Many of the farms have a desire to return to full capacity (and) have requested assistance through the GoI and Coalition forces for an initial supply of feed and support for small end items, such as water pump repair parts and replacements," said Maj. Alaric Robinson, Company A, 411th Civil Affairs Battalion, supporting 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT) at Patrol Base Dragon.

One Qarghuli Village sheikh has fared well in fish farming without much assistance from Coalition forces or the Government of Iraq. Sheikh Ali Hussein Hassan has been in business for five years.

He raises carp, silver and glass fish and sells the fish live at an open market in Baghdad. Hassan said the process is fairly simple.

"We put the nets in the water first, then drain the water from the pond and collect the fish. From there we put them into the trucks and take them to Baghdad," Hassan said. Trucks with makeshift aquariums in the back are used to transport the fish.

Hassan's fish farm has two ponds and employs six members of his family.

"We would like to get (existing fish farmers) working with other fish farms, perhaps, and working with the Government of Iraq as well," said Sgt. Joshua Seymour, a Trumbull, Conn., native, Co. A, 411th CA. "Agriculture is a big part of this area; helping them

make more from what they have is going to really help stabilize their economy and their environment."

One obstacle is a shortage of water.

"Large quantities of water are needed, and the water is often in short supply," Bertrand said. "That's tough to deal with."

He said steps are being taken to ensure that two primary rivers, the Euphrates and Tigris, are being drawn upon to provide necessary water for both irrigation of agriculture and running the fish farms.

Bertrand said a relatively small investment is required to get most fish farms up and operational, but a large return is expected. Counting on a high level of consumption among Iraqis, he said the fish should sell well.

"The current diet in Iraq is meat with every meal, but fish is cheaper and people really do enjoy it so we see an advantage of getting more out to the markets," he said. "As the security grows, the prosperity's going to grow."



Courtesy photo

The owners of an Arab Jassim fish farm proudly display fish from their pond April 5.



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Approximately 200 Rakkasans take off at the Run for the Cure at Camp Striker simultaneously with a Ride for the Cure in Clarksville, Tenn., April 19.

Rakkasans run for the cure

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

Rakkasans at Camp Striker ran a 5-kilometer race that kicked off simultaneously with a Ride for the Cure bicycle race in Clarksville, Tenn., April 19.

The idea to do a run for the cure of breast cancer in Iraq came from Capt. Troy King's wife, a breast cancer survivor.

He was happy to help the cause but was planning the run on a smaller scale at first – like a company run, said King, commander of Company B, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). When word spread, however, more people wanted to take part.

“At first we started off small with a company run and a few other folks,” King said. “But then we signed up as a team. Then we set up the Rakkasan Run for the Cure and it just sort of blossomed from there.”

The support of his battalion commander, Lt. Col. Mathew Redding, and

brigade commander, Col. Dominic Caraccilo, made it easier for King to take the run to another level, he said.

The Rakkasans showed their support and responded in the form of 196 registered runners, more than \$6,400 in donations and approximately \$4,500 from the sale of t-shirts and registration fees. In all, more than 300 people participated in the event at Camp Striker.

As the crowd gathered for the race, runners stretched, laughed and a bit of the Rakkasans' competitive nature surfaced as people set their sites on other runners.

Cellular phones were used to synchronize the start times of the run at Camp Striker and the Ride for the Cure race in Clarksville.

Upon hearing “go,” the runners took off. After jockeying for position, it occurred to some of the runners why they were really running.

“When I was a little kid my grandmother died of breast cancer and my mom had a scare a few years back, so I had that on my mind,” said 1st Lt. Brendan Crane, a distribution platoon

leader with Company A, 626th BSB.

Crane said he was moved by signs along the race route that showed how many have been affected by breast cancer. “It really hit me as I ran by, so getting tired really wasn't an option.”

His resilience carried Crane to a first place finish with a time of 19:15. Though the race had prizes for the 1st and 2nd place finishers for men and women, the race had no losers.

Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Patton, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), greeted everyone who finished after him with cheers and high-fives. With his own mother being a breast cancer survivor, the run itself meant more to him than who placed first.

“The run was in remembrance of ... all the women who are survivors of breast cancer – the daughters, the sisters, the wives and the mothers – everyone who has been subjected to the disease,” Patton said. “We're trying to ensure our daughters and their daughters don't have to go through the things our generation has gone through.”

9 Rakkasans become U.S. citizens

By Pvt. Christopher McKenna
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Nine Rakkasans were among 259 Soldiers from 71 different countries who became U.S. citizens during a mass naturalization ceremony at al-Faw Palace on Camp Victory, Iraq, April 12.

"I can't think of a better use of the al-Faw Palace than to naturalize men and women who are fighting in support of the United States of America," said Lt. Gen. Lloyd Austin III, the Multi-National Corps - Iraq commander. "Saddam Hussein built this palace to celebrate his victory over Iran and today we use it to celebrate our brothers and sisters gaining their citizenship."

Nearly 5,000 service members have earned U.S. citizenship while serving abroad since 2004; more than 40,000 service members are not American citizens.

"The source of our nation's uniqueness is our ethnic and cultural diversity," Austin said. "These Soldiers have already sworn to protect the U.S.A. They have put themselves in harm's way to do our nation's bidding and now they become citizens of the country they defend."

According to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the ceremony was the largest outside of the continental United States for the military to date. Each Soldier must go through an interview and test in order to ensure they speak the English language and have an understanding of American history.

"We took a test dealing with civics," said Sgt. Peter Yenter, Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). He is originally from Germany but claims Fort Still, Okla., as



Pvt. Christopher McKenna

Spc. Enriqueillo Hernandez, Troop B, 1-33rd Cav. Regt., 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), receives his U.S. flag and naturalization papers during a naturalization ceremony held at al-Faw Palace April 12.

his home.

Yenter was adopted at birth by a military family in Germany. "My adoptive father was in the Army, so even in Germany, I stayed on post," he said.

Soldiers reasons varied for wanting to become naturalized citizens.

"I'm doing it so I can vote in this year's election and be able to spend more time with my daughter in the States after I am out of the military," said Pfc. Michel Corlay, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), who is originally from Paris, France, but now calls Boise, Idaho, home.

"I'm in the military; it's only natural to want to be a citizen of the country I represent," Yenter said.

It's a significant move to join the military in a country in which you

are not a citizen. Now, 259 more Soldiers who took that step have become naturalized citizens.

"I am proud to be an American because of what I represent," Yenter said. "It's the colors you wear on your sleeve that should make you proud."

Other Rakkasans who took part in the ceremony are Pfc. Alcide Morrisette, from Company B, 1-187th Inf. Regt.; Spc. Ariana Garcia-Hernandez, Spc. Arnold Archibald and Spc. Jean Ricardo, all with Company E, 626th Brigade Support Battalion; Spc. Eman Palaez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT); Spc. Enriqueillo Hernandez, Troop B, 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry Regiment; and Sgt. Alejandro Villavicencioestrada, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment.

Iron Rakkasans welcome Daughters of Iraq

Integration of females adds to security brought by Sons of Iraq

By Capt. Mike Starz
3rd Battalion, 187th Inf. Reg.

The organization known as Sons of Iraq, which has brought peace to much of Iraq, is taking a bold step in its evolution with the addition of Daughters of Iraq (DoI).

On April 17, Col. Aman, commander of 4th Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division met with leaders from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) to discuss the creation of the first DoI program. These women would be able to search other females at security checkpoints, expanding the capabilities of the SoI currently manning the checkpoints.

Steve Martinez, a law enforcement professional attached to 3-187th Inf. Regt., said integrating women into security roles was necessitated by insurgents utilizing females to carry out suicide attacks against Iraqis and Coalition forces. Employing women,

Martinez said, would “provide a complete and thorough search of suspect females with the utmost respect for the individual and local customs without compromising the safety of others.”

The DoI will search other women in and around Yusufiyah to help prevent trafficking of weapons, explosives and dangerous materials.

In addition to the significant security gains that these women will bring to the checkpoints, there are other advantages.

“The Daughters of Iraq will facilitate female empowerment and the creation of the group represents a significant step towards a properly functioning democratic society,” said Sgt. Jason G. George, Company C intelligence noncommissioned officer. “While the group may face criticism from traditionalists, ultimately, their success will demonstrate their value to the populace.”

Another benefit of the creation of DoI is the opportunity for some of the more disadvantaged women to receive

benefits, most of whom have been specifically targeted to join the program.

“We have been working to assist the impoverished women and, particularly, the widows in the area. There are limited employment opportunities for women widowed by insurgent violence and burdened with supporting their children,” said 1st Lt. Chris Hafner, Company C intelligence officer. “This program is ideal for these women.”

The details for DoI contracts are being finalized and will start with 30 women.

“Integrating patriotic Iraqi women into the Daughters of Iraq is a huge step in the right direction of freedom for the Iraqi people,” said Staff Sgt. Thai A. Starkovich, military transition team noncommissioned officer in charge. “With the cooperation of the Iraqi Army and the Sons and Daughters of Iraq, the safety of Iraqis is a goal that is now visible on the horizon.”

What is the most significant progress you've seen here?



“The biggest progress I've seen this deployment is ... the rebuilding of the infrastructure of Iraq.”

Staff Sgt. James Van Orman
Headquarters and Headquarters Troop,
1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry Regiment

“At Patrol Base Shanghai, the most significant change I saw was the improvement in the quality of life.”

Pfc. John Quirke
Company B,
3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment



“The biggest change is the implementation of (Iraqi security forces). It (frees) up more time for Soldiers to be able to conduct missions as well as have needed down time.”

Staff Sgt. Brent Keeton
Headquarters and Headquarters Battery,
3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment



“The Fadiliyan sheikhs being roactive, plugging themselves into the Jurf Nahia Council.”

Capt. Bathan Raymond
Company A,
3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment

Rakkasans for the cure

